

Alumni Relations  
Office comes to  
the rescue ...



***Springboks'***

triumph helps raise  
R100 000

PPS donation adds  
professional touch

Young Alumni Chapter empowers  
underprivileged students





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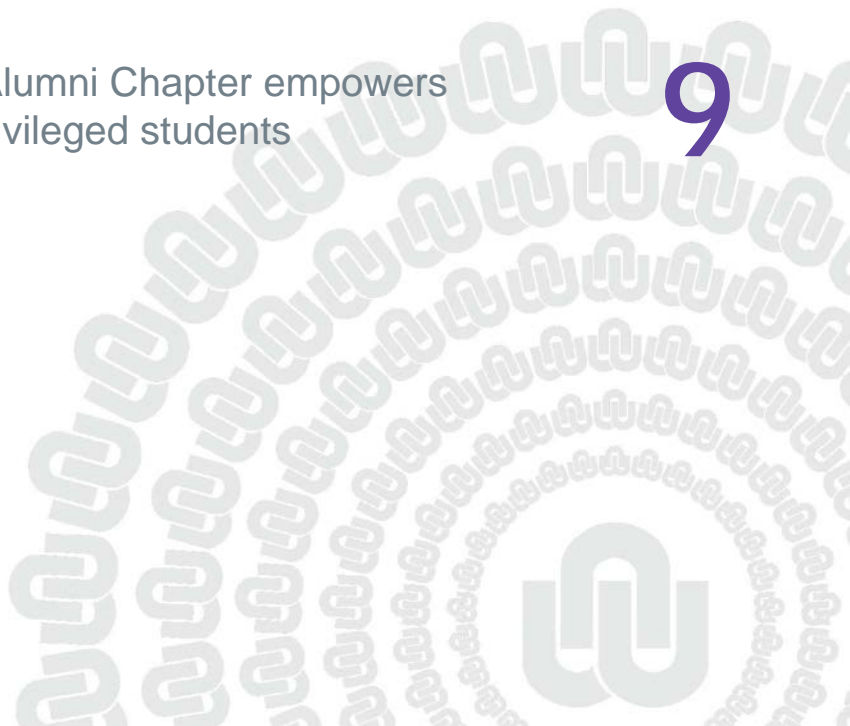
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# MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE BOARD OF DONORS



Ms Percy Moleke

Dear donors and friends of the NWU,

Few things in life are more rewarding than knowing you have made a positive impact on someone's life.

When you donate to the NWU, you pave the way to a brighter future for many students, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

The NWU is constantly seeking new ways to improve the lives of its students and those of the communities it serves. Through your generous donations you will make bursaries available to students and enable the NWU to share its expertise with communities through research and innovation that is focused on finding problem-solving solutions.

It is a misconception that the National Student Financial Aid (NSFAS) provides adequate support and that there is therefore no need to fund students. There are still funding gaps, for instance in the funding of postgraduate students.

I implore you as donors to continue with your funding, whether it is to the university or directly to students. [Click here](#) to select one of our initiatives to support.

You can rest assured that the Board of Donors is fulfilling its oversight role by ensuring that your investments will yield the intended results.

Remember, by helping the NWU financially, you give hope where there were no prospects, and you open doors where there were no exits.

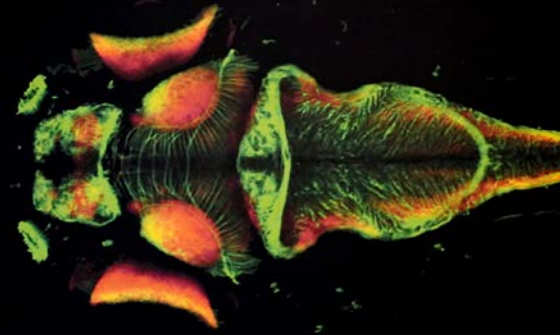
Kind regards

Percy Moleke, chairperson of the NWU Board of Donors

# GENEROUS DONATION

from PPS adds a professional  
and aesthetic touch

by Steve Maphakathe



**Thanks to a generous donation from the Professional Provident Society (PPS), the entrance to the top floor of the Pharmacy Building now looks like a million dollars.**

The entrance to this floor, hosting Pharmacology and a research team of the Pharmacoen Centre of Excellence, has been renovated and modernised with technology and art.

These improvements complement and celebrate the neuro-psychopharmacological focus of the Pharmacology subject group's expertise, which entails examining the effects of drugs on the mind.

The postgraduate laboratory has also been revamped.

The reception area is now equipped with a display screen and room cast showing the subject group's publications and achievements, as well as several pieces of graphic wall art. (Room casts are screens that stream video or audio.)

*At the back from left are Prof Jan Steenekamp from the NWU, Kirsten Dreyer and Kosie Dreyer, both independent financial advisers, Leonard Haasbroek, PPS regional officer, and Pierre Coetzee, PPS manager for the graduate division. In front are Prof Linda Brand from the NWU and Marletta Augustyn, PPS regional officer.*



The art explores the brain and neurons and depicts the subject group's excellence as one of the oldest and foremost behavioural neuroscientific research groups.

### What a special occasion

The handover of the finished renovations took place on 7 November 2023. Representatives from PPS and staff from the subject group and the Department of Development and Fundraising of the NWU attended the event.

Dr Stephan Steyn, senior lecturer from Pharmacology, gave the welcome address, emphasising the significance of the venture.

"PPS is investing in the future of young professionals, and these enhancements will be beneficial to both undergraduate and postgraduate students."

Dr Steyn said the paintings inspired and motivated the staff members to keep doing what they adore.

### More praise for PPS

Prof Jan Steenekamp, newly appointed director of the School of Pharmacy from January 2024, also expressed his gratitude to PPS for this initiative.

"We appreciate PPS's dedication and look forward to growing our relationship with them and strengthening our collaboration."

It is commendable that NWU stakeholders are taking the initiative and collaborating to develop the future of young professionals.

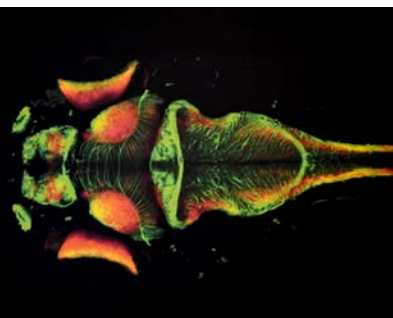
Creating a pleasant and aesthetically beautiful environment is more than a mere nice-to-have when it truly inspires and creates a professional atmosphere to work in.



## VALUE FOR PROFESSIONALS

[PPS](#) is a mutual financial services company in South Africa that offers tailor-made insurance, investment and healthcare solutions exclusively for graduate professionals with an honours equivalent or higher qualification from a public institution or certain listed private institutions.

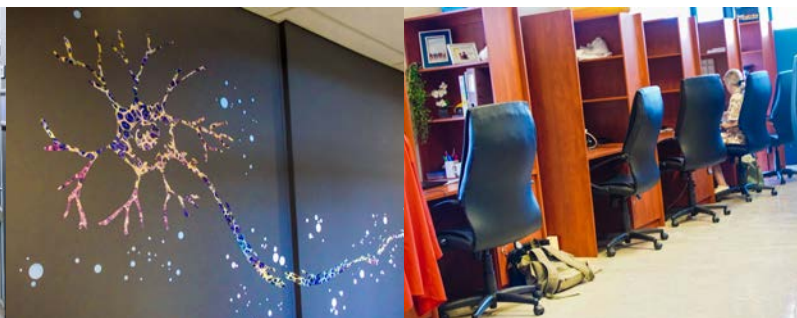
The company assists members to secure their current and future financial position by providing peace of mind throughout their professional careers and during their retirement years.



*An illustration depicting a frog's brain.*



*Guests at the handover event take a tour of the reconstructed third floor of the Pharmacy Building.*



*A painting of a single neuron at the end of the corridor.*

*The postgraduate laboratory has also been renovated.*

By Pheny Mokgothu

# Alumni

## RELATIONS OFFICE

**supports graduating students**

After writing her final exam at the end of 2023, *\*Patricia* felt confident that she would pass with flying colours. Only one hurdle remained between her and graduating in 2024: an outstanding debt.

*\*Not her real name*

**Then the Alumni Relations Office came to her rescue ...**

During the past few months the Alumni Relations Office has hosted various paid events to assist struggling final-year students. They successfully raised R90 000 to help students with outstanding debts of R5 000 or less to clear their financial obligations and graduate in 2024.

The team presented the cheque to Prof Sonia Swanepoel, deputy vice-chancellor for community engagement and Mahikeng Campus operations, during the staff year-end function on 24 November 2023.

"The paid events we host serve as a key fundraising mechanism," says Keabetswe Gopane, alumni relations practitioner at the Mahikeng Campus.

"We encourage our alumni to attend these events, and with the proceeds generated over the years we established a fund specifically aimed at assisting graduating students who have financial constraints," she adds.

**Many ways to give back**

Keabetswe says the decision to support students with modest outstanding debts aligns with the office's mission to encourage alumni to give back to the university in various ways.

"This contribution will aid the upcoming generation of alumni and significantly contribute to fostering a culture of alumni giving," she says.

"Beyond financial contributions, we also ask our alumni to assist in other ways.

"These may include offering their time through mentoring, participating in motivational talks, providing training, delivering public lectures and connecting NWU students with various opportunities," says Keabetswe.



From left are Maxwell Dyasi, Mahikeng Campus Alumni Committee member, Bongani Mahlangu from the NWU Convocation, Prof Sonia Swanepoel, deputy vice-chancellor for community engagement and Mahikeng Campus operations, and Keabetswe Gopane, alumni relations practitioner. On the far right is Jean Stidworthy, director of marketing and student recruitment, with the cheque for R90 000.

By Bertie Jacobs

# Springboks' World Cup

triumph helps raise R100 000  
for NWU students



*Having a whale of a time during the Rugby World Cup final ... next to NWU mascot Eagi (far right) are Prof Daryl Balia, deputy vice-chancellor for IT and Potchefstroom Campus operations, with Prof Mzubanzi Bismark Tyobeka, NWU principal and vice-chancellor, on his left.*

**It was decided on an impulse, but Nomvula Chasakara, chairperson of the Potchefstroom Campus Student Council (PCSC), knew it would work. How could it not, given the pulling power of the Springboks playing in their fourth World Cup final?**

By the time captain Siya Kolisi lifted the Webb Ellis Cup after the team beat the All Blacks in the final of the IRB Rugby World Cup in France, Nomvula and her dedicated team had managed to raise R100 000 for students struggling with their registration fees for 2024.

#### **How the big day played out**

On the day of that epic final, a large television screen was erected in the Amphitheatre on the Potchefstroom Campus and tickets to watch the game went on sale to students.



*Nomvula Chasakara is the chairperson of the Potchefstroom Campus Student Council for 2023/2024.*



*NWU mascot Eagi and Prof Bismark Mzubanzi Tyobeka, NWU principal and vice-chancellor, enjoy the screening of the Rugby World Cup final.*

In total, 2 100 seats were available at R20 per ticket, or R30 for two tickets. By 19:45, more than an hour before kick-off, there wasn't an empty seat left.

Nomvula and her team raised R33 000 from the ticket sales, and the offices of several executive management members agreed to sponsor the rest, making the magic R100 000 number a reality.

The collaborating offices were those of Prof Mzubanzi Bismark Tyobeka, the vice-chancellor, Prof Daryl Balia, Potchefstroom Campus deputy vice-chancellor, Dr Corrie Rheeder, director of Student Life on the Potchefstroom Campus, and Danie Hefer, manager of the Central Bursary Office.

The funds raised will be distributed by the Central Bursary Office.

### **Where it all started**

Nomvula says it all began when she and two fellow members of the Campus Student Council pitched their idea of using the Rugby World Cup final to raise funds to Dr Corrie Rheeder.

“We explained that all the proceeds would go to helping students register in 2024. She said if the registrar approved, we had her backing. We then spoke to the registrar, who gave the go-ahead.

“We decided to challenge Prof Tyobeka to match the ticket sales. He said he would match the sales and he would join us,” Nomvula explains.

On the big day, the students flocked to the Amphitheatre. Prof Daryl Balia sponsored the television screen, adding to the success of the occasion.

Says Nomvula: “The event was an on-the-spot decision and all involved just came together in a remarkable fashion.” It all goes to show how a culture of care makes winners of us all.





From left are Zanele Ngobese, alumni relations practitioner, Innocentia Mphuthi, former chairperson of the Vanderbijlpark Young Alumni Chapter, Prof Linda du Plessis, deputy vice-chancellor for planning and Vanderbijlpark Campus operations, Morena Tsotetsi, current chairperson of the chapter, and Celeste Rossouw, acting director for stakeholder relations.

# Young Alumni Chapter empowers underprivileged students

By Angeline Marokoane

**Giving back to the community and supporting underprivileged individuals holds immense value in shaping a better future for all.**

The Young Alumni Chapter of the Vanderbijlpark Campus has donated R90 000 towards the education fees of deserving graduates and R20 000 for the university’s Meal-a-Day programme.

This act of kindness took place during the campus’s recent year-end function.

The Vanderbijlpark Young Alumni Chapter, established in 2011, has set a remarkable example. Their generous donations show their dedication to ensuring that financial constraints are not an impediment to the pursuit of higher education.

By lifting the burden of outstanding fees, the chapter has paved the way for these deserving graduates to embark on successful careers and contribute meaningfully to society.

## Food for thought

In addition to its contribution towards education,

the chapter also donated generously towards the NWU’s Meal-a-Day programme that provides meals to underprivileged students.

By supporting this programme, the alumni ensured that students facing financial difficulties receive a nutritious meal each day, enhancing their overall well-being and educational prospects.

## Making a lasting impact

“These philanthropic endeavours highlight the importance of alumni networks and their potential to make a lasting impact on society,” said Prof Linda du Plessis, deputy vice-chancellor for planning and Vanderbijlpark Campus operations.

“The Vanderbijlpark Young Alumni Chapter serves as an inspiration to others, showcasing the power of collective action and the difference it can make in the lives of underprivileged individuals.

“By coming together and pooling their resources, alumni can create a ripple effect of positive change, enabling access to education and addressing challenges faced by marginalised communities,” she added.