

eish!



NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY
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The quarterly staff newsletter for the people of the NWU

Inspiring leader ready for another five years



Dr Theuns Eloff, Vice-Chancellor.

Until he joined this University, Dr Theuns Eloff had never spent more than six and a half years in the same position. Now, with five years as Vice-Chancellor already behind him, he is ready for the next five years.

Dr Eloff, who has been reappointed by the NWU Council for another five-year term until 2014, has led the NWU since the merger in 2004. In the process, the University has won many awards and reinforced its reputation as one of South Africa's most innovative and best-managed higher education institutions.

Over the next few years, it is expected that the University will not only retain but accelerate the pace of growth and development of the post-merger years, garnering even more awards and reaching greater heights.

Dr Eloff believes that he still has work to do at the NWU. "I am very grateful for the opportunity to finalise and consolidate the various strategies implemented since the merger in 2004."

Read more about the highlights he recalls from his first term, the strategic questions he will embrace during his next term, and how he feels about the current challenges the NWU faces in the article on pages 3 and 4.

"Under the effective leadership of Dr Eloff, the North-West University has over the past few years excelled in various fields," says Mr Peet van der Walt, Chairperson of the Council.

Mafikeng Campus started 2009 on a positive note

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Read this!

Solve this puzzle and win!

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More than 5 000 first-years were welcomed at the NWU in 2009

6



NWU leaders hone their management skills



Prof Chris van der Watt, Director: Organisational Learning and Development, was responsible for the development of the Leadership Academy Programme.

The NWU recently became the first university in South Africa to launch a Leadership Academy Programme to develop the competence and potential of its management leaders.

The first of three workshops planned for 2009 was held from 12 to 16 January 2009 at the Institutional Office in Potchefstroom. It was attended by 35 NWU leaders, including members of the Institutional Management, campus rectors, vice-rectors, chief directors, campus registrars and deans.

Topics discussed during the workshop included *Building interpersonal relationships*, *Mobilising and inspiring people*, *Utilising conflict* and *Goal setting*. The sessions were facilitated by several external management experts, including Dr Jopie de Beer, an evaluating consultant from Randburg, Mr Tony Manning, a Johannesburg-based consultant and Dr Mandla Adonisi of the

Gordon Institute of Business Science, Sandton.

The aim of the Leadership Academy is to provide an in-house programme for the structured and ongoing development of the NWU's management leaders, according to Dr Theuns Eloff, Vice-Chancellor of the NWU.

The basic premise is that leadership is the joint responsibility of a group of senior members of management (the so-called leadership community) who have to practise leadership in a collective and aligned manner to ensure that the NWU's success is sustainable.

Dr Eloff believes that the programme will contribute to the objectives of greater organisational effectiveness and quality of working life.

The next workshops will be held from 22 to 26 June 2009 and from 23 to 27 November 2009. For feedback on the Leadership Academy Programme workshop turn to page 11.

No time wasted in tackling 2009 challenges

The year started at a quicker pace than usual, due to several immediate challenges facing the NWU during the first few months of 2009.

Among these are the Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC) audit and site visits, and the University's response to criticism contained in the report by the ministerial task team appointed to investigate the causes of student unrest at the Mafikeng Campus last year.

HEQC audit

In his February electronic newsletter, Vice-Chancellor, Dr Theuns Eloff, described the institutional audit by the HEQC as "probably the most important event in the life of our university". You can read more about this event on page 10. To raise awareness about the audit and site visits, we have also made it the subject of a crossword puzzle competition. One quick-thinking winner from each business unit (Institutional Office and three campuses) will receive a useful corporate gift.

Ministerial task team

The University sent preliminary feedback to the Minister of Education, Ms Naledi Pandor, in response to the ministerial task team report, received in December 2008. Although the NWU will use the report as an opportunity for introspection, the University has made a number of critical remarks about the process followed by the task team, the factual errors in the report, and the fact that some recommendations were based on these errors. For more information, read the article on page three.

Most innovative university

In this issue we also focus on the numerous awards that the University won during 2008 (see p16 for the advertisement that appeared in several publications). Among the many accolades received, the NWU was named as the most innovative higher education institution in South Africa for 2008 by the Department of Science and Technology's Innovation Fund.

The Acting Executive Director of the Innovation Fund, Mr McLean Sibanda, explained that the NWU displayed exemplary best practice which stood out in the eyes of the adjudication panel.

"The NWU demonstrated a culture of innovation which permeates through the entire institution. There was evidence of breadth and depth to its innovation activity too," he said.

The adjudicators were also impressed with the University's investment in focused research, as this results in more funding being directed into the focus areas, with greater levels of innovation being achieved.

"The NWU's energised submission is indicative of an energised office, as well as good leadership. All in all, a well-deserved award," Mr Sibanda said.

Closing the Rector's door

Eish! talked to Prof Piet Prinsloo whose term of office as Rector of the Vaal Triangle Campus is coming to an end on 31 August 2009. In the article on pages eight and nine you can read more about his early years as Rector, the current challenges faced by the Campus, and what the future holds for himself and for the Campus.

The rest of this issue of Eish! is packed with information about the NWU's Leadership Academy Programme (p2), the results of a survey on social cohesion among NWU students (p11), the FW de Klerk exhibition (p12), and the 2009 first-year intake (p15).

We wish everybody involved with the HEQC audit the best of luck - we trust that everything will go smoothly.

Hours and hours of hard work and preparation have already gone into this event and more will follow until this audit cycle is concluded.

To celebrate the conclusion of the site visit at the Institutional Office, everybody can take a well-deserved break and relax at the inter-campus social day on Friday 20 March 2009 at the Potchefstroom Campus.

See you there!
Nelia Engelbrecht



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Countering criticism with excellence

The NWU has overcome many obstacles, weathered fierce storms and received numerous accolades since the merger in 2004. Eish! asked the Vice-Chancellor, Dr Theuns Eloff, to share his views on the NWU's accomplishments and challenges.

The NWU should excel to such an extent that all voices of criticism are silenced by the extent of its achievements, says Dr Eloff.

He firmly believes that the NWU is on the right track – despite some reservations expressed in the report that a ministerial task team handed to the NWU Council in December 2008.

The task team was appointed by the Minister of Education, Ms Naledi Pandor, after student unrest disrupted classes on the Mafikeng Campus last year.

“Given the history of the NWU and its constituent parts, the institution will always be different from the average South African university, and this will often evoke criticism. However, we should not be defensive. Instead, we should look at all that we have accomplished and see things in the right perspective,” Dr Eloff says.

Accomplishments

“When I look back at the last five years, some of the achievements that come to mind include the steady, decisive progress made with our core business of teaching-learning and research.”

Among all undergraduate students, including the more than 16 000 distance students, the success rate had increased to 79,5% in 2007, compared to 78,5% in 2006. (Figures for 2008 will only be available later this year when the next NWU annual report is published.)

The graduation rate for undergraduate degrees and diplomas for 2007 was an excellent 25,3%, up from 24% in 2004. This positioned the NWU among the five top universities in the country.

The number of NRF-rated researchers also showed a steady increase from 85 in 2006 to 95 in 2007 and, according to preliminary 2008 figures, now stands at 102 or 11% of all academic staff. The NWU currently ranks among the seven top universities in South Africa for research, and among the top two for innovation.

In 2006 the NWU delivered the third most doctoral students in SA, namely 110. Since then the number of PhDs continued to rise. A total of 124 doctoral degrees were conferred in 2007, and 132 in 2008.

In addition, the NWU has received valuable external acknowledgement in the form of several highly acclaimed awards. (See back page for more detail.)

Other highlights that Dr Eloff recalls are the three inter-campus social days held during 2007 and 2008, which have nurtured a sense of unity among all NWU staff members.

Current challenges and strategic issues

Challenges faced by the NWU during Dr Eloff's current and next term of office include the Ministerial task team's report, the HEQC audit and replacing two valued campus rectors. In addition, the University will focus on strategic issues such as internationalisation and institutional advancement (including building a strong endowment fund).

• Ministerial task team report

“The Ministerial task team pointed out several legitimate and relevant issues in their report, including social cohesion, programme alignment and transformation. These issues should be taken very seriously,” Dr Eloff says.

“However, where the task team has misinterpreted some matters, or drawn the wrong conclusions, for instance about our language policy and our management model, we should refute them - not only through our words, but also through our deeds and our successes.”

Dr Eloff also believes that the ministerial task team's report should be seen in the context of universities as autonomous institutions, governed by their councils. “No other body has enforceable power over a university. However, we acknowledge the fact that our autonomy is based on public accountability and operating within the plan for higher education in South Africa.”

It is expected that the NWU Council will give final feedback on the ministerial report before the end of March.

• HEQC audit

The challenges posed by the HEQC audit, for which the NWU has long been preparing, will continue after the current round of HEQC site visits is over.

! Continued on page 4

Dr Theuns Eloff is being congratulated by Sir Trevor McDonald, Chancellor of the London South Bank University. He was awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Laws by this university on 19 November 2008. During the ceremony, the Vice-Chancellor of that university, Prof Deian Hopkin, said that Dr Eloff was awarded this doctorate for his engagement with global education and social transformation and for his contribution to partnership with the London South Bank University and its values.



Countering criticism with excellence

From page 3

Approximately a year after the HEQC audit, the NWU will receive final feedback from the audit panel. From this, a quality improvement plan must then be compiled.

"In the meantime, we will start attending to those problems that we identified in our self-evaluation portfolio, such as those in the field of student disciplinary processes and resource management," says Dr Eloff.

• Rectors leaving

The extended terms of office of Prof Annette Combrink, Rector of the Potchefstroom Campus, and Prof Piet Prinsloo, Rector of the Vaal Triangle Campus, will come to an end on 31 December 2009 and 31 August 2009 respectively.

"Although this may lead to the infusion of

'new blood' at the NWU, these colleagues have both been involved with the University and its predecessors for many decades, and it will not be easy to fill their shoes," says Dr Eloff.

• Internationalisation and institutional advancement

"The NWU is set on enhancing our contact with international universities," says Dr Eloff, adding that another issue of strategic importance is institutional advancement. "We should build a strong endowment fund in particular," he says. Both issues will receive priority attention to ensure even more momentum during the coming year.

A well-deserved rest

For the first time ever in his career, Dr Eloff has been granted long leave for three months during the first half of the year. However, his three months' leave will be interrupted by a few formal obligations.

In May this year, he will attend a Vice-Chancellors' Forum in his capacity as Chairperson

of Higher Education South Africa (HESA) in Italy at a summit of the G8 countries. This will be the first time that a G8 summit will include a Vice-Chancellors' forum.

In June, in his capacity as Vice-Chairperson of the Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU), he will attend an ACU Vice-Chancellors' Forum in Malaysia. This event will coincide with a meeting of the Ministers of Education of Commonwealth countries.

"I will also interrupt my long leave to attend the next week-long session presented by our newly established Leadership Academy," Dr Eloff says. (Read more about this Academy on p2)

And how is he going to spend the rest of his break?

"I am going to recharge my batteries by resting, playing golf, relaxing at the coast and visiting the Bushveld. During the last few weeks, I will catch up with my reading - I would like to update my knowledge about the latest management developments."

Dr Ngoato Takalo, Executive Director: Teaching-Learning and Vice-Principal, will officiate as acting Vice-Chancellor during this time.

There is great appreciation for Dr Eloff's leadership among the campus rectors. Eish! asked them to share their views:



Prof Dan Kgwadi,
Rector: Mafikeng Campus



Prof Annette Combrink,
Rector: Potchefstroom Campus



Prof Piet Prinsloo,
Rector: Vaal Triangle Campus

Q: How did Dr Eloff support you and your campus during his first term as Vice-Chancellor?

Since the merger Dr Theuns Eloff has provided constructive strategic planning and stabilised crisis situations with his calm nature and particular negotiation and mediation style.

Dr Eloff has also been my personal mentor during my time as Rector, which was invaluable to me.

The Campus has always had great appreciation for the leadership of Dr Eloff. His regular scheduled visits to the various sections, accompanied by the Campus Rector, helped to create a sense of being informed and involved among staff. The Campus feels safe and can therefore concentrate on its core business.

The Vaal Triangle Campus benefited from the merger and incorporation in 2004, as the Campus was positioned as a fully-fledged third campus, thereby heralding a new development phase.

Dr Eloff continued to support the Campus's new position and promoted it at meetings.

Q: How do you feel about the reappointment of Dr Eloff as Vice-Chancellor for another term and how is your campus going to benefit from it?

I strongly support Dr Eloff's re-appointment as Vice-Chancellor for another term. This will ensure continuity and sustainability of the merger process and stability on all three campuses.

The procedures that he put in place during his first term and the experience he gained from handling the teething problems of the merger equipped him to deal with similar current and future challenges.

We are very pleased that he has been reappointed. At this point in the history of the University it is absolutely crucial to have security and stability, and Dr Eloff is uniquely positioned to provide that for the whole University. His wider involvement, for example with Higher Education South Africa and the Association of Commonwealth Universities, also adds to a sense of security because he has the wider vision and is able to exert influence where it counts.

The NWU needs the continuation of Dr Eloff's strategic guidance, leadership and innovative approach, so that the merger strategies can be enconced in systems and processes.

The Campus is currently in a development phase and support at the highest level, the Vice-Chancellor, is indispensable. A new VC without the background and experience would interrupt the rhythm of the process and the realisation of objectives.

Course for new academics a huge success



Seven academics from the Mafikeng Campus attended a course for new lecturers from 3 to 5 February 2009 at the Institutional Office in Potchefstroom.

The course, aimed at introducing academics to best practices and new trends in higher education, was attended by 38 newly appointed lecturers from all three campuses. Of the participants, 20 were from the Potchefstroom Campus and 11 from the Vaal Triangle Campus.

Ms Mariaan Klopper of the Institutional Academic Development and Support (ADS) office presented the course.

Seven academics from the Mafikeng Campus attended an institutional course for newly appointed lecturers from 3 to 5 February 2009. In the back row from left are Mr Theo Triegaardt, Mr Fritz Kgotle, Dr Ngoato Takalo, Executive Director: Teaching-Learning and Vice-Principal, and Mr Thabo Mashoene. In the front row, from left, are Ms Annarie Müller, Mr Jan van der Merwe, Ms Veronica Sivhabu, Ms Janet Hanna and Dr Sabi Ranko-Ramaili from Academic Development and Support, Mafikeng Campus.

Starting 2009 on a positive note

The official opening of the Campus took place under a cloudy sky in a marquee tent packed with more than 1 000 people.

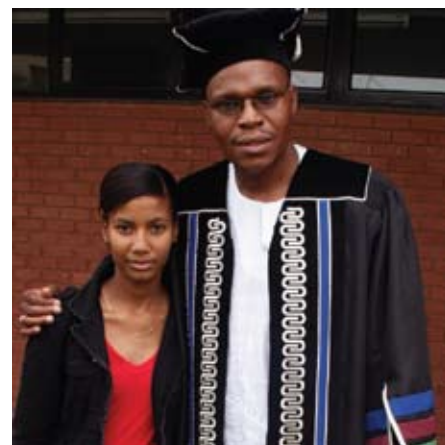
In his welcoming address, Prof Dan Kgwadi, Campus Rector, thanked the student leadership for their undertaking that 2009 would be a stable year. "I am pleased that we have started this year on a positive note, with the registration process going according to plan so far," he said.

During the event, long-service awards were presented to 59 staff members. In addition,

laptops were handed over to seven first-year students who were the best grade 12 achievers for 2008 among the newcomers. The top achiever, Ms Fatima Modutwane, from the Kebonang Secondary School in the Mafikeng area, also received a full bursary.

The opening was led by Dr Ngoato Takalo, Executive Director: Teaching-Learning and Vice-Principal.

Prof Dan Kgwadi, Campus Rector, with Ms Fatima Modutwane, the top achiever among the first-year students.



Record turnout for Botswana-based alumni

A record number of 300 alumni from the Mafikeng Campus recently attended a gala dinner at the Gaborone Sun Conference Centre in Gaborone, Botswana.

Ms Susan van Rooyen, Acting Manager: Marketing and Communications, welcomed the alumni, saying the University was proud of their exceptional achievements and leading roles in Botswana. "You are ambassadors and partners of this university and we want you to be involved with your Alma Mater," Ms van Rooyen said.

Prof Dan Kgwadi, Campus Rector, expressed his delight with the number of Botswana alumni still supporting their Alma Mater. He invited them to visit the Campus and – by making their expertise available – play a more active role in mentoring current student leaders.



Prof Dan Kgwadi, addressing the alumni.

IKS takes the bull by the horns

Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) has taken the research bull by the horns and will soon boast more than 10 internationally accredited articles published in technical journals.

This centre, in collaboration with the National IKS offices and the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA), has approached the journal *Alternation* to publish the research articles. The articles will soon appear in a special edition of *Alternation: IKS and Sustainable Development*.

Alternation is an internationally accredited journal of the Centre for Studies of Southern African Literature and Languages, based at the University of KwaZulu-Natal.



Prof Annette Combrink

Rector takes over as Aardklop chairperson

Prof Annette Combrink, Campus Rector, is the new chairperson of the Aardklop National Art Festival. She is the first woman to preside and succeeds Dr Theuns Eloff, whose term as chairperson has ended.

Prof Combrink is passionate about the arts

and in her long university career, amongst others as Director of the School of Languages and Dean of the Faculty of Arts, has done much to promote the arts on the Campus.

“Due to the world-wide economic pressure, the arts will most decidedly have the bad end of the stick, and I will strive to expand the sponsor foundation of the festival,” she says.

The Aardklop board of directors comprises volunteers from several specialist fields who have the promotion of the arts at heart.

Alumnus is sports psychologist for Brumbies

An alumnus of the Potchefstroom Campus has been appointed as sports psychologist to a Super 14 team in Australia.

Dr Pieter Kruger was contracted by the Brumbies to conduct individual and team psychological assessments and interventions. During the past three years he has been involved with the well-known Harlequins team in London.

The former coach of the Harlequins, Andy Friend, was recruited by his home country to coach the Brumbies. He selected his own management team and asked Dr Kruger to act as team sports psychologist for the coming season. Due to Dr Kruger’s involvement with the Harlequins and the fact that he is an associate in a private practice in London, he could not move to Australia permanently.

Dr Kruger obtained his BA degree and two honours degrees in psychology and sport sciences cum laude at the former Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education (PU for CHE). He completed his master’s degree in clinical psychology, also cum laude, at the University of the Free State and returned to the PU for CHE to do his doctorate in sports psychology. In 2004, he was the sports psychologist for the rugby institute at the Potchefstroom Campus.

In 2006 Dr Kruger left for the United Kingdom and soon joined the Harlequins as their sports psychologist. In London he continued his work in clinical, industrial and sports psychology and continued his studies at the Albert Ellis Institute in New York and the Beck Institute in Philadelphia in the USA. Currently he is also a senior lecturer in the Department of Psychology at the London Metropolitan University.



Dr Pieter Kruger at Twickenham Stoop, the home ground of the Harlequins, shortly before a match.



Art assignment brings joy to the underprivileged

Shortly before the festive season, art students of the School of Curriculum-based Studies gave great pleasure to underprivileged children in some of the poorest informal settlements surrounding Potchefstroom.

Students made toy cats from scrap materials, which they also had to use in a painting later on as part of an assignment given to them by their lecturer, Mrs Dederé Victor. The project was christened “Care Cats”.

She says the students knew in advance that their work would be donated to a good cause, and some of them even made as many as 10 cats in case some children would not receive one.

The Women’s League of the St Michael’s Catholic Church distributed 84 of the toy cats among communities, along with buckets full of basic food necessities.

Great joy reigned when the art students’ “Care Cats” were distributed in residential areas in the vicinity of Potchefstroom. Here Ms Madeline Major of St Michael’s Women’s League hands over some of the cats.

Lecturer receives medal of honour for education research



Prof Linda Theron and her husband, Prof Tinie Theron.

Prof Linda Theron from the School of Educational Sciences has been awarded a medal of honour by the Education Association of South Africa (EASA).

The award was made in the Young Researcher 2009 category and is the result of Prof Theron's contribution to promoting the scientific status of education.

She is currently engaged in four major projects focusing on building the resilience of education stakeholders, especially those affected by HIV/AIDS. Two of these are national projects and two have international participation.

The national projects are Resilient Educators, aimed at encouraging resilience among educators who are challenged by the HIV pandemic, and Read-me-to-Resilience, a project to determine whether reading culturally-sensitive metaphorical stories to AIDS orphans might encourage resilience.

Internationally, Prof Theron works with researchers from countries such as Canada, China, the United States, India, Thailand and Columbia.

Madeleine excels in course



Ms Madeleine Groenewald

Ms Madeleine Groenewald, a lecturer from the School of Information Technology, Faculty of Economic Sciences and Information Technology, was recently awarded R2 000 for her contribution to a study guide.

As part of a course for new lecturers, presented by the School of Philosophy, Potchefstroom Campus, Ms Groenewald had to redesign a chapter in a study guide with the purpose of explaining the foundational principles of her chosen field of study. The focus of her contribution was the second-year subject, Decision Support Systems.

Ms Groenewald, a staff member since October 2007, specialises in statistical analysis and decision support systems.

Staff member conquers cycling challenge

One of the cyclists who made their mark in the Fast One Cycle Challenge hosted by the Vaal Triangle Campus recently was Mr Jan Tshabalala from Technical Services.

This year saw hundreds of competitors cycling from the Nasrec Conference Centre in Johannesburg to the Campus – a distance of 103 km. Mr Tshabalala took the 12th position in the P category with a time of just over three hours. A total of 243 cyclists took part in this category of the cycle challenge.

To prepare himself physically for the cycle challenges, Mr Tshabalala cycles 50 km to and from work each day.



Mr Jan Tshabalala

Closing one door and opening another

In about six months' time, Prof Piet Prinsloo, Rector of the Vaal Triangle Campus, will close the door of the Rector's office behind him for the last time. His original term of office as Rector was extended in 2007 but will finally come to an end on 31 August 2009. Eish! talked to him about the past, the present and the future of his beloved Campus.

Prof Piet Prinsloo is a tall man and when you talk to him, you have to look up to make eye contact.

This has also been true figuratively speaking: for the past five years, students and staff at the NWU's Vaal Triangle Campus have been looking up to him for guidance as their Campus Rector.

First footprints

Prof Prinsloo, a former teacher, left his first footprints on the bank of the Vaal River when he joined the Vaal Triangle Campus of the former Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education (PU for CHE) as a lecturer in 1977. He left for the former Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit (RAU) in 1985, but returned to the Vaal Triangle Campus two and a half years later.

He was appointed acting Vice-Rector on 1 April 1994 and Vice-Rector and Campus Head on 1 July 1995.

From April 2002, while still Head of the Campus, Prof Prinsloo also served as Vice-Rector: Academic and Vice-Principal of the PU for CHE.

In January 2004, when the NWU came into being, Prof Prinsloo was appointed Rector of the Vaal Triangle Campus.

Looking back

At the time of the merger, one of the biggest challenges was the incorporation of the Sebokeng Campus of the former Vista University.

The main stumbling block was that, unlike Vista's six other campuses, the Vaal Triangle Campus did not inherit any of that university's facilities.

However, the Campus rose to the challenge and, by following a systematic process and ensuring the buy-in of all personnel, successfully fostered a stable and healthy campus climate.

The same positive climate is still evident on the Vaal Triangle Campus today.

Prof Prinsloo attributes this to the Campus Management's constant focus over the past decade on four basic developmental aspects.

These are:

- Discovering and rediscovering attainable aspects of excellence;
- Dreaming about an ultimate goal for the Campus – that it will one day be a model campus and a relevant and viable place of higher learning;
- Developing and revising the process and strategies for realising the dream; and
- Delivering the dream, based on the collective willingness of staff to increase the input in their task agreements year after year.



Prof Piet Prinsloo

Highlights

During his term as Rector, Prof Prinsloo experienced the power of teamwork first hand. "Working together enabled us to establish a sustainable and quality-driven campus in a short period of time," he says.

The Campus has experienced record growth and capital investment during the past few years. But it is not only the Campus that has grown. Prof Prinsloo believes that he has grown as a person and gained in wisdom during his term as Rector.

"I learnt for instance that, to achieve the required results, every manager should be concerned about:

- What people do (the actions they take to adhere to their task agreements) and
- How they feel (the climate and circumstances in which they work)."

Strong points

Prof Prinsloo is very proud of the Vaal Triangle Campus' staff members, and particularly their contributions towards the high quality of teaching and learning on the Campus.

"30% of our academic personnel are undertaking postgraduate studies and approximately 83% already have master's or doctoral degrees," says Prof Prinsloo.

He believes that further investments should be made in the skills of individuals and new goals should be set to raise the 'metabolism' of the Campus, focusing on quality and the enhancement of competence and expertise.

Current challenges

Although he is running the last lap of the race, Prof Prinsloo is still participating wholeheartedly,

sharing the dreams of the campus community and working towards achieving its goals.

"Once our new lecture hall complex has been completed, we would like to raise our number of students to 5 000, while also increasing our financial support for students from disadvantaged communities."

Another challenge is to revise and extend the programmes and qualifications currently offered on the Campus, focusing strongly on the needs of the Vaal Triangle area.

"We strive to be a regional asset to the Vaal Triangle and to be the academic cornerstone in the industrial heartland of the country. By recruiting quality students, cultivating in them the desire for life-long learning and equipping them with the academic know-how, practical skills and valuable life experience, the Campus is pro-actively contributing to the regeneration and sustainable growth of the region," says Prof Prinsloo.

Ready for the HEQC

"The Vaal Triangle Campus is ready for the HEQC audit and site visit in March 2009. Our personnel were involved with the preparation process right from the start and there is a high level of quality awareness among staff and students. The biggest challenge is to regard the HEQC audit as part of a continuous, self-regulating, quality-driven process, and not a one-off event."

- Prof Piet Prinsloo, Rector: Vaal Triangle Campus

A related goal is to develop the Quest Training Centre to its full potential, establishing it as the NWU's community expertise centre for the Vaal Triangle region, southern Gauteng and the northern Free State.

Looking ahead

Community development, especially in the Vaal Triangle region, lies close to Prof Prinsloo's heart. In August this year, when he closes the door of the rector's office for the last time, he will open another door: one leading to the establishment of a community development network for the Vaal Triangle Campus and region.

His involvement will entail implementation of NWU expertise, skills training and corporate



Prof Prinsloo with his management team. At the back are from left Prof Linda du Plessis, Vice-Rector: Academic, Quality and Planning, Ms Elbie Steyn, Campus Registrar, and Mr Bertie Visser, Chief Director: Finance and Facilities. In the front row from left are Prof Roy Dhurup, Dean: Faculty of Economic Sciences and Information Technology, Prof Prinsloo and Prof Tinie Theron, Dean: Faculty of Humanities.

advancement and sponsorships.

For the implementation of expertise, he will focus on contact with Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) to obtain learnerships, as well as on liaison between all NWU faculties and business and industry in the Vaal Triangle Region on matters such as tenders, economic impact assessments, and the Vaal air quality project.

He will also promote skills training at the Quest Training Centre including vocational training presented by the Water Tower Training Centre and short courses presented by the Potchefstroom Business School and the Skills Development Unit.

Securing sponsorships for university projects and programmes, including A meal a day, Ikateleng and Sediba, will also be part of Prof Prinsloo's responsibilities.

He will be involved with the NWU in this capacity for the next five years, until he retires at the age of 65.

What is he looking forward to?

"I would like to enhance the quality of life of myself and my family," he says.

It seems as if he expects the pace to slow down in future, but that remains to be seen Once a sprinter, always a sprinter - even if you are running a different race.

And what will he miss the most?

"The lovely view over the Vaal River from my office window!"

His likes and dislikes

Favourite food: Meat braai over an open fire.

Favourite books/film:

Books: Historical romances.

Films: Good dramas.

This makes me happy: When a project is successfully completed, bringing joy and happiness to the participants.

What I appreciate in people: People who are honest, upright and without pretences.

What I find frustrating or irritating: People with inflated egos.

My best vacation ever: Sitting around a camp fire in a nature reserve or in the Bushveld, enjoying good company and a glass of wine.

My family: I am married to Wilna Ernst, whom I met when we were students. We have three children: Anita is married to Marius Lennox, and they have two boys, namely WG (3 years) and Pieter (2 months). My other daughter, Jané, married Johan Smit on 14 February 2009. I also have a son, Philip.

HEQC site visits in full swing at NWU

Months of hard work and preparations for the Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC) audit have finally culminated in site visits by the HEQC panel.

HEQC staff and panel members visited the three campuses of the NWU between 16 and 19 February 2009. These visits included short tours of the campuses and presentations by the campus' rectors, managements and student councils.

Building C1 will be a beehive of activity between 15 and 20 March 2009 when the panel visits the Institutional Office in Potchefstroom to study the evidence documents in the NWU's document room and conduct interviews with different groups.

These interviews will not only include planned sessions with invited NWU stakeholders, but also open sessions for other members of the NWU community who would like to appear before the panel. Individuals or groups may also direct written submissions to the HEQC panel before the end of the site visit, provided that they clearly motivate the need for bringing such information to the attention of the panel.

"During the site visit, the panel members will validate the information contained in the NWU's portfolio that was submitted to them on 3 December 2008. They will also look into the validity of our claims about our quality assurance processes and mechanisms," says Prof Es Steyn, Manager: Quality.

The invited interviewees have already been briefed on how they should prepare for the interviews and when their scheduled sessions will take place. During the site visit, they will also receive SMS messages to remind them of their interviews.

Groups of staff members and students will be transported from the three campuses to the Institutional Office to be interviewed by the HEQC panel.

Should you need more information about the HEQC audit and in particular the forthcoming site visit at the Institutional Office, you can phone Ms Melinda du Toit from the Institutional Project Office at (018) 299 4604 for logistical information, and Prof Es Steyn at (018) 299 4875 or Dr Jannie Jacobz, Director: Quality Office, at (018) 299 4874 for general information. Also watch out for the daily electronic email notice, @NWU, for news flashes.

Information can also be found on the NWU's web site at <https://intranet.nwu.ac.za/en/in-im-heqc/index.html>. This is how you can locate it:

- Go to NWU web page: www.nwu.ac.za
- Click on language of preference.
- Click on Staff Intranet.
- Click on Strategic Priorities.
- Click on HEQC.



Ms Amanda van der Merwe, Manager: Institutional Administration, (centre) and her team, Ms Jacoline Jansen van Vuuren (left) and Ms Mpho Seshabelo, (right) are responsible for the document room.

Solve this puzzle and win

Your problem-solving skills can earn you a corporate gift.

Use the article above to complete this crossword puzzle and send it to engelbrecht@nwu.ac.za, fax (018) 299 4938 or internal box 260, NWU, and stand a chance of winning our lucky draw. The first correct entry from each business unit will earn its entrant a handy corporate gift.

Down:

1. Contact her for more information about logistical issues regarding the site visit (first name).
2. Kind of submission.
3. Prof Es Steyn is the manager in this office.
4. Ms Amanda van der Merwe and her team were responsible for assembling the room.
5. The site visit at the IO will take place during this month.
6. Interviewees will receive messages to remind them of their interviews.

Across:

1. Abbreviation for Higher Education Quality Committee.



2. The HEQC is taking place right now.
3. The last site visit will be conducted at this office.
4. The electronic version of the NWU's self-evaluation portfolio can be found on the
5. Members of the HEQC will conduct interviews with different groups.
6. visits took place between 16 and 19 February 2009.
7. Director: Institutional Project Office (first name).

Survey offers insights into social cohesion at NWU

Students are more willing to share the University's campuses and classrooms with people from other racial groups than to share personal spaces such as rooms in residences. In these spaces all students, regardless of race, express more need for social distance, but white students are the most sensitive.

These were some of the interesting findings of a survey conducted at the NWU between September and November 2008 on the levels of social cohesion and preparedness for integration among full-time students.

At the request of the NWU Council, the survey was undertaken by a sub-task team of the NWU Human Rights Commission among a representative sample of full time students, consisting of 594 Mafikeng Campus students, 1 958 Potchefstroom Campus students and 440 Vaal Triangle Campus students.

Here are some of the other findings of the survey:

- Generally speaking, respect for race is high across all campuses of the NWU and varies between 73% and 95%. However, 20% to 34% of coloured and black students do experience instances of disrespect.
- It was found that students experience disrespect towards their own cultures in very similar ways across the campuses. In other words, members of a specific racial group experience disrespect in the same way, irrespective of the campus they attend.
- Highly diverse interpretations of race and racism were discovered. For instance, some students associate these terms with differences in religion, while others regard them as differences in culture or appearance.

These were some of the individual responses received across the three campuses:

"I experience that my own culture is disrespected when:

- placements in hostels are not done on merit;
- people from other races look at me weirdly when I wear a scarf and religious clothes;
- other students and lecturers undermine me just because I'm black;
- I'm not considered for a bursary because I'm a white male;
- black residence students don't want coloured students;
- being a foreigner on campus, I am treated as an outsider,
- asked whether I am really black since I am doing Afrikaans;
- Afrikaans and English are used and no Sotho;
- there is discrimination against me, because I'm white and judged on what my ancestors did."

Some of the constructive suggestions made by participating students were the following:

- Use only English as the medium of instruction.
- Treat all students equally, whether they are international or local students.
- Encourage students to speak their mother tongues.
- Ensure race representation on management bodies so as to accommodate all.
- Adapt residence and campus customs to all cultures.
- Have more interactive events for the sake of socialising.

- Create a code of conduct that will stress equality.
- Introduce serious disciplinary measures to deal with racial disrespect.
- Encourage group interaction among students of different cultures to promote the spirit of Ubuntu.
- Campus management cannot really do anything, as it is the mindset of the students that is wrong.

"In the short term, value could be added if some of the suggestions from the students are considered," says Prof Marlene Verhoef, Institutional Director: Language Directorate and a member of the team that conducted the survey.

The team came to the conclusion that further research is necessary to enhance the NWU's understanding of these complex issues, along with programmes to constructively manage diversity and diversity issues on the NWU campuses.

The NWU Human Rights sub-task team who conducted the survey:

- Dr Suria Ellis, Statistical Services, Potchefstroom Campus
- Dr Edward Sedibe, Institutional Director: Student Affairs and Sport
- Prof Marlene Verhoef, Institutional Director: Language Directorate
- Prof Johan Zaaïman, School of Social and Political Studies, Potchefstroom Campus
- Prof Madoda Zibi, Institutional Director: Diversity, Equity, and Human Rights

Feedback: Leadership Academy Programme

From page 2

Eish! asked a few of the participants for feedback on the Leadership Academy Programme workshop held earlier this year.

"It was a wonderful opportunity for senior management to enhance our management skills once again and to discuss important management matters right at the beginning of the year. I really enjoyed the excellent session about self-knowledge and gaining a better understanding of personality traits and differences."

- Prof Frikkie van Niekerk, Executive Director: Research and Innovation

"The workshop was an eye opener in dealing with issues of change. Since the University is still in the change process because of the merger, this helped in creating an awareness about change management. As managers, this information

will help us perceive the merger in a different perspective."

- Prof Lulama Qalinge, Acting Dean: Human and Social Sciences, Mafikeng Campus.

"The team spirit of the NWU's management was enhanced. The training was practical and I believe it is of critical importance to me as a manager to apply what I have learnt. I now also experience a greater awareness of myself as a manager."

- Ms Dorothy August, Registrar: Potchefstroom Campus.

The programme was very thought-provoking and provided an array of possibilities in addressing contemporary leadership issues in a dynamic higher education environment.

It also provided an excellent opportunity to network with key role players at the NWU."

- Prof Roy Dhurup, Dean: Economic Sciences and Information Technology, Vaal Triangle Campus.



Prof Frikkie van Niekerk Prof Lulama Qalinge



Ms Dorothy August Prof Roy Dhurup

NWU opens FW de Klerk exhibition



From left are Mr FW de Klerk and Ms Elita de Klerk, Ms Suzette Eloff and Dr Theuns Eloff.

The NWU recently honoured one of its best-known alumni, when the permanent F W de Klerk exhibition was officially opened in the library on the Potchefstroom Campus.

"The De Klerk family was bound to the former Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education (PU for CHE) with many umbilical cords, and is connected with great enthusiasm to the North-West University of today," Mr de Klerk said at the opening of the exhibition.

Some of the guests of honour at the opening were Mr FW and Mrs Elita de Klerk, his brother, Wimpie, his son, Willem, as well as the members

and spouses of the 1958 Student Council of the former PU for CHE, of which Mr de Klerk was the Vice-Chairperson.

"The establishment of the NWU as a new-generation university 10 years after the first democratic elections in 1994 is in line with the vision that Mr FW de Klerk shared with the nation in his historic parliamentary speech in 1990," Dr Theuns Eloff, NWU Vice-Chancellor, said at the opening. The exhibition is made up of memorabilia donated to the University by Mr de Klerk, depicting various aspects of his renowned career.



At the opening of the exhibition are from left Prof Francois Venter, Dean: Faculty of Law, Potchefstroom Campus, Dr Leon Wessels, SA Human Rights Commission, Prof Johan Rost, Executive Director: Finance and Facilities, Institutional Management, and Prof Esté Vorster, Director: Centre of Excellence for Nutrition, Faculty of Health Sciences, Potchefstroom Campus.

The De Klerk family's association with the NWU:

- The Rev WJ de Klerk, Mr FW de Klerk's grandfather, was the first registrar of the Potchefstroom University College from 1919 to 1927.
- Mr de Klerk's father, Senator Jan de Klerk, studied at the PU for CHE, and served as Chancellor from 1962 to 1979. Mr de Klerk's older brother Mr Willem (Wimpie) de Klerk also studied here and later became a professor at this campus, a post he held from 1965 to 1973.
- Mr de Klerk himself was a student here during the 1950s, and graduated in 1958 with an LLB degree. According to him, he was not one of the most diligent students on campus. "I think that many of my lecturers were later surprised to see how I turned out," Mr de Klerk remarked smilingly.
- In his final year, 1958, he was Vice-Chairperson of the Student Council. Many years later, from 1992 to 1998, he served as Chancellor of the PU for CHE.

NWU leads with records management

Among higher education institutions in South Africa, the NWU is the undisputed leader in records management.

This was again confirmed when the Department of Education (DoE) invited Ms Amanda van der Merwe, Records Manager of the NWU, to present a records management workshop for 27 delegates from other higher education institutions.

The DoE 'discovered' Ms Van der Merwe, who is also the Manager: Institutional Administration of the NWU, when she attended its workshops on electronic document management during 2007 and 2008.

At these workshops, aimed at experts

in information technology and records management, Ms Van der Merwe was requested to deliver presentations based on the progress made and knowledge gained during the implementation of records management at the NWU.

Her presentations were extremely well received by the other universities represented and they then requested Ms Van der Merwe to present records management workshops for them. The reason is that there is a great need for training in the field of records management but

accredited training is not widely available.

The first workshop, held on 2 and 3 December 2008 at the University of Pretoria, generated third-stream income of more than R30 000 for the NWU.

"In March 2009 we will present the same workshop at the University of the Free State and the University of KwaZulu-Natal. This will generate further income of approximately R30 000 for the NWU," says Ms Van der Merwe.

In another development stemming from the December workshop, the NWU was approached by the Library and Information Association of South Africa to present the workshop at their conference in May 2009.

Sign up for the NWU Convocation

World-wide, the Convocation is an important structure in the governance of universities. At the NWU, the Convocation plays a key role in upholding the University's reputation for excellence. Eish! asked Ms Izette Schouwstra, Manager: Convocation Affairs in the office of the Institutional Registrar, a few questions about the Convocation.

What is the Convocation and how does it differ from alumni groups?

The Convocation comprises more than only the alumni. It consists of not only every person who has graduated with a degree or diploma from the University or its predecessors, but also the current permanent staff members of the institution.

What does the Convocation do?

The Convocation links its members to the University, to the ongoing benefit of the institution and current and future Convocation members. It aims to promote the University's image and safeguard its traditions and interests. Members vote for the Standing Committee (Exco), which

elects the Convocation's representatives on the University Council. The Exco also encourages cooperation among members, administers the Convocation and works closely with Management on various matters.

Why should I join the Convocation?

Helen Keller once said: "Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much." By joining the Convocation you can help to shape the University as an intellectual flagship for the country and the continent. The University is what it is because of the people who support it, including yourself.

How can I become a member of the Convocation?

If you are not a member yet, you can complete a membership form and pay your one-off membership fee of R50. The application form is available on our website at <http://www.nwu.ac.za/hsc/Secretariat/Convocation/index.html>. Send your completed form and proof of payment to Izette Schouwstra, Internal mail box 449, NWU. If you are unsure of your membership status, please send me an e-mail for confirmation.



Ms Izette Schouwstra

Current Council members designated by the Convocation



Mr Flip Buys



Dr Fritz Kok



Adv Jan Henning, SC



Prof Laetitia van Dyk

They're going the extra mile ... a lot of extra miles

In the previous Eish! we asked our readers to nominate fellow employees who are willing to go that extra mile. The contributions received so far show not only that many in the NWU community go out of their way to render excellent service, but also that their diligence is noticed and appreciated by their colleagues.

In this edition we would like to share some examples with you:

Mr Zander Lindeque of the Department Biochemistry, School for Physical and Chemical Sciences on the Potchefstroom Campus, and Mr Cobus Steenkamp of the Institutional Project Office believes that the **NWU Wellness team**, comprising **Mss Ina van der Watt, Anne Freeke** and **Jo-Anne Lindeque**, never hesitates



Mss Ina van der Watt (seated in front), Anne Freeke (left) and Jo-Anne Lindeque (right).

to go countless extra miles.

"Their prompt response to enquiries, the numerous projects that they run, the nicely decorated venues and the refreshments for external guests such as the blood donation teams reflect not only their hard work, but also their passion and dedication.

"Before the inter-campus social days they often work throughout the night, until the early morning hours. They always bend over backwards to accommodate people, for instance those with late bookings for projects. They stay calm and friendly, even in the face of undeserved criticism."

Yolande Bechaz from the office of the Financial Director in the Institutional Office would like to nominate **Mr Andrew Fouche (jr)** of IM Financial Administration.



Mr Andrew Fouche (jr).

"Andrew really went out of his way to obtain all the right furniture for us in the C1 building. He is also very helpful with regard to the Oracle financial system. No problem is too big or too small – your case is always very important to him. Believe me, it is

worth your while to learn his extension number by heart!"

Ms Lynette Tolmay from Protection Services on the Potchefstroom Campus would like to nominate **Mr Riaan Cremer**, also from Protection Services.



Mr Riaan Cremer.

"Riaan is our training officer – he offers security training and last year he started with weapons training too. He has an excellent ability to transfer his knowledge to course attendees and is always friendly and helpful. He liaises

well with internal and external stakeholders and demonstrates sound judgement. The security training that he offers to learners at the Wilge School shows his dedication to community service."

Ms Susan van Rooyen, Acting Manager: Marketing and Communications, Mafikeng Campus, believes that



Ms Zandile Bingo.

Ms Zandile Bingo from the Graduate School of Business of the Faculty of Commerce and Administration of that campus went the extra mile when she kept a level head during a challenging interview with the presenter of Highveld

Stereo's early morning programme, *Rude Awakenings*, in February this year.

"When confronted by the presenter, 'Wackhead', about the message on the customer care answering service at the Mafikeng Campus, her witty replies ensured that the image of the University remained unscathed, and resulted in her having the last laugh."



Ms Gloria Gopane.

Prof Reinford Khumalo, Dean of the Faculty of Commerce and Administration at the Mafikeng Campus, would like to nominate his secretary, **Ms Gloria Gopane**. "She is well-organised, punctual, and cheerful. She often goes the extra

mile by doing a messenger's work when our messenger is not available - and she does this without ever complaining."



Ms Anna-Marie vd Elst

MsSuneliaRietkerk of Student Accounts on the Vaal Triangle Campus would like to see **Ms Anna-Marie van der Elst**, Manager: Finances on the same campus, being recognised for her dedication.

"She does far more than her fair share: she not only goes out of her way to assist students and colleagues, but is the best boss that I have ever worked for. She is ALWAYS available to the people in her division and supports us in our work and also personally."

Ms Monica Mampone from Financial Support Services also believes that Ms van der Elst renders excellent service, especially with regard to student registrations. "She even works during weekends and after hours to make sure that everything is done in time."

Ms Mari-Leigh Pienaar of the School of Languages, Faculty of Humanities on the Vaal Triangle Campus, believes that



Ms Christine van Aardt.

Ms Christine van Aardt, a secretary at this school, deserves acknowledgement for, among others, the professional way in which she assists students.

"She is always helpful and if she doesn't know what to do, she finds out - she never sends them away to manage on their own."

An exceptional example of going the extra mile was when Ms Pienaar had car trouble and Ms van Aardt did not hesitate to fetch her at home to ensure that she was in time for her classes.

Ms Chanél Boshoff, also from the School of Languages, agrees wholeheartedly.

"I have witnessed how Christine stays calm, even under stressful circumstances. Even when she is busy on the computer, with five people waiting for her, she answers the telephone calmly: 'Good day, School of Languages, Christine speaking...' and then gives the caller her full attention."

NWU welcomes more than 5 000 first-year students

The NWU welcomed 5 059 first-year students on the different campuses this year, which is approximately 3,3% more than the 2008 intake.

At the Potchefstroom Campus, 3 190 applicants were accepted, while the Mafikeng Campus admitted 907 first-year students. The Vaal Triangle Campus welcomed a record number of 962 first years.

In his speech to the Vaal Triangle students and their parents the Vice-Chancellor, Dr Theuns Eloff, focused on the University as an important role player in higher education in South Africa. He also said that the University could now finally close the chapter on the merger and go forward with confidence.



Dr Theuns Eloff, NWU Vice-Chancellor, was present when Prof Piet Prinsloo, Rector of the Vaal Triangle Campus, welcomed the first-year students on 23 January 2009. Pictured here are Dr Eloff, a few first-year students, Prof Prinsloo (back row, right) and Mr Siphwe Mbata, Chairperson of the Campus Student Representative Council (back row, second from left).

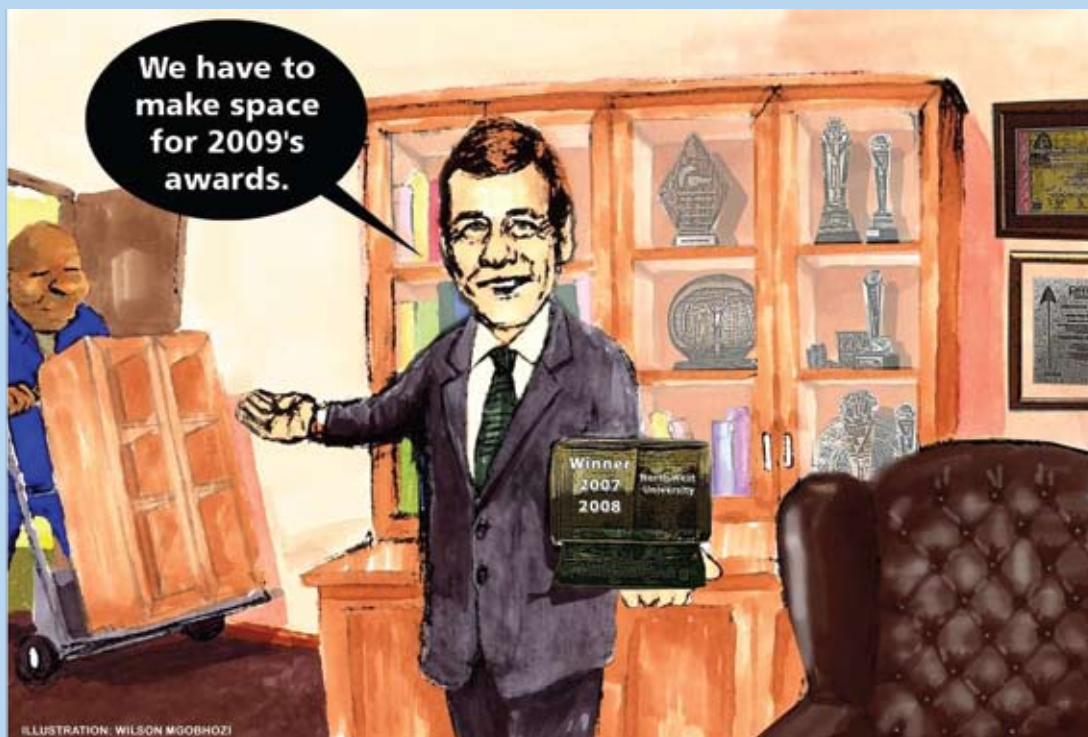


Dr Theuns Eloff, Vice-Chancellor with two of the first-year students who were welcomed on the Mafikeng Campus on 26 January 2009.



Photograph: Potchefstroom Herald

Prof Annette Combrink, Rector of the Potchefstroom Campus, addresses the estimated 12 000 people who visited this campus when the first-year students were welcomed on 17 January 2009.



The NWU received several accolades during 2008 and will continue to reach greater heights, demonstrating our drive to become a leading university in Africa and beyond.

Institutional
Office

Mafikeng
Campus

Potchefstroom
Campus

Vaal Triangle
Campus



Thank you
to all NWU personnel
for your
continuous support

- * The university contributing the most towards multilingualism and nation building - *Pan South African Language Board, 2008*
- * The best governed university in South Africa - *PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2008*
- * The most innovative university in South Africa - *Innovation Fund of the Department of Science and Technology, 2008*
- * A healthy financial surplus was again achieved in 2008, with an increase in tuition fees of only 9% on average
- * Successful conclusion of the 2008 academic year on all campuses
- * Research output grew by 36,8% since 2004, with 11% of the permanent academic staff being National Research Foundation rated researchers

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