

eish!



NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY
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Staff newsletter for the NWU



Camaraderie
triumphs at
Comrades

Dean of
Health Sciences
says goodbye

**Iron men show
their mettle**

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Front page: *Mr Kaizer Phakathi from Postal Services on the Potchefstroom Campus takes on Cowies Hill during the 2012 Comrades marathon. (Article on p10)*

Photograph: Pheny Mokgothu, Marketing and Communication, Mafikeng Campus.

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What makes a good website?

The NWU is in the middle of an initiative to transform the NWU website into a user-friendly, well-written tool.

The changes will be based on informal research, some of which Eish! will be sharing with readers in the next few editions.

First of all, it is necessary to know what defines a good website if you want to build one. The answer, according to Michael Stalker from CrossCom blog, is simple: great content, great design and great information architecture.

There is an abundance of information on the internet and you have to sift through loads of below-average websites to find ones that really stand out and feel trustworthy. All of these websites usually have the three things mentioned above in common.

So when we talk about great content, what do we mean? In short, it means well-written, original content that is unique to your site and that visitors or users will find relevant and interesting.

In the same way, a clean design will make it easy to find information on your website and will make it a pleasure to visit. This goes hand in hand with the information architecture, which has to do with how you arrange all the content on your site.

Of course these are not the only things that define a good website, but it is a good place to start if you want to improve your presence on the web.

In the next edition of Eish! we are looking at NWU web vocabulary.

If you would like to know what exactly words such as information architecture, content strategy and blog mean, you should watch this space.

MESSAGE FROM THE VICE-CHANCELLOR

Dear colleagues

2012 was heralded in on a national level with the events at the University of Johannesburg, when a prospective first-year student's mother lost her life in the stampede of students still seeking a place at the university at the last minute.

Meanwhile, the Minister for Higher Education and Training has placed four South African universities under administration (University of Zululand, Tshwane University of Technology, Walter Sisulu University and Central University



of Technology) and an assessor was appointed to investigate the Vaal University of Technology. However, at the NWU, the first semester included some things for which to be thankful:

- First-time first-year entrants showed an increase of more than 10%: from 7 550 (2011) to 8 349 (2012). While the number of first years at the Potchefstroom campus is still relatively stable, it increased with more than 13% at the Mafikeng Campus and with more than 40% at the Vaal Triangle Campus.
- The total number of students increased to more than 62 000 in 2012. In terms of head count, the NWU is now the third largest university in South Africa.
- Student sport reached great heights: we are all very proud of the ongoing athletic performance of Sunette Viljoen – the keeper of the student world title for javelin. Also, the ever-growing presence and performance of various NWU sport teams over the three campuses in the University Sport South Africa environment proves that the investment in good sport facilities is paying off.
- I have already said in the previous Eish! that there is sustainable performance improvement in key performance areas as reflected in

the 2011 Annual Report. Of these areas, the research outputs were possibly the highlight of the semester for me.

- We have also taken great strides with the monitoring of the transformation process. The work sessions that were facilitated across all three campuses regarding some topical issues, the inclusion of transformation on agendas and also the acceptance of the Transformation Charter by the Senate shows that the NWU is willing to keep track of transformation within the university.

There are numerous challenges awaiting us in the second half of the year. Now is the time to place internationalisation in the fast lane; the staff complement project must be finalised and the anti-bureaucracy initiative must become practice. Meanwhile, the HEQF process must not lose momentum and the focus should still be on enlisting, keeping and throughput of master's and doctoral students.

Thank you to every staff member at the NWU. Your loyalty, hard work and enthusiasm are contagious. Best wishes for the new semester!

Greetings

Thinus Eloff

Eish! together we tell one story

On the Saturday afternoon just before the Comrades, an English-speaking woman stopped the NWU supporter team outside a Durban supermarket where we were buying the last of the provisions for the next day. She was rattling a tin for some charity or other, but when she heard we were from the NWU, she smiled broadly.

"I listen to Prof Kobus van der Walt on the radio station RSG every Saturday morning when he presents his Afrikaans programme 'Omgewingspraatjie'," she said. (This is a programme about the environment.)

"Well I never!", we thought – the NWU's voice is heard even in far-off KwaZulu-Natal. It just goes to show: our spokespeople's words definitely don't fall on deaf ears. Read on p4 how the achievements of these articulate colleagues helped them to pocket handsome prizes, and

on p10 how Prof Kobus van der Walt from the Potchefstroom Campus received an ATKV award for his radio programme.

Yes, in the end all these voices tell one story about the NWU, its expertise and its people.

In this edition of Eish! we introduce a top storyteller – Mr Bertie Jacobs from Marketing and Communication on the Potchefstroom Campus. (Read more about this award-winning writer on p23.)

In his letter on p7, Bertie tells the story of NWU colleagues who became true comrades alongside the Comrades route. In the article on the 2012 Comrades itself, a few of the NWU athletes share their experiences of support, perseverance and hope. If you put all these experiences together, you write the big story of the NWU – a place where dreams come true



and your feet are given wings to tackle the Comrades routes of life successfully.

Enjoy!

Marelize & Nelia

Experts rewarded for their eloquence

NWU experts who are often quoted in the media brought in approximately R170 million in free publicity for the university in 2011.

In return, the NWU has expressed its gratitude to them. This is the third year that the NWU has given recognition to its media spokespersons by holding a special function for them, but the first time that they have received formal awards and prizes.

Topping the list of spokespersons is Prof André Duvenage, who was named media spokesperson of the year (2011) at a function held at the Institutional Office on 25 April 2012.

Prof André is the director of the Social Transformation research focus area and a professor in Political Studies on the Potchefstroom Campus.

He was quoted 114 times in the media, earning the NWU more than R3,3 million.

This achievement earned him R20 000 in prize money and a floating trophy. All the winners' prize money was deposited into their personal

development funds for use as prescribed by the NWU's Finance Department.

Prof André is followed closely by Mr Theo Venter, part-time lecturer and special advisor in the office of the NWU's vice-chancellor.

Theo's eloquence earned the NWU R6,3 million in relative advertising value, and as runner-up he received R15 000.

The third overall winner is Prof Tommy du Plessis, the director of the Potchefstroom Business School, who secured R1,8 million in free publicity for the NWU, and received R10 000 in prize money.

CATEGORIE WINNERS

Apart from the three overall winners, there were also winners in different media categories:

- Print media: Prof Tommy du Plessis (quoted 76 times, advertising value of R1,4 million).
- Broadcasting media: Mr Theo Venter (quoted 60 times, advertising value of R6,1 million).

- Online media: Prof Frank Winde, subject chair of Geography and head of the mine water research group on the Vaal Triangle Campus (quoted 35 times, advertising value of R800 000).

The purpose of the awards is to encourage NWU academics and researchers to share their expertise with the public.

Newsclip, the company that monitors the NWU's media coverage, identifies the winners based on the number of times they are quoted in the media.

Seeing as the advertising cost differs between the various media, the relative advertising value that media spokespersons earn for the NWU is not taken as the measure.

The frequency with which they are quoted is seen as a more accurate indicator.

GOOD NEWS AND BAD NEWS

Media monitoring showed that favourable coverage of the NWU significantly outweighed unfavourable coverage during 2011.

Of the 7 730 items analysed, 5 037 appeared in the print media, 1 054 in broadcast media and 1 639 in the online media.

Much of the favourable coverage resulted from the university's plan to build a Velodrome on the Potchefstroom Campus, as well as the news that the NWU had for the fifth time in a row been chosen as the best-governed university in South Africa by PricewaterhouseCoopers.

Most of the negative publicity received was as a result of an incident at the Veritas men's hostel on the Potchefstroom Campus, where two senior members of the residence committee resigned from their positions after problems with the treatment of first-year students during orientation.

Although sports achievements generated a lot of positive coverage, a few defeats on the sports fields also resulted in negative coverage.

How to deal with the media

Mr Jeremy Maggs, well-known journalist and radio and television personality, was the guest speaker at the prize-giving function held at the Institutional Office. He described the interaction with the media as a 'blood sport' and has the following advice for academics talking to the media:

- Plan three main points in advance that you'd like to raise.
- Get to your area of expertise as quickly as possible.
- Be assertive – don't allow yourself to be bullied; you have the right to be heard.
- Make sure your audience knows that you are the expert in your field – the 'go to' person who can be approached for further information.
- Listen for clues that the interview is drawing to a close, and use those last seconds to reemphasize your message.
- Your trump card is your expertise – your knowledge puts you in a strong position.
- Humanise your message; use examples and make sure that there is warmth and empathy in what you say and how you say it.
- Avoid so-called 'off-the-record' comments. Anything you say can be used.
- 'No comment' implies guilt – you must always have an answer ready.

Top management members set a great example

Dr Theuns Eloff, the vice-chancellor of the NWU, and Prof Herman van Schalkwyk, the rector of the Potchefstroom Campus, may not be eligible for the awards, but they certainly set a great example for other NWU spokespeople. These articulate members of the Institutional Management were

honoured at the awards ceremony for the 347 times that the two of them were quoted in the media in 2011.

This exposure meant no less than R8,3 million in free publicity for the NWU. However, seeing as their communication with various stakehold-

ers, including the media, automatically comes with their positions as top management leaders of the NWU, they are not eligible for the cash awards. The same goes for NWU communication practitioners who communicate with the media because of their positions as media spokespeople.



Their words are worth millions: In the back row from left are Prof Frank Winde from the Vaal Triangle Campus (winner: online media), Dr Theuns Eloff, the vice-chancellor of the NWU, and Prof Tommy du Plessis from the Potchefstroom Campus (winner: print media en third overall). In front are from left Mr Theo Venter from the Institutional Office and Potchefstroom Campus (winner: broadcasting media and second overall), Prof Andre Duvenage from the Potchefstroom Campus (overall winner) and the guest speaker of the evening, Mr Jeremy Maggs.

NWU athletes

After exhausting every molecule of perseverance, 15 athletes with ties to the NWU can say: "I completed the 2012 Comrades Marathon."

To assist these brave athletes, the NWU's support team again provided drinks, energy supplements, muscle medicine, plasters and lots of encouragement at their stall at the foot of Cowies Hill in Durban.

All 15 athletes reached the finishing line before the cut-off time, with Mr Jaco Barnard completing the exhausting 89 kilometres in the

fastest time: a mere 07:23:37. (The names and times of the other athletes appear in the text box on the next page.)

TO DURBAN!

This year the athletes tackled the "down run", which includes the energy-sapping Botha's Hill downhill slope on the route from Pietermaritzburg to Durban.

It is well known that this route, with its numerous hills, is pitiless on athletes because of the stress on their legs from running downhill. Fields Hill, about 10 kilometres from Hillcrest,



Cool relief: Mr Louis Jacobs, director of Corporate Communications in the Institutional Office, makes sure that Ms Rika Huyser from Biological Sciences on the Mafikeng Campus gets something to drink. She recorded the best time among the three female athletes from the NWU who completed the Comrades.

presents a debilitating downward challenge of three kilometres, and in Drummond, at the halfway mark, there is another steep downhill slope, testing runners to the limit.

THIS IS WHAT THEY REMEMBER

Mr Kaizer Phakathi from Postal Services on the Potchefstroom Campus says that his worst moments of the Comrades were the last 10 kilometres, which he had to walk because of a knee injury. The best part was the first half of the route, when his energy levels were still high and he could keep up with some of the top athletes.

For Mr Werner Coetzee from Legal Services at the Institutional Office, the Comrades was definitely mentally and physically the toughest thing a person can do.

"To be able to participate in the biggest ultra-marathon in the world and finish it within the



Sweet reunion: Mr Werner Coetzee (left) and Mr James Botha, both from Legal Services in the Institutional Office, reach the stand of the NWU supporters. James attempted the Comrades again this year after 12 years, and says he could feel that the years had taken their toll. "It was definitely easier last time."

conquer Comrades

cut-off time is really very special," he says. "The fact that I could complete it despite a torn knee ligament makes it even more special."

Werner says the support of the thousands of supporters along the route and the camaraderie of fellow athletes were indescribable.

Mr Henro Erasmus of the School of Accountancy on the Potchefstroom Campus says that he started getting cramps and became light-headed about 25 kilometres from the finishing line. However, the biggest challenge was Cowies Hill, about 18 kilometres from the end.

"I told myself that I just had to make it to the 10 kilometre mark, because I could walk from there and still reach the finishing line in time." He believes that it was the support of the spectators that eventually got him across the finishing line.

IF THE BUG BITES

It's been said that once the Comrades bug bites, you're hooked and can't resist running this race year after year. That's also the opinion of Ms Rika Huyser from Biological Sciences on the Mafikeng Campus.

"My intention of 'running up once from the coast and once down again' changed to running down a number of times and up once. And if I remain blessed I would like to attempt another 'up' next year," Rika says.

"The support from the spectators is unbelievable. You are encouraged with well-known slogans like 'hou bene hou' (keep going, legs) and 'almost there'. Sometimes you start giggling when you hear some of the things they say, because it's just easier to laugh than to cry," she says.



Perseverance

Our Comrades athletes have proven that perseverance pays. They achieved the following times:

Jaco Barnard	07:23:37
Ockie de Kock	07:26:56
Willie Lubbe	07:38:56
Rika Huyser	08:57:13
Cliff Wallace	09:14:05
Kaizer Phakathi	09:23:19
Henro Erasmus	09:59:47
Fanie Swanepoel	10:51:18
Hilde Kemp	11:24:24
Stefan Pienaar	11:24:25
Koos Degenaar	11:33:08
Erichia Nel	11:46:45
Ettiene Pretorius	11:46:46
Werner Coetzee	11:48:06
James Botha	11:51:37

Mr Paul Harmse was eliminated from this group after tearing a calf muscle during the marathon.

Strange feet: Mr Koos Degenaar, director of Marketing and Communication on the Mafikeng Campus, believes these strange shoes are the ideal footwear with which to conquer the Comrades. Koos completed his fourteenth Comrades this year.



Fast facts: Ms Annette Willemse (right) from Marketing and Communication on the Vaal Triangle Campus, updates the readers of the university's Facebook page on the progress of the NWU athletes. With her is Ms Kiewiet Schepel from Marketing and Communication on the Potchefstroom Campus.

NWU engineers impress with their new complex

The state-of-the-art engineering complex recently inaugurated on the Potchefstroom Campus will assist the university in reaching its goal of doubling the number of engineers trained at the NWU.

At the inauguration of the complex, Prof Jan de Kock, the acting dean of the Faculty of Engineering, said only around 2 000 engineering students graduate in South Africa annually, while approximately 25 000 per year are needed for South Africa to be economically competitive.

"There's a growing need for engineering studies and for that reason we had to build a new, bigger facility," he said.

The faculty's aim to double the number of engineers who are trained at the NWU resulted from the dire shortage of engineers in South Africa and the realisation that the training of engineers leads to job and wealth creation.

Ms Brenda Swart from the national Department of Higher Education says it is one of her department's priorities to have more graduate engineers in South Africa, as the shortage of engineers has a drastic effect on the creation of infrastructure. "South Africa has about one engineer for every 3 000 people – we have far too few engineers."

THE BIGGEST EVER

According to the NWU's chief director of Physical Infrastructure and Planning, Mr Louis van

der Ryst, this R106 million project has been the largest ever undertaken on the Potchefstroom Campus.

The building is 18 000 m², has workshops, laboratories and more than 70 offices (including the dean's office) and can accommodate 1 200 students.

The six lecture rooms can be made larger or smaller as the need arises and are all accessible by forklift – to facilitate the delivery of equipment.

The complex will accommodate Chemical and Minerals Engineering as well as Electrical and

Electronic Engineering. Only Mechanical Engineering will remain in their current building. The new building has been designed to facilitate project-driven and problem-based teaching, and lecturers can apply the latest learning strategies because the supporting technologies are available in the building.

"We feel privileged to have been responsible for the establishment of one of the most modern engineering complexes in the country.

"This is clear evidence of the NWU's innovation and unflinching commitment to top-quality tertiary education," says Prof Herman van Schalkwyk, rector of the Potchefstroom Campus.

Right after Mother Nature's heart

The brand new engineering complex is environmentally friendly and was built to let in lots of natural light. Rainwater collected in a dam is used to water the lawn and plants.

Prof Piet Stoker from the Faculty of Engineering's Centre for Research and Continued Engineering Development was involved in the planning of the gardens and surroundings.

He says the aim was to create a natural environment by planting trees and plants that are indigenous and therefore at home in the extreme climate of Potchefstroom. The trees planted as focal points include wild olive and tree wisteria, for example.

"This natural garden attracts numerous birds and veld animals. We have a mongoose family that regularly visits the offices on the ground level. The birds like the seeds of the indigenous grass species, and the dam attracts interesting water birds such as the hammerhead, the black-winged stilt and the blacksmith plover.

"The end result is a peaceful and natural environment within which we can conduct productive and innovative research," says Prof Piet.

Have a look at the photo gallery at www.naturelandscaping.biz. To read the story about the development of the gardens, click on "portfolio" and then on "corporate projects".



Cutting-edge complex: the brand new, ultramodern engineering faculty of the Potchefstroom Campus, in all its glory.



Curbing crime: in an attempt to curb criminal activities in the Mafikeng area, Prof Dan Kgwadi, campus rector (right), hands over a memorandum of complaints to the Speaker of the Legislature, Mr Supra Mahumapelo (left).

Campus marches against crime

Staff and students recently participated in a crime awareness march. The march started at the main entrance of the campus before heading to the Provincial Legislature where a memorandum of complaints about criminal activities in the area was handed over.

The campus rector, Prof Dan Kgwadi, handed the memorandum to the Speaker of the Legislature, Mr Supra Mahumapelo, and the MEC for Education, Ms Louisa Mabe.

The recent escalation of criminal activities such as assault and robbery in the Mafikeng area has given rise to a series of consultations between the authorities and stakeholders.

The university has also conducted a research project on the challenges presented by, and the impact of, crime in the area.

In an attempt to tackle the crime problem, a partnership has been forged between the Mafikeng Campus and the North West Provincial Government.

Other partners include the North West Social Security Cluster, comprising the South African Police Service (SAPS) and the Public Safety and Liaison Department.

“The university has worked hard to create a safe environment on campus, but the time has come to also take safety precautions off-campus where most of our students reside,” Prof Dan said.

Research cooperation will benefit campus and province

The relevance of research and innovation for the North West Province was discussed at a workshop held recently on the Mafikeng Campus.

Organised by the School of Environmental and Health Sciences, the workshop was intended to build relations between the university and the provincial government to enhance research activities that will benefit communities. Presentations on the importance of research in helping government expedite service delivery were

followed by discussions that Prof Efe Useh of the Department of Nursing Sciences facilitated. Participants agreed that interaction between the university’s researchers and government departments would contribute to the development of the province.

“Through this platform we also want to emphasise the issue of interdisciplinary research and highlight the fact that all disciplines have a point of convergence,” Prof Efe said.

Mafikeng Campus celebrates Africa Day

The campus joined the world in celebrating Africa Day on 25 May 2012. Hosted by the university’s Cultural Union, the programme included a range of cultural activities such as music, poetry, choir singing and traditional and modern dance.

Africa Day is celebrated around the world to honour African diversity and success and to highlight the cultural and economic potential that exists on the African continent. The theme of this year’s celebration was “Africa Day: past, present and future”.

The programme commenced on 24 May with the Africa Day Walk from the university’s main entrance to the student centre, where Prof Dan

Kgwadi, the campus rector, officially opened the celebrations.

Students, staff and community members were then taken through the unique African way of slaughtering a cow, followed by an address by Ms Tebogo Modise, the North-West MEC for Sports, Arts and Culture.

Senior citizens also gave informative talks on various African cultures, while the Cultural Union, Fifth Groove Poetry Club and the university choir used song and dance to express the uniqueness and substance of Afrika Borwa (South Africa). This included the rhythms and moves of the tsutsube and stape dances, as well as the popular pantsula and sbojwa dances.

Let’s celebrate: students, staff and community members wear their cultural attire to celebrate Africa Day.



Brain Bag puts research under the magnifying glass

The two go hand in hand: research is of critical importance for better teaching-learning, and teaching-learning is necessary to be a better researcher.

This was the message from Prof John M Pettifor of the University of the Witwatersrand's Faculty of Health Sciences. He was addressing academics and students during the Potchefstroom Campus' second Brain Bag research discourse for this year.

Prof Pettifor believes that research and teaching-learning must be mutually reinforcing. "Staff must be involved in undergraduate instruction, thus stimulating postgraduate research in students from early on."

As usual, a full Senate Hall tucked into the delicacies in their brain bags, which were sponsored by the Ferdinand Postma Library. During the Brain Bag research discourse, four researchers from this campus had the opportunity

to talk about their own research. Prof Hans de Ridder, Prof Gerhard van Huyssteen, Prof Annemarie Kruger and Ms Anel du Plessis gave a few wise tips.

The Brain Bag event was introduced in 2010 as the brainchild of Prof Amanda Lourens, Vice-Rector: Research and Planning. The aim is to strengthen the research culture on campus and give researchers the opportunity to share their experiences with colleagues and postgraduate students.



A healthy choice: Prof Grieta Hanekom, school director of Physiology, Nutrition and Consumer Sciences, is representing HESA on the Professional Board for Dietetics and Nutrition.

Representative of HESA now in our midst

Prof Grieta Hanekom has a lot on her plate. The latest challenge served up to Prof Grieta, director of the School of Physiology, Nutrition and Consumer Sciences, is to oversee the quality control of nutrition and diet programmes throughout the country.

She is tucking into this task after hearing the news that the Minister of Higher Education and Training, Dr Blade Nzimande, has designated her to serve on the Professional Board for Dietetics and Nutrition as representative of Higher Education South Africa (HESA).

Prof Grieta will henceforth be responsible for the quality control of nutrition and diet programmes across South Africa. She will also communicate professional council decisions about teaching-learning to tertiary institutions.

"It is an honour and I am grateful that my expertise is recognised. I will enjoy sharing this information and knowledge with colleagues and ploughing it back into the school and the faculty," she says.

Story: Leandi Ferreira

ATKV honours academic for his environmental talks

The Afrikaanse Taal- en Kultuurvereniging (ATKV) has honoured Prof Kobus van der Walt from the Faculty of Natural Sciences for his contributions to environmental matters.

He is the presenter of RSG's "Omgewingspraatjie" (Environmental Talk) radio programme that is broadcast weekly. Prof Kobus is a professor in Natural Science and Technology Philosophy and a well-known academic who specialises

in Environmental Philosophy, Hydrology, Catchment Area Management and Environmental Management.

Prof Kobus was pleasantly surprised by the ATKV award, which was presented to him in May 2012. "In the past, I always listened with great interest to RSG's weekly 'Omgewingspraatjie'. Little did I know that I would be taking over from Prof Tertius Harmse as presenter."

He says he has a responsibility to make people aware of their influence on the environment. "Through small adjustments, everybody can still have a quality life without destroying the environment in the process." Prof Kobus thanked RSG, his colleagues at the NWU and the "friends of the environment" listeners. "Without the listeners' questions, 'Omgewingspraatjie' would have been much less interesting."

Environmentally aware: Prof Kobus van der Walt (left) receives his award from Mr Japie Gouws, the ATKV's managing director.





She lived life to the full: the late Ms Sasha Westcott will be remembered for her gusto for life. Here she is pictured taking part in the first-year orientation programme with her fellow students.

Campus bids student leader farewell

From now on, 26 April will be known as 'Sasha Day' on the annual calendar of the Vaal Triangle Campus. Mr Jacob Simango, the director of Student Affairs, made this announcement during a very emotional remembrance service that was held for the late Ms Sasha Westcott – a student leader who passed away after a long illness.

The remembrance service was an initiative of the house committee of the Acacia day hostel for women, of which Sasha was a member. During the service, various members of the campus community paid homage to her.

Suffering from severe rheumatoid arthritis, Sasha and her electric wheelchair were a well-known sight on the campus. She

joined in 2011 as a student in the Faculty of Humanities and participated wholeheartedly in the first-year orientation programme – to such an extent that she was elected, uncontested, as a house committee member in 2012. In her address, the house parent of Acacia, Ms Karin Venter, described Sasha as a "ray of sunshine" who was a role model for all students.

The president of the Student Representative Council (SRC), Mr Tadashi Sabalele, also praised Sasha for her willingness to serve as a student ambassador and by doing so contributing immensely towards a dynamic student culture. He challenged students to follow in her footsteps and to rise above their circumstances – irrespective of what these may be – and to live life to the fullest.

Optentia welcomes two extra-ordinary professors

The Optentia research programme recently welcomed two extra-ordinary professors and by doing so further enhanced their standing as a research entity of note.

The two professors, Prof Sesh Paruk and Prof Hans de Witte, each delivered a special lecture to undergraduate and postgraduate students, members of the research community and campus management.

In her lecture, titled "Be the change you want to see", Prof Sesh explained the role of social scientists in shaping the future. Prof Sesh is currently the head of human resources (HR) for the South African Parliament. She completed her PhD in Psychology at the University of Fort

Hare and is registered as a clinical and counselling psychologist with the Health Professions Council in South Africa, a chartered psychologist in the United Kingdom and a master HR practitioner with the South African Board for People Practice. She also serves on Parliament's management board.

Prof Hans's lecture, "Learning from job insecurity research from overseas", aimed to give an overview of recent research findings and focused on ways to reduce job insecurity. He is a professor at the Department of Psychology of the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven and teaches Work and Organisational Psychology. He has a master's degree in Psychology and a PhD in Work and Organisational Psychology.

Mother and daughter graduate together

They say the apple never falls far from the tree and during the recent autumn graduation ceremony, a mother and daughter duo proved just how accurate the saying is.

For Dr Stef Esterhuizen and her daughter, Ms Sumari Esterhuizen, the autumn graduation ceremony will always remind them of the day they shared the stage as graduates.

Dr Stef received her doctoral degree in Educational Science, specialising in the field of teaching-learning, and her daughter received her honours degree in Economics. Dr Stef is a lecturer in the School of Education Sciences and Sumari is employed as a teacher at the Driehoek High School.

In 2011, Dr Stef also fared the best in the challenging ITEA process, and for this achievement she received the Vice-Chancellor's Prestigious Award at a gala event held on 2 March 2012 in Potchefstroom.

With a career in education spanning a period of 27 years, Dr Stef is an avid devotee of the philosophy of lifelong learning and says the achievement of a doctoral degree signifies the ultimate achievement in her career to date.

She and Sumari share a passion for teaching – as do the rest of the family. Dr Stef's husband, Johan, is a head of department at a high school in Vaalpark whilst her father, brother and sister are also in the education profession.



Mother and daughter duo: Dr Stef Esterhuizen (right) and her eldest daughter, Sumari, during the recent graduation ceremony.

Prof has a keen eye and quick wit

In this instalment of the ongoing series on NWU deans, Eish! talks to Prof PA (Petrus Albertus) Botha, the dean of the Faculty of Human and Social Sciences on the Mafikeng Campus. We talked to him about people, his career and his faculty.

When Prof PA Botha doesn't know something, he asks or reads until he finds out. When it is his turn to be asked, his replies are to the point.

For example, if you ask who is the easiest to work with – students or peers – he answers without hesitation.

"I prefer students, as they have no pretensions and show greater appreciation for what you do for them.

"Some academics, on the other hand, have rather inflated egos and opinions about everything. One of my former lecturers used to say, 'The fighting amongst academics is so fierce because the stakes are so low,' which is quite true."

FOCUS ON POLITICIANS

Another question he answers without hesitation relates to political representatives.

As a result of his subject field he has trained many representatives from municipalities and provincial legislators over the years.

In fact, his master's degree – which he obtained in Public Management at the Stellenbosch University in 1995 – was actually a manual on the representative role of councillors.

And if he has to assess the run-of-the-mill political representative in South Africa, what would their score be?

"About 30 percent," he answers honestly. "I realise that is a gross generalisation, but most politicians are there for their personal benefit and are not truly concerned with the interests of their communities.

Too many incompetent people are appointed because of their political loyalty rather than qualifications and ability." Before 1994, he explains, most councillors were elected from the community on the basis of their skills and knowledge.

"After the establishment of our new democracy many of them were elected without the necessary skills and knowledge, mainly because they had had no previous experience, as they had previously been excluded from political involvement."

Prof PA Botha



TALL ORDER

Prof PA believes that if councillors want to do their work well, they should have – among other things – good communication and public relations skills. They should also know how to influence people, handle the media, be good leaders and be able to solve problems in the community.

It is also important to him that political representatives should have integrity and high moral values, be honest, be prepared to serve and show respect for others.

WELLNESS PROGRAMMES WORK

Prof PA obtained his doctorate in Organisational Behaviour at the University of Pretoria in 2007. He says that his knowledge in this field still helps him to understand human behaviour – to predict it and in a certain sense, to manage it.

Most of his conference proceedings and articles through the years have been about the wellbeing of employees – something that he regards as very important in an organisation.

"Most progressive organisations in the world have employee wellness programmes, as research has proven that healthy workers are happier and more productive. They also have more energy and

a positive attitude towards life – in fact, they tend to enjoy life more. They communicate better, deal with stress better and work with more dedication and enthusiasm.”

However, it is not only the organisation’s responsibility to look after the wellbeing of employees. Each of us has to look after our own welfare too.

DEALING WITH STRESS

A part of the “recipe” for dealing with the pressures of modern life is looking after our physical and mental health and maintaining a sound balance between work and personal life.

This is not easy, however. Here are a few guidelines from Prof PA: “Care for your body: make sure that you get enough exercise and eat healthily. Nurture your relationships: become involved in your community and pursue emotional intelligence and a healthy, fulfilling sexual relationship.”

I think that most of us know the recipe for a balanced lifestyle, but unfortunately we do not apply this,” - Prof PA Botha

In addition to physical health and good relationships, other important aspects of life are spirituality and the environment. “Be spiritual, embrace your values and live in harmony with your environment,” he says.

BOLAND MOUNTAINS

And talking about the environment – doesn’t he miss the Boland mountains of Caledon, where he grew up?

Definitely, he replies, but by the time the longing becomes unbearable, it is fortunately time for the family’s annual holiday in Vermont near Hermanus, from where they can also visit the Boland.

Prof PA did not immediately exchange the Boland mountains for the plains of Mafikeng. After his first academic position at the Police Academy in Graaff-Reinet, he accepted a position on the Polokwane Campus of the former Pretoria Technikon, where he lectured and was an academic manager for 14 years. On 1 January 2010, he became the dean of the Faculty of Human and Social Sciences at the Mafikeng Campus.



Prof PA (far left) has been married for 22 years to Ann-Marie, his “Karoo flower from Laingsburg”. Ann-Marie lectures in Communication at Taletso FET College in Lichtenburg. With them are their sons, Albert, 16 (right), and Jacques, 13. Albert is an excellent rugby player and Jacques loves playing tennis.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

“I wouldn’t exchange the stimulating and challenging opportunities offered by the Mafikeng Campus for anything.”

He says that he greatly appreciates the positive energy and spirit in his faculty, and also the support he receives from his colleagues, management team and campus management.

Some of his greatest challenges are to create a culture of high performance in the faculty, and to recruit and retain dedicated and highly qualified staff.

He would like to establish structures for encouraging cooperation and research among different academic disciplines. “I would also like to ensure that all programmes are financially viable and sustainable,” he says.

VERY CURIOUS

The final question, about what people don’t know about him, he answers in his usual honest manner: “I am actually an introvert who is unusually curious.”

Curious? Indeed. If he doesn’t know something he doesn’t waste time wondering about it. “Sometimes my wife and children are seriously embarrassed because I will approach strangers and start questioning them,” he smiles.

He is also very observant and finds it easy to draw conclusions from a situation and people’s body language. “I am genuinely interested in people’s welfare. For example, when I meet

new people, I usually – to their astonishment – know more about them than they know about me.”

And now, by the end of the interview, we also know who Prof PA is – he gives straight answers, is a shrewd observer and insatiably curious.

Other interesting facts:

My favourite dish: Pasta.

My favourite book: *Bidsprinkaan* by André P Brink.

My favourite movie: *The Shawshank Redemption*.

My favourite animals: I was mad about two Dobermans we had, because they were so active and loyal.

This made me laugh: I try not to take life too seriously. My children make me very proud and happy. My son, Albert, is a social animal and his antics and quips make me laugh.

Cities I have already visited: Lisbon, Moscow, Taipei, Paris, Zurich and Sydney. Although every global city has its own charm, I find Istanbul in Turkey exceptional because of its proud history, culture and attractions.

My best holiday ever: A tour of Australia.

The most adventurous thing I have done so far: I ran the Comrades.

This I still want to do one day: I want to take part in the Ironman competition.

These two Ironmen

What do you get when you combine bucketsful of sweat, bags of perseverance and perhaps a dash or two of pluck? The answer is an athlete with the mettle to enter the Ironman competition.

Mr Boeta Pretorius and Mr Dawie Janse van Rensburg definitely fit the bill. Both successfully completed the South African Ironman competition in Port Elizabeth on 22 April 2012.

This was the second Ironman experience for Boeta, manager of the Application and Research Support division at Information Technology Central in the Institutional Office.

Boeta is an excellent sportsman and biathlon athlete, and since 1996 has participated regularly in short-distance biathlons as well as the Comrades.

The Ironman bug bit him in 2010 and he successfully completed the 2010 competition in a time of 12:23:31.

Dawie, a lecturer in Mathematics and Applied Mathematics on the Potchefstroom Campus, is also a sportsman to be reckoned with, having completed many biathlons and Comrades marathons.

He came fifth overall in the 2011 South African biathlon championships, and also won his age category, and came tenth in the 2011 World Biathlon Championships in Gijón, Spain. This year he decided to set his sights on the legendary Ironman competition.

IRONMAN

The very first Ironman competition was held in America in 1978, and only 12 men completed it. Ironman South Africa was presented for the first time in 2005, with 805 participants. This year 1 744 entrants registered for the Ironman and 1 376 completed the competition.

The Ironman is a triathlon that consists of three legs – swimming, cycling and running. The event usually starts at Hobie Beach in Port

Elizabeth at 07:00 in the morning with the swimming leg, consisting of two rounds of 1,9 km each.

The cycling leg of three rounds over a total of 180,2 km follows this. The last leg is the running – three rounds of 14,7 km each. The total distance covered in all three legs is 226 km.

THE MOST DIFFICULT YEAR

According to our two athletes, this year's competition was gruelling. Many athletes said that the 2012 South African Ironman was the most difficult competition to date.

It was a challenge just to get to the finishing line. Athletes had to defy high swells, chilling winds and relentless rain showers.

"The first round of the swimming leg went relatively well, but when I attempted the second round, the wind really started to blow and it took me almost twice as long to cover the same distance," says Boeta.



Boeta can do it: Mr Boeta Pretorius, Divisional Manager: Application and Research Support at Information Technology Central in the Institutional Office, ran, swam and cycled all of 8 500 km for his Ironman training.

show their mettle

Dawie confirms the poor weather conditions. "The weather was the worst in the eight years that the Ironman has been presented in Port Elizabeth. At one stage the wind blew at 60 km per hour and I had to battle to stay on my bike," he says.

In spite of the difficult weather conditions, both colleagues had the strength and courage to complete the competition, even if they did not achieve their personal goals. Boeta completed the competition in a time of 13:30 and Dawie's time was 12:20.

One wonders what it is that drives a person to attempt such an enormous task. Both colleagues say discipline, endurance and support are what count.

PREPARATIONS

According to Boeta, life revolves around training, training and more training for six to eight months before the competition. "If you are lucky enough to train with someone, it is definitely an advantage – it helps you to stay disciplined and motivated.

"A typical day will involve three training sessions – a running session in the morning, a swimming session at lunchtime and then a running and cycling session in the evening. Over weekends one has a bit more time and then you can train more."

Dawie agrees with Boeta that one has to train at least six days of the week, and for five of the six days you have to attempt at least two of the disciplines. "For me the hardest part of the preparation is the cycling, because it involves the most time. I tried to cycle at least 120 km to 150 km per day for four to five weeks," he says.

It is easy to see that hours of sweat and tears go into preparing for the Ironman. Boeta also adds: "I calculated that in preparing for the Ironman I cycled about the equivalent of the distance from Potchefstroom to Cairo, ran from Potchefstroom to Cape Town and swam from Potchefstroom to Pretoria!"

WHY, WHY, WHY?

The "ordinary folk" among us can't help asking the question: Why do you want to do this to yourself?

Dawie says it is definitely a passion, and that the Ironman is surely on every serious athlete's 'bucket list'.

"Afterwards I look back and I am very grateful that I could complete the race, even if it was the worst ever.

"If I could do it again I would make a few adjustments to my preparations, but one can change nothing of the circumstances on the

specific day. You should always prepare for the worst."

"I enjoy an active life and it makes me feel physically better to participate in races like these. I think one can say this is my thing, my addiction," says Boeta. "However, this was my last Ironman. In future I will concentrate on short-distance triathlons – the preparation for these is less intense and in this way I can take part in more events during the year."



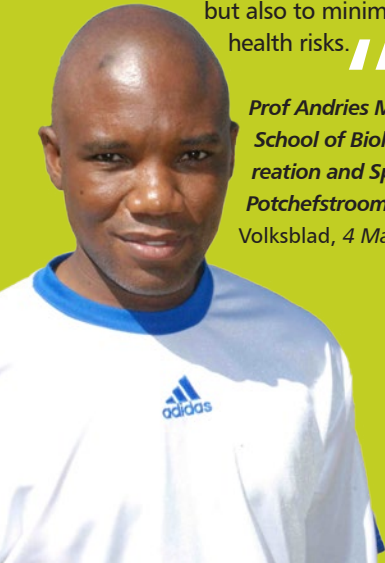
Dawie is dynamite: Mr Dawie Janse van Rensburg, a lecturer in Mathematics and Applied Mathematics on the Potchefstroom Campus, trained at least 120 km per day in his Ironman preparations.

These experts know their subjects

In recent weeks, several members of the NWU community have once again shared their expertise with the community – in speeches and in interviews with the media. In our ongoing series, we wish to share the following quotes with our readers.

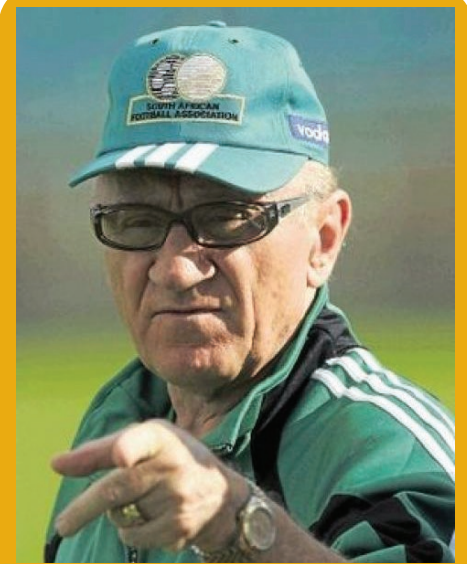
After America and the UK, South Africa has the highest obesity rate in the world. It is essential to get children physically active at a young age, not merely for the sake of balanced physical development, but also to minimise certain health risks.

Prof Andries Monyeki,
School of Biokinetics, Recreation and Sport Science,
Potchefstroom Campus
Volksblad, 4 May 2012



Universities are already under a lot of pressure to admit students who barely meet the minimum requirements. Many of them have no chance of getting in and need much better marks for certain fields of study. College students must meet the same requirements as school leavers to be considered.

Dr Theuns Eloff, Vice-Chancellor: NWU
Die Burger, 4 May 2012



South African football must create mini football development centres in schools to develop future stars. Many of the country's key players are close to retirement and youngsters should be groomed to take over.

Mr Ted Dumitru, technical consultant for the NWU Soccer Institute, Mafikeng Campus
NEW AGE, 4 June 2012

Experts believe schools and parents should focus on teaching children how to deal with psychological issues on the sports field.

Players must learn what they can and what they can't control – and they definitely cannot control referees' actions.

Dr Ankebé Kruger, North-West Sports Academy,
Potchefstroom Campus
Beeld, 11 April 2012



Mobile education will not only be ideal for the inherently digital generation, but it will also dramatically increase access to higher education. The country's 23 universities could accommodate only so many students, but with cellphones, education could be taken to the people – wherever they are. We have to move towards a multi-mode teaching approach. We could use mobile phones, iPads, videos ..., our imagination is the limit. If you can think it, the technology is there to support you.

Prof Herman van der Merwe, Dean: Faculty of Economic Sciences and Information Technology, Vaal Triangle Campus
IOLscitech, 18 May 2012



New chair to investigate heart disease

In the previous edition of Eish! we reported on the three new research chairs awarded to the NWU. The time has come to take a good look at the chair known as Early Detection and Prevention of Cardiovascular Disease in Africa. This chair has also been awarded by the national Department of Science and Technology (DST).

Heart disease is spreading like wildfire through Africa, but one of the research chairs on the Potchefstroom Campus is intended to help put an end to the spread of this chronic disease.

The research that will be conducted in the chair known as Early Detection and Prevention of Cardiovascular Disease in Africa will be the first of its kind in Africa.

"With our long-term project we wish to determine which young people are most prone to coronary disease – something which has never been done in South Africa," says Prof Alta Schutte, director of the research focus area Hypertension in Africa Research Team (HART) on the Potchefstroom Campus, where the chair is hosted.

"Hypertension is the most frequently treated medical condition in South Africa – as evidenced by the chronic medication used in the country. Due to the associated loss of quality of life and the large economic burden for South Africa, it makes sense to focus first and foremost on the prevention of hypertension."
– Prof Alta Schutte.

CHANGES IN BLOOD VESSELS

Young, healthy people are going to be tracked over a number of years.

"We are going to use highly sensitive research equipment to track small changes in the blood vessels – in the eye for instance," says Prof Alta.

The data will be gathered at the new Hypertension Research and Training Clinic, which is set

to open on the Potchefstroom Campus on 6 September 2012.

"The type of information that we intend to collect is at present totally unavailable to black population groups, and the very high incidence of hypertension and strokes in these groups compels scientists to attend to these matters."

PREVENTION IS BETTER THAN CURE

According to Prof Alta, the long-term goal of the research is the prevention of these diseases.

"Because we will be able to identify the early markers or signs for the development of cardiovascular disease in people, we believe that the project will lead to very successful prevention programmes in future."

The chair has been awarded for a period of five years, with the option of two further five-year cycles.

One of the biggest advantages associated with the awarding of the chair is the funding of R12,5 million per five-year period.

FUNDS FOR TEAM WORK

These funds will be applied directly to increase research capacity, which in turn will lead to increased research outputs.

Some of the funds for the chair will go towards bursaries for students who are also involved with the research.

They are honours and postgraduate students who participate in the research programmes for cardiovascular physiology.

The research professor to be appointed as leader of the chair will work closely with the



Healthy hearts: Prof Alta Schutte is very excited about the new chair, Early Detection and Prevention of Cardiovascular Disease in Africa. "The possibilities of new knowledge to be garnered from this are phenomenal," she says.

academic staff members of HART, and also with the head of the hypertension clinic, Sister Adele Burger, research assistants and postdoctoral fellows.

The HART staff members are Prof Alta Schutte, Prof Johannes van Rooyen, Prof Hugo Huisman, Prof Rudolph Schutte, Prof Leoné Malan, Prof Nico Malan, Dr Carla Fourie, Dr Carina Mels, Dr Wayne Smith and Mr Ruan Kruger.



Bureaucracy at the NWU

In this edition of Eish! we focus on the “debureaucratisation” project launched by the vice-chancellor, Dr Theuns Eloff. To find out more, we speak to Prof Marlene Verhoef, Executive Advisor: Strategies and Projects in his office, who is co-responsible for the project.



Q: Where did the idea originate?

A: The vice-chancellor strongly believes that we should take a look at business processes to ensure that red tape does not adversely affect our effectiveness.

He is especially concerned about our academics who are experiencing increasing pressure to deliver outputs even as unnecessary paperwork takes up much of their time.

To combat bureaucracy, we have included the issue as an objective in the NWU's Institutional Plan for 2012 to 2014.

Q: Isn't bureaucracy unavoidable?

A: It is true that complex institutions such as the NWU will always have some level of bureaucracy to contend with – after all, we need policies, rules and processes to function.

The problem is that certain elements become obsolete or ineffective.

Ultimately they can cause so much frustration and take up so much time that the whole process becomes counterproductive.

Q: How is the project coming on?

A: Dr Eloff and I have already spoken to managers at the Institutional Office and on the three campuses. Some of the business processes clearly need to be streamlined.

Q: What did you discuss with these people?

A: We asked the managers at the Institutional Office about the core processes in their sections or departments, to what extent these processes produce paperwork and duplication, and how this could be minimised, and how they wish to see their own sections as ideal, streamlined services.

We were eventually able to identify six broad themes.

Q: Could you tell us more about these themes?

A: Firstly, everybody seems to be in agreement that structures, rules and procedures are indeed necessary to manage complex institutions such as the NWU.

Secondly, we realised that people feel that the manner in which the NWU's management model is implemented could also contribute to an overly bureaucratic environment.

Thirdly, it became clear that there was a general sense that the Institutional Office, in conducting its strategic and coordinating role, needs to be serious about professional service delivery.

We also found that exceptions to the rule – for instance in cases where the system is misused for personal gain – often lead to rules and regulations to make provision for the exceptions.

This just leads to more bureaucracy.

In the fifth place, we saw that the external requirements imposed on universities in South Africa and the rest of the world – such as departmental and legal prescriptions – produce a lot of paperwork at universities.

Lastly, it emerged that some of the NWU systems are widely believed to be extremely rigid and to lack the capacity to deal with new challenges – such as a better and more modern application of information technology.

This situation creates more frustration.

Of course this last theme also touched upon the important role of IT in debureaucratisation.

Q: What are people's frustrations?

A: From our talks with academic managers it became clear that academics often feel overloaded with paperwork.

They complain that many of the processes at the NWU are overly complicated, for example the ethics application process, which apparently entails scores of pages of paperwork.

Also the processes surrounding short courses, postgraduate administration and the use of fleet vehicles are experienced by some as cumbersome.

Others mentioned the fact that forms are often sent around the campus by internal mail – something which can obviously be done much faster and more reliably by email.

Some of the deans feel that their directors should be given more responsibility, as they are much closer to operational processes and thus in a better position to make decisions.

Q: What do we hope to achieve with this project?

A: Our processes must become more streamlined.

Although it's still early in the project, we hope to eliminate unnecessary duplication.

Also, decision-making authority should ideally reside as close as possible to the area over which it is exercised.

We wish to enable academics to focus on their core business – teaching-learning, research and the implementation of their expertise – without being buried in red tape.

We want the NWU's functional management model to be implemented as effectively and efficiently as possible.

Q: What does the project entail from now on?

A: We are negotiating with a possible service provider to act as consultant, so that the project can be completed before the end of the year.

DO IT!-workshops open up dialogue on transformation

Are we responsible for each other's well-being?

Definitely, says Dr Ingrid Tuvfesson, Executive Advisor: Transformation and Diversity Management. In fact, the series of DO IT! workshops that she has planned for 2012 underline this truth.

The acronym DO IT! stands for Dialogues for Openly Inclusive Transformation, with the name clearly reflecting the intention behind these events: to create platforms for inclusive open dialogue on transformation topics.

ADDRESSING THE NEED

Dr Ingrid, who celebrated one year at the NWU on 1 June 2012, explains that various observations during 2011 prompted her realisation that these workshops are essential for the NWU to "normalise" transformation.

"Last year, I realised that our policies do not adequately address matters such as sexuality, disability, and gender and racial discrimination, and that topics such as these are not discussed in an open and inclusive way at the NWU," she says.

An unfortunate incident of gender discrimination that Dr Ingrid experienced in Potchefstroom a while ago further highlighted the need for dialogue.

"I recognised the need for open forums where topics that are regarded as controversial, can be discussed and where people can be sensitised about the effects and consequences of their actions," she says.

This realisation led to the planning of a series of transformation workshops for the university.

TWELVE WORKSHOPS

A total of 12 workshops are planned for 2012 – four workshops for each campus on sexuality, disability, transformative leadership and gender. The workshops are already under way. In April, the disability workshop was held at all three campuses, using internal presenters.

The sexuality workshop was also presented at the Potchefstroom Campus in April and will be held at the other two campuses in September.

Open to the entire NWU community, these workshops are aimed at encouraging discussion, raising awareness and informing the transformation and diversity agenda at the NWU.

MANAGEMENT MUST BE INVOLVED

"Although we want a bottom-up approach to transformation, it is of the utmost importance that these workshops are also attended by management," she says.

"We need their involvement and they need to be clearly visible in this process, as collegial support is invaluable to transform the NWU."

At the workshops, two or three speakers – mainly NWU experts – address certain topics, after which the people attending the workshop complete questionnaires. In turn, these questionnaires are discussed in small groups, encouraging dialogue and participation.

"My wish is that the workshops will make visible and further the commitment to transformation," says Dr Ingrid.

"All information gathered at the workshops will be made available to management early next year. The information will also be used to – amongst others – determine if our policies are supporting or detracting from the issues discussed at the workshops," she says.



Dr Ingrid Tuvfesson, Executive Advisor: Transformation and Diversity Management, believes that if you do not understand your own self-worth, you cannot understand and respect the worth of other people.

And the winners are...

Congratulations to the following colleagues who each won a corporate gift:



Institutional Office:

Mr Stef van der Linde, data revisor,
Alumni Office



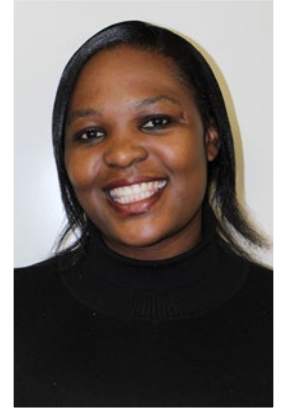
Mafikeng Campus:

Ms Margaret Aphiri, bursary
officer, Finance



Potchefstroom Campus:

Mr Danie Stoop, Head:
Electronic Services



Vaal Triangle Campus:

Ms Nombulelo Gumede, adminis-
trative officer, Academic Develop-
ment and Support

We would like to thank everyone who participated. If you were not so lucky the first time, here is another opportunity to take part in our exciting competition:

Win! Win! Win!

You can **win** a corporate **gift** – just find the answers to the following **10 questions!**



1.

Identify the close-ups and provide the relevant page numbers on which they appear.

2.

3.

4.

6. Name one characteristic of a good website.
7. Who was announced the NWU media spokesperson of 2011?
8. Which NWU Comrades athlete finished with the best time?
9. What is Prof PA Botha's favourite animal?
10. What does HART (research focus area) stand for?

SEND YOUR ANSWERS TO:

Post: Marelize Santana, Internal box 260.

Email: marelize.santana@nwu.ac.za with Eish! in the subject field.

Remember: Please supply your staff number, title, name, surname, job title, and the name of your division and campus.

The first correct entry per business unit that we receive, will win a prize!

Walking the extra mile

The year has reached the halfway mark, and as the pace of work picks up, it is good to see that many of our NWU staff members still have it in them to give and do more than what is expected. We once again take this opportunity to give recognition to all our NWU colleagues who go the extra mile.

Ms Annelishé van der Spoel, senior administrative assistant in the International Office on the Potchefstroom Campus, would like to take this opportunity to identify several people for their excellent work. She starts by nominating **Mr Johan Schoeman**, **Ms Johanna Venter** and **Ms Martie van Zyl**, all from the Financial Administration Department in the Institutional Office.

Annelishé says Johan is an operating system specialist and no stranger to the concept of the extra mile. "He is friendly and good-natured and always ready to help whenever Oracle starts to act up, no matter how busy he may be. Thanks for your help and patience, Johan," she says. "Johanna and Martie deserve to be complimented. With helpful people like them to assist you, you would think of any excuse to fetch your stationary yourself!" she adds. "Many thanks for your friendly and helpful service."

Next on Annelishé's nomination list is **Ms Emmerentia Aucamp**, a store manager, and **Ms Marina du Plessis**, an administrative assistant at Residence and Catering Services on the Potchefstroom Campus. "These two ladies don't hesitate to help, not even very early in the morning. The steam is still rising from their mugs of coffee, but if you walk into their offices, the coffee is soon forgotten while they are helping you – thank you ladies!"

Another person who is widely known for her service excellence is **Ms Maud Chulu**, a lecturer in the Department of Nursing on the Mafikeng Campus. According to Ms Kgomotso Direko, also a lecturer in the department, Maud always goes the extra mile in both clinical and practical nursing matters. "Her passion is admirable and equips her to tackle challenges in nursing, no matter if she is dealing with students, colleagues or anyone else. She is a valuable asset to the department," says Kgomotso.

Mr Levi Mofokeng, an administrative officer at Academic Administration on the Vaal Triangle Campus, nominates

Ms Mapeete Mulumba, nursing sister at the Campus Clinic. "She is a hard-working colleague and takes the welfare of staff and students to heart. She'll even work through her lunch hour and is always ready to lend a hand, come rain or come shine," says Levi.

Ms Abigail Corns, an administrative officer in the Admissions Office on the Mafikeng Campus, is another colleague who certainly gives and does more than what is expected of her. These are the words of Dr Nelda Mouton, manager of the Admissions Office on the campus. "Abigail is always willing to help and support students. She is very conscientious in her work and always does her best. I can recommend her wholeheartedly, because she's so friendly, competent and loyal to the office and the university."

Mr Harry Dasi, a protection officer at Protection Services on the Potchefstroom Campus, would like to give some well-deserved praise to two colleagues. **Mr Francois van den Berg** from the Faculty of Law on the Potchefstroom Campus was already nominated in the previous edition of Eish!, but Harry wishes to emphasise that Francois – as part of emergency services – truly goes the extra mile. "Francois enjoys his work and his reaction time is very fast!" says Harry.

Adv Thabo Pheto, a legal practitioner at Legal Services in the Institutional Office, also deserves a compliment, according to Harry. "Adv Pheto treats all alike, from the lowest to the highest ranked. He is always very professional and knows how to really listen. He always has time for you and knows how to make you feel better."

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. Remember to give your job title and the name of your department or school as well as the particulars of the person whom you wish to nominate.

JOHAN SCHOEMAN



JOHANNA VENTER



MARTIE VAN ZYL



EMMERENTIA AUCAMP



MARINA DU PLESSIS



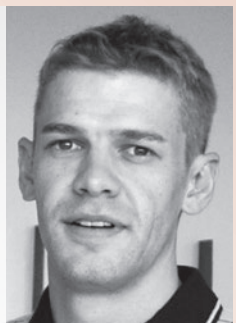
MAUD CHULU



THABO PHETO



FRANCOIS VD BERG



ABIGAIL CORNS



MAPEETE MULUMBA





Prof Marlene says goodbye

After five years as dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences on the Potchefstroom Campus, Prof Marlene Viljoen is retiring.

Prof Marlene will be remembered particularly for her academic leadership and management role, her professional expertise and her personality, says Prof Mariëtte Lowes, Vice-Rector: Teaching-Learning. "As leader and manager she had a special vision of and insight into the health environment and wide experience at national and international level. She was very skilled in creating order, establishing structures and managing and inspiring people," says Prof Mariëtte.

"Marlene, we are going to miss you, but we do not begrudge you this time of scaling down to give special attention to your family as well. We trust that you will still be involved in the faculty if the time allows."

Prof Marlene is succeeded as dean of Health Sciences by Prof Awie Kotzé. Prof Awie says that Prof Marlene was a true entrepreneur who made a significant contribution to the development of a structured research environment in the faculty.

In 2008 there were only two research entities in the faculty, and today there are six entities, with a possible seventh one due in 2012. "Her special ability to inspire the staff and allow them to be innovative and creative, and her expertise in identifying relevant research areas and opportunities, were directly responsible for this," he says.

"The solid basis that she laid down in a short time is the prelude to great things to be achieved in the future. We are going to miss her vision and insight, but we wish her only the best for the future."

Investment in skills pays dividends for the future

Perhaps one of the wisest investments that one can make is learning new skills. A group of NWU staff members were recently acknowledged for doing just that.

These 49 staff members received certificates at a ceremony held at the Institutional Office on 28 May 2012 after completing a one-year management development programme funded by the ETDP-SETA*. "I would like to congratulate the participants. Completing this course was by no means an easy task to accomplish over and above their normal workload and personal lives," says Ms Helen Mogorosi, Director: Human Capital Development.

Participants had to attend lectures and submit assignments that were based on implementing what they had learnt in the classroom. "Being able to put into practice the knowledge they gained really made the qualification worthwhile and meaningful," says Helen.

"I have no doubt that the managers whose staff members attended the programme will take note of their potential and encourage their career aspirations and further development."

* ETDP stands for Education, Training and Development Practices and SETA for Sector Education and Training Authority.



Wise investment: receiving their certificates in management development are, in the back row from left, Mr Arno van Tonder, Ms Carine Basson, Mr Braam Klaasen and Mr Andrew Fouché (Institutional Office). In the middle row, from left, are Dr Fazel Freeks, Ms Daleen Wessels, Ms Rika Huyser (Mafikeng Campus) and Ms Hanli Myburgh. In the front row, from left, are Ms Moira Muller, Ms Ronel Vorster, Ms Susan van der Westhuizen and Ms Marina Louw. All staff members are from the Potchefstroom Campus, except where otherwise indicated.



Eager to learn: these staff members were awarded a senior certificate in management development. They are, in the back, from left, Ms Riana Venter, Ms Lungile Ntsizwane (Mafikeng Campus), Mr Tinus Steenkamp, Mr Johan Liebenberg, Mr Gerrie Benade, Ms Marelize de Lange and Dr Esmarie Strydom (Vaal Triangle Campus). In the middle row, from left, are Mr Lieb Venter, Ms Hester Moolman, Ms Mariana Strydom (Institutional Office) and Ms Retha Badenhorst. In the front row, from left, are Ms Marlise Styger, Ms Elmarie du Preez, Mr Obed Legari (Mafikeng Campus) and Ms Welmarie Steenkamp. All staff members, except where otherwise indicated, are from the Potchefstroom Campus.

NWU journalist chosen as top sports writer

Sanlam and the Media Development and Diversity Agency (MDDA) have named Mr Bertie Jacobs from the Potchefstroom Campus as sports writer of the year for regional and community newspapers.

Bertie, a communications officer in the Marketing and Communication Department, completed his studies at the NWU and then joined Suparugby as a rugby writer.

Ms Annemie Bester, a *Northwest Independent* journalist and one of Bertie's former classmates, says: "I would never have taken him for a rugby enthusiast. Imagine our surprise when he joined in the discussions like a seasoned sports writer – he knew dates, players and results by heart."

When Bertie was appointed as sports editor of the *Herald* in 2009, a stream of stories about soccer, netball, hockey, cycling, racing pigeons

and ordinary people flowed through his fingers. Bertie became part of the NWU family in 2011.

One story that stood out like a beacon was his moving tribute to the late Springbok Dirk de Vos shortly after he died. It was this story that convinced the judges of Sanlam and MDDA to crown Bertie as national sports writer for smaller newspapers. Five of his best pieces of work were entered.

What is his dream career? "My ideal career is to write one freelance story per month. I want to believe that I have made my mark in some way, that my reporting enabled me to leave behind a story that people will remember me by," he says.

Sports writer of substance: Bertie Jacobs' exceptional writing talent earned him the award as sports writer of the year.

Photo: Annemie Bester



Oh dear, this NWU colleague is covered in 'red tape'. Fortunately, Prof Marlene Verhoef, Executive Advisor: Strategies and Projects in the office of the vice-chancellor, is at hand to rescue him. In the article on p18, you can read more about the debureaucratisation project for which Prof Marlene is taking co-responsibility with the vice-chancellor, Dr Theuns Eloff.



Prof Ewert Kleynhans, from the School of Economics on the Potchefstroom Campus, shares the following favourite quote:

"Years ago, during my military service, my sergeant, Sergeant Paxton – now a colonel – used to say:

**'NOTHING
IS IMPOSSIBLE
UNLESS YOU
MAKE IT SO.'**

This has stayed with me and motivated me ever since. When times are tough, when you feel despondent in the face of huge challenges, just remember this saying. It urges you to tackle challenges and not to give up before you have even tried. Once you're in it, it's dogged as does it."

Do you have a favourite quote that is near and dear to your heart? Please share it with us. We would like to use it in the next edition of Eish! Please send your quote, its origins or author, your short motivation why this has made an impact on you, as well as your name, surname, job title and department/school to marelize.santana@nwu.ac.za.



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