

# NWU & U

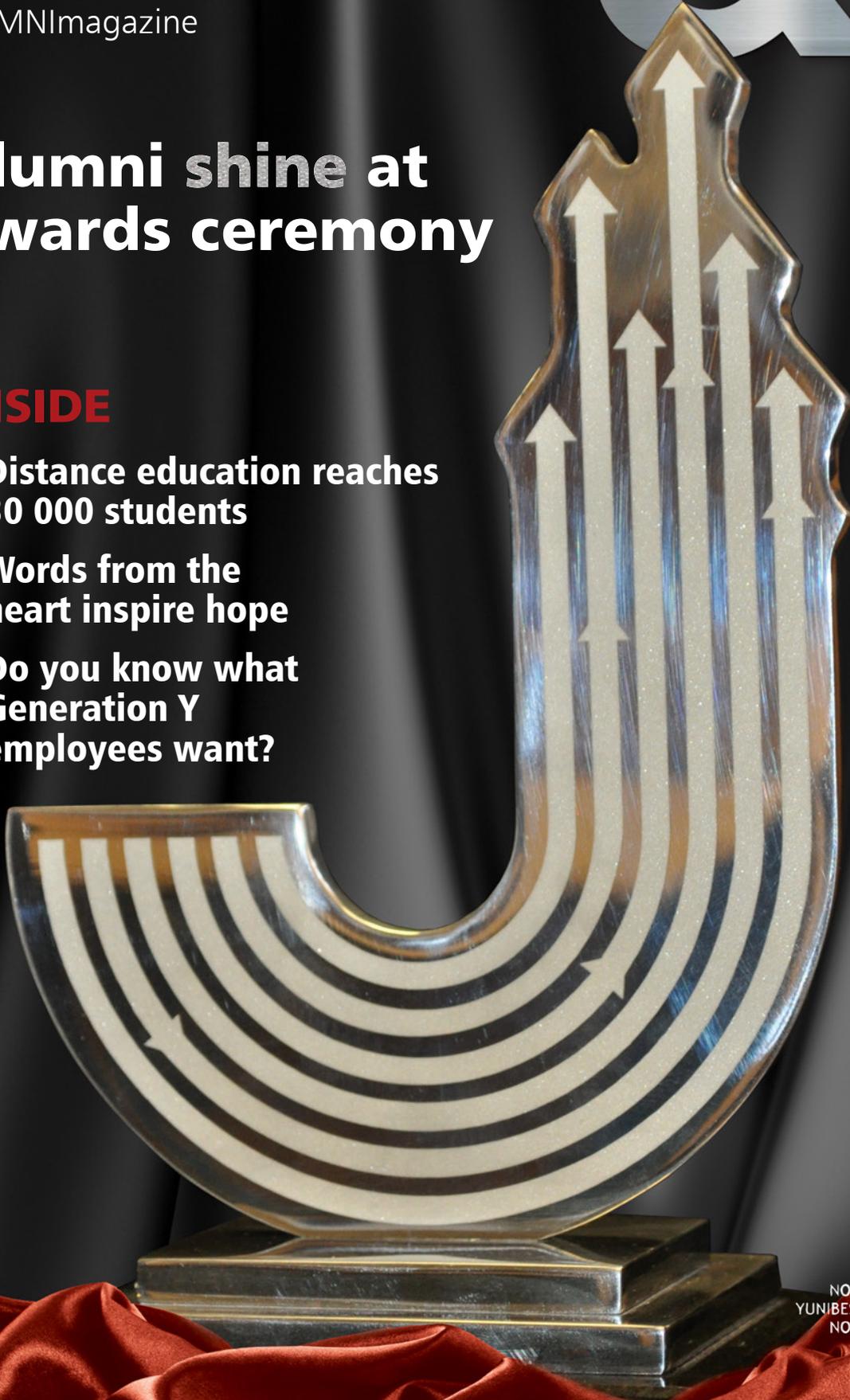
AS ALUMNI

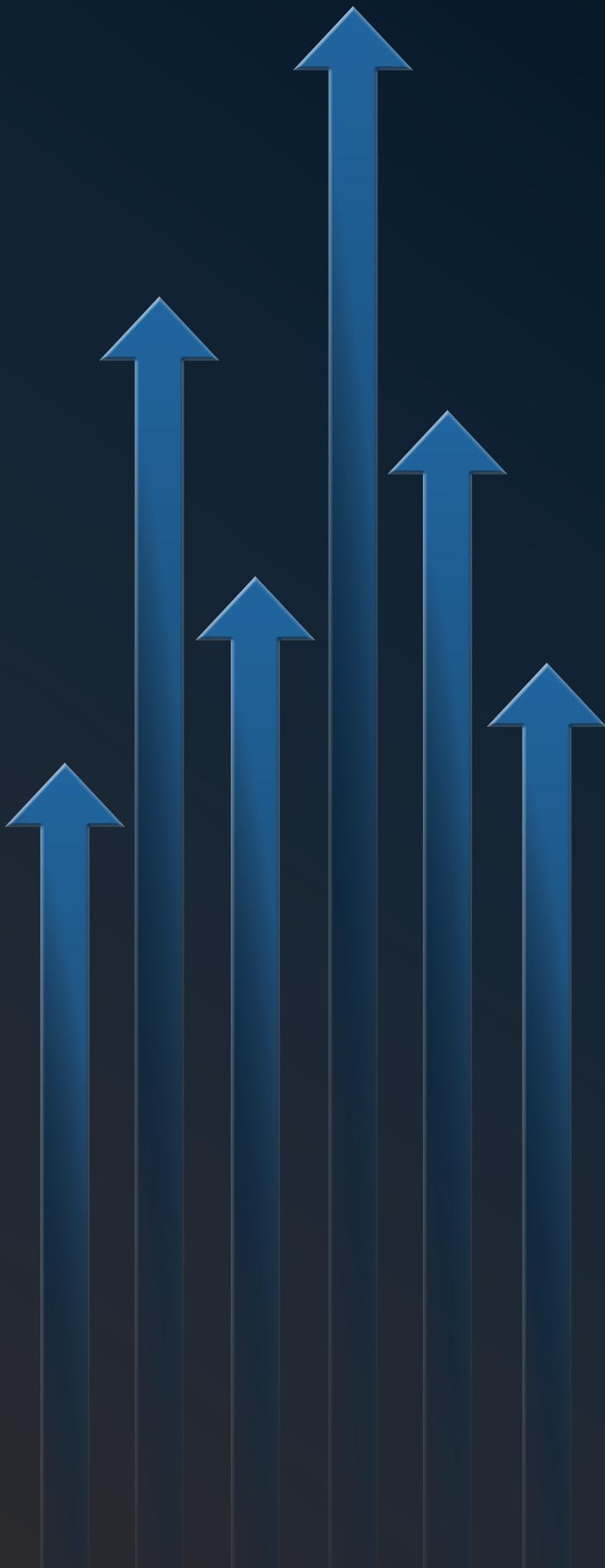
ALUMNI magazine

## Alumni shine at awards ceremony

### INSIDE

- Distance education reaches 30 000 students
- Words from the heart inspire hope
- Do you know what Generation Y employees want?





**FRONT PAGE:** With this trophy, the NWU acknowledges alumni who make exceptional contributions to society. Read more about this on p 10.

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# Message from the vice-chancellor

*Dear alumnus*

It is rather unbelievable that we are already in the 10th year of the new North-West University. During this time an entire generation of more than 100 000 “new NWU alumni” were added to our alumni.

We are grateful for stability on all our campuses and for quality teaching-learning, research and effective management for our almost 60 000 students:

**TEACHING-LEARNING**

In 2012 our teaching methodology ensured that 88 out of every 100 students passed their exams

for a specific module. We are also very proud of our graduation rate of 25%, which is much higher than the national average of 17%. Our low first-year drop-out rate of 12% compares well to a sector average of between 25% and 30%. In 2012 we awarded 14 669 degrees and diplomas – truly an extraordinary contribution towards the achievement of our country’s planning objectives.

**RESEARCH OUTPUTS**

The NWU awarded 670 master’s degrees in 2012, of which 433 were research master’s, and an unbelievable 154 PhDs – more than 10% of the country’s PhDs. We published 935 research articles and have 140 NRF-rated researchers. This means that our research productivity – one of our historical weaknesses – has grown remarkably.

**FINANCES**

In 2012 our budget was R2,7 billion, of which we generated R864 million. The state subsidy constitutes (only) 41% of the total income, and we exceeded a 3% surplus for the first time, namely R84,1 million. With regard to infrastructure we spent a record amount of R123 million on new developments.

**TRANSFORMATION**

We tend to get a lot of flak for our progress with transformation, but rest assured that we have set ourselves measurable targets with 10 transformation elements. To mention but one example: the percentage of black staff with doctorates grew from 23,53% in 2006 to 42,48% in 2012.

**QUALITY**

In our efforts to maintain quality, it is important to keep monitoring. Early in 2014 an internationally led evaluation will be conducted to determine to what extent the NWU has succeeded in achieving the merger goals and our mission. The panel will focus on

transformation, positioning of the NWU, the core business (teaching-learning, research and the implementation of expertise) and also effective management and governance. It is an excellent opportunity to give the next vice-chancellor and his/her management team an overview of objectives and milestones that have already been achieved.

**MY FINAL TERM**

On a more personal note: my second and final term as vice-chancellor will expire in May 2014. By the time that you are reading this message, the process for the appointment of a new vice-chancellor and institutional registrar will already be completed.

While the new registrar will assume his/her duties in January 2014, the idea is that I will work with the designated vice-chancellor for a couple of months (probably from April to May 2014). This process will ensure institutional stability, consolidation of the continued increase in outputs and sound governance.

It is very satisfying to look back after more than 12 years (including two years at the former PU for CHE) and see how we were able to grow our core business through a difficult merger process to become a balanced teaching-learning and research university.

In the previous edition we promised that, after the growing pains of the merger, we want to pay more attention to our relationship with our alumni, and in this edition you can read more about the recognition given to a number of alumni for their contribution in the South African society.

Enjoy reading this edition!

Kind regards

*Heuns Cloff*



“Everyone has his own specific vocation or mission in life; therein he cannot be replaced, nor can his life be repeated, thus, everyone’s task is as unique as his specific opportunity to implement it.”

- Viktor E Frankl, Austrian neurologist, psychiatrist and Holocaust survivor.

# Everyone sings a unique song

Paging through this edition of the NWU & U, it is remarkable to see the unique talents and contribution to the community of every NWU alumnus.

Our alumni make the most of their special knowledge or skills, and excel in widely divergent fields.

This year, 10 of our alumni have received NWU awards for their outstanding contributions. The areas in which they excel range from politics and political science to law, nuclear power and traditional medicine (read the article on p 10).

Another alumnus who has received an award this year – this time the prestigious Education and Training Award from the Minister of Correctional Services – is Ms Hellen Leseyane, an alumnus of the Mafikeng Campus.

As head of education and training at the Mafikeng Correctional Centre she brings hope to offenders through the educational programmes that she presents.



What makes some of our alumni’s contributions to the community all the more admirable is the many obstacles they overcame to reach their potential. Mr Zenzile Rens, alumnus of the Vaal Triangle Campus, is one of them (article on p 16).

After sustaining serious injuries to his face in a fire when he was a baby and losing one arm in the process, he did what very few people feel up to: he became a public speaker. Today he communicates his knowledge of debating to unemployed young people in Orange Farm and inspires them to change their lives for the better.

Other alumni who enrich people’s lives are Ms Yolanda Maartens, Ms Erica Eloff and Dr Hannes Taljaard who each in their own unique way ensure great listening pleasure.

Yolanda, a broadcaster at the radio station OFM, is a regular companion to many people and informs and entertains them day after day (article on p 18).

Also read on p 30 how the musical talent of the soprano Erica and composer Dr Hannes provide the spice that makes life unusual and interesting for ordinary people.

On a lighter (musical) note: just as every bird sings its own song, people also ‘sing their own tunes’, each according to their unique skills and talents.

Whatever your melody might be, it’s music to the ears. Sing to your heart’s content!

Happy reading

*Nelia*

and the NWU & U team

## NWU experts know their stuff

The NWU’s experts are often quoted in the media, which enhances the public image of the university as an institution that pursues knowledge and innovation in order to enable others to improve their quality of life. In this article we share some of our experts’ comments that were published in the media in the last year.



“The report on climate change was recently released and one of the main findings was that science is 90% sure that the climate change that we’ve experienced since the 1950s are human-driven. It cannot be ascribed to natural cycles.”

**Prof Kobus van der Walt,**  
Faculty of Natural Sciences,  
Potchefstroom Campus

*RSG Omgewingspraatjies,*  
28 September 2013



“It is important for government and all other stakeholders to stimulate innovation, especially in a country such as South Africa where unemployment is rife. There is a need for all stakeholders join hands and support innovative ideas from youth to groom an emerging breed of entrepreneurs.”

**Dr Mulunga Mwanza,**  
Faculty of Agriculture, Science and  
Technology, Mafikeng Campus

*Polity.org.za*  
6 September 2013

# Messages from afar



It is heart-warming to read the letters from our alumni. We gladly share them with our readers.

## Dear editorial team

Add my name to the list of readers who regularly congratulate you on the NWU & U! The photographer and layout artist deserve special mention.

Thank you for all the enjoyable articles. I see that Prof Kobus van der Walt – who chats with his “friends of the environment” on *Radio Sonder Grense* just before seven on Saturday mornings – did not win one of the awards mentioned in the article “Words worth their weight in gold”.

I never miss one of his illuminating talks, and I hope that he will persevere nonetheless.

Best wishes

Hein van der Walt,  
Florida Hills, Johannesburg

*The NWU & U also received a letter from Ms Pieterella Slot de Jong, in which she explains how the former Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education (PU for CHE) supported her after the passing of her husband, who was an instrument-maker at the university. Here are some excerpts from her long narrative:*

## Dear editor

A Mr Verhoef from the university recently telephoned me to obtain my contact details as alumnus, and this incident moved me to write to you about my memories of the PU for CHE as I recall them.

After my husband’s passing, it soon became clear that his pension fund would be insufficient to care for the needs of the family, and the university offered me a job. However, I was but a traditional housewife back then, with no professional training to speak of.

Prof Van Rheede van Oudtshoorn, who was the head of the Natural Sciences Faculty at the time, said that I should come and work in the Pharmacy Department’s laboratory. Thus it happened that, in 1972, I timidly arrived on the laboratory doorstep.

*After a few months, Pieterella decided to apply for a position at the library. However, she found that her diplomas in home economics were inadequate for admission to university studies. After attending evening classes for two years, she finally wrote her matric exams, and passed with flying colours.*

In 1975 I could finally enrol for a degree, as the Diploma in Library Science required five BA subjects.

Two of my children were also students at that stage, which encouraged me to study too. The three of us graduated in 1981.

Each of us attended a different graduation ceremony, causing Prof Tjaart van der Walt – the rector at the time – to ask my youngest child: “How many Slots are there?” upon which she could respond: “I am the last.”

*After Pieterella worked as a librarian on the campus and, later, in the library of the military base, she left Potchefstroom and moved to Krugersdorp.*

Krugersdorp was in the midst of preparations for the celebration of their centenary, and I was tasked with researching and recording the history of the town. Before I could do this, I had to obtain a postgraduate diploma in Cultural History.

*After obtaining said degree from the University of Pretoria, she had the following to say about her retirement:*

What to do with all my free time? The best solution was to study. So, at

Please write and tell us where you are and how your careers and families are doing. Send your letters to [nelia.engelbrecht@nwu.ac.za](mailto:nelia.engelbrecht@nwu.ac.za), fax them to 086 614 3222, or mail them to Nelia Engelbrecht, Institutional Office, North-West University, Private Bag X1290, Potchefstroom, 2520.

**WE WOULD LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU!**

the age of 71, I obtained my master’s degree in Cultural History at the University of Pretoria.

This letter is not merely the tale of my accomplishments. It is a tribute to the PU for CHE who never failed me, and offered me every opportunity to study and build a career for myself.

My family and I will always honour our university. All four of my grandchildren completed their studies there; the last one is now a third-year education student.

I am almost at the end of my life – but thanks to the contribution of my university pension I am living contentedly in my town house.

This is my story – to me, it just goes to show that there will always be opportunities offered to you by responsible institutions. You just have to make use of them.

Kind regards  
Pieterella Slot de Jong,  
Rand-en-Dal, Krugersdorp

# New alumni association promotes coordination

On 28 February 2013, the NWU founded an institutional alumni association, with representatives from all campuses.

The NWU's Statute makes provision for such an association to assist the Convocation to promote professional, social, educational and other relationships between the NWU and alumni.

"The association must also ensure that our communication with the NWU's alumni and our activities meet their expectations," says

Ms Nina Brazer, director of Institutional Development and Alumni Relations.

Another important task is to help to set up chapters, something that's also described in the Statute.

These chapters can be created according to regions, professions or historical background and can also be sports, social or cultural groups.

## MEETINGS IN 2013

Following the founding meeting in February on the Vaal Triangle Campus, the Institutional Alumni Association met on 18 July at the Institutional Office in Potchefstroom, and on 16 September on the Potchefstroom Campus.

In addition to Nina and the campus alumni coordinators, the new association will have one representative from each campus.

"Because important alumni role players from the campuses now serve together in the Institutional Alumni Association, the association will contribute towards better coordinated alumni activities across the NWU," says Nina.

The campus representatives on the new Institutional Alumni Association are top left Mr Bert Sorgdrager (Potchefstroom Campus) and Mr Heinrich Kriel (Vaal Triangle Campus). The Mafikeng Campus will appoint their representative soon.

The NWU's recently established Institutional Alumni Association encourages alumni involvement and is helping to set up chapters across the country.



## We would like to stay in contact with you

Since its establishment in March 2012 the alumni call centre of the NWU has already updated the contact details of about 10 000 alumni.

Ms Izette Schouwstra, Ms Charmaine Coetzee, Ms Thandi Ralekgetho and Ms Louisa Vermeulen are the team members behind this achievement.

From the Institutional Office in Potchefstroom they contact alumni from all three campuses, as well

as the NWU's predecessors. "Our alumni are very friendly and happy to hear from the NWU, and gladly tell us what they are up to these days," says Izette.

The call centre is part of the Development and Alumni Relations division.

"Our alumni are a valued stakeholder group of the NWU and we want to make sure that we have every-

one's most recent contact information," says Ms Nina Brazer, the director of the division.

"If your contact details have changed, please let our call centre know."

Here are Izette's details: [izette.schouwstra@nwu.ac.za](mailto:izette.schouwstra@nwu.ac.za), or tel 018 285 2594.



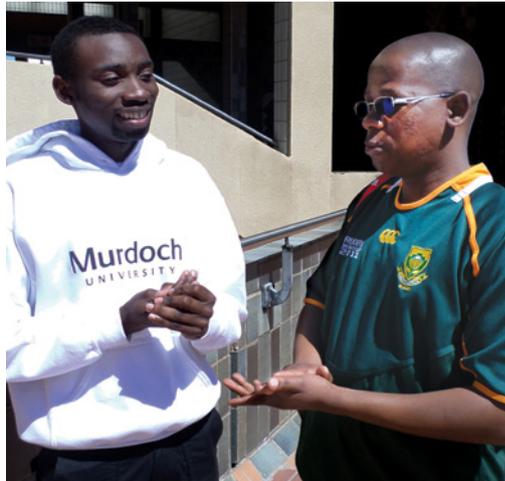
# Alumni's compass points north-west

During the second part of 2013, NWU alumni came from all corners of the country to be together. We gladly share some of these events with our readers.

## Alumni believe in giving back

Alumni from the Department of Transport Economics set the ball rolling in May when they held a prize-giving function, and in August alumni from all faculties on the Mafikeng Campus shared some of their wisdom and experience with students by talking to them about their future.

The latter event took place on 30 and 31 August 2013 and was presented by the Student Christian Movement.



Mr Takudzwa Masunda (left) is the chairperson of the Student Christian Movement on the Mafikeng Campus. With him is Mr Kgotso Rakoma, one of the alumni who talked to the students.

Among others a psychologist, social worker, microbiologist, nurse, accountant and articulated clerk talked to the students about topics such as personal financial planning and the choice of a place to work.

Not long after that, on 15 November, the red carpet was rolled out for approximately 600 alumni. Look out for the first NWU & U of 2014 for information about this annual gala dinner, held at the Convention Centre in Mmabatho.

### KNOW YOUR CAMPUS

The alumni office plans a "know your campus" campaign for next year. As part of this they will invite alumni to attend campus tours, graduation ceremonies and open days.

"We are going to hold a summit with alumni from the different sectors, where they will be able to give feedback on how they benefited from our teaching and where we can improve. This event, probably shortly after the graduation ceremonies in May, will conclude with a braai," says Ms Susan van Rooyen, the alumni coordinator on the Mafikeng Campus.

She says the media will also be involved to increase awareness among the public of what the campus has to offer and how the alumni are faring in the corporate world. ▸

## Celebrating 30 years with song and stories

A lot can happen in a decade, and much more in 30 years.

These were the words with which the rector of the Vaal Triangle Campus, Prof Thanyani Mariba, welcomed the alumni at their annual alumni dinner on 23 August 2013.

Heinz Winckler, well-known South African singer and winner of the very first South African Idols TV programme, provided the entertainment, while Marketing and Communication

provided the stories. Staff from this division collected the stories beforehand and told the tale of the past 30 years using anecdotes, photographs and media flash-backs.

One of the stories was about the engineering students who brewed their own mampoer as part of a fundraising event in 1982.

It was only after the former residence housemaster enquired about the peculiar pumpkin smell that they spilled

the (fermented) beans. And did they raise any money?

Well, due to the high alcohol content and the strict (and frequent) quality control process, they could not remember very much...

### BREAKFAST SESSION FOCUSES ON TRADE UNIONS

On 15 October 2013, with the country-wide strikes still fresh in the memory of South Africans, Prof Hugo Pienaer, an expert on labour legisla-

## Visiting the residences was great fun

Residence antics, puppy love and late nights were the topics of conversation when former residents of several Potchefstroom Campus residences held their reunions recently.

Villagers held their 35-year reunion from 19 to 21 July 2013. This included a social event at the clubhouse on the campus, a cricket match and a spit-roast.

As is customary, this reunion coincided with the annual rugby match between Villagers and Heimat, and the "old folks" could see how the young ones tackled one another.

A few days later, on 27 July, 35 men from the men's residence Over-de-Voor (also known as Overs) sang their residence song with gusto in spite of being in their early sixties.

Retirees, academics, pharmacists, marketers, managers, farmers, a diplomat, legal eagles, computer experts, business people and even a deputy minister came from all over South Africa to gather around the braai fire at the house of Carel and Esmé van Heerden in Northcliff, Johannesburg.

### FROM EIKENHOF TO OOSTERHOF

Shortly afterwards it was the women's turn.

Eikenhof women's residence celebrated its 20th year as a fully fledged senior women's residence on the Potchefstroom Campus. This residence has been in existence for 52 years, but was a residence of the former teachers' training college (POTE) until 1993.

A cocktail, a tour of the residence, a spit-roast and a paint-the-town-red session provided lots of fun. After a busy weekend everyone



had to say their goodbyes, but the thought of next year's gathering brought some consolation.

Other women's residences that held reunions this year were Vergeet-my-nie and Oosterhof.

Besides these reunions, there were also other alumni meetings, such as those in Nelspruit and Mossel Bay.

On 1 August Prof Herman van Schalkwyk, the rector of the Potchefstroom Campus, told approximately 70 former students, prospective students and their parents in Nelspruit about the university and the most recent developments on the campus.

On 2 September it was seafood time when former students from across the Southern Cape gathered in Mossel Bay.

During this event prospective students also had the opportunity to talk to former students and marketers of the university about life on the Potchefstroom Campus. ▸

The "old ladies" at Eikenhof's reunion are, at the back from left, Ms Jeanine Pires-Putter, Ms Annarette Jansen van Rensburg, Ms Marietjie Smit and Ms Itricia Cass. In front from left are Ms Anja Franken, Ms Emmie Viviers and Ms Marlize Kitching.

tion, talked to alumni about the role and impact of trade unions.

With the theme "Do trade unions contribute to unemployment?" Prof Hugo talked about strikes, the influence of trade unions in the working environment and legislation on minimum wages, among other topics.

Alumni from the business sector were particularly well represented at the event. ▸



At the alumni dinner of the Vaal Triangle Campus are, from left, Mr Oupa Kwaledi, Mr Nkululeko Khomo, Ms Nkululeko Phandle, Ms Thandi Phandle, Mr Chuku Taole, Mr Wanda Ntombela and Mr Nico Kroucamp.

# NWU awards illustrious alumni



The NWU's top ten alumni were celebrated at an awards evening held in Sandton. At the back from left are Mr Eric Bukasa Ntumba, Dr Bismark Tyobeka, Mr Maans Pretorius, Dr Theuns Eloff (who received an award for exemplary service), Dr Johan van Zyl and Mr De la Rey Venter. In front are Justice Bess Nkabinde, Prof TT Cloete and Judge Yvonne Mokgoro. Mr FW de Klerk and Prof Johann Coetzee could not attend the function.

At an awards evening held on 6 September 2013 in Sandton, the NWU celebrated the top 10 alumni who have contributed to shaping the country.

The prestigious Lifetime Achievement Award went to former State President FW de Klerk, who completed his Bachelor of Law degree at the former Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education in 1958.

"The spirit of the NWU is reflected in the way it unlocks the future for its students and the way it enables them to find their place in the world," said Dr Theuns Eloff, vice-chancellor of the NWU.

"To honour their outstanding accomplishments and exemplary contributions to society, alumni were publicly recognised."

Dr Theuns said that for many years now, NWU alumni have made their mark – not only in South Africa – but also internationally.

"At the North-West University, it's not just about education but the opportunities that education brings. We offer more than education; we offer people a place in the world.

"We would like to congratulate our alumni on their achievements and also encourage our students to shape South Africa and the world in the same way that all of our alumni have," he said.

"On 1 January 2004 the NWU proudly and officially came into being as part of the national government's broader plan to transform higher education with the aim of using resources more effectively and addressing past imbalances.

"The NWU has truly embraced this, not only celebrating the great alumni who have been produced, but also celebrating virtually 10 years of being one merged and unified university.

"Transformation was embraced throughout all aspects, and in this period it became feasible for the NWU to produce quality students, excellent research and well-rounded graduates.

"Through hard work and perseverance, the NWU is now counted among the top institu-

tions in the country for its quality of teaching and research.

"We are really proud of what the NWU has achieved since the merger – we have had exciting developments.

"The NWU wants to be a place where it all starts, where students not only reach academic excellence, but also give wings to their imagination, visualise their aspirations and develop their future success," concluded Dr Theuns. ▶

The NWU is proud of its alumni and this year, for the first time, recognised them for their accomplishments and exemplary contributions to society.

## HERE ARE OUR ALUMNI WINNERS

**Lifetime Achievement Award:** Mr FW de Klerk, former State President

### Alumni awards:

- ❖ Justice Bess Nkabinde, judge of the Constitutional Court (Mafikeng Campus)
- ❖ Dr Bismark Tyobeka, chief executive officer of the National Nuclear Regulator of South Africa (Mafikeng Campus)
- ❖ Judge Yvonne Mokgoro, former judge of the Constitutional Court (Mafikeng Campus)
- ❖ Mr De la Rey Venter, vice-president of Shell Upstream International (Potchefstroom Campus)
- ❖ Dr Johan van Zyl, president of Toyota SA Motors (Potchefstroom Campus)
- ❖ Prof TT Cloete, acclaimed linguist (Potchefstroom Campus)
- ❖ Mr Eric Bukasa Ntumba, corporate manager of the Commercial Bank Congo (Vaal Triangle Campus)
- ❖ Prof Johann Coetzee, industrial and consulting psychologist (Vaal Triangle Campus)
- ❖ Mr Maans Pretorius, president of Seadrift Coke (Vaal Triangle Campus) ▶

# Nominate outstanding alumni

If you know of alumni who boast distinguished accomplishments or have made exemplary contributions to society, it is now your chance to nominate them for the NWU's 2014 alumni awards.

Once again, two kinds of awards will be made: the Alumni Award and the Lifetime Achievement Award.

To qualify for the Alumni Award, alumni must:

- have obtained a degree or a diploma from the NWU or its predecessors;
- have achieved distinguished personal and career accomplishments;
- have made exemplary contributions to society;
- have shown significant leadership in the above-mentioned areas; and
- demonstrate ongoing commitment to the NWU.

Current members of the NWU's Council, the executive committee of the Convocation, as well as the Institutional Management, may not be nominated for the awards.

## LIFETIME CONTRIBUTIONS

Nominations are not made for the Lifetime Achievement Award, as the members of the executive committee of the Convocation

themselves will decide if they would like to make this award to one or more persons nominated for the Alumni Award.

This award will only be made on rare occasions, honouring candidates who have demonstrated exceptional and meritorious service to society and whose extraordinary lifetime achievements, personally and professionally, make them inspirational role models for the future.

## THIS IS HOW IT'S DONE

Office-bearers of the NWU, alumni, permanent staff members and members of Council and the Board of Donors may submit nominations for the Alumni Award.

You can use the nomination form in the NWU & U – all fields must be completed. All nominations should be submitted to the institutional registrar in his capacity as secretary to the Convocation on or before 31 March 2014.

The nominations will then be evaluated and the recipients will be announced during a gala alumni event in September 2014. ▶

*Enquiries about the nomination process can be directed to Ms Therina du Pisani at tel 018 285 2595 or [therina.dupisani@nwu.ac.za](mailto:therina.dupisani@nwu.ac.za).*



At the dinner in London are, from left, Dr Theuns Eloff, the vice-chancellor of the NWU, Ms Elmarie van der Merwe, Mr David van der Merwe and Mr David Kearney.

## London alumni get together

For the first time ever the Institutional Office of the NWU has held an alumni dinner in London.

The invited guests gathered on 15 October 2013 at the Imperial Hotel in Russell Square, where Dr Theuns Eloff, the vice-chancellor, told them how the NWU is currently doing and what the university plans for the future. He also invited them to share their expectations regarding the NWU.

According to the university's database, there are approximately 70 alumni in the United Kingdom, but Ms Nina Brazer, the director of Development and Alumni Relations, believes there are many more.

"We are locating them through the churches in the United Kingdom and also with the aid of the alumni who attended the dinner," she says. ▶

# Distance education unlocks the future

With its more than 50 teaching centres in South Africa and Namibia, the NWU's Unit for Open Distance Learning now enables 30 000 students to study closer to home.

**How it works:** The lecturers sit in one of nine studios on the Potchefstroom Campus, speak into a microphone and write on an interactive whiteboard while they are recorded on camera. The students follow the lecture from one of the study centres, which are equipped with computers and at least two interactive whiteboards.

The lecturers use the whiteboards to explain things, just as they would use a blackboard in a more traditional classroom. Because the whiteboards are connected to the internet, lectures can be downloaded and displayed on the whiteboard.

The students can also write on the whiteboards at the centres (for instance to ask the

lecturer questions) and everybody will be able to see this interaction.

Students can write simultaneously on any of the whiteboards, but fortunately there are facilitators in each study centre who coordinate proceedings and prevent chaos.

Students can also send messages through SMSs, Facebook or Twitter, or phone a call centre for academic or administrative enquiries.

In 2014 a third whiteboard will be added so that three modules can be offered at the same time. A lecturer's whiteboard session is followed by a group discussion, giving everyone the chance to participate.

At the study centres students also have access to computers and literature. Students who have their own internet connectivity can participate in the lectures from home. ▶

Distance education opens doors for people who, for various reasons, are unable to study full time.

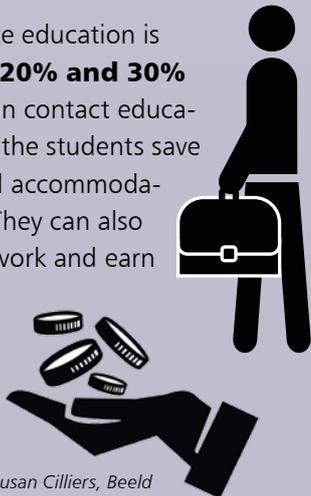
**1** Students can find missed lectures on the internet and watch them on their computers or iPads. More than **500 lectures** were recorded during the past few years.



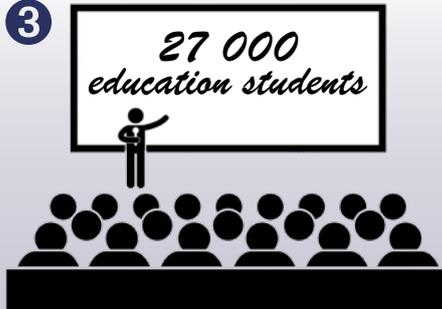
W.W.W



**2** Distance education is between **20% and 30% cheaper** than contact education, because the students save on travel and accommodation costs. They can also continue to work and earn an income while they study.



**3** **27 000** education students



Approximately 27 000 of the **30 000** distance students are education students. The others study nursing and theology. New programmes that will soon be offered are the Grade R Diploma, BEd, BA in Business Administration and Police Practice.

**4** More than **50 000** degrees and diplomas have been awarded in the past 20 years.



**5**



The unit also wants to expand its teaching to Botswana, Zimbabwe, Mexico, Brazil and Angola. There is already a study centre in Portugal.

**6**

The unit's ability to harness **virtual technology** to bring education to people in remote places makes it the most advanced institution of its kind in South Africa.



The centre's ultra-modern call centre can be contacted at 018 285 5900 or [DistancePotch@nwu.ac.za](mailto:DistancePotch@nwu.ac.za)

Acknowledgment: Susan Cilliers, Beeld

## Research focuses on grandparents

The Centre for Child, Youth and Family Studies in Wellington – which is part of the Potchefstroom Campus – has released insightful research on the experience of grandparents who act as the primary caregivers of their grandchildren.

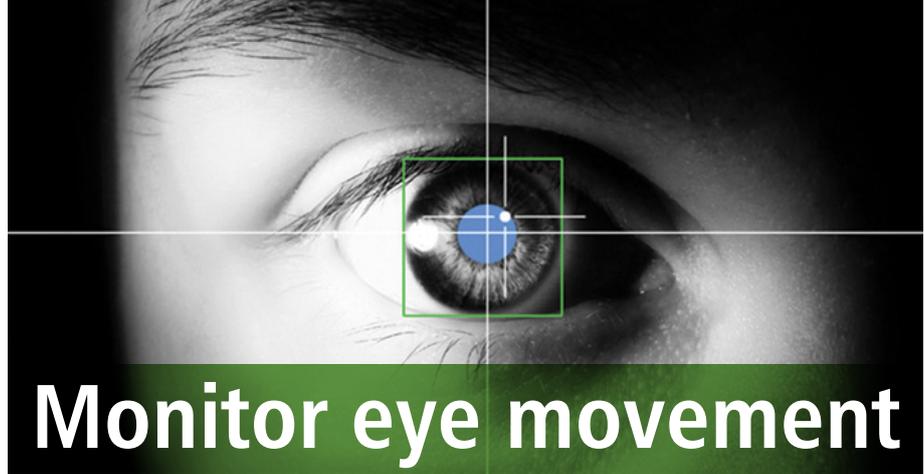
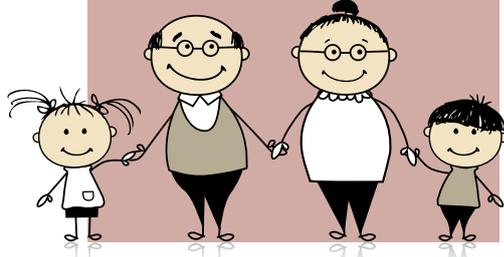
This phenomenon is increasing worldwide and in South Africa no research has yet been done on white grandparents who are the primary caretakers of their grandchildren in suburban communities.

Ms Susan Brink, a master's student under the leadership of Ms Issie Jacobs, a lecturer, has found that this phenomenon is caused by social and structural changes of families. These changes may include the death of the parents, divorce, parental incompetence due to chronic illnesses, drug and alcohol abuse or teenage pregnancies.

The most important finding was that grandparents experience conflict between the situation they find themselves in and the traditional role that is expected of them as grandparents. This in turn leads to the realisation that the substituting parental role now has to be fulfilled.

This parental role makes high demands on grandparents – it affects their interpersonal relationships and impact on their finances.

Grandparents also struggle with discipline and have a need for parenting guidance and the assistance of professionals to equip and support them. ▶



## Monitor eye movement for better learning

All eyes were on the research results of a team from the Vaal Triangle Campus's research focus area, UPSET\* during the 17th European Conference on Eye Movements held in Lund, Sweden.

Professor Jan-Louis Kruger, leader of the sub-programme Audiovisual Translation, presented a paper he authored together with colleagues Ms Esté Hefer and Mr Gordon Matthew.

Entitled "Attention distribution in academic lectures: Eye tracking and performance", the paper explored the way students distribute their visual and cognitive attentional resources during an academic lecture.

Students constantly have to shift their attention between different sources of information of varying information density and relevance. The words spoken by a lecturer, information provided through a visual presentation, and a transcription or translation of the words of the lecturer in subtitles will neces-

sarily result in competition and a risk of cognitive overload.

Prof Kruger and his co-authors compared the distribution of visual attention between information-rich sources such as subtitles, slides and the lecturer, and rest of the screen, an information-poor source. They were able to perform this study by means of eye tracking data.

The purpose of doing such a study is to correlate eye tracking data with performance and brain activity measures. This enables researchers to determine the impact of attention distribution between different sources of information on both academic comprehension and engagement.

Research on eye tracking is done worldwide, with diverse applications in education, marketing and other commercial settings. ▶

\*UPSET stands for *Understanding and Processing Language in Complex Settings*.

## Mafikeng Campus reaches out to emerging farmers

The Centre for Animal Health Studies is currently running a community outreach programme to uplift emerging livestock farmers.

This programme reaches out to emerging farmers in a 30 km-radius around the campus, which is a semi-arid area with livestock farming as the main agricultural activity.

The main objectives of the programme are to empower farmers with knowledge of livestock husbandry, improve

animal care and establish a genetic pool of livestock that farmers can access. Farmers are also trained in herd health management, including vaccination, internal and external parasite control, breeding and primary animal health care.

Final-year students in Animal Health are actively involved in the community development project, providing them with problem-based education and hands-on experience. ▶



# New vice-rector wants to tackle challenges

The new vice-rector for teaching-learning at the Potchefstroom Campus, Prof Rantoa Letšosa, views his appointment as a wonderful challenge.

"The Lord prepared me well for it. I know he has a plan for me, because on my own I won't make it."

Prof Rantoa says his heart's desire is to see all young people getting the opportunity to study. "I therefore see the university as one that cares and reaches out to people, even those on farms and some of the smallest towns in our country. With the aid of our present technology it is certainly not impossible."

He is the first black vice-rector for teaching-learning at the Potchefstroom Campus, and

before that was the vice-rector at the School of Theology of the Reformed Churches of South Africa (RCSA), where he was appointed in 2010.

Prof Rantoa is taking over from Prof Mariëtte Lowes, who retires at the end of 2014.

He is very excited about his appointment as vice-rector. "I know it is a difficult task and a big challenge that awaits me, but it is something that is achievable. Where there is a will, there is a way."

Breaking through barriers and reaching out to each other will make the challenges easier to tackle. "For the university to survive we have to hold each other's hands high and work together to bring about change." ▶



**Prof Rantoa Letšosa is the new vice-rector for teaching-learning on the Potchefstroom Campus.**

PHOTOGRAPH:  
MARIO VAN DE WALL



The Vaal Triangle Campus has launched its first-ever mobile game – Univenture - to aid in the student recruitment process.

This interactive game, developed by Mr Martin Booth, a postgraduate student from the South African Serious Games Institute (SGI-SA) in the Faculty of Economic Sciences and Information Technology, allows prospective students to familiarise themselves with the academic offerings and the campus environment.

The purpose of the game – which consists of several levels – is to aid Bob, a fictional prospective student, to make a decision about a future career by visiting the different faculties and academic schools.

Each stage of the game represents an academic school and as you progress through the different levels you are informed about the requirements for each field of study. Along the way Bob also meets various members of the campus community, including the campus's much-loved gaggle of geese.

Martin says the marketing application has been successfully launched on the Google Play Store. If you would like to know more, use the following link to go to the Univenture page: <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=za.co.nwu.nwuvaal>.

The game is currently only meant for Android devices; an Afrikaans version is also available. ▶

## Mafikeng Campus hosts dialogue on African traditional medicine

The Centre for Indigenous Knowledge Systems on the Mafikeng Campus recently hosted a dialogue on the institutionalisation of African traditional medicine in South Africa.

The main objective of the dialogue was to create a discussion platform for academics, traditional health practitioners, scientists, health officials, researchers and government officials.

This resulted in discussions on the progress made in the development, promotion, commercialisation and institutionalisation of African traditional medicine by government and key healthcare institutions.

Ideas on how to create a favourable environment for collaborative research with scientists and the contribution of African traditional medicine to the health sector and economy of the country were among the main discussion points.

An informative presentation was made on research, development and innovation in African traditional medicine. Various medicinal products made from indigenous plants were showcased by the Department of Science and Technology's research team.

The outcomes of the discourse included agreements on African traditional medicine research and development, partnerships, cooperation and collaboration among the stakeholders. ▶

# Zenzile finds his voice

He was saved to inspire, says Zenzile Rens. Overcoming great obstacles in his life, this alumnus of the Vaal Triangle Campus has become a confident public speaker who inspires the Orange Farm youth to change their lives.

Like many people, Zenzile Rens had a deep-rooted fear of speaking in public.

However, in his case there was a real reason for this reticence – a childhood scarred by an accident that he nearly didn't survive.

Despite the trauma, the Zenzile you see today is a confident, inspiring speaker who is helping young, unemployed people in Orange Farm – South Africa's largest informal settlement – find their voices too.

"The person you see now is a totally different person. Considering my childhood, my confidence today is on another level," says Zenzile, who graduated from the NWU's Vaal Triangle Campus with a BCom degree in Economics in 2009, followed by a BCom Honours in Business Management and Marketing.

The campus, and particularly its Riverine Toastmasters Club, is where Zenzile, who was painfully shy as a boy, finally discovered the power of speaking up.

"My childhood was not that easy," he says. "Children ask questions and I always had to explain myself to other children; I always had to justify certain things, which was a bit of a challenge."

The challenge was explaining how he had lost his left arm and why his face was scarred.

When he was a baby of only two months old, Zenzile was critically injured in a fire started by a candle placed next to his bed while he was sleeping. By the time help arrived, the flames had virtually engulfed the room. The tiny baby was rushed to hospital where he spent about three months in treatment for severe burn wounds. His arm was so badly injured it had to be amputated.

## THE POWER OF MIRACLES

Zenzile recovered and, as he grew up, dreamt of becoming a doctor. "I guess it came from seeing what they can do – miracles."

When he encountered the NWU, his plans changed. "In grade 12, I was lucky enough to be on the Ikateleng programme," he says.

(This programme prepares grade 12 learners for their final exams by offering supplementary tuition in a variety of school subjects.)

After passing grade 12, Zenzile arrived at the Vaal Triangle Campus and studied BSc Information Technology for a year before changing to BCom Economics. He also met the person who encouraged him to transform his life, Mr Victor Yawa, a student leader and member of the campus's Riverine Toastmasters Club.

"I was very shy and a bit closed; I was focused on books," Zenzile recalls. "Victor encouraged me to move away from my comfort zone and invited me to attend a Toastmasters meeting at the campus."

The experience was a shock to his system. "At the first meeting, I got the fright of my life. I saw these people standing up and speaking in front of other people and I thought, 'This is not for me!' I just couldn't see myself doing that and I didn't want to go back."

That did not deter Victor. "He was persistent and did not give up on me," says Zenzile. "I went back a second time and this time, I listened."

Eventually, he decided to give speaking a try. "My first speech was called 'Me, myself and I', and it was nearly a disaster."

This was because his talk was far too short. "I was supposed to speak for five to seven minutes, and I only spoke for 1,45 minutes. That's how little I had to say."

Still, when he left the podium, the audience applauded. "That gave me the courage to come back. It meant that the little I said had been heard. I never looked back."

## STRENGTH FROM WITHIN

Having found his voice, Zenzile not only became a regular speaker at Riverine Toastmasters, he became an office bearer. "In my second year, I was appointed vice chairperson of the club, and then chairperson."

# and uses it to inspire

Later, after graduating, he took on an even greater leadership role in Toastmasters as a district coordinator and then an area governor, responsible for about 25 Toastmasters clubs in South Africa and Lesotho. "I went from strength to strength," he says.

That strength comes from within – and inner strength was the topic of his best speech so far. "The most powerful message I can give the world is that when you realise the strength within, you can change the world. I used to live in the shadows, keeping my light under the table. Now I've put it on the table to light up the world."

He is doing that by motivating young people in Orange Farm to develop their public speaking and communication skills. With the blessing of Toastmasters, and in partnership with the LoveLife organisation, he has started an Orange Farm 'gavel club'. This is a club specifically for unemployed people over the age



Mr Zenzile Rens motivates young people.

of 18 and youth under 18 who cannot afford the usual Toastmasters fees.

## MAKING A DIFFERENCE NO MATTER WHAT

"Our gavel club is the first to be established in South Africa, and is called the Nakanjani Lovelife Gavel Club – 'Nakanjani' meaning 'no matter what'," says Zenzile.

"No matter what, we are going to make a difference in Orange Farm, where the unemployment rate is very high. Communication skills are very important in the job market. How can you sell yourself if you can't express yourself?"

The club opened in September 2012 and now has about 25 registered members. "But it is not only about public speaking skills. We also wish to bring about change."

In September 2013, the club held what is believed to be the first careers day in Orange Farm. "Big companies came to present," he says. "The NWU was there, and so were Sasol and PriceWaterhouseCoopers."

Unfortunately, only 50 young people attended. "I wasn't pleased. We did massive marketing at each and every school and on local radio stations and newspapers. The turnout showed me that there is still a lot of work to be done to change the mindset in Orange Farm. It's a challenge I'm going to keep on working at."

Zenzile, whose full-time job is as a pricing analyst with First National Bank in Johannesburg, says his voluntary work as a motivational speaker has become his passion.

"When I wake up in the morning, I ask myself why I am alive. What is my purpose? The answer is that I am a difference maker.

"Through speaking and through my involvement with other organisations, I am able to inspire people and help them change their lives. I never thought I would overcome my own fear of public speaking. Now I have the freedom to be me.

"I was saved to inspire." ▸

“

I USED TO LIVE IN THE SHADOWS, KEEPING MY LIGHT UNDER THE TABLE. NOW I'VE PUT IT ON THE TABLE TO LIGHT UP THE WORLD.

”

The newly-wed couple, Yolanda Maartens and Charlie Brown, relax with their canine kids, Rocky and Lucy.



# Talking is her passion *and our pleasure*

Alumni in central South Africa are probably familiar with the voice of Ms Yolanda Maartens, presenter at the commercial radio station OFM. The NWU & U spoke to her about her student years at the Potchefstroom Campus and her job as a radio presenter and producer.

**M**s Yolanda Maartens is a doer, not a sitter. The exception is when she is forced to sit behind the microphone in the OFM studio. Then she becomes a talker – another activity that comes naturally to her.

Even at the tender age of four, Yolanda had a quick tongue. “One night, I was waiting for my dad to come home from work. I was so tired I kept pacing around the coffee table. My mother asked me to come and sit next to her, because she knew I would fall asleep. I told her: I am a walker, not a sitter.”

This smooth answer led to a lot more talking throughout the years, which finally earned her a morning programme on PUKfm while she was still a student.

However, her career in broadcasting only really took off when she won OFM’s *On Air* talent show in 2009.

As a new presenter, Yolanda was initially on the air over weekends from the OFM studio in Potchefstroom, but in 2011 an oppor-

tunity came up for her to produce a new programme for the station.

June of the same year saw her move bag and baggage to Bloemfontein, where she currently resides.

### CITY OF ROSES VS POTCHEFSTROOM

“The City of Roses is slowly making its way into my heart, but Potchefstroom will always be my home.”

Although she was born in Potchefstroom, her family moved away when she was only two months old. Her childhood was spent in Richards Bay, where she attended school from Grade 1 to Grade 12. (Naturally, she cheers for the Sharks.)

At school she quickly blossomed into a “talker”, and won many public-speaking competitions and awards for Afrikaans.

After matric, she lived and attended school in Berlin for a year as a Rotary exchange student. “I was lonely at times. I come from a close-knit family, and it was difficult to be

away from them for so long. But it was still a wonderful experience.”

During her stay in Berlin, she became fluent in German. She took German as an extra subject at university, and later served as a student assistant and facilitator in the department.

### A GOOD STUDENT?

Yolanda, who stayed in a student commune in Esselen Street, maintains that she was quite the model student.

“I worked hard. My parents made it clear from the start: after my year abroad, I would have only one opportunity to study.

“I loved the learning environment on campus; it motivated me to obtain my honours in Development Communication and my master’s in Sustainable Development and Disaster Risk Management.”

However, even model students take a break.

“I spent many an evening on the Bult with a footlong (hot dog) in my hand and the music from Bourbons playing in my head – but you didn’t hear it from me,” she jokes.

A detail she is willing to share is that her husband, Charlie, asked her to be his girlfriend at Pablo’s, another of their favourite hangouts.

Over the years Yolanda has retained this love for socialising and staying in contact with people.

### PEOPLE PERSON

The personal element of radio is one of Yolanda’s favourite aspects of the job.

“As a presenter, you are in direct contact with your listeners. I get immediate feedback about a new song, delicious recipe or interesting interview,” she says.

Yolanda has also had her share of laughs behind the microphone.

“The funniest incident was probably during a sports bulletin, when I read ‘sucsex’ instead of success. Johnne van Huyssteen (the presenter) and I couldn’t stop laughing and it took five minutes before I could continue with the bulletin. If you can’t laugh at yourself, then radio isn’t for you.”

There have also been sad moments, such as when she had to present a programme as a tribute to Ms Lindsay Batterson, a colleague who died in a car crash.

## Educate a woman, and you educate a nation

Although she had a lot of fun as a student, Yolanda also experienced the darker side of life when she worked at the Africa Centre for Disaster Studies on the Potchefstroom Campus after completing her studies.

There she became involved with the Girls in Risk Reduction Leadership Project (GIRRL project), where she was introduced to the harsh realities of physical violence, extortion and extreme poverty – challenges that these girls regularly had to face.

“They often become the head of the household at a very

young age, caring for younger brothers and sisters.

“I have so much respect for their ability to stand up for themselves and to get along with so very little.

“It was amazing to witness their journeys of self-discovery and the realisation that they can become anything if they work hard and seek help in the right places.

“I wish more companies and institutions would offer bursaries for girls. As the famous educator, Dr Kwegyir Aggrey, said: If you educate a woman, you educate a nation.”

“It was the most difficult thing I have ever done on radio. I was unable to read the news afterwards.”

### BEHIND THE MICROPHONE

Some of the interesting people she has interviewed include the band Lady Antebellum, racing driver Mika Hakkinen, singer Bonnie Tyler and actor Gerard Butler, as well as local artists like Chris Chameleon, Bobby van Jaarsveld and Nadine.

Has she ever been at a loss for words behind the microphone?

“Of course,” she responds. “How would you feel sharing a studio with Bobby van Jaarsveld, his eyes locked on yours? Or Ryk Neethling? Or Gerard Butler? I love my job! What woman wouldn’t love being paid to talk?”

Yolanda is most definitely a talker. She is also a doer who lives life with abandon. ▶

Yolanda shines during a photo shoot organised by the radio station, OFM.



# Educator gives offenders

When she works with offenders serving their sentences at the Mafikeng Correctional Centre, all Ms Hellen Leseyane sees is people in need of her help.

Compassion is among the qualities that have made Ms Hellen Leseyane, alumnus of the Mafikeng Campus, one of the most successful adult educators in South Africa's Department of Correctional Services.

"I see the offenders as my brothers in need of help. With an education, it is possible for a person to make a living after being released. It makes it easier to find a place in society."

As head of education and training at Mafikeng Correctional Centre, Hellen runs all its education programmes for offenders, including adult basic education and training (AET), skills training such as plumbing, and tertiary studies through distance education. She also continues to teach in class and to go from cell to cell to recruit learners.

"Our results are very good. For AET levels two, three and four in 2010/11 (the period of this award) only three learners failed and our pass rate was approximately 85%."

Three learners are currently busy with their diplomas. Hellen knows of several former offenders who completed grade 12 at the centre and have continued to improve their qualifications since being released on parole.

## THE BEST OF THE BEST

In March 2013, Hellen received the coveted national Education and Training Award from Correctional Services Minister Mr Sibusiso Ndebele, making her the top educator.

What made the award all the more special was that no one else came close to winning.

Although two other finalists were in the running for the award, they tied in third place. "There was no position two, which makes the award a very big achievement for me."

Two weeks after receiving the award, Hellen received an invitation from the Australasian Corrections Education Association to attend its 2013 conference in Australia.

Then, in August 2013, she was included in the *Mail & Guardian's* 2013 Book of South African Women, celebrating the country's most influential women.

## NOT HER FIRST CHOICE

Clearly, she is an excellent teacher – but teaching was not actually her first study choice when she initially applied at the then University of Bophuthatswana.

"I wanted to be a social worker but decided to opt for my second choice, public administration," says Hellen, who grew up in Pella village near Rustenburg and was the youngest of 11 children.

Fortunately – as things turned out – her application for BA Admin studies was turned down.

"I was not admitted to it because it was already full, but now I have realised that I could have made the biggest mistake of my life if I had been admitted."

For one thing, Hellen does not particularly enjoy administration. For another, education runs in her blood.

"We are a family of teachers. My father, my three sisters and most of my family members were teachers, and I saw how highly they were respected in the community."

So teaching it was. After completing her BA Education degree in 1996, Helen went on to do her BA Honours in Geography and was all set to become a teacher.

Then her career plans hit a snag. "It was 1997 and the Bophuthatswana government had been overthrown. There were no posts for educators."

## KNOCKING ON DOORS

She didn't languish at home for long.

"One morning I was listening to a radio interview with the then provincial head of education at Rooigrond Correctional Centre," Hellen recalls.

"I took his details and the following day I knocked at his door and asked to volunteer as an educator. Two months later they called me."

Instead of being a volunteer working for nothing, Hellen was paid a small stipend as an adult educator at Rooigrond Correctional Centre.



# hope for the future

A year or two later, the opportunity came up to apply for a post as a security official.

"I was working under Discipline, which meant my duties included inside guarding duties, hospital guarding and manning gates," Hellen recalls.

That lasted for three years and took her far away from education, her passion.

"But it was not wasted time. My love was for education but I used the opportunity to help the Education Office whenever I could, such as when people there went on leave."

Later, when the opportunity presented itself, she successfully applied to become an educator, a position she has happily filled ever since.

## LISTENING AND SEEKING TO UNDERSTAND

Interestingly enough, being an adult educator at a correctional centre has also enabled Hellen to experience a taste of social work, her original career ambition.

"Sometimes I will observe that a learner is not coming to school or his performance is dropping. I will call that person to my office and ask him why his marks are dropping."

When she sees a learner whose spirits are low, Hellen does her best to give that person hope and, if necessary, refer him to a social worker for counselling.

"I care very much, but at the same time I am firm and professional, and I never forget why I am here. The learners will tell you, 'Oh this woman is so strict!' However, it is important for them to understand that they can only build a better future if they change their behaviour."

The message that crime does not pay is one that Hellen believes young people need to hear.

This is the purpose of her Advise the Youth project, which entails videotaping the stories of offenders who are willing to appear on camera. The plan is to record these stories on DVDs for distribution to schools in the future.

"Young people are not aware of the consequences of crime and how much they can lose whilst in prison," Hellen says. "By hearing about this from the horse's mouth, they will realise what the impact is on the lives of offenders and their families."

This project is still in the early stages, however. In the meantime, Hellen continues to do what she does best: bring hope to offenders through excellent education. ▀

Me Hellen  
Leseiyane



# Techno boss finds balance in nature

Mind-blowing technological advancements excite him, but Dr John Carstens, alumnus of the Vaal Triangle Campus, can be just as enthusiastic about the tranquility of nature.

Dr John Carstens knows how to balance opposites.

As chief financial officer of Altech, a telecommunication, multimedia and IT company, his work environment is one of cutting-edge technology, but the world closer to his heart is one of mountains, the ocean and the bushveld.

The secret, he says, is to spend time in nature so that you can strike a balance between the fast pace of the technological world and the serenity of nature.

"We don't always achieve this balance, but I feel that I meet God in the beauty and stillness of nature," he says.

## FROM MOUNTAIN TO RIVER

No wonder Dr John loves nature – he grew up in the scenic Cape and matriculated at the Tygerberg High School in Parow.

Then he changed scenery and went to study at the Stellenbosch University, where he obtained his BCom and BComHons degrees. He completed his master's (1992 to 1997) and doctorate (1999 to 2003) on the banks of the Vaal River when the NWU's Vaal Triangle Campus was still part of the former Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education.

Dr John, a qualified chartered accountant, wrote his thesis on accounting control in electronic commerce. His studies culminated in the writing of a textbook that was eventually published in 2004, with Prof Pierre Lucouw from the Vaal Triangle Campus as co-author and co-editor.

## WHAT A JOURNEY

He thinks of studying as a never-ending journey of acquiring knowledge and discovering more about himself. "It's not just

book knowledge that plays a role, but also the influence that people have had on me."

After 21 years he is still in contact with Prof Pierre and his wife Susan. "They are very dear friends of my wife, Ann, and myself."

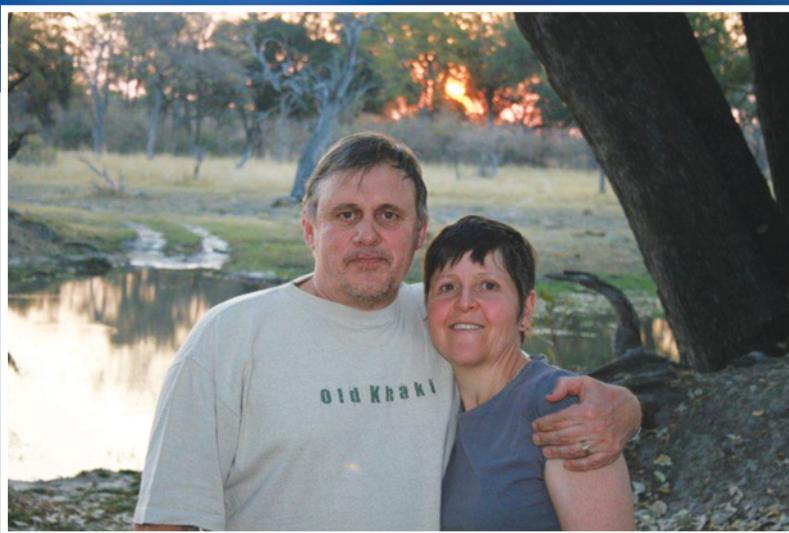
Ann is a professor in veterinary science at the University of Pretoria. Dr John also had a stint in academia, having taught accounting and auditing at the former Vista University.

Before joining Altech in 1989, he worked at auditing firms, Dairy Bell, Sasol and ASEA, a Swedish manufacturing company.

## MAKING LIFE EASIER AND SIMPLER

In 1996 Dr John was appointed as a company director and the chief financial officer of Altech. He contributes to strategy and plan-





Dr John and Prof Ann relax in the Okovango Delta.

“ IF I HAVE TO SUM IT UP, I'D SAY YOU NEED TO LIVE YOUR DREAM, BE CONTENT AND PERSIST WITH WHATEVER YOU TAKE ON.

”

ning, and is involved in taking and executing decisions. He also exercises control over Altech's financial decisions and business interests.

After more than 24 years' experience in the electronics, telecommunication and electric energy industry, he still gets excited about the innovative new technologies that are being invented almost daily, especially cordless devices and cheaper, simpler communication devices that make life easier.

#### A HELPING HAND

But his business is not just about technology; he also believes that it's important for companies to become involved in the communities in which they operate.

"Social engagement should be part of a company's objectives – companies should give back to the community which indirectly makes their very existence possible."

With his imminent retirement in 2014, Dr John is satisfied that he has tried throughout the years to support others in their development – at work and in their personal growth.

What he might have done differently is give back even more of what he has learnt and experienced over the years. "I would like to spend more time on community work – I hope to be able to rectify that in the years to come."

#### GIVE BACK, TRAVEL AND RELAX

Dr John and his wife live in Pretoria, but own property in George and Harolds Bay, and plan to retire at the seaside.

"There is so much to look forward to. I would love to be able to spend more time with my family and friends and to become

more involved in community affairs, as well as to explore our country and its people."

Dr John has travelled a lot during his career; Italy and Britain are some of his favourite countries.

His fondness for Britain probably stems from the fact that one of his sons has lived there for the past seven years. His other son is a bit closer to home – he lives with his family in Muizenberg, Cape Town.

Grandpa John has two grandchildren – a girl and a boy.

#### GOOD ADVICE AND A LESSON OR TWO

He has good advice for the young people of today: "Choose a field of study that will allow you to live a fulfilled life. I know it is not always easy, but so many people are stuck in careers where they are not happy."

And what has life taught him so far?

His answer: "I'm glad to hear you say 'so far', because I continue to learn every day. If I have to sum it up, I'd say you need to live your dream, be content and persist with whatever you take on."

On his wish list for the coming years is "to write another book and to lecture". Other items on this list include reading, travelling and socialising around a campfire, at a swimming pool or at the sea.

He will probably also find more time for his favourite hobbies. So don't be too surprised if you encounter him on a hike in the Drakensberg Mountains, or armed with a fishing rod by a silver stream in Mpumalanga... ▶

# She loves the taste of food culture

Dr Renata Coetzee, alumnus of the Potchefstroom Campus and recipient of an honorary doctorate from the NWU, is described as a celebrated writer on food and a respected researcher.

Food involves much more than just eating – a nation's food culture is closely entwined with its values, art, music and folklore – actually its whole being.

This truth is confirmed in Dr Renata Coetzee's book, *Kukumakranka – Khoi-Khoin\*Culture, Customs and Creative Cooking*, published in 2010 by Lapa Publishers.

This book, which tells the food stories of the ethnic group, the Khoi-Khoin, is not Dr Renata's first time in the food limelight.

Her research of approximately 40 years about the eating habits of indigenous nations

has already resulted in various other books (see text box), lectures and TV appearances. She is also a frequent celebrity guest at international food festivals in places such as Israel, the USA, Switzerland, Austria, the Netherlands, China, Zambia, Namibia and Malawi.

## TO BE KNOWN IS TO BE LOVED

Wherever Dr Renata goes, she introduces people to the rich culinary heritages of the different cultures of South Africa so that people can learn to love and respect what is perhaps unknown to them.

"By learning to know one another's eating culture, we also learn to know one another," says Dr Renata.

In 2000 she received the Chancellor's Medal from the University of Pretoria for her life-long dedication and contribution, and in 2007 she received an honorary doctorate from the NWU.

Her association with the NWU – and specifically with the former Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education (PU for CHE) – started in 1948 as a first-year BSc student in dietetics, food science and chemistry.

Dr Renata followed up her undergraduate studies with a master's degree which she received in the USA, where she attended the universities of Wisconsin-Madison and Cornell.

She has also taught at various South African universities, namely the PU for CHE (1960 to 1963), Stellenbosch and Pretoria.

## PRESERVE OUR HERITAGE

To Dr Renata all this is much more than just a career – she is passionate about the conservation of indigenous foods and traditions.

Dr Renata Coetzee has been collecting facts and stories about people and their food cultures for years.

"Various species of veld foods in Southern Africa are already lost or on the brink of extinction," she says.

In order to preserve this heritage she gladly helps to establish indigenous gardens, for example the one on the Solms-Delta Wine Estate near Franschhoek.

In this garden they grow traditional herbs, fruit and vegetables of the Khoi-Khoen. These include sorrel, wild cabbage, the Kei apple and the T'samma. (The latter is a kind of watermelon that is the main source of water and veld food in the Kalahari.)

### FROM VELD FOOD TO MEALS ON THE TABLE

The food from this garden is used to prepare veld food dishes in the wine estate's restaurant, Fyndraai.

"I am so glad that the results of my research are used in such a way," says Dr Renata.

It is her wish that the oldest eating culture of our country will be revived. In the third part of her book, *Kukumakranka*, she connects the past and the present with her recipes for Khoi-Khoen food for today's tables.

Among these recipes you will find drinks such as kukumakranka liqueur, sauces such as t'Nabba sauce (made from Kalahari truffles), and meat dishes such as porcupine skin roasted on a fire and rabbit cooked with wild garlic and wild rosemary.

### FURTHER BACK

Dr Renata is currently finalising a book about a food culture dating further back than that of the Khoi-Khoen – it deals with the eating habits of their predecessors.

These early people lived at the southern point of Africa as long as 200 000 years ago, and according to scientists, their descendants populated the whole world. Scientists also found that the early people who lived at the Blombos cave near Stillbaai and ate seafood were an important link in the development of mankind.

This book, *A Feast from Nature – !GAROB ≠ ŪN*, will bring lots of reading pleasure to everyone who loves stories about people's food cultures. ▀

\* *Khoi-Khoen* is the plural of *Khoi-Khoi*.

## Food stories from her pen

Through the years Dr Renata's research has become food for thought in various books.



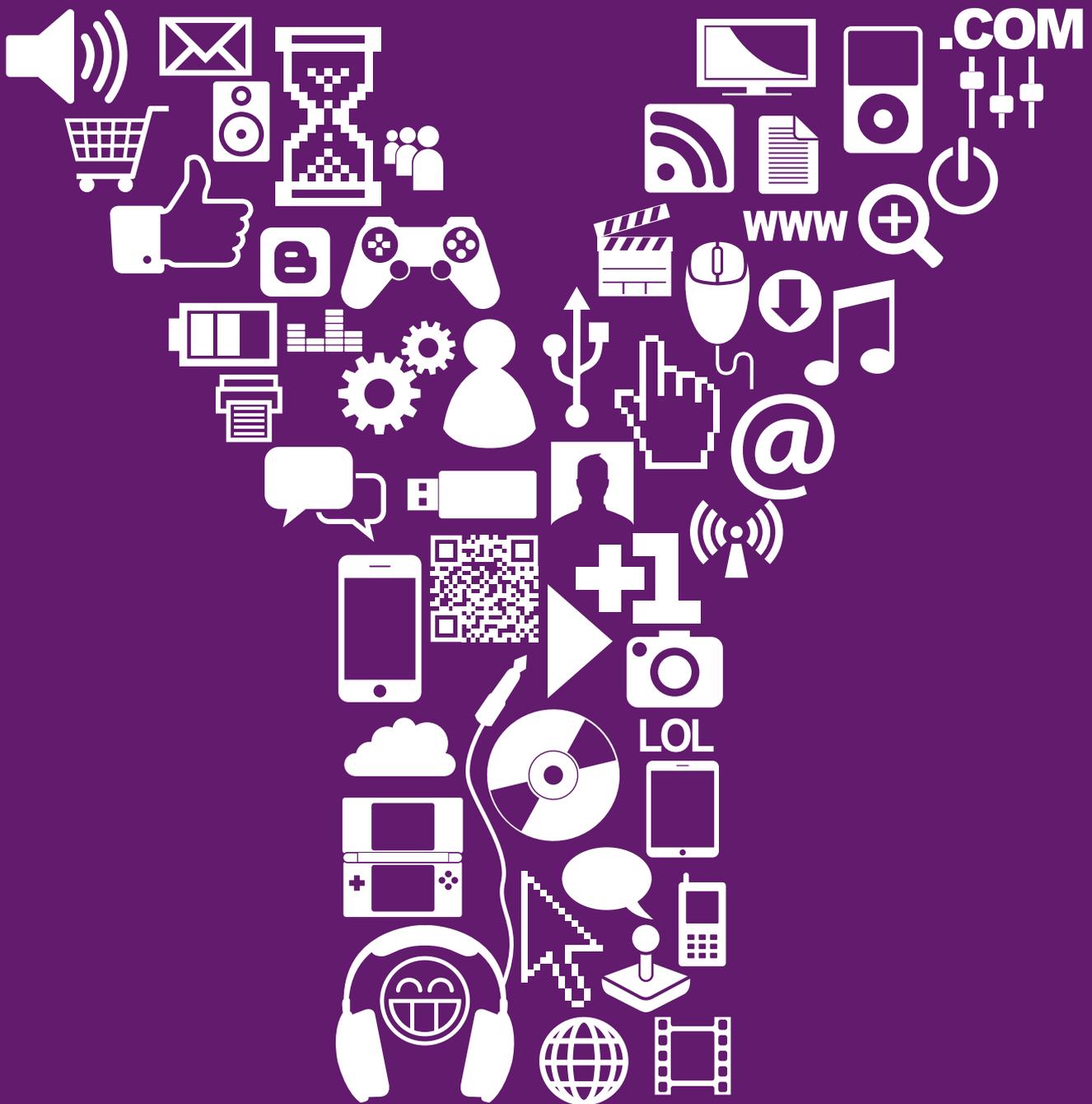
- ❖ *Spys en Drank* was first published by Struik in 1977 and this year Lapa republished it. This book tells of the eating habits in the Cape from 1652 to 1800, and how they were influenced by the Malay slaves, the French, the Dutch and the Germans.

The famous chef and food expert Peter Veldsman said the following about this 1977 edition: "For the first time since Leipoldt a cookbook with cultural value has been published."

About this year's edition, he said that this book does not contain a bunch of dry, academic facts. It is written in a language that even the current generation of young people will enjoy.

- ❖ *Funa – Food from Africa* deals with the foods and eating habits of the different black ethnic groups of Africa. The book, which was published by Butterworths in 1982, is currently out of print.
- ❖ *Cost-conscious Creative Catering*, self-published by Dr Renata in 1994, reflects her knowledge of bulk catering. (For example, at one time as the departmental manager for dietetics and catering at Anglo American, she was responsible for 250 000 meals per day.)
- ❖ *Kookemakranka – Khoi-Khoen-Kultuuroed en Kom-Kuier-Kos*. This book was published in 2009 by Lapa, and Volker Miro was responsible for the beautiful photographs.
- ❖ *Kukumakranka - Khoi-Khoen Culture, Customs and Creative Cooking* was published in 2010 by Lapa, with photographs by Volker Miro. ▀

# GENERATION



*It takes more than a good salary to attract and retain Generation Y employees, who expect to be promoted quickly, are already thinking ahead to retirement and want work-life balance and plenty of training opportunities.*

# How to attract Generation Y employees

Many employers are currently facing challenges attracting, developing and retaining Generation Y employees.

This is one of the findings of a research study led by Prof Nicolene Barkhuizen of the Department of Industrial Psychology at the Mafikeng Campus.

“Our aim was to determine the reward and remuneration practices that will attract them to organisations,” Prof Nicolene says.

Generation Y refers to the age group born between the early 1980s and the early 2000s who, it is believed, are constantly looking out for better prospects and more rewarding jobs in reputable companies and prestigious settings.

For the study, 202 final-year undergraduate students completed a survey questionnaire measuring 17 reward and remuneration practices on a five-point scale from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree”.

“Some of our findings were quite surprising,” says Prof Nicolene.

## RAPID CAREER PROGRESS

One surprise was that, for the group as a whole, the most important employment requirement of Generation Y employees was career development, which came in slightly ahead of a good base salary.

“Base salary is important to them but career development is more important,” she says. “It seems that Generation Y employees want to start their careers in more senior positions than earlier generations; they also want to progress more quickly and are not willing to wait long for promotion opportunities.”

Another surprising result was that retirement benefits were the third most important factor for survey participants. “It’s very interesting that such young people are already thinking

about their retirement.” The fourth and fifth most important reward and remuneration practices overall were training opportunities and work-life balance.

## DIFFERENCES BETWEEN ENGLISH AND AFRIKAANS SPEAKERS

However, there were some differences in the priorities of English-speaking survey participants – who were in the majority in the study – compared to the priorities of their Afrikaans-speaking peers.

After base salary and career advancement, Afrikaans-speakers listed their most important remuneration practices as performance management, recruitment and work-life balance.

For the English-speaking respondents, healthcare emerged as the greatest employment drawcard – more attractive even than base salary and career advancement.

The picture changed slightly again, however, when the whole group was asked to rank their most and least important reward and remuneration practices (as opposed to using the five-point scale to agree or disagree with statements in the questionnaire).

“The ranking results showed that base salary was by far the most important, followed by work-life balance, career advancement and healthcare,” Prof Nicolene says. “On the other hand, the least important practices were shares, followed by perks, savings and leadership style.”

She says the study has opened up new avenues for further research, and the team is eagerly preparing to delve deeper into the issues uncovered, including Generation X employees’ attitudes to healthcare and retirement.

Employers will no doubt await the results with eagerness. ▀



Prof Nicolene wanted to know what makes Generation Y employees tick.

# Art treasures – from small beginnings come great things



In 1932, there was just £6 in the annual budget to purchase works of art; in the meantime, the NWU's art collection has grown to 1 031 works, worth approximately R17 million.

The collection, started by the former Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education, has been made more accessible to the public through the recent publishing of a book about it.

The book, *NWU Art Collection: Looking back while moving forward*, was launched on 15 August 2013 at an exhibition on the Potchefstroom Campus.

### THEN AND NOW

As the name of the book suggests, the NWU's collection consists of older and newer works of art. Some of the older works are by artists such as Pierneef, Maggie Laubser, Bettie Cilliers-Barnard and Jo Roos.

Modern works of art in the collection include those by Pauline Gutter, Stompie Selibe, Barbara Wildenboer, Diane Victor and Gordon Froud.

### ART AS EXPRESSION

Mr Johan Myburgh, *Beeld's* art and entertainment editor, opened the exhibition at the Botanical Gardens Gallery.

"What is a university without an art collection?" he asked. "It is, after all, art that reminds us of our humanity – with all its baggage – and offers the viewer relief and gives expression to the sometimes inexpressible.

"It's important to exhibit this collection. It's fine when paintings hang in an office, but it means more in the library and other public spaces."

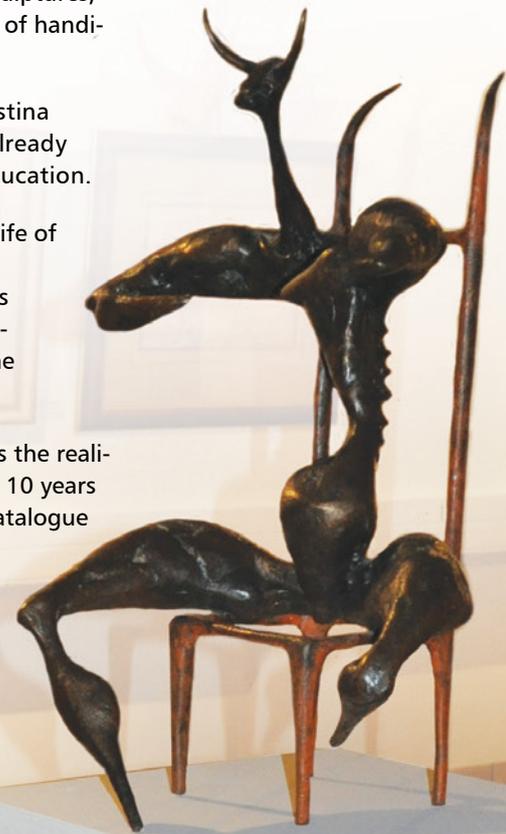
### BUILT UP OVER 80 YEARS

The NWU's art collection, built up over the past 80 years, include paintings, sculptures, graphic works and a few examples of handi-craft.

According to the curator, Ms Christina Naurattel, the art collection has already been the topic of research and education.

"The gallery also links the cultural life of the NWU with that of the broader community by means of exhibitions and publications to cultivate an understanding and appreciation of the visual arts."

The book about the art collection is the realisation of a dream conceived about 10 years ago to compile a comprehensive catalogue of the university's art collection. ▶



Maureen Vivian Quin's two works, *Queen* 1988 and *Supplication* 1998 – 1999, are part of the NWU's art collection.



Left: Hanneke Benade's art work, *Dropping a hint*, as photographed by Robert Hamblin.



# Erica sings a *lullaby for her alma mater*

Recently, at a lunch-hour concert on the campus, Ms Erica Eloff, renowned opera singer and alumnus from the Potchefstroom Campus, sang the lullabies that NWU staff member, Dr Hannes Taljaard composed for her daughter.

If the night breeze bothers you, come and sleep in my arms. If the moon shines in your eyes and leaves a tear on your cheek. Sing with me! (Translated.)

These beautiful words belong to a lullaby that Ms Erica Eloff, famous soprano, sings to her 21-month-old daughter, Elodie, when it's time for her to go to sleep. The lullaby is part of a cycle of five songs, specially composed for Erica by Dr Hannes Taljaard – resident composer of the Potchefstroom Campus – on the occasion of the birth of her third and youngest child.

Residents of Potchefstroom could enjoy these compositions by Dr Hannes for the first time on 29 August 2013, during a lunch-hour concert. What made the concert so extraordinary was that Erica, who presently resides in London, sang the lullabies in the conservatory hall of her alma mater.

The audience was carried away by the beautiful music and lyrics, with Erica's voice perfectly accompanied by Estelle Loubser on piano and Human Coetzer on the cello.

### A SPECIAL GIFT

Dr Hannes explains that he wanted to present Erica with a special gift in the form of the cycle of lullabies. It would be a gift that could not be stored away in a cupboard somewhere, but one that would regain its magic every time it was played or sung.

He explains: "The cycle consists of five songs that portray a typical bedtime scenario between mother and child. In the first song the

mother encourages the child to pack away her toys. Then, together, they sing a song of protection against all things strange and scary in the darkness of night."

But the child is still awake by the end of the protection song, and mother and child sing a playful counting rhyme. "In the fourth song the mother's resourcefulness surpasses the expectations of her child, who becomes drowsy and falls asleep."

This glimpse of the lives of mother and child is brought to an end when the final song proclaims the possibility of a world where acceptance is stronger than expectation.

Dr Hannes says that his original plan didn't quite extend to a cycle, but it gradually developed into one. His inspiration came from the great masters. "It contains hints of Brahms, Britten and Schubert. I also peeked over Haydn's shoulder," he explains. "Haydn in particular inspired the bass-line one hears in the composition."

### MAGICAL LYRICS

Erica says that the lyrics are magical, and are entertaining to both parents and children. "In the composition it is not only important what the mother says to the child, but the way in which it is said."

The mother's language is very creative, and she uses alliteration when she sings to hold the attention of the child. The meaning of the songs is deeply emotional and personal, as it refers to songs from Hannes's childhood.



Erica met her husband, Jacques, in 1994. They have three beautiful children, Eleonor (12), Xavier (10) and Elodie. As a mother of three she understands just how special and effective a lullaby can be. Dr Hannes, who she considers a dear friend, could hardly have bestowed a more precious and fitting gift.

Erica's performance at the conservatory was like a very special homecoming. "It is good to be home, where my musical talents were honed. It is like visiting family you haven't seen in a long time.

"The NWU conservatory with its staff and expertise holds a special place in my heart." She

was a first-year student at the conservatory in 1995, and she tries to visit at least once a year.

It is not the first time Dr Hannes has composed lullabies for Erica. In 1999 he composed *Wiegelielidjies* (Book 1) and in 2001 *Wiegelielidjies* (Book 2) – also for Erica. ▶

The birth of Ms Erica Eloff's youngest child moved Dr Hannes Taljaard (left) to compose a cycle of five lullabies.



# NWU and Kaizer Chiefs team up

The NWU is joining forces with the famous soccer club, Kaizer Chiefs, to help develop young soccer players.

In terms of an agreement with Kaizer Chiefs, the NWU will make its expertise available for the training of young, talented soccer players from this club's youth academy in Johannesburg.

The Centre for Continued Professional Training (CCPT) on the Vaal Triangle Campus will be the point of contact between the soccer club and experts across the NWU.

Their expertise will be used to develop young soccer players as well-rounded individuals – in other words it will not necessarily be about soccer only.

This means that the NWU will provide consultation services and also offer advice on a wide variety of topics. These include finance, nutrition, psychological preparation for high-performance sport and physical conditioning. The soccer players will thus be developed academically as well as professionally to prepare them for life after their professional soccer careers.

"The specific type of knowledge required will depend on Kaizer Chiefs' needs. If, for instance, they require knowledge on nutrition for sportsmen, we will put them in contact with the nutritionists on the Potchefstroom Campus. The CCPT can therefore be viewed as the coordination unit that mobilises the expertise of the NWU for the purposes of the project," says Mr Ederick Stander, project manager at the centre.

NWU experts from the Vaal Triangle Campus are already working on a business plan and a manual for the youth academy. The manual will contain elements of social, intellectual, physical, tactical and technical development.

## ENTIRE NWU CAN BENEFIT

According to Ederick, the collaboration with Kaizer Chiefs benefits the NWU in many ways.

Apart from the great marketing opportunities that an association with a leading sports brand such as Kaizer Chiefs brings, the NWU will also receive third stream income for the services and knowledge of its experts.

"As a result of the agreement, Kaizer Chiefs' senior team, the current Absa Premiership and Nedbank Cup champions, have already held two of their pre-season training camps at the FNB High Performance Institute of Sport on the Potchefstroom Campus. The club also pays the Vaal Triangle Campus a monthly service fee for making professional services available."

## INNOVATION CENTRE

Another result of the collaboration between Kaizer Chiefs and the NWU is the Kaizer Chiefs Innovation Centre to be established on the Vaal Triangle Campus next year. NWU staff and students, as well as supporters from the local community, will be able to enjoy the total Kaizer Chiefs experience.

Prof Thanyani Mariba, the campus rector, and Mr Kaizer Motaung, the executive chairperson of Kaizer Chiefs and legendary soccer icon in South Africa, have already signed an agreement to make this centre a reality.

The centre will consist of a two-storey building of approximately 300 m<sup>2</sup>. On the ground floor a wide range of Kaizer Chiefs products will be for sale, while the top floor will be used as office space where postgraduate students and academics from the NWU can do research.

Ederick believes that the NWU's association with Kaizer Chiefs will create many research opportunities in subject disciplines such as sports management, sports science and sports psychology.

"The agreement with Kaizer Chiefs is proof of the NWU's reputation as a research institution with a strong base of expertise and as an internationally recognised destination for sports development," he says.



# We recognise outstanding contributions

**Chief Justice Mogoeng Mogoeng** received an honorary doctorate from the Mafikeng Campus in recognition of his vision of an independent, empowered, adequately resourced and transformed judiciary.

As judge and judge president of the North West Province, he maintained close ties with the NWU's Faculty of Law on the Mafikeng Campus. He is often invited to the campus as a guest speaker and mentor.

The Mafikeng Campus also awarded an honorary doctorate to **Dr Mbuyiseni Oswald Mtshali**.

This was done in recognition of his life-long contribution to the literary arts in South Africa and the world. His book, *Sounds of a Cowhide Drum: Poems*, was one of the first volumes of poetry by a black South African poet and won him the Olive Schreiner Prize for poetry in 1974.

**Prof Michael Welker** received an honorary doctorate from the Potchefstroom Campus for his significant contribution to bringing new relevance to biblical and reformed theology in an era in which biblical theology is widely viewed as dated.

Prof Michael was honoured for his development of theological research networks, as well as for stimulating and participating in discussions between theologians and natural scientists.

The Mafikeng Campus awarded the Chancellor's Medal to **Ms Mmakgotha Grace Masuku** for her exceptional contributions to the South African community. She was honoured for her work in the field of environmental conservation and the protection of indigenous knowledge systems for sustainable existence

(including traditional medicine), and for promoting the culture and traditions of the Batswana people.

**Mr Vincent Craig Carruthers** received the Chancellor's Medal from the Potchefstroom Campus for his contribution to environmental affairs and his involvement in various authoritative books on South African wild life.

He has authored two books in cooperation with the NWU – *Complete guide to the frogs of Southern Africa* and *Frogs and Frogging in South Africa*.

The Potchefstroom Campus also awarded the Chancellor's Medal to the **Rev Erlo Hartwig Stegen** for his continued contributions in the field of education development and community upliftment.

Kwasizabantu, currently the largest missionary station in Africa, was founded by Rev Erlo in 1970.

The Vaal Triangle Campus awarded the Chancellor's Medal to **Dr Molefi Oliphant** for his outstanding contributions to the development of soccer and his role in South Africa's successful bid to host the 2010 FIFA World Cup.

He served as bursar of the former Transvaal Football Association until 1991, and was subsequently elected as vice-president and later president of the South African Football Union (SAFA). ▸

Several prominent South Africans have received honorary doctorates or chancellor's medals from the NWU in recognition of their exceptional contributions to society.



Chief Justice Mogoeng Mogoeng receives his honorary doctorate from the Mafikeng Campus in recognition of his efforts to improve the competence and effectiveness of the judicial system by promoting access to justice, especially for rural and indigent communities.

# Intervarsity is war, man!

Seventy years of intervarsity matches against Kovies have produced many crocodile tears and raw wounds, but also many happy times and triumphant moments. The book, *Dis oorlog, man!* tells the eventful story of these battles.

Intervarsity is not for the faint-hearted – it's war, man!

This is the message in this easy-to-read book about the past 70 years of intervarsity clashes between the former Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education (now the NWU) and the University of the Free State (Kovies).

The book is the brainchild of Prof Rikus Fick, the dean of student affairs on the Potchefstroom Campus, while Ms Lennie Gouws and Mr Bertie Jacobs wrote the book.

Lennie, a freelance journalist from Potchefstroom, spent hours doing research in the archives of the NWU and the local newspaper, the *Potchefstroom Herald*.

Bertie, an experienced journalist at Marketing and Communication on the campus, conducted many interviews with the leading figures of yesterday and today, including alumni, coaches and players.

These two writers dusted down and polished the facts, stories, rumours and anecdotes from the old days to compile this fun-filled book. Ms Marlize van Rooyen, also from Marketing and Communication, did the layout.

Ms Lennie Gouws, a freelance writer, and Mr Bertie Jacobs of Marketing and Communication, have a good laugh about a wisecrack by the Intervarsity cheerleader, Hans van Zyl. He said that the other person's squint was so bad that his tears ran down his back when he cried. Lennie and Bertie wrote the book, *Dis oorlog, man!*

## THE DAYS OF YORE

There are many photographs from the olden days, and headings such as "*die plesiermaking en lawaai duur voort*" (the merry making and rowdiness continue), "*skaking van epiese proporsies*" (kidnapping of epic proportions) invite one to read more.

Although sports such as netball and hockey are mentioned, most of the book is dedicated to rugby, with the scores of the "battles" from 1927 to 2011 at the back.

Prof Rikus writes in his preface that when you page through the history of the past 69 intervarsities, it strikes you how unique each of them was.

For example, there was the epic rugby match of 1977, when the result was described as Puk 30, Springboks 27. There were also the dismal "lean years" of 1978 to 2000, when the Puk rugby team scored only one victory against Kovies and ended only one match in a draw.





The team of 1977 are at the back from left J Strydom, O Oosthuizen, D Weitz, E le Roux and A Markgraaff. In the middle row are from left T Eloff, S Greyling, B de Klerk, J Venter, D van Heerden, P Coetzee and F Venter. In front are from left W Smit, Mr P Malan (sports director), J Stoffberg, (coach/captain), Dr W Scott (chairperson) and A Rossouw.



This is the Intersvarsity team for 2013. In the front row from left are Malan van der Merwe, JC Oberholzer, Gerhard Nortier, Hannes Esterhuizen (head coach), Victor Kruger (captain), Attie Strauss (coach), André Barnard and Philip de Wet. In the middle from left are Henning van der Merwe (kicking coach/logistical manager), Pieter Smith, Janus Jonker, Mashudu Mafela, Marius Fourie, Johan Smith, Rudolph Muller, Justin Botha and Jaco Colyn (physiotherapist). At the back from left are Ian Heyns, Henri Scharneck, Robey Labuschagne, Cobus Oosthuizen (sports scientist), Danie Jordaan, SJ Niemand, Adriaan Oosthuizen and Malherbe Swart.

**PROPERLY WHITEWASHED**

Luckily the turn of the century brought a turning point, and there were many joyful celebrations in 2000 when the team broke the losing streak after 17 years.

Not long after that, in 2005, the Puk team properly “whitewashed” Kovsies (as the local newspaper put it) by walloping their opponents 48 – 28, their biggest victory ever over Kovsies.

**LET’S SING ALONG**

Besides the colourful descriptions of the matches, the book is full of anecdotes about legendary cheerleaders, enthusiastic champagne girls and abducted student council chairpersons.

The book is not all you get for your R250 (or R300 including postage if the address is in South Africa).

The price includes a CD with intersvarsity songs, which were obtained from long-playing records released in 1961 and 1969. (The price of the 1961 record was a whopping R3,50!)

The authors of the book invite you to sing along, and when you close your eyes, it will be intersvarsity again...

However, you have to buy the book first – please contact Ms Karien Lowe in Prof Rikus’s office at 018 299 2834, or send her an email at [karien.lowe@nwu.ac.za](mailto:karien.lowe@nwu.ac.za) to obtain your copy. ▶

# IT ALL STARTS AT THE NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY

Next year the North-West University will commemorate the first decade of a successful merger. In 2004 we took a giant leap into our future so that you could take a giant leap into yours. Today we are continually looking for new ways of defining the future, as we want you to be as proud to be a part of the NWU as we are to have you as one of our alumni.

It all starts here™



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