

# eish!



NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY  
YUNIBESITI YA BOKONE-BOPHIRIMA  
NOORDWES-UNIVERSITEIT

Staff newsletter for the NWU

VOLUME 4 No 7 December 2010

*Read this!*

**3** Students vote,  
lecturers win

**7** Electricity consumption:  
shocking!

**8** For him, quality  
is essential

*Prof Heilna du Plooy's research into the science of stories got her the award for Most Productive Senior Researcher of the Year (2009). This literary figure and well-known poet is a lecturer at the School of Languages in the Faculty of Arts on the Potchefstroom Campus. On p4 and 5, you can read more about the gala ceremony where she and other NWU staff members were honoured.*

**She knows  
her stuff**



*Dear colleagues*

The Soccer World Cup is long gone and the year 2010 is almost over. Now that the last of the exam papers are being finalised, we can once again look back with gratitude on a very successful and stable academic year.

In this edition, you can read more about our top researchers and the good work done by lecturers in the classroom. It is very evident to me that our mission is being embodied in a balanced manner.

The year had many highlights. In a nutshell: with the help of all members of staff, we have been successfully establishing the unique NWU brand and image.

Let me illustrate how we have set the pace in the past year:

- In March, the NWU held a transformation colloquium – before anyone else in the sector – which allowed for frank and constructive debate.
- In June, we received a very positive HEQC Report following 2009’s quality audit, which confirms that we have enough quality improvement processes in place.
- Our teaching-learning is among the top five in terms of throughput rate and we have the second highest graduation rate in South Africa.
- Our total research output for 2009 places us among the top six or seven in the country and we received the most THRIP grants in South Africa.
- With our innovations, patents and community service we undoubtedly rank among the top three universities in the country.

- 2010 and 2011 saw infrastructure development and macro maintenance projects amounting to almost R300 million.
- We received the award for the best-governed institution for the fourth consecutive year.
- Based on our achievements, the NWU with its three campuses is probably the most balanced institution in terms of student sport, culture and overall student experience.

In short, the NWU is being increasingly successful in becoming nationally relevant and in making a big and diverse contribution!

Colleagues, thank you for your hard work and loyalty during the past year.

You can be sure that 2011 will bring new challenges – therefore I trust that all of you will enjoy a well-deserved holiday and that you and your loved ones will have a peaceful time, especially over Christmas.

*James Cloff*

## Eish! the year’s almost over!

It’s upon us: the end of 2010, the year in which South Africa surprised the world (and probably itself) with a successful Soccer World Cup.

The NWU also had a particularly good year – read about the lecturers who received Rapport Prizes for Inspiring Teaching (p3) and those who excelled in the field of research, innovation and community engagement (p4 and 5).

The well-known American ethnologist, Margaret Mead, once said: “Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”

Likewise, one enthusiastic lecturer giving an inspiring lecture, and one committed scientist applying his or her research or inventions to the benefit of humanity, can positively affect the lives of many people.

However, it’s not just in this edition that we

felt the justifiable need to boast about NWU staff – we also did that in the previous six 2010 editions of Eish! Paging through these editions, words such as ‘bravo’ and ‘well done’ just seem to pop into your head.

To explore the topic of environmental sustainability, we spoke with Physical Infrastructure and Planning about the NWU’s electricity consumption. We are also planning a greener approach for next year – look out for details in the next few editions of Eish!

The School of Continuing Teacher Education is taking the lead in their pursuit of quality – on p13 you can read about the growth in distance education.

The winners of the competition in edition six will be announced in the first edition of 2011.

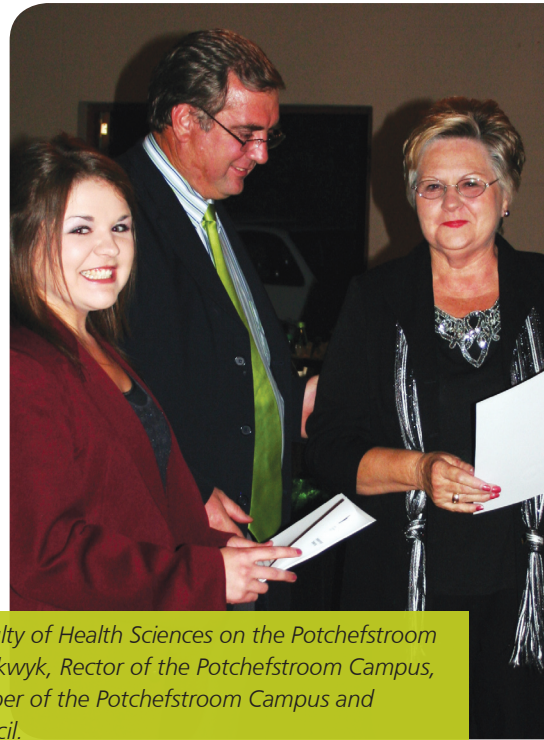
And that’s that, colleagues. Enjoy the last bit of the year. Eish! wishes everybody a merry Christmas and a

prosperous New Year. We hope that all of you will return with renewed enthusiasm and vigour for another exciting year at the NWU.

Regards  
*Marelize & Nelia*



# R50 000 each for inspiring lecturers



The runners-up in each NWU faculty received certificates of merit. This information is available on the NWU webpage at News > Press Releases.

The competition, conducted by the campus student representative councils, will become an annual event.

*Dr Adrie Roux (right) is the winner of the Faculty of Health Sciences on the Potchefstroom Campus. With her are Prof Herman van Schalkwyk, Rector of the Potchefstroom Campus, and Ms Danel Benade, Student Council member of the Potchefstroom Campus and Chairperson of the Campus's Academic Council.*

It's only when you are passionate and motivated yourself that you can inspire others to develop their full potential.

And it is thanks to their passion and motivation that 15 NWU lecturers recently won the Rapport Awards for Inspiring Teaching to the value of R50 000 each.

The most inspiring lecturers on the three campuses – one in each faculty – were chosen for the first time in the history of the NWU after students voted for them by SMS on 20 October 2010.

These awards, sponsored by the Sunday newspaper, Rapport, were presented during gala ceremonies on each campus.

## THEY ARE THE WINNERS

Mafikeng lecturers who received awards are Ms Janet Hanna, (Commerce and Administration), Dr Freddy Khunou, (Law), Ms Myrtle Erasmus (Education Science), Dr Oziniel Ruzvidzo, (Agriculture, Science and Technology), and Dr Nomonde Phetlho-Thekisho (Human and Social Sciences).

The winners on the Potchefstroom Campus are Ms Sophia Kapp (Arts), Prof Ernst Breet (Natural Sciences), Mr Albert Coetsee (Theology), Ms Elize Harris (Educational Sciences), Prof Anél du Plessis (Law), Mr Dawie Mong (Economic and Management Sciences), Mr Henri Marais (Engineering) and Dr Adrie Roux (Health Sciences).

Ms Madeleine Groenewald (Economic Sciences and Information Technology) and Dr Hanneltjie Meintjies (Humanities) were announced the winners of the Vaal Triangle Campus.



*The Vaal Triangle Campus's faculty winners are Ms Madeleine Groenewald (left) from Economic Sciences and Information Technology and Dr Hanneltjie Meintjies (right) from Humanities. They are flanking Prof Thanyani Mariba, Rector of the Vaal Triangle Campus and Ms Liza Albrecht, Editor of Rapport.*

## MONEY USED FOR DEVELOPMENT

As in the case of the NWU's annual Institutional Awards for Teaching Excellence, the winners' prize money is also paid into the University's staff development fund, which can be used for professional development.



*On the Mafikeng Campus, five lecturers received awards. From left to right are Mr Mwanawina Ilyayambwa, President of the Mafikeng Campus's Representative Student Council, Ms Janet Hanna, winner: Commerce and Administration, Prof Marlene Verhoef, Advisor: Office of the Vice-Chancellor, Dr Freddy Khunou, winner: Law, Ms Anastasia de Vries, Rapport, Ms Myrtle Erasmus, winner: Education Science, Dr Oziniel Ruzvidzo, winner: Agriculture, Science and Technology, Prof Dan Kgwadi, Rector: Mafikeng Campus, and Dr Nomonde Phetlho-Thekisho, winner: Human and Social Sciences.*

# What an evening!

On 29 October 2010, at a gala event in Potchefstroom, scores of NWU staff members were honoured for their hard work in the field of research, innovation and community engagement.

Prof Heilna du Plooy from the School of Languages in the Faculty of Arts on the Potchefstroom Campus was announced Most Productive Researcher of the Year (2009).

Her research is mainly about literary narratology, which is the science of stories or the theory of storytelling.

In 2009, their unit, the Unit for Languages and Literature in the South African Context, did research specifically into themes such as identity and space in literature.

The award for Most Productive Junior Researcher of the Year (2009) goes to Prof Du Toit Loots from the School of Physical and Chemical Sciences in the Faculty of Natural Sciences on the Potchefstroom Campus.

His current research focus is the discovery of new applications of metabolomics technology. This involves using state-of-the-art analytical equipment in conjunction with bioinformatics for better disease characterisation, novel disease biomarker identification and disease diagnosis.

Although he is currently using metabolomics for tuberculosis and HIV research, he has experience in using similar research approaches for studying congenital errors of metabolism, diabetes, neurodegenerative disorders, metabolic syndrome, micro-nutrient deficiencies and alcoholism.

The Most Productive Research Entity of the Year is the Unit for Reformed Theology and the Development of the South African Society. This Unit is part of the Faculty of Theology on the Potchefstroom Campus, with Prof Francois Viljoen as Director.

Twenty-three staff members who were either rated or rerated by the National



*The Centre for Animal Health on the Mafikeng Campus received an award for their involvement in the community. Here Prof Thanyani Mariba (right), Rector of the Vaal Triangle Campus presents it to Prof Blessing Dzoma (left), who received it on behalf of the Centre.*

Research Foundation in 2009 were also honoured. Of these, 11 were new ratings.

## CREATIVITY REWARDED

Several people were recognised for their visual, performing or creative writing output during 2009. Two of them are writers in the Faculty of Arts on the Potchefstroom Campus: Prof Hans du Plessis, Director: ATKV School for Creative Writing and Ms Sophia Kapp from the School of Languages.

The other staff members who were rewarded for their creative output are Mr Richardt Strydom from the School of Graphic Design and Mr Steven Bosch from the School of Communication Studies, both from the Potchefstroom Campus.



*Prof Du Toit Loots (left) from the School of Physical and Chemical Sciences in the Faculty of Natural Sciences on the Potchefstroom Campus, is the Most Productive Junior Researcher of the Year. With him are Prof Linda du Plessis, Vice-Rector: Academic, Quality and Planning, Vaal Triangle Campus and Prof Frikkie van Niekerk, Executive Director: Research and Innovation.*

## Innovative spirit helps them triumph

Innovation is highly regarded at the NWU – as is clear from the University's pay-off line: Innovation through diversity. At the function, several innovative staff members were honoured.

The following NWU staff members received certificates of honour for their contribution towards enhancing the University's Intellectual Property portfolio:

### MORE THAN ONE PATENT EACH:

- Mr Barend Visser (five patents, Centre of Excellence for Space Physics)
- Prof Okkie de Jager (three patents, Centre of Excellence for Space Physics)
- Prof Leon van Rensburg (two patents, Unit for Environmental Sciences and Management)
- Prof Anne Grobler (two patents, School of Pharmacy)

### ONE PATENT EACH:

- Prof Esté Vorster (Centre of Excellence for Nutrition)
- Mr Attie Jonker (School of Mechanical Engineering)
- Mr Johan Bosman (School of Mechanical Engineering)

- Prof Awie Kotzé (School of Pharmacy)

All of these staff members are from the Potchefstroom Campus.

Mr Frans Kruger from the Institutional Legal Office received a special certificate of honour in recognition of his role in managing this portfolio.

### INNOVATORS AND INVENTORS EXCEL

The following staff members or groups received awards for innovations:

- Prof Okkie de Jager (Top inventor)
- Mr Barend Visser (Top inventor)
- Prof Leon van Rensburg (Recognition as inventor)
- Ms Ulrike Janke, Centre for Text Technology (CTexT) (Top technology inventor)
- The Physics application group: Mr Barend Visser (Recognition as technology inventor)
- The Institutional Language Directorate: Ms Anneliese Beukes (Improvement of NWU management system, process or performance).

## THEY SERVE THE COMMUNITY

NWU staff and students are currently involved in more than 200 community projects.

The following centres, projects and individuals received awards for their developmental role in the community:

- Centre for Community Law, Mafikeng Campus, for providing legal services to the community.
- Centre for Animal Health Studies, Mafikeng Campus, for providing animal health services to the community.
- Dr Mbuthi Hlophe, Department of Chemistry, Faculty of Agriculture, Science and Technology, Mafikeng Campus, for providing clean water to the community of Madibogo.
- Ikateleng Project on all three campuses, for providing supplemental instruction to learners and teachers.
- Prof Leon van Rensburg, Unit for Environmental Sciences and Management, for the Monontsha Project at the Impala Platinum Mine near Rustenburg.
- Prof Japie Kroon, Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences, Potchefstroom Campus, for his support to the Students in Free Enterprise (SIFE) Programme.
- Prof Annamarie Kruger, Director: Africa Unit for Transdisciplinary Health Research (AUTHeR), Potchefstroom Campus, for her involvement in the Farm Labour and General Health (FLAGH) Project.

Those who make available their knowledge and skills through participation in international organisations, institutions and committees were also honoured:

- Prof Marius Potgieter, School of Physical and Chemical Sciences, Faculty of Natural Sciences, Potchefstroom Campus.
- Prof Harm Moraal, School of Physical and Chemical Sciences, Faculty of Natural Sciences, Potchefstroom Campus.
- Prof Minrie Greef, Africa Unit for Transdisciplinary Health Research (AUTHeR), Potchefstroom Campus.
- Prof Justus Roux, Unit for Languages and Literature in the South African Context, Potchefstroom Campus
- Prof Bertus van Rooy, School of Languages, Faculty of Humanities, Vaal Triangle Campus.



Two writers in the Faculty of Arts on the Potchefstroom Campus, Ms Sophia Kapp from the School of Languages (second from left) and Prof Hans du Plessis from the ATKV School for Creative Writing (second from right), were honoured for their creative output in 2009. With them are Prof Jan Swanepoel, Dean of the Faculty of Arts (left) and Prof Hein Viljoen, Director: Unit for Languages and Literature in the South African Context (right).



As part of their 30-year celebrations, staff and students from the Mafikeng Campus marched through the city. They displayed 21 countries' flags – one flag for each country from which there are students on the Campus.



Mr Mwanawina Ilyayambwa, Chairperson of the Student Representative Council (left), presents Dr Lucas Mangope, founding member of the University of Bophuthatswana (right), with a commemorative book. He also received a Leopard Award from Prof Dan Kgwadi, Rector: Mafikeng Campus (centre).

# 30 years celebrated with great fanfare

## They painted Mafikeng BLUE

Everybody – staff members, students, alumni and the community of Mafikeng – participated in the 30-year celebrations of the Mafikeng Campus.

The celebrations started when the Campus opened on 10 February 2010 and reached a high point in October.

### MUSCLE POWER AND CULTURE

On Wednesday, 6 October, staff and students took part in a fun run and then in a march through the city.

Thursday, 7 October was a day filled with fun and culture for the students, with performances by poets, traditional dancers, a hip-hop artist and the campus choir.

Staff and students also competed on the soccer field. The old-timers suffered defeat at the hands of the students – including when Management and the Campus Student Representative Council took each other on.

### RECOGNITION FOR CONTRIBUTION

On Friday, 8 October, Dr Lucas Mangope, founding member of the former University of Bophuthatswana,\* delivered a lecture on the Campus. "In the seventies, when we first started to talk about our dream, many people simply dismissed it as a joke. At the time, few people could envisage such a prestigious place for scholars in Mafikeng," he said.

During that event, Prof Dan Kgwadi, Rector of the Mafikeng Campus, presented Dr Lucas with a Leopard Award in recognition of his huge contribution to the establishment and development of the University.

That same evening, at a gala event for alumni, Prof Dan presented six more Leopard Awards to individuals who have made outstanding contributions to the University or their communities:

- **Mr Sebastian Mahila** and **Dr John Tau** – Founding members of the University of Bophuthatswana.

- **Justice Yvonne Mokgoro** – Alumnus: Former University of Bophuthatswana (BJuris, 1982 and LLB, 1987) and lecturer: Faculty of Law, until 1991. At present: Chairperson of the South African Law Commission and a judge of the Constitutional Court.
- **Ms Naledi Pandor** – Lecturer: English, 1986-1989, University of Bophuthatswana. At present: Minister of Science and Technology.
- **Mr Michael Morake Rabanye** – Alumnus: University of Bophuthatswana. Attorney and famous musician. (Mr Rabanye was ill and could not receive his award in person – he passed away three days later.)
- **Mr Gaba Tabane** – Alumnus: University of Bophuthatswana and later the University of North West (BCom, 1994 and BCom(Hons), 1996). Lecturer: 1996-1999. At present: Director at Deloitte.

\* The University of Bophuthatswana was a precursor to the University of North West, which became part of the North-West University through the merger in 2004.

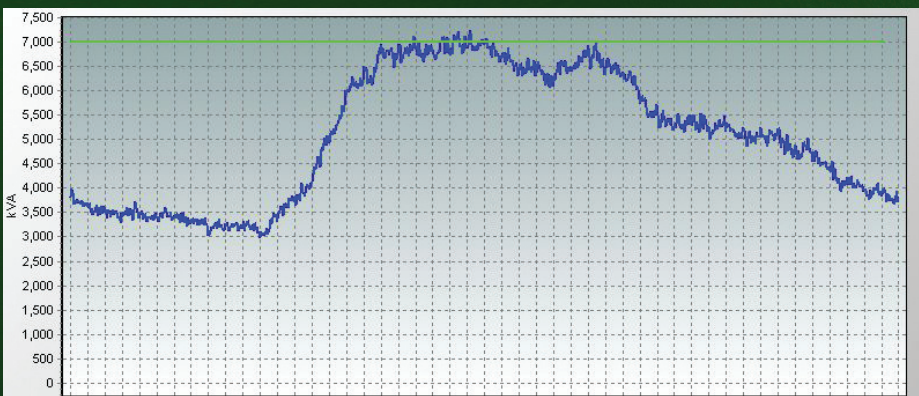
# You can manage what you can measure

With the current electricity crisis in South Africa, saving power has become an important topic. *Eish!* asked Ms Liesel van Wyk, Section Head; Mr Christo de Beer, Technician and Mr Hendrik Esterhuizen, Engineer about the steps that the University is taking to monitor and measure electricity usage. ("Meet en weet" is an Afrikaans term that means "measure to know".)

The University's municipal electricity bill is approximately R2,4 million a month, and the NWU currently uses approximately 9 to 10 MVA (Million Volt-Amperes) of electricity. (In winter, this rises to between 12 and 13 MVA.)

This bill is calculated differently than for a private household. The municipality charges three tariffs: standard, peak and off-peak, which means that electricity is more expensive during certain hours of the day. The NWU pays per standard unit, but an immediate maximum consumption charge is also added.

The electricity consumption for campus x during month y is shown by the following graph:



The peak of campus x's electricity consumption for month y is approximately 7 250 MVA. The electricity bill is calculated by adding up the total electricity consumption (the part below the line on the graph) and the penalty on 7 250 MVA.

Monitoring and measuring electricity consumption across the University is no easy task, and that is where the load management strategy – meaning to manage electricity consumption effectively and innovatively – comes in.

One of the aims of the load management strategy is to reduce the electricity consumption peak and, in this way, to lower the associated cost.

## THE 'MEET EN WEET' OFFICE

The 'Meet en Weet' Office of the Department of Physical Infrastructure and Planning (PIP) is the nerve centre where anything to do with electricity consumption is monitored, analysed and controlled.

What makes this office so special is that with the push of a button you can see how much electricity is used at a particular point in time by the four different business units of the NWU.

This 'intelligence room' knows exactly how much electricity is used in each building. Most electrical appliances such as air conditioners, heaters, hot water systems and emergency power supply can also be controlled from here.

Prof Johan Delpont, consulting engineer at the National Energy Regulator of South Africa (NERSA) is very impressed by this system and believes it to be one of the best in the country.

## LOAD MANAGEMENT A WAY OF LIFE

Electricity saving, sustainability and the load management strategy is a way of life, according to Hendrik Esterhuizen, Engineer at "Meet en Weet". "There is no short-term plan to quickly save electricity, only to return to our old way of life. We have to realise that we need to implement a lifestyle change and live greener," he says.

PIP is applying the load management strategy in a very practical way. For instance, the hot

water systems in the campus residences are controlled during the day to keep the electricity consumption peak as low as possible.

All four business units use energy-saving light bulbs, load switches have been installed on all geysers and heaters, and special shower heads are being used in the residences, resulting in a 25% saving on hot water.

## PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

The PIP team members have many ideas for the future. More and better load management mechanisms are being planned and researched. They are also planning an awareness campaign for next year.

## MORE ABOUT EMERGENCY POWER:

The Institutional Office, Potchefstroom and Vaal Triangle Campus already have emergency power systems in place and the Mafikeng Campus's system should be installed by January 2011.

These systems vary in size:

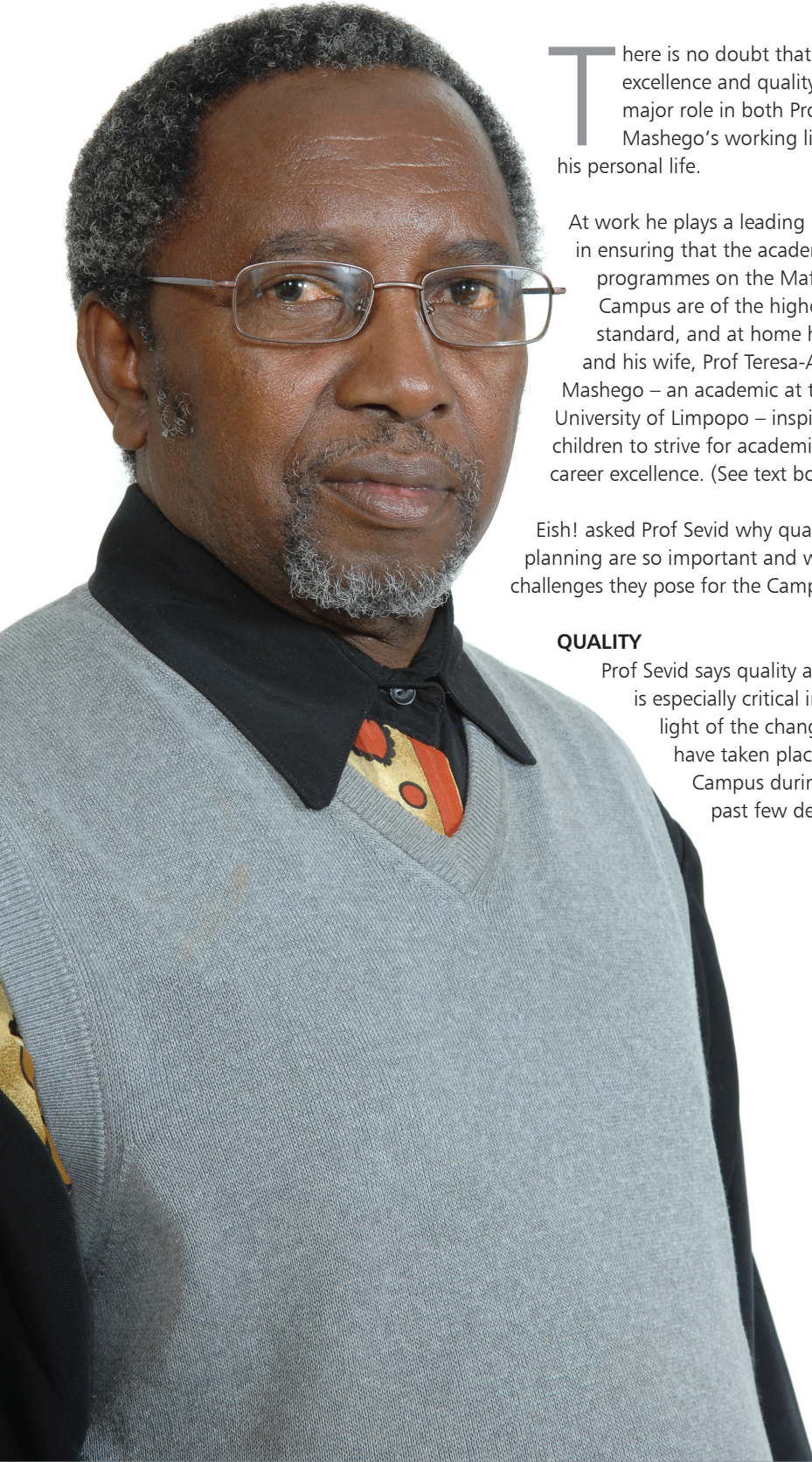
- Institutional Office: 0,8 MVA
- Mafikeng Campus: 3,3 MVA
- Potchefstroom Campus: 6,6 MVA
- Vaal Triangle Campus: 1,7 MVA

The biggest system on the Potchefstroom Campus uses approximately 1 000 litres of diesel per hour. If such a system runs for 24 hours, it costs a whopping R192 000.



# For him, *quality is a way of life*

*In our ongoing series on the Vice-Rectors of the NWU, we feature Prof Sevid Mashego, Vice-Rector: Planning and Quality on the Mafikeng Campus, in this edition of Eish!*



**T**here is no doubt that excellence and quality play a major role in both Prof Sevid Mashego's working life and his personal life.

At work he plays a leading role in ensuring that the academic programmes on the Mafikeng Campus are of the highest standard, and at home he and his wife, Prof Teresa-Anne Mashego – an academic at the University of Limpopo – inspire their children to strive for academic and career excellence. (See text box.)

Eish! asked Prof Sevid why quality and planning are so important and what challenges they pose for the Campus.

## **QUALITY**

Prof Sevid says quality assurance is especially critical in the light of the changes that have taken place on the Campus during the past few decades.

The Mafikeng Campus started out as the University of Bophuthatswana (UNIBO) in 1980, mainly offering four-year professional degree programmes. Most of these programmes changed to three-year basic degree programmes in 1994 when the University was incorporated into the South African university system and it became the University of the North-West.

After the merger in 2004, the University became a campus of the North-West University.

"Taking these changes into consideration, it is important that the programmes, subjects in programmes and the support services be subjected to quality assurance processes and procedures," says Prof Sevid.

"This should be done to address any quality assurance shortcomings that might have unintentionally crept into the academic offerings. By improving the quality of our academic offerings, we also improve the quality of our graduates," he says.

## **CHALLENGES: QUALITY**

The quality assurance process poses a few challenges, as the coordination of quality assurance activities only started on the Campus after the merger in 2004 and are therefore relatively new.

"One of our biggest challenges is to get staff members to consistently apply quality assurance principles in their daily activities and managers to be held accountable."

He also believes NWU employees should participate in the preparation of self-evaluation reports and improvement plans.

## **PLANNING**

In addition to quality, Prof Sevid holds the reins with regard to planning on the Mafikeng Campus.

"Initially the Campus was designed to accommodate approximately 6 000





The Mashego family are from left Prof Sevid Mashego, Vice-Rector: Quality and Planning, Mafikeng Campus, his youngest son, Lebogang, his daughter, Keitumetse, his eldest son, Thoriso and his wife, Prof Teresa-Anne Mashego.

students. However, we are now planning for steady growth to a maximum of 10 000 students by the year 2015. To make provision for this growth, we also have to extend the facilities and human resource capacity," he says.

#### CHALLENGES: PLANNING

Prof Sevid says the biggest planning challenge is that managers often fail to submit the needs of the various departments in time.

"This could be due to a lack of skills, probably coupled with the inability by some managers to properly use the management information system. This means that keeping to deadlines is problematic."

He also believes that there is a need for the development of a culture of planning on the Campus.

#### DREAMS FOR THE CAMPUS

Prof Sevid has many dreams for the Mafikeng Campus. In the short term, he would like the 2011 registration process to go smoothly and to see that the Campus enrolls high-quality first-time entrants.

In the long term, he would like to see the Campus boasting enough facilities with state-of-the-art equipment, highly qualified academic staff, a high research output, and more self-generated, third-stream income.

### *They love to learn*

For the Mashego family, tertiary education is as important as breathing is to others. Prof Sevid holds an MSc (cum laude) and a PhD in Zoology (University of Limpopo). His wife, Prof Teresa-Anne Mashego, has two master's degrees – one in Educational Psychology (University of Massachusetts, USA) and one in Clinical Psychology (University of Zululand). She also holds a PhD from the University of Limpopo. Their eldest son, Thoriso, holds an MBChB degree (University of KwaZulu-Natal) and is currently a medical doctor in Cape Town. Their daughter, Keitumetse, holds an MSc (University of Limpopo) and is presently registered for an MBA (Tshwane University of Technology). Until last month she was a lecturer at Monash University in Australia and is now in private practice as a clinical psychologist. Their youngest son, Lebogang, is in his final year of a BSc degree (Chemical Engineering, University of KwaZulu-Natal).

**BAPTISM OF FIRE** – Prof Sevid recalls the following amusing incident: "In 2003, shortly after I started at the Mafikeng Campus, a group of demonstrating employees demanded an audience with the Vice-Chancellor. When they started marching to the office, we asked security to close the door on them. The group started pushing against the door, with the four security men pushing back. The door was ultimately ripped off its frames. The security men and the door were pushed towards the table where we were sitting and the demonstrators surrounded us. However, the security men kept clinging to the door, less concerned with what was happening around us. To me this was very funny – perhaps a baptism of fire!"

## In a nutshell

**Favourite food:** Goat stew

**Favourite film:** The Greatest Story Ever Told.

**Favourite wild animal:** Lion (also my totem animal)

**This makes me happy:** Achievement of goals that I have set for myself or were set for me.

**Interesting facts about me that most other people are not aware of:** My research for both my master's and doctoral degrees was on parasites on fish. Furthermore, I expressed my gratitude to those who played an important role in my academic development by naming new parasites after them. A doctoral student has also named two parasites after me – *Ductylogyrus sevidi* and *Dactoylogyrus mashegoensis* – in honour of my contributions in that field of study.

**Famous person I would like to have a conversation with and why:** I wish to meet President Barack Obama of the USA or any other powerful world leader to discuss opportunities for the education of underprivileged black children in South Africa.

**What I do for relaxation:** Listening to music, watching films or videos about wildlife, watching soccer, tennis, cricket and rugby on television, and playing golf.

**The most interesting place I have ever visited:** I spent three months doing research in Israel at the Sea of Galilee, Jordan Valley and at the Red Sea. I used that opportunity to tour the whole of Israel, especially the towns and areas associated with Jesus Christ. The cherry on top was when I floated in the Dead Sea. What an exciting feeling – just floating with no danger of drowning!



The Mafikeng Campus recently celebrated their 30th anniversary. Here, staff and students take to the streets for a march through the city. Read more on p3.

## Research Day for Faculty of Agriculture, Science and Technology

The Faculty of Agriculture, Science and Technology (FAST) recently held a Research Day at the Centre for Animal Health Studies. The theme of the day was "Science for a Developmental Economy."

The purpose of this event was to encourage students to present their research and to build a research culture within the Faculty to improve research output.

The main speaker of the day was Prof Edmund K Osae from the Department of Physics at the University of Ghana, whose field of research is Applied Nuclear Physics.

The topic of his lecture for the day was "The importance of nuclear energy in an energy mix for security and sustainable development of a country".

According to Prof Mashudu Maselesele, Dean of FAST, the Faculty has consistently improved its postgraduate output and research publications over the past two years.

"We have grown from 16,10 units in 2008 to 26,85 in 2009, of the total 32,31 units of the Mafikeng Campus. We are expecting more growth this year, and I am optimistic that we will continue to grow and improve the quality of our postgraduate supervision."

## Chemistry student receives Ogilvie Scholarship

Mr Lutendo Chester Murulana, a postgraduate student in the Chemistry Department in the Faculty of Agriculture, Science and Technology, recently received an Ivan Ogilvie Scholarship award from the Corrosion Institute of South Africa (CorriSa).

Chester received this award for his research entitled "Corrosion inhibition potential of imidazolium and pyridinium based ionic liquids on aluminium and mild steel in acidic environments".

His research aims to explore ways in which corrosion can be controlled by making use of ionic liquids as corrosion inhibitors. This is the first time this kind of research is being carried out in South Africa.

The study is one of many research projects being conducted in the research group of Prof Eno Ebenso (Head of Department and supervisor).

CorriSa collaborates with researchers and academics from different industrial sectors and higher education institutions and actively promotes research on corrosion and corrosion control.



Mr Chester Murulana, recipient of the Ivan Ogilvie Scholarship, is doing exciting research on corrosion.

## Students' robot sniffs out land mines

Two fourth-year students in Engineering on the Potchefstroom Campus, Mr Albert Sorgdrager and Mr Johan Pieterse, have just completed the prototype of their land mine tracking robot named Barnacle, which will possibly be used by the United Nations (UN).

This robot has the ability to locate land mines in a field hundreds of metres away, which completely removes the risk of injury to contemporary operators. "The robot is equipped with several filters. It drives around and picks up scent particles. The robot relays the filters to its operator, where it can then be

tested for the presence of explosives without the operator ever having encountered the danger of land mines," says Albert.

The research company, Mechem Denel, that provides the South African Defence Force with technology and is involved in the "demining" of land mine fields in countries such as Sudan and Afghanistan, contributed financially towards the development of this robot and has demonstrated huge interest in the Barnacle. "Mechem Denel said they would like to register the patent, after which it will possibly be tendered to the UN," says Albert.

## Unity in diversity

The School of Continuing Teacher Education (SCTE) has held another successful Diversity Day. Various staff members used this opportunity to share their traditions and cultures with each other and therefore embraced their slogan – unity in diversity.

Mr Bram Schouwstra, Head: Projects and Short Courses, took the audience to the Netherlands and proved some stereotypes to be far from the truth.

Other lecturers in the School also contributed, and Mr James Varughese told everyone about his traditionally arranged wedding in India. Mr Johan Nell also had a turn and shared

interesting facts about the Voortrekkers, for example the pliers used to make shoes comfortable for feet with bunions. With typical wit, Mr Aubrey Fransman portrayed a merry second New Year's celebration in the Cape and did an exceptionally interesting presentation about the heritage and traditions of Coloured people.

The negotiations for a traditional Tswana wedding were also portrayed; the two families involved in such a union were depicted with such accuracy and humour that everybody was in stitches.

A gourmet lunch comprising various traditional dishes brought the function to an end.



Bishop Desmond Tutu, FW de Klerk, Margaret Thatcher (the British Prime Minister at the time), Nelson Mandela and George (HW) Bush, will recognise themselves on one of the murals in the subway.

## Subway is 40 years old

This year marks the 40th anniversary of the tunnel underneath the railway line, which links the main campus (from the back of the main building) with the West Campus. The subway was constructed in 1970 for pedestrian traffic.

Every year during Rag, it has been the tradition of the Student Art Association of the Department of Fine Arts to paint a mural on the walls of the subway. These paintings, created by art students between 1974 and 1994, make the tunnel a unique part of the Campus.

The first painting, inspired by visions of Leonardo da Vinci's Last Supper, was painted during Rag of 1973. From 1974 onwards, the Rag theme was also the theme of the mural. Familiar faces started appearing, among them two former rectors, Prof Bingle (1974) and Prof Tjaart van der Walt (1991). Also featured are famous people such as Mike Schutte, Margaret Thatcher, Nelson Mandela, FW de Klerk and Bishop Desmond Tutu – and there's no shortage of Hollywood and cartoon characters.

Painting each year's mural was always a big event, and it was all done during the gruelling night before Rag. The third years planned the painting, the first and second years did the donkey work and the fourth years visited the site and made comments and recommendations.

The tradition of painting murals in the subway ended in 1994 when the Fine Arts Department was closed.



The staff members hung on to Mr Aubrey Fransman's every word during his presentation. In front is Aubrey, with Messrs Leon Danster, Nathaneal Friesling and Hilton Visagie in the back.



*The students donned traditional attire, representing the cultures of various countries and groups. This young lady represented the Xhosa culture.*

## Students display cultural diversity

The subject group Industrial Psychology has hosted a very successful "Diversity in the South African workplace" workshop.

According to Dr Leon Moolman, the co-ordinator of this event, the theme of the 2010 presentation mirrored the recent FIFA World Cup and therefore saw the postgraduate students representing the cultures of Uruguay, Spain, France, Germany, South Africa, Ghana and the Netherlands.

The workshop focused on diversity in the corporate sphere and how the increasingly competitive and globalised world economy has changed the face of organisations.

During the workshop, the challenge of managing cultural diversity within the workforce was illustrated through several role-play presentations. It became clear that the issues of cultural diversity generate highly charged emotions, which are often fuelled by variations in individual perceptions and interpretations.

The students portrayed the diversity of the South African workplace by wearing traditional attire, presenting cultural and tradition-based behaviour, and serving culturally inspired cuisine. This workshop is an annual event on the campus calendar and is regarded as one of the highlights of the honours programme in Industrial Psychology.

## Prof gets dollars from Google

Prof Etienne Barnard from the School of Information Technology has received a research grant of \$67 900 US from Google for his research project: "Voice search for under-resourced languages".

The award forms part of the Google Research Awards Programme. This programme supports academic research that improves access to information, and also aims to facilitate interaction between Google and academics and build partnerships with universities. Prof Etienne is very excited about the honour that this

award brings to the School. "The funding will allow us to engage a couple of bright students in the project, and is also going to open new doors for us in the international research community, where Google's excellence commands a lot of respect," he says.

According to Prof Etienne, they plan to investigate the application of voice search to provide spoken information access in the developing world. In layman's terms: anyone looking for information on the internet should be able to find it simply by talking on a cellphone! To achieve this

goal, a number of research challenges related to speech technology for under-resourced languages must be addressed. Most importantly, algorithms are required for the efficient creation of acoustic models and language models for such languages. Machine translation will also be utilised to make information available across language boundaries. The main goals of the project are to develop, implement and investigate such algorithms and to learn about several practical factors that will determine the utility of voice-search applications in the developing world.

## Vaal Triangle Campus boasts first women's cricket team

A group of talented women made sporting history on the Vaal Triangle Campus when they formed the first ever women's cricket team. The team plays in the Gauteng First Women's League and they took to the pitch for their first match on 16 October 2010.

According to the coach of the team, Ms Adri Olivier, they are motivated to do their best and become the overall winners in the League.

"The addition of the women's cricket team will increase the Campus' sport repertoire and create a competitive driving force," says Adri. At the moment the team consists of 20 players, of whom 16 are registered NWU students.

In the first round of the league, the team will come up against teams from Randburg, Delfos, Kagiso and the Vaal University of Technology (VUT).





*Dr Herman van Vuuren of the SCTE (left) with the first group of graduates who completed the Advanced Certificate in Education in School Leadership.*

# SCTE among the best in the world

In the past 15 years, the student numbers of the School of Continuing Teacher Education (SCTE) in the Faculty of Education Sciences on the Potchefstroom Campus have increased from 27 to 24 000. A motivated staff corps and the relentless pursuit of quality are the keys to their success.

## GROWTH

In 1995, there were only 27 distance students; now the SCTE has 24 000 students across South Africa and Namibia. The School has 350 accredited facilitators working with distance students at 35 study centres.

These centres are fully equipped and offer all the necessary resources and support to students, such as internet access and mini libraries. Interactive teaching as part of electronic learning also kicks off in 2011.

The School cooperates with the Open Learning Group as far as administration is concerned, and registration takes place throughout the year. All study materials are supplied to students, and contact classes are offered twice a month, as well as during vacation schools.

It's not just the student numbers that are growing. The SCTE is currently located in Building B11 but to make room for their 82 staff members, a new building is being constructed next door.

The School confers between 6 000 and 8 000 degrees and diplomas every year, and graduation ceremonies are held in Potchefstroom, Polokwane, Nelspruit,

Durban, George, East London, Windhoek and Odangwa.

## SUCCESSSES

Prof Manie Spamer, School Director, ascribes the School's successes to its dedicated staff who are always willing to go beyond the call of duty. "We are lucky to have staff who are willing to invest everything in their work. It is a pleasure to be working with such a devoted, enthusiastic team," he says.

The SCTE focuses on quality. A recent international audit panel (with members from Uganda, Australia, Britain and Belgium) found that the operation of the SCTE compares well with the best in the world. All academic programmes were also rated by other South African universities, and very positive feedback was received.

"It is very important for us to make a difference in education and to render a quality product," says Prof Manie. "The present economy and limited capacity of residential universities make it increasingly difficult for prospective students to afford full-time study on a university campus; distance education is the solution."

## DREAMS FOR THE FUTURE

Prof Manie foresees a future addition to the University – in the form of a distance education college to better equip prospective students for university study. The new points system, which requires teachers to attend a certain number of short courses within a three-year cycle, is another challenge that needs to be addressed.



*Student registration at the School of Continuing Teacher Education is always a hive of activity.*

The School of Continuing Teacher Education is responsible for the in-service training of under- and unqualified teachers, as well as for the further training of qualified teachers, by means of the following programmes:

- The National Professional Diploma in Education (NPDE) for teachers without a three-year teaching qualification but with at least five years' teaching experience.
- The Advanced Certificate in Education (ACE) for teachers with a three-year teaching qualification.
- The Honours Degree in Education (BEdHons) for teachers with a BEd or a four-year teaching qualification.
- BEd upgrade for graduate students to upgrade and supplement their diplomas.

According to Prof Manie, they are also currently investigating new teaching programmes that are structured according to the new education plan. These include the Advanced Certificate in Education, the Advanced Postgraduate Diploma and the three-year diploma.



MELANI NORTJE



KAONE GWAI



SUNA MEYER



HENDRA PRETORIUS



DANNYBOY MOLOTO



ELRIE BOTHA



DINÉ DU PREEZ



DANIE HEFER

# Walking the extra mile

*The end of the year is in sight, and we would like to use this opportunity to recognise NWU colleagues who are always willing to go the extra mile in doing their daily work.*

**Ms Melani Nortje**, assistant accountant of the Financial Administration Department in the Institutional Office, is someone who does not hesitate to help people. "She has a lot of work to do, but still manages to be friendly and helpful," says Ms Ilze Combrinck, secretary to Prof LJ Grobler in the School of Mechanical Engineering on the Potchefstroom Campus. "She receives a lot of enquiries that don't really have anything to do with her field, but never hesitates to help."

According to Ms Mamogale Tlholoe, a debtors' clerk in the Department of Finance on the Mafikeng Campus, **Mr Kaone Gwai**, a senior administrative officer from the same department, routinely takes the initiative to go the extra mile for his colleagues. "He has an incredible background at the University and wonderful administrative skills," says Mamogale. "He is a selfless worker and won't think twice about helping colleagues and clients. He always makes sure that people get the assistance that they need."

Another person who deserves a compliment is **Ms Suna Meyer**, financial and project administrator in the Africa Centre for Disaster Studies in the Research Focus Area: Social Transformation in the Faculty of Arts on the Potchefstroom Campus. Ms Yolanda Maartens, a researcher and project coordinator in the same centre, says she always does more than what is expected of her. "Suna is like a mother to us in the office," she says. "She always has advice and knows who to call when she herself cannot help. Suna is a special person and her friendliness is there for all to see – thank you for everything that you do for us!"

Ms Nono Tshalane, an assistant in the Vaal Triangle Campus Library, would like to nominate four staff members. The first two are **Ms Hendra Pretorius**, library

manager, and **Mr Dannyboy Moloto**, administrative assistant at the information desk, who are two true stalwarts. "Hendra is always ready to help with anything, not just with work-related matters. She is a good listener, she always understands and she motivates me to give 110% in everything I do," says Nono. "Dannyboy really goes the second mile and gives his all in his work. He is always professional and friendly and won't hesitate to go out of his way to help people."

She also wants to nominate **Dr Elrie Botha**, a senior lecturer in Industrial Psychology in the School of Behavioural Sciences. "Dr Elrie is like a mother to all the honours students in the School. She is always organised, dependable and dedicated, and it is an honour to work with her." Finally, Nono nominates **Ms Diné du Preez**, a student advisor in the Academic Support Services Department. "She is always friendly and does not hesitate to help; she always goes out of her way to help students."

**Mr Danie Hefer**, Head of the Financial Support Services Department on the Potchefstroom Campus is another role model. "Danie is a true stalwart – and not only when it comes to his staff. The empathy and dedication with which he looks after students' interests speaks volumes. When deciding about financial assistance to students, he is always objective and fair, without losing sight of the human factor," says Ms Triens Jacobs, administrative officer in the Department. "Thanks Danie, you make a big difference in the lives of many students."

If you would like to nominate a colleague who always goes the extra mile, please send an e-mail to [Marelize.Santana@nwu.ac.za](mailto:Marelize.Santana@nwu.ac.za). Remember to give your job title and the name of your department or school, as well as the particulars of the person that you wish to nominate.

# Empowering women the HERS way

Five NWU women honed their management skills at a HERS Conference between 12 and 18 September in Cape Town.

Prof Susan Visser (Director: School of Accounting Sciences, Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences, Potchefstroom Campus), Dr Muki Moeng (Institutional Director: Academic Development and Support), Ms Elbie Steyn (Registrar: Vaal Triangle Campus), Prof Marlene Verhoef (Advisor: Office of the Vice-Chancellor), and Ms Marilyn Setlalentoa (Department of Social Work, Faculty of Social Sciences, Mafikeng Campus) were nominated by the NWU to attend the week-long conference.

## THEY PROVIDE KNOWLEDGE

HERS-SA is a self-sustaining, non-profit organisation dedicated to the advancement of women in the higher education sector.

Their annual conference brings together women in middle management to senior positions, provides them with knowledge and networks, and encourages them to aspire to the most senior positions at higher education institutions.

Dr Muki says the morning plenary sessions – which provided a big-picture understanding of the higher education environment – was very empowering. During the afternoons, delegates were

able to choose from a wide selection of workshops. "I found the workshop on planning, resourcing, funding and budgeting very informative," says Elbie.

## NWU WOMEN SHARE THEIR EXPERTISE

Ms Phumzile Mmope, Executive Director: Corporate Affairs and Relations, and Prof Amanda Lourens, Vice-Rector: Research on the Potchefstroom Campus, were among the guest speakers at the Conference.

Phumzile addressed the audience on building corporate affairs and relations in a higher education institution, while Prof Amanda spoke about her career, lessons learnt and the challenges women in management face.

At the conference, delegates rubbed shoulders with colleagues from 16 South African universities, 12 African universities, an institution from the USA and one from Mauritius.



*Eish! and the Institutional Management (IM) wish everybody at the NWU a blessed Festive Season and a marvellous New Year. Members of the management team celebrating the hard work of everybody at the NWU are from left Ms Phumzile Mmope (Corporate Affairs and Relations), Prof Themba Mosia (Institutional Registrar), Mr Victor Mothobi (Human Capital), Prof Herman van Schalkwyk (Rector: Potchefstroom Campus), Dr Theuns Eloff (Vice-Chancellor), Prof Thanyani Mariba (Rector: Vaal Triangle Campus), Prof Frikkie van Niekerk (Research and Innovation), Prof Dan Kgwadi (Rector: Mafikeng Campus) and Prof Johan Rost (Finances and Facilities).*



We would like to  
**thank everyone**  
 for their **support**  
 during the year. **Eish!**  
 wishes everyone a  
**blessed** Christmas  
 and a **prosperous**  
**2011.**