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The Stellenbosch Alumni Relations team establishes alumni hubs both locally and internationally to connect alumni in specific regions with one another through regular networking and social events. For more information on how to start or join an existing hub in your area, send an e-mail to alumni@sun.ac.za.
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### SU/KU LEUVEN THINKTANK
- The SU/KU Leuven ThinkTank gets students from north and south talking about issues that impact on their future and the world around them.
EDITORIAL LETTER

by the stories of Dr Rust Theron, Blain van Wyk, Ethan Newman
we are innovative, inclusive and future-focused, as well as how
nose and how many Maties across the world do inspirational work.

discovered how many wonderful stories there are right under my
happens in other campus buildings. In the meantime I have
Rooiplein
months of pressing deadlines, new ideas, but most of all
stories and use them to compile a magazine.

In my career as a journalist I have probably written tens of
thousands of words, read even more words, and have compiled
several publications. It is always a pleasure to read gripping
TO ACTION
FROM INSPIRATION

I

WHERE

FOCUS

IRRESISTIBLE

YOU

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WHAT IS THE LEADERSHIP LEGACY YOU WANT TO LEAVE BEHIND?

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INSPIRING THOUGHT LEADERSHIP ACROSS AFRICA
POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL FOR ECONOMIC AND MANAGEMENT SCIENCES

With its new postgraduate school, the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences (EMS) helps to train the next generation of academics and to equip them with advanced research skills.

THE POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL MAKES IT EASIER FOR PEOPLE TO DO A PHD

This initiative offers bursaries to prospective doctoral students to study full-time and to complete their degrees within three years. Academic staff at the faculty can also complete their part-time doctorates within four to five years. “The postgraduate school makes it easier for people to do a PhD in all the disciplines of the faculty. This will increase the number of doctorates substantially,” says Prof Stan du Plessis, dean of EMS.

Dr Jaco Franken, manager of the postgraduate school, says: “Our goal is for graduates to be self-driven knowledge inside and outside of the university.” He adds that the initiative also aims to establish and strengthen partnerships. In 2015, SU had formed international partnerships with overseas universities. The Department of Logistics and Transport, with the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences signed a cooperation agreement, primarily aimed at the PhD programme in Translation, with the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences of Leuven, Belgium. This agreement provides for exchange opportunities and the future conferment of a joint PhD degree by the two institutions.

The Department of Logistics in the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Swiss Kühne Foundation about humanitarian logistics.

The Kühne Foundation is aiming to help generate knowledge with the Swiss Kühne Foundation Memorandum of Understanding Management Sciences signed a cooperation agreement with the Catholic University of Leuven, Belgium. This memorandum was signed with overseas universities.

Stellenbosch campus after a while or SU staff and students looking for classrooms, buildings and facilities don’t have to worry about getting lost. SU’s Division for Facilities Management and Information Technology developed a new smartphone and tablet application that puts the campus in the palm of your hand and makes it easier to find your way. It’s freely available on the App Store or iTunes (for iOS) and Google Play (for Android). The search phrase is “SU Facilities”. This handy app allows users to explore the campus, to get information about campus facilities and buildings, campus transport, and GPS coordinates, among others.

It also offers an alphabetic table of contents about buildings, faculties, departments and more. Users can also report any problem they may experience to the facilities helpdesk. With the interactive map – a first for a SA university – users can take a virtual tour of the campus. A new addition that is very popular is an integrated list of exam tables and venues.

CONTACT S.U. IN YOUR LANGUAGE OF CHOICE

People who wish to contact SU can now do so in their preferred language.

With the appointment of two new staff members, SU’s Contact and Client Services Centre can assist callers in six of South Africa’s 11 official languages. Sindiswa Bangani, originally from Mfuleni and an alumna of Rhenish Girls High and SU, assists people in isiXhosa and isiZulu, while Belius Siraathaza, from the Eastern Cape and an alumnus of the Cape Peninsula University of Technology, helps people in isiXhosa, isiZulu, Tsswana and Sesotho.

Besides these languages, clients are also assisted in Afrikaans and English. According to them, those who call are usually very relieved when they realise they can communicate in the language they are most comfortable with. “They can immediately express themselves better,” says Siraathaza.

“One can save a lot of time once the communication barriers have been eliminated,” adds Bangani.

According to Darryn Havenga, head of the Contact and Client Services Centre, the isiXhosa/isiZulu line started off slowly as most people are used to pressing 2 as soon as they hear English. He says there are currently more calls in these two languages because the awareness of the language option increased.

Each day, the Contact and Client Services Centre handles about 160 telephone calls and emails between 08:00 to 16:30.

S.U. BUILDS INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

As a world-class institution, SU boasts a number of international partnerships. In 2015, important partnerships were formed with overseas universities.

The Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences signed a cooperation agreement, primarily aimed at the PhD programme in Translation, with the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences of Leuven, Belgium. This agreement provides for exchange opportunities and the future conferment of a joint PhD degree by the two institutions.

The Department of Logistics in the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Swiss Kühne Foundation about humanitarian logistics.
Two faculties of Stellenbosch University celebrated milestones in 2015. The Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences (EMS) is 90 years old, while the Military Academy (Milac) turned 65 years old.

The establishment of EMS in 1925 was a bold move by the university’s senate in an era when commerce faculties only started making their appearance on the university landscape. The success of this venture was soon clear and the faculty grew over the years. Since its inception the faculty’s student numbers have vastly increased, from only 15 students in 1925 to more than 7 000 in 2015. During this period (until March 2015) the faculty awarded 51 333 qualifications.

Milac, at the Saldanha campus, was established on 1 April 1950 as part of the University of Pretoria and a branch of the SA Military College at Voortrekkerhoogte. The purpose was to train cadets to the level of a Baccalaureus degree. In order to establish Milac as a separate entity and to facilitate the participation of navy students, it was decided in 1953 to move the Academy to Saldanha, and it has been part of Stellenbosch University ever since.

The first group of students started attending classes in Stellenbosch in 1955.

STAFF SUCCESSES

Prof Aslam Fataar (Faculty of Education) was honoured by the Education Association of South Africa, while his colleagues Prof Yusuf Wagheid and Dr Liezel Frick received awards from the Association for the Development of Education in Africa and the African Development Institute of the African Development Bank.

The South African Academy for Science and Arts honoured Profs Johan de Viliers and the Libertas Choir, Leon Dicks (Microbiology), Lizette Rabe (Journalism) and Leslie Swartz (Psychology). Marina Joubert (photo) of the Centre for Research on Evaluation, Science and Technology (CREST) won a National Science and Technology Forum Prize.

Prof Erwin Schwell (School of Public Leadership) was invited to serve on an External Advisory Committee of the American Association for the Advancement of Science for a project on science and policy.

Prof Stan du Plessis (Dean of Economic and Management Sciences) has been ranked first in the category Innovative Research in the Financial Mail’s Ranking of the 100 Best South African Universities (2015 survey).

Prof Rachel Jaftha (Department of Economics) was invited to serve on the international advisory council of one of the world’s best business schools, the Fundação Dom Cabral (FDC) business school in Brazil.

Celebrated theatre director and SU drama lecturer, Matthius Basson (photo), received a Fleur du Cap Prize for his lifelong contribution to theatre.

Prof Nulda Beyers (Desmond Tutu TB Centre, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences) and Dr Wesaal Khan (Department: Microbiology) each received a South African Women in Science award.

FACULTIES CELEBRATE 65 AND 90 YEARS


THE STREET MILE

The Street Mile Festival is held annually in the picturesque Victoria Street on the Stellenbosch campus as part of SU’s Woordfees and is hosted in conjunction with Maties Athletics.

Cronje also won in 2013. Sibusiso Madikizela, coached by former middle distance runner Elana Meyer, was second, while Maties athlete, Llewellyn Groeneveld, came third.

The race is held annually in honour of SU alumnus De Villiers Lamprecht, who, on 13 November 1964, became the first South African to run a dream mile. Lamprecht is a former resident of Dagbreek and was the first athlete in the world to complete a dream mile barefoot and went on to break the magical four-minute barrier five times.

Since Lamprecht, 57 South African athletes managed to run a dream mile. The 50th anniversary of the first South African dream mile was celebrated at Coetzenburg Athletics Stadium last year.

FIRST VICTORIA STREET DREAM MILE

The Free State athlete and South African record holder in both the 1 500 m and the mile, Johan Cronje, earlier this year became the first athlete to run a dream mile in Victoria Street at the fifth Dagbreek/Maties Street Mile. A dream mile is the mile (1 609 m) covered in less than four minutes.

The Street Mile Festival is held annually in the picturesque Victoria Street on the Stellenbosch campus as part of SU’s Woordfees and is hosted in conjunction with Maties Athletics.

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RESEARCH UNIT PROMOTES DEMOCRACY

A newly formalised unit, the Transformation Research Unit (TRU): Democracy Globally, was established at SU.

The TRU will build on the work of its predecessor – an informal international research team that has been studying democracy since 2000. The TRU members include many international and leading senior political scientists, economists, sociologists and historians who examine democracy comparatively across cultures from an economic, political and social perspective with a particular focus on South Africa, South Korea, Chile, Poland, Turkey, Germany and Sweden.

By analysing and comparing countries we hope to come to understand better what the universal and specific factors are that shape democracies in different cultural settings,” explains Prof Ursula van Beek, head of the TRU.

The TRU is based at the Centre for International and Comparative Politics in the Department of Political Science.

FUNDING FOR RESEARCH IN AFRIKAANS AND ISIXHOSA

Prize money of R500 000 will be awarded from 2016 by Het Jan Marais Nationale Fonds (HJMNF) in collaboration with Naspers and SU to an academic or researcher working in Afrikaans and whose work contributes to strengthening it as an academic language and medium of scientific research.

Stellenbosch University will also create a fund of R150 000 to develop isiXhosa as an academic language. The Jan H Marais prize, the largest of its kind for Afrikaans, was announced earlier this year by Prof Andreas van Wyk, chairperson of HJMNF, at a dinner marking the creation of the fund 100 years ago.

“This prize we will acknowledge excellent scientific work and publications in Afrikaans,” Van Wyk said. He mentioned that the idea for the prize came from a remark made by Prof Wim de Villiers, SU rector and vice-chancellor. The first award ceremonies will take place in Stellenbosch on 26 May 2016. SU will award the isiXhosa funding annually.
STATUES AS STATEMENTS

2015 was the year in which statues and symbols fell on university campuses. So what does the future hold for histories and the preservation of heritage?

By JAN-JAN JOUBERT

It's tough to be a statue these days. You have so much to deal with: wind, weather and those darn pigeons. But on top of that your very survival is at stake. Blink once and you're gone – another case of a statue fallen. Not that you even asked to be there in the first place.

Jokes aside, in the ever-changing beloved country, the symbols and symbolism of the past are as contested as the way of the future. Street names, place names, statues of heroes – who, apart from their concrete, bronze or iron shapes, are often deemed to have feet made of clay – are subject to the signs of the times. Cecil John Rhodes has been toppled at Ikeys, and Jan Marais may lose his view of the Rooiplein if Open Stellenbosch gets its way.

The Matie campus is not exactly overcrowded with statues. The most prominent examples are the group of stern old men in front of the Faculty of Theology’s angel factory, Jan Marais (Our Benefactor, apparently - but whose?) and Doc Danie Craven with his trusty dog, Bliksem, by his side, as ever.

The bust of Dr DF Malan has been removed from the former DF Malan Memorial Centre, now known as the Coetzenburg Centre. In fact, a reasonable number of politicians’ names have given way – the BJ Vorster Building has been renamed the Arts and Social Sciences Building and the HF Verwoerd Building now goes by Statistics and Accounting. Of all the old premiers, only JC Smuts is clinging on for dear life – but ‘Slim Jannie’ was a Sap, completely acceptable in some circles these days, apparently.

But what of the previous rectors and vice-chancellors who may have potentially overstayed their welcome? Wilcocks was a Sap himself, as was Doc Danie Craven. Prof Gawie Cillie’s legacy, on the other hand, is a whole different kettle of fish. Any argument that there was a tangible difference between the ideologies of HB Thom and Dr DF Malan will not survive a reading of Thom’s preface to Malan’s autobiography Afriknere- volkseenheid en my ervarings op die pad van die beweging.

Take for example the following extract from that preface, which is not only a horrific example of apportioning the reader’s thoughts using the pronoun ‘we’, but also of the way in which Thom not only thought along the same lines as Dr Malan, but sometimes chose to think on the old man’s behalf.

Thom writes: ‘While Dr Malan was busy with the last chapters of this book, his physical strength wasn’t what it used to be. We feel this as we read these last chapters. He doesn’t elaborate on the big things he had played a part in. We get the feeling that the work isn’t concluded with the sense of detail that we would have preferred. We do, however, close the book with a feeling of deep gratitude in our hearts. Deep gratitude because the Lord spared him, and we have to go on. Deep gratitude in our hearts: deep gratitude because the Lord spared him. We get the feeling that the work isn’t concluded with the sense of detail that we would have preferred. We do, however, close the book with a feeling of deep gratitude in our hearts. Deep gratitude because the Lord spared him. We get the feeling that the work isn’t concluded with the sense of detail that we would have preferred.’

What do ‘we’ say to that? Being politically subservient to the powers that be clearly goes way back. The same goes for name changes. Today we have Thaba Tshwane, before that it was Voortrekkerhoogte, before that Roberts Heights, and what it was called before the Voortrekkers arrived, heaven only knows.

The current rector and vice-chancellor, Prof Wim de Villiers, recently endured the wrath of far-right groups with northern roots after the removal of a commemorative plaque in honour of Dr HF Verwoerd in the building no longer called the Verwoerd Building.

The rector said: ‘We have to go forward at all times. Sometimes the path will be well-lit and the journey easy; other times the road will be rocky and the journey heavy. And that’s how it should be – change is never easy. The most important thing is to keep talking to each other.’

De Villiers says he isn’t currently aware of any remaining names of buildings on campus that might offend people, with the possible exception of the JS Gerrieke Library. The rector is asking for continued dialogue in the spirit of what Prof Albert Grundlingh of Maties’ History Department says in essence the ructions at the University of Cape Town aren’t necessarily about Cecil John Rhodes as a person, his role in history, or even his legacy.

“Student leaders openly acknowledge that Rhodes is singled out to point to other issues, one of them being what they call the ‘radical decolonisation’ of the university. Even with the removal of the statue, that agenda would still be on the table,” Grundlingh points out.

“The way in which this agenda materialises is not primarily about having a rational discourse, but rather about who is powerful enough to wield the ideological sceptre of knowledge – an established tradition based on liberal assumptions on face value, or a challenging African nationalist vision, serving as counterbalance.”

“History – as it develops and is dissected by historians – can be complex, nuanced and often contradictory. But heritage in the form of monuments is selective covered in a misty haze,” he says.

The noise emanating from the UCT campus also raises a broader issue: the politics of statues. On a conceptual level, there is immense confusion between history as a study of past occurrence on the one hand, and heritage on the other, something that merely represents a moment from the past by means of, say, a monument.

**IN THE NEWS**

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**STATEMENTS**

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and performative with an often unambiguous and over-simplified message, relating only a specific idea in a specific historical timeframe. “It is not often that these ideas stand the test of time, and in South Africa the tests of time are severe indeed,” says Grundlingh, who points in part to Afrikaner treatment of competing history narratives as an example of relative tolerance.

Even though Afrikaners opposed the imperialist ideal, they didn’t always convey their displeasure and hostility towards British symbols in dramatic fashion. Instead, they erected their own monuments and tried to express their own past and future aspirations.

“The fact that these attempts had the possibility of offending other population groups wasn’t considered often enough. However, after 1994, Afrikaner monuments like the War Memorial of the Boer Republics in Bloemfontein, were key to acknowledging the role of black participants in the Anglo Boer War. It is also important to look at how Afrikaners dealt with imperial symbols in broad terms. During the 1947 Royal visit to South Africa, in spite of their opposition to the tour, they were mindful to behave in an impeccable manner. No one would have thought of disrupting the proceedings, and nobody would have even remotely considered besmirching the King’s train with excrement.”

“Exhibited artefacts can be interpreted differently by visitors. There is nothing wrong with that. There are many different interpretations of the past, after all,” said Mgijima.

He answers rather dolefully to a question on whether museum pieces sometimes become useless. “Currently there is ample consensus that all problematic artefacts should be sent to museums. More often than not, unpopular artefacts find their way to storage spaces inside museums, away from the eyes of the public!”

Mgijima believes artefacts which might offend sensitivities should be exhibited accompanied by different interpretations, without prescribing to the visitor which interpretation is preferable. He argues everyone’s own world view and experience should shape each individual interpretation.

Mgijima’s colleague, Prof Matilda Burden, says one must always remember that statues and name-giving is actually just manifestations of a timeframe and Zeitgeist.

In South Africa the tendency for centuries has been to name places and buildings after the rulers of the day. In other countries there is an understanding that history is made up of many layers – giving new things new names whilst retaining the names of the old. But South African struggles with this.

“It is necessary to change hurtful names, but it becomes problematic when change is the only constant, especially when politicians’ names are simply replaced by those of other politicians. In principle there is no progression,” says Burden.

For now, she has the last word on this issue: “The layers of history must be respected – all names shouldn’t just be changed. Names of people tend to divide more than other names.

“it’s always important to remember that people make mistakes, especially politicians. Every issue generates at least two competing views. And maybe it can be an enriching experience to give room for the view of the “Other”, the view which differs from one’s own.”

Jan-Jan Joubert studied journalism at Stellenbosch and heads the Sunday Times’ parliamentary bureau.
A VISION FOR RESEARCH

Cutting-edge research is a priority for Stellenbosch University’s Business School (USB). And with their clear vision, this academic department is destined to make a huge impact in the world of business.

By HEINDRICH WYNGAARD and AMBER KRIEL

Over a year ago Prof Piet Naudé, a Malie alumnus, philosopher, theologian and academic of note, joined the Business School (USB) of Stellenbosch University as the new director, armed with a short priority list. These included safeguarding the school’s 50-year legacy as a provider of business education, as well as ensuring that USB’s global reputation, demonstrated through its three international accreditations (AACSB, EQUIS, MBA), remained intact.

“We stand on the shoulders of those who came before us,” he would say, “but we will honour this legacy of excellence as best we can.” This brings one to the other priority Naudé listed on his arrival at USB, which is to encourage high-quality research, or the creation of new knowledge. He reiterates: “One can easily forget that USB is first and foremost an academic department of Stellenbosch University and therefore has a very specific research mission.

Naudé says the business school only enrolls postgraduate students, and – apart from work done by its academic staff – the annual research output of USB’s Master’s and PhD students is quite considerable.

It is required of every Master’s student to do a research assignment as completion of their chosen programmes, be it Master’s in Business Administration (MBA), MPhil in Development Finance (MDevF), MPhil in Management Coaching, or MPhil in Futures Studies.

Recent examples of the level of research produced by top students are: Christie Koorts’ MBA research project on consumer sensitivity regarding the use of personal information in relationship marketing; Hennie Mansvelt’s MBA research project on green IT; Steve Motsi’s MDevF research project on the pricing behaviour of banks in sub-Saharan Africa in the aftermath of the 2007/2008 global financial crisis; as well as 2014 Director’s Award winner Jennifer Wörner’s MBA research project on luxury travel.

Senior research consultant Dr John Morrison plays an important role in assisting students to create a researchable study out of often rough ideas. “Most students have wonderful ideas but have little clue of how to package it as research. However, once the two connect, wonderful knowledge is created,” says Morrison.

For him, the research process starts with posing a compelling question about the intended research topic, and knowing where the data for the study is to be found. This assistance from Morrison enables students to constructively engage with study leaders or supervisors.

One such study leader is senior lecturer Dr Babita Mathur-Helm, who not only supervises students but who also emphasises the importance of publication when she interacts with them. “Publication happens when you’re inclined to do it; when you have an intention to do it,” she believes.

On the PhD side, programme head Dr Heidi Raubenheimer points to the fact that even a thesis in examination – Daniel Malan’s “The power of responsibility: Integrative social contracts theory and the United Nations global impact” as a case in point – has the ability to impact and create anticipation way before graduation.

Singling out two examples, she talks about USB’s current first “coaching”-oriented PhDs. One such study is in the examination phase, namely Michelle van Reenen’s “Towards a conceptual framework of coach supervision for internal coaches within South African organisations.” The other, Nicky Terblanche’s study “A coaching framework to facilitate transformational learning during senior leadership transitions”, is just starting out.

Of such quality is the research at USB that students often find themselves moving on to become lecturers, as has just happened with Ghanaian national Dr Joseph Akotey, who was appointed as lecturer in Development Finance after graduating with his PhD from USB in March 2015.

The head of the USB Development Finance programmes, Prof Charles Adjasi, is also an alumnus who completed his PhD at USB.

One of USB’s foremost researchers, Prof Sylvanus Ikhide, heads the PhD programme in Development Finance. “Course work is vital for this programme before the actual research starts,” he says.

“Thereafter, the focus is on producing high-quality research articles that can be published in good journals. Our aim is to ensure up to ten published papers in journals in another two years from now.”

Ikhide produces two examples of the latest progress: Development Finance PhD student Elina Amadhila successfully submitted a paper for publication in the African Review of Economics and Finance. Ikhide and a fellow researcher, Innocent Bayai, also presented a paper on financing and financial sustainability of microfinance at the 5th International Research Conference on Social Economy, held in Lisbon, Portugal, in mid-July this year.

Naudé again: “We prioritise research because what builds a business school’s long-term reputation is its intellectual credibility. Business leaders must know we provide evidence-based solutions. Students must know our curriculum content and research supervision contain the best and latest knowledge insights. Our network of international peers must see academic value in our relationships. And accreditation bodies must never doubt the quality and impact of our intellectual endeavours.”

This year, Prof Mias de Klerk was appointed to head USB’s research portfolio with the primary objective to restructure this portfolio to efficiently facilitate USB’s intellectual contributions.

De Klerk says that evidence abounds that USB’s research has excelled in practice-oriented research with a strong developmental focus. He also points out that of the ten best articles produced over the five years up to 2015, nine focused specifically on Africa “and thus directly supports our vision to be globally recognised as the knowledge partner in Africa.”

In line with his own priority list, Naudé concludes: “To cut back on research is to cut off the oxygen that brings life to USB.”

Heinrich Wyngaard and Amber Kriel works in USB’s publicity division.
The SA Agulhas II’s return voyage to Antarctica is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for any researcher. A group of postgraduate students of Stellenbosch University (SU) joined the 2015 voyage to conduct their research on the world’s coldest continent.

By WIIDA FOURIE-BASSON

The ancient Greeks believed that there had to be a Terra Australis Incognita in the far south to “balance out” the northern areas of Europe, Asia and Northern Africa. However, it was only in 1820 that the Antarctic continent was first sighted by the Russian expedition of Michail Lazaref and Fabian Gottlieb von Bellinghausen. Antarctica is the coldest place on earth – the lowest temperature ever, -93°C, was recorded at the South Pole on 10 August 2010. The average winter temperature is not much better, though, normally hovering around -83°C.

With a surface area of 14 million km², Antarctica is the world’s fifth-largest continent after Asia, Africa, North America and South America. Over 90% of the world’s fresh water is found here, locked in a 2.5 km-thick ice sheet.

The research projects of the postgraduate students of the Department of Earth Sciences addressed various aspects of the same problem, namely to improve our understanding of algae growth in the Southern Ocean, as well as the circulation of essential chemical elements and their impact on CO₂ levels in the ocean and atmosphere. Three postgraduate engineering students also installed an extensive cabling system and sensors on the SA Agulhas II in order to explore the ship’s “habitability”. Photo: ROSCA DE WAAL
From the outset, the ship SA Agulhas II was intended as a scientific research and supply ship as part of the South African National Antarctic Programme (SANAP). SANAP manages the SA National Antarctic Expedition’s bases in Antarctica as well as on Marion and Gough islands in the Southern Ocean. Each year, scientists may apply to join the SA Agulhas II’s return voyage to Antarctica and conduct experiments and take samples of the seawater while on board. Photo: ROSCA DE WAAL

The students had to brave 16 m-high waves, seasickness, cabin fever and a flooded laboratory while navigating 10 000 km of the world’s most remote and treacherous seas. That woozy feeling is awful, especially when the sea is really rough. But at the same time, it constantly tells me I was on an adrenaline-charged roller coaster. I come from a family with wanderlust, and Antarctica is a dream destination – who wouldn’t want to travel and do what you love, all in one,” says Jean Loock.

In 1775, the famous Captain James Cook wrote about the abundance of seals on the island of South Georgia. A decade later, the first British seal hunters arrived, ushering in a very cruel and inhumane period in the island’s history. By 1825, they had taken some 1,2 million fur seals from the area. It took another eight decades before the industry hit a slump when the fur seal population was on the verge of complete extinction. A research expedition in 1952 found that there were only 500 fur seals left on the island. Photo: DOMINIC ROLLINSON

The supplies for South Africa’s research base in Antarctica are stored in a 4 000 m³ hangar in the ship’s bow. A 35-ton crane and three general cranes weighing 10 tons each are used to load the scientific equipment and vehicles onto the ice sheet. From there, it is transported 160 km inland to SANAE IV at Vesleskarvet. SANAE IV is built on top of a dark, rocky ridge (a so-called nunatak or glacial island) on the edge of the Ahtmann mountain range, and is completely surrounded by the glacial ice sheet. Photo: JETHAN D’HOTMAN

Penguins are synonymous with Antarctica and the rough icy waters of the Southern Ocean. But actually, only the emperor penguin (pictured here) can withstand the extreme sub-zero temperatures and winds of up to 200 km/h in the winter months. Up to 5 000 of these penguins normally crouch together in colonies to survive the bitter cold. Breeding colonies of other penguin species – such as the Adélie penguins – can be found on the northern tip of the Antarctic Peninsula, where conditions are somewhat more favourable. Photo: JARRED VOORNEVELD

The world’s southernmost whaling station was established by the Norwegian Carl Anton Larsen on the island of South Georgia in Grytviken Bay in 1904. Others soon followed and the whaling industry in the Southern Ocean experienced an unprecedented boom for the next three decades. At the same time, however, it very nearly wiped out the entire whale population. During the 1930/31 hunting season, legal and illegal hunters caught and slaughtered more than 40 000 whales for their oil and fles. By the 1930s, overproduction caused the price of whale oil to plummet to a record low. Whale hunters had to close shop, as species such as the humpback whale had been virtually wiped out by then, and whaling stations on the island started closing one after the other. Today, visitors can still see the corroded remnants of the whale factories and even old whaling boats on the island. Photo: BRENDAN BOULLE

Back home in Stellenbosch – the team members of the Department of Earth Sciences (front, from left to right) are Hendrik Smith [24], Leigh-Anne Palmer [21], Natasha van Horsten [30] and Mari Scott [22], and in the back, Gillian Trollope [22], Ryan Cloete [23] and Jean Loock [23]. Photo: STEFAN ELS

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“What the crew says

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Stellenbosch University (SU) continues to conduct research with a real impact on society. In 2015, many studies were completed in various fields, with very interesting results. Here are a few.

**Children with tuberculosis (TB) meningitis**

Children with tuberculosis (TB) meningitis now have a much better chance of survival thanks to a study by Dr Ronald van Toorn, a senior specialist in Paediatric Neurology at SU and Tygerberg Children’s Hospital. As part of his doctorate in Paediatrics, he sought ways to improve the outcome of TB meningitis in children. This severe form of tuberculosis in children occurs when TB bacteria penetrate the membranes and fluids around the brain and spinal cord. Over the course of four years, Van Toorn studied 184 children with TB meningitis to determine whether the treatment at Tygerberg was safe and effective. He found a positive outcome in 80% of the children, with a post-treatment mortality rate of only 3.8%.

**Hope for children with TB meningitis**

South African internet users should step up their password practices to protect themselves from cybercriminals. This was the finding of Prof Rika Butler from SU’s School of Accountancy and Martin Butler from USB. In a survey of South Africans’ password practices, they found that only one in every five local computer users regularly change their passwords, even though the risk associated with not doing so is well known. Not being password-alert may result in financial losses when users fall victim to cybercriminals.

**Bank charges during financial crisis**

In a new book, Barend Lutz and Prof Pierre du Toit (photo) from SU’s Political Science Department describe how their research has led to a method to measure public expression in support of democracy on Twitter. In the publication, they focus on social media platforms and how computer linguistics can be harnessed to make sense of this landscape. Their research demonstrates the changes that have taken place in the spaces where democracy occurs, and emphasises the need for analysts of democracy to view these new spaces from a different perspective.

**Fynbos soil for new antibiotics**

The healthcare sector is fighting an uphill battle against harmful bacteria that have become resistant to most antibiotics. And with very few new antibiotics being developed, the lives of millions of people worldwide may be in danger. In his search for new antibiotics, Dr Du Preez van Staden (photo) of the Department of Physiological Sciences examined bacteria-rich fynbos soil to identify those bacteria that produce antimicrobial substances. The results of his search showed that the bacteria in fynbos soil produce lantibiotics, which actively counter various bacteria, including methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus.

**Billions for shares**

Zimbabwean Steve Motsi (photo), top performer in USB’s MPhil programme in Development Finance for 2014/15, chose to study the steadiness of bank charges in sub-Saharan Africa following the global financial crisis of 2007/8. His research proved that the banks in sub-Saharan Africa hold monopolies, which have remained unaffected by the financial crisis. His objective was to improve understanding of how banks may position themselves to provide small enterprises with more development finance, in which the cost of banking products plays a vital part.
Stellenbosch

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As a medical student at Stellenbosch University, one of Dr Rust Theron’s lecturers served as his inspiration – so much so that he has now started a project to assist aspiring doctors with their training at SU. It’s time to give back, he believes.

By ILSE ARENDSE

Medical specialist Dr Rust Theron’s diary is full and his time limited. But this Matie alumnus and specialist in internal medicine at Durbanville Mediclinic still finds the time to make a positive difference and do his bit to help train new doctors.

Theron was instrumental in establishing a ground-breaking collaboration between private hospital group Mediclinic and Stellenbosch University’s Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences (FMHS). SU role-players in this initiative, which piloted in 2014 at Durbanville Mediclinic in Cape Town’s northern suburbs, include Profs Rafique Moosa, chief executive of the Department of Medicine, as well as Eluis Irusen, chairman of the undergraduate programme in Internal Medicine, both from FMHS.

This project creates the opportunity for medical students from SU to complete a part of their undergraduate training at accredited Mediclinic hospitals. During the pilot project, medical students in their fourth and fifth year of study underwent their four-week rotations in internal medicine at the hospital and received clinical training from doctors in private practice.

Based on the success of the pilot, FMHS and Mediclinic have since decided to expand the programme, including another three hospitals in the Mediclinic group, namely Mediclinic Cape Gate, Mediclinic Louis Leipoldt and Mediclinic Panorama.

You were instrumental in turning this project into a reality. Why the desire to become involved?

I came across statistics that indicated that our country was facing a severe shortage of doctors. Medical schools can increase their student intake, but the problem is with the clinical rotations. For instance, there simply aren’t enough consultants to take these students on hospital ward. Often, this means that up to 22 students accompany a single consultant.

As Mediclinic had already started training nurses in the private sector, I first approached the hospital group and then SU’s medical faculty with the idea of offering undergraduate students clinical rotations in the private sector. The university was already busy exploring similar options, and the rest is history.

What added value does this training offer students and doctors?

Being in private practice, we get to see another type of pathology, which these students do not always encounter at Tygerberg. At Mediclinic, they have the latest technology and equipment at their disposal, and as they work alongside a specialist in a 1:1 or 2:1 ratio, each student rotating here receives much more personal training. Students are also more comfortable asking questions in such a small group as opposed to the groups at Tygerberg, where third-years, fourth-years and even student interns are bunched together on rotations.

The pilot project was a success. What can be expected next?

We are looking at rolling out the project to other disciplines also, such as orthopaedic surgery. Specialists in other cities such as Port Elizabeth and Bloemfontein have also expressed interest in replicating the project at their institutions. So, it does seem to have a substantial ripple effect!

Have you retained a strong connection with your alma mater?

For some time now, I have been lending a hand as an examiner of student interns in their final exams, as well as of postgraduate specialists writing their internal exams. Quite a few students have also completed their compulsory electives under my supervision.

Who was your inspiration when you were a student?

One of the people who made the biggest impression on me during my medical training was the late Prof Helmut Weich. He always made time to help students with their training, and at the end of a rotation with him, he invited you to a fish braai at his home. There, Prof – barefoot and in shorts – personally welcomed you at the door. Then he would serve you the entire evening and truly make you feel at home. When one day, one of his colleagues asked him why he did it, he replied: ‘The chances are that one of them will have to look after me when I’m old, and not the other way around!’ Now, I try to follow his example, taking care to invite those students rotating with us to a braai and a social at the end of their rotation.

How strongly do you feel about making a difference?

As with the Eskom power crunch, South Africa is heading for a crisis in terms of the number of doctors graduating in relation to the size of our population. It’s easy to sit back and criticise, but I choose rather to be part of the solution. I also believe that every doctor in our country has a duty to help where they can to alleviate this problem. However, this project is not a one-man show – without the support of my various colleagues who also form part of the programme, it would never have succeeded.

• Ilse Arendse studied journalism at SU and is currently responsible for the University’s alumni communication.

Get Involved

• Mariello Papierman is responsible for the University’s alumni communication.

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NYUKELA!

“Nyukela” means “going up” in isiXhosa. So let us tell you about Maties across the world who are moving up in their respective fields.

Riaan Olivier is the new head of Southern African Business for Stanley Black & Decker (SBD). With an MBA and a Master’s degree in Electronic Engineering, Olivier is highly qualified to take Stanley Black & Decker to the next level and grow its South African operations.

USB MBA alumna Zibu Mthiyane is currently a Mandela Washington Fellow for 2015 as part of President Barack Obama’s Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI). YALI embodies Obama’s commitment to invest in the future of Africa. Mthiyane, who graduated in December 2014 with an MBA degree from the University of Stellenbosch Business School, is the CEO of Zoluhle Polymericus, a company specialising in the design and manufacturing of synthetic steel products. She also made the list for FinWeek’s top women to watch in 2015.

Abel Sithole has been appointed to the position of principal executive officer (PEO) of the Government Employees Pension Fund (GEFP). For the past six years, Sithole has been with the Institute for Futures Research (IFR) at Stellenbosch University. He holds an MA (International Relations) and MPhil (Futures Studies).

Isa Omagu, USB Advisory Board member and chairperson of the USB Alumni Exco, has been appointed as general manager of Guaranty Trust Bank PLC in Lagos, Nigeria. Omagu completed his MPhil in Development Finance (MDevF) in 2011.

Randall Ohlson is the new principal at Pacaltsdorp Primary School in George. Ohlson completed an Advanced Certificate in School Management and Leadership in 2012.

USP MBA alumna Lynn Naudé is the new chief executive officer of the Absa Cape Epic. Naudé, who obtained a BA Law degree, has extensive experience with world-class sporting events, ranging from managing heavyweight sponsorship portfolios including the Springboks, Bafana Bafana, Absa Currie Cup, the Absa Premiership and the Springboks, the company specialising in the design and manufacturing of synthetic steel products. She also made the list for FinWeek’s top women to watch in 2015.

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Bertho van der Westhuizen has been chosen to take over the reins from his well-known father, Schalk, at the iconic red wine producer Alto in the Golden Triangle outside Stellenbosch. Bertho van der Westhuizen obtained his BSc degree in Viticulture and Oenology in 2002.

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Since joining Stellenbosch University in mid-February this year, I’ve had the opportunity to travel with the new rector and to meet alumni close by and very far away. When chatting with you, it seems clear that very many people would like to revisit Stellenbosch and to reconnect with their alma mater. We’d like that too – in fact, we’d love it.

Traditions in other parts of the world abound for alumni returning to campus for a homecoming and family weekend, and we are setting off down that path – to create an annual opportunity for alumni from all years, all faculties and all residences to revisit our university.

Friday 4 March to Monday 7 March 2016 is the planned Maties Homecoming and Family Weekend. It’s also the first weekend of the Woordfees, so please make your accommodation bookings early.

There will be residence reunions where each residence will facilitate its own engagement, and will share these plans shortly.

An opportunity, as alumni, to play golf at one of the local courses, or an early morning mountain bike ride on the new trail above Coetzenburg is on the cards. Also, campus tours and a walking tour of Stellenbosch to see how much has changed and how much is still the same.

Engage with our incredible young people by attending a leadership discourse café where alumni will share leadership experiences with the leaders of tomorrow or in the Smart Ideas Exchange. Here you will see the wide range of exciting research and innovation activities taking place at our university.

There will be faculty reunions where you can meet the dean, previous deans, your old and new professors, and greet your classmates. And a Distinguished Alumni Dinner with our rector, Prof Wim de Villiers, and our 40 distinguished professors and ten faculty deans.

For the recent graduates, there will be a tented party, and for those who graduated in the 1960s and in the 1980s, luncheons are being arranged by key people in these groups. We’ll keep you updated on this.

And in between, there are over 120 Woordfees events going on in our town. We know that you’ll be keen to get your maroon on, as on Monday, 7 March, Maties face the UFS Shimlas in the Varsity Cup at Coetzenburg. Our boys need you!

We’ll share the registration details on our alumni website shortly. But put it in your diary now, tell your friends, and please come. Matieland so looks forward to sharing our end-of-summer Homecoming and Family Weekend with you.

• For more information, please contact Marvin Koopman at alumni@sun.ac.za or call +27 (0)21 808 4020.

It’s always great to come home to Matieland, writes KAREN BRUNS, senior director of Development and Alumni Relations. So make sure you attend the Maties Homecoming and Family Weekend in March 2016.

For more information, please contact Marvin Koopman at alumni@sun.ac.za or call +27 (0)21 808 4020.

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WE KNOW THAT YOU’LL BE KEEN TO GET YOUR MAROON ON
In August 2015, Ethan Newman was the recipient of the National Research Foundation’s research excellence award in the category for male next-generation researchers. It was not only his passion for nature which set him on this dream career path, but also valuable bursaries and awards.

By WIIDA FOURIE-BASSON

As a postgraduate student in the Department of Botany and Zoology, 28-year-old Ethan Newman has already presented five conference papers and published four research papers in high-impact international journals like Evolution and Annals of Botany.

Prof Bruce Anderson, study leader for his honours and now also his doctoral research, says this young student’s keenness for biology is unrestrained.

“I have never met another student with as much enthusiasm for his subject,” he says.

Yet this did not come without hard work, perseverance and commitment. Newman says as a child he wandered for hours around the Renosterveld nearby his home town, Wellington, collecting reptiles, insects and spiders.

But it was only in high school that his interest in plants became an overriding passion: “I was specifically interested in rare bulbs and orchids, and I enjoyed taking pictures of them and their interactions with pollinators.”

He also mentions his biology teacher at Huguenot High School, Lorraine Kuun. “I also had many friends at high school who were just as passionate about natural history as I was. We spent a lot of time exploring in the veld. It was during these adventures that I realised I wanted to become a botanist,” says Ethan.

To follow this career path would require a tertiary education, which could have been financially challenging.

Bursaries gave Newman the opportunity to follow his dream career. As a postgraduate student he received various scholarships, merit bursaries and grants; the Ernst and Ethel Eriksen Trust Scholarship (2013-2015), Stellenbosch University Merit Bursary for PhD students (2014-2015), the NRF Innovation Scholarship (2014-2015), NRF SKA Travel Grant (2013 & 2015), National Geographic Young Explorers Grant (2013 & 2014) and the NRF Scarce Skills Scholarship (2012-2013).

Newman started collecting data for his honours project on the cluster Disa (Disa ferruginea) and its pollinator as an undergraduate already. The mountain pride butterfly (Aerogetes tulbaghia) is the only insect that pollinates the cluster Disa and it has very specific and localised colour preferences.

This research field is important, as pollinator populations worldwide have been falling, with serious implications for food security. Researchers are also worried about similar declines in the pollinator populations of wild plants. Without these pollinators, hundreds of native plants are likely to go extinct.

Newman often disappeared into the veld for days on end, collecting data on Table Mountain and the Langeberg Mountain in Grootvadersbosch Nature Reserve. A year after completing his honours project, the research was published as an article in the international journal Proceedings of the Royal Society B.

“This was a defining moment in my career,” admits Newman.

For his MSc, he is continued with the research he started as an undergraduate. This time he focused on the berg lily (Nerine humilis), which is pollinated by the enigmatic long proboscis fly (Prosoeca longipennis). Because of his rapid research progress, he was granted a National Geographic Young Explorer’s award. In the second year of his Master’s studies, his MSc project was upgraded to a PhD.

Anderson is full of praise when he describes Newman’s work ethics and natural field skills. “The first chapter of his MSc thesis was adapted into an article and published in Annals of Botany. The second chapter has been accepted as a research article by Evolution, an extremely difficult journal to get published in. “For both of these research articles, Ethan did the bulk of the field work, all of the statistics and most of the writing.”

Newman was the first author on these articles, and his co-authors were Anderson and Prof Steven Johnson of the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN).

Currently, Newman is also learning French after he has been accepted as an exchange student at the University of Montpellier as part of the Erasmus Mundus exchange programme.

His ultimate goal is to follow a career in the biological sciences. “Today I realise how fortunate I am, to be able to pursue my dreams when most of my peers have given up before they even tried.

“My passion for science is not something that I have acquired; it is an integral part of me.”

• Wiida Fourie-Basson is the marketing officer of the Faculty of Science.
BURSARIES

CHANGE

LIVES

For many aspiring students, going to university and receiving a degree seems like an unattainable dream. But programmes like the SU Bursary Fund can change their dreams into reality. You can help make that dream a reality.

By ILSE ARENDESE
Photo: ANTON JORDAAN

It is indeed a dream to go to university, experience student life, and receiving a degree which allows you to practice a career which you love. But this need not only be a dream.

“We all know that the unique and enriching experience of becoming a Matie is not accessible to all. Not everyone can afford university studies, especially in a country like South Africa with high levels of poverty and inequality. “Nearly half of all our students are reliant on bursaries or other forms of financial support, without which, they would not be able to further their studies with a view to becoming productive members of society,” says Arrie Hanekom, head of Stellenbosch University’s Bursaries and Loans Division.

“And that is where worthy initiatives such as the SU Bursary Fund comes in,” he adds.

This bursary fund is SU’s annual giving programme, geared towards fostering a philanthropic community in support of student success. It is part of SU’s vision of being an inclusive, innovative and future-focused institution, and fulfilling its tasks of research, teaching and learning, and making a social impact.

“This year alone we allocated bursaries to seven students, totalling R256 200 and this was made possible through generous donations from alumni and friends of SU. I believe together we can make the difference in education – the future of Africa.”

As an alumnus or friend of the university, you are essential to our mission and can help us make a difference in education – the future of our country. No matter how big or small, your gift can change many lives for the better. It could buy textbooks or computers, fund a field study, or help create the best teaching and learning spaces for the 21st century.

HOW TO GIVE

Once you have decided which aspect of SU’s ground-breaking work you would like to support, you can make a donation by cheque, a direct deposit, credit card, debit order via electronic funds transfer (EFT) or online.

Our easy-to-use online giving platform (http://12000-05.sun.ac.za/donorPay/faces/formAlumnMain.jspx) makes donating safe and secure. Your online donation will be handled by GivenGain, a secure payment gateway to process online donations. An SSL encrypted [secure socket layer] link and non-storage of card authorisation information means that your data will never be compromised by third parties. You can donate to Stellenbosch University from the safety of your own internet banking account via EFT (go to www.sun.ac.za/matieland and click on “Donate”). Enter the name of the gift opportunity you wish to support in the beneficiary field (or equivalent) of your internet bank service.

CONTACT

Please contact our Development and Alumni Relations office for further information on the various projects that you can support.

Phone +27 (0)21 808 4020 or e-mail alumni@sun.ac.za.

TAX BENEFITS

Individual and corporate donors to Stellenbosch University receive tax benefits under South African income tax law. The amount of the deduction is capped at 10% of taxable income, which could present quite a sizeable tax saving. In the USA and UK there are options for donating to Stellenbosch University in a tax-efficient way. The full rand value of your bequest is deductible in determining your net estate duty liability. Contact Hugo Steyn on +27 (0)21 808 3615 or e-mail hugos@sun.ac.za.

TYPES OF SUPPORT

You can determine when and how your gift to the University should be used. It could be provided for current projects or invested to provide a lasting legacy for generations to come.

Current-use gifts of any size can be made to the academic initiative, strategic objective, research programme, faculty, student residence or society of your choice.

These include:

• Stellenbosch University Bursary Fund
• Deans’ Funds (in the faculty of your choice)
• Residences and Societies
• Operational costs (equipment and ad hoc human resources needs)
• Named research chairs (for the duration of the funding).

A revenue-funded (current-use) research chair requires an average R2 million per annum to support a top researcher and his/her team.

Endowments are permanent funds that are invested to create a lasting resource that grows in perpetuity. The fund may be established in your name or in honour or memory of another. These include:

• Endowed Deans’ Funds
• Endowed bursaries or scholarship funds
• Stellenbosch University Bursary Fund
• Named research chairs
• Operational costs
• Residences and Societies
• Stellenbosch University Bursary Fund

The cost to endow a research chair in perpetuity at a South African university falls in the region of R30 to R38 million. This is based on certain assumptions for growth in the future.
LONG LIVE THE RECTOR

PROF H CHRISTO VILJOEN

President of the Convocation

provides a brief history of past rectors at Stellenbosch University.

In memori

Matieland would like to honour SU alumni who have passed away. The university has noted with regret the passing of the following alumni.

ALUMNI


MDW (De Wet) van Zyl (80) of Somerset West. BEd (1949). Former head of the Mathematics Department. Hired for the HOPE Project and worked in Port Elizabeth.

Prof WH (Hermy) Roos (71) of Faerie Glen. B.Com (1968).

Prof RD (Ronald) Sanderson (72) of Stellenbosch.

Ms TM (Tsholofelo) Segone (23) of Mmabatho. BScAgric (2014). Former resident of Gauteng.

Ms CVBS (Cecete) Smuts (gebore Toerien) (91) of George. BA (1942).

Mr DP (Willem) van Drimmelen (72) of Port Elizabeth. BScAgric (1971). Former resident of West Cape. Lecturer in the Department of Process Engineering.

Dr LS (Louise) Verster-Baise (53) of Graaff-Reinet. BSc (1994). Former resident of Graaff-Reinet. Radio and TV commentator, as well as captain of international rugby and cricket teams. Ds HW (Henry) Murray (78) of Silverton.

Mrs TS (Theresa) van Vuuren (gebore Jacobs) (53) of Graaff-Reinet. BSc (1984). Former resident of Graaff-Reinet. Worked in Port Elizabeth.

Ms D (Shamilla) Sebon (23) of Mmabatho. BScAgric (2014). Former resident of Mmabatho. BScAgric (2014). Former resident of Mmabatho.

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he wooden floor glistens and steam rises from his cup of coffee as the new rector shifts into his seat, readying himself for yet another person trying to get to his core; pen in hand like the sharpest of scalpels.

So what do we already know? Prof Wim de Villiers was born in Stellenbosch Hospital, the youngest child of the late Prof AB de Villiers, who later became dean of the Maties Law Faculty. Prof Wim matriculated in 1977 from Paul Roos Gymnasium, obtaining the highest marks in the province, and in 1983 passed his MB,ChB degree at Stellenbosch with distinction. He received the Francie van Zijl and Chancellor’s medals for academic achievement. In 1990 he was awarded an MMed degree, specialising in internal medicine, also with distinction, by the same university.

Foreign shores beckoned and he exchanged SA for Oxford where he was awarded a DPhil in immunology, followed years later by a Master’s degree in health administration from Harvard. In-between these, he was appointed to several senior positions at the University of Kentucky, USA. Why then leave a glamorous international academic career to return to the challenges of South Africa, first as dean of health sciences at Ikeys, and now the tough position as Stellenbosch’s rector in times of change and uncertainty?

"I’m a South African, and so is my wife (Catherine). It was never our intention to leave South Africa permanently, but the initial plan to leave for 18 months turned into 18 years. After my MBA, I was interested in what makes big systems function and I wanted to paint on a larger canvas. That’s why the position as dean at the University of Cape Town was such a wonderful opportunity. When talking about his best memories of being a student here, he differentiates between the curricular and “extramural” – what the rest of us might call student fun.

"Many people find my best curricular memory somewhat bizarre. It was during my second year of study, when medical students get to dissect a cadaver for the first time. One really gets to experience the wonder of physiology and anatomy; the structure of being human. At the same time you are exposed to the communal experience of working in a team – a sense of security. The journey into the past animates this rector who hates the over-used label “Slim Wim” slapped on him by others. Then he checks himself, focuses and answers firmly: “But nothing beats intervarsity at Newlands when it comes to co-curricular learning.”

"It’s important to remember that this type of experience has very little to do with the language in which you are being taught. In the academic world a lecture is basically an opportunity to facilitate, a means to an end. The most important place to learn is not in the lecture hall. It’s both academic and co-curricular, and a very good example is the LLL concept (Listen, Live and Learn, the communal student housing for Maties from different backgrounds).

"For example, in any wide-ranging project, 40% of ideas would work..."
excellently, 20% would kind of work, and 40% would fail. The success of the
industrial engineering program is testament to that. My predecessor,
Prof Russell Botman’s brainchild, will be continued. The LLL Project is an
example of how to cultivate respect and understanding.

But why come back here when many current currents are moving in the
other direction, out of the country? “For instance, my predecessor,
Prof Russell Botman, is a fixture in the African countries will soon attend a conference organised
derived!” says the man whose son, Braam,
was something of a phenomenon when he studied at
Stellenbosch years ago, a fluent Afrikaans-speaking
American living in Wilgenhof.
I don’t have all the answers and I’m not an elitist. "Universities are elitist by
definition through entry requirements," he retorts. "But why?
Stellenbosch’s good old boys return!" is not. "Stellenbosch
boys? What of those who could never become them? Are they inferior in
some way, or are their children destined to be the Other?"
De Villiers sees this label as “a pity,
and a positive”. “I was born here, and grew up
here, but from my second year I studied at the Tygerberg
campus. So actually I was in Stellenbosch for only 19
years. So I’ve been away for more than 30.” De Villiers
acknowledges that he’s from here, but he’s also from far
away. And he realises something many people may not like: “I have a lot of American in me, combined with a shot of
managerialism.”

Maties is run well. A university is a business with a
corporate identity – business-like but not business ‘lite’.
I have an inherent knowledge of the local undercurrents
because I’m from here, and that’s a positive thing.

“Everyone says: ‘Welcome to the hot seat.’ I’m new. I try
to reach everyone and to listen to as many people as
possible. This university is full of wonderful people who do
wonderful work, much of which isn’t known widely enough.
As a brand we are performing below our capability. My aim
is to change the university from being primarily a teaching
institution, to being primarily a research institution.
Currently, 40% of our students are postgraduate, and I
want to raise that number.”

At the office
His most positive experience to date as vice-chancellor
happened when he and his wife came house-hunting. It
was Open Day at the university, a Saturday. ‘All the busses
from all the schools, from everywhere – all our country’s
children – such diversity!’ he beams.
And his most negative experience? “There hasn’t been any.”
Let’s tackle the more difficult issues, starting
with transformation.

“If you read anything about higher education throughout
the world, you would know the transformation of
knowledge and education systems is a vexed issue globally.
One contested aspect is the choice between differentiation
on the one hand and massification (a primary focus on
student numbers) on the other. I’m for differentiation.
Isn’t that rather elitist?
Universities are elitist by definition through entry
requirements,” he settles that point, before continuing.
Other transformation issues include how to meet the
demands of the workplace, different financing models,
and the like. Stellenbosch’s impact on Africa is often
underplayed,” says De Villiers, and whip out a document
confirming that more than a dozen African countries will soon attend a conference organised
by Prof Linus Opara from Stellenbosch’s Faculty of
AgrSciences.

But when has an institution been completely transformed?
“Transformation never stops. It’s like growth. I don’t
have all the answers, but there always has to be growth,
transformation and progress.”

And what is Stellenbosch’s relationship like with our
minister of higher education and training? Does Dr Blade
Nzimande bear a grudge against Maties? “Shortly after my appointment, I went to see the minister.
We had a very good conversation and the director-general
(Gwede Qonde, who incidentally previously worked in the
waste management sector) came to my office here in Stellenbosch out of
his own accord.

“Stability and quality are important to them, especially
because a lot of South African universities struggle with exactly that. I want to diversify Stellenbosch so that by 2020
50% of our students are black (the current number is 38%).
We’re building the skills pipeline our country requires!”

The languages issue
And what is the status of that other hardy annual always
bugging every Matie – the will of the university’s chief
benefactor Jan Marais, which stated that Afrikaans must
forever have “no lesser place” than English at Stellenbosch?

Times change. It was a different regime. English is
currently the world’s leading academic language. And this,
too, constantly changes. Three hundred years ago it was
Latin. In the 19th century it was French, at the start of the
20th century it was German. Now it is English. Maybe in
fifty years’ time it will be Mandarin.”
What about Afrikaans, then?
Stellenbosch University has always lectured in Afrikaans
and English and marked papers in both languages. Currently,
we want to implement and finance a policy of equal
status which leaves no-one excluded and which
doesn’t impact negatively on anyone.

“I find it strange that it is seen as a university’s duty
to promote a language. You’d think that responsibility
falls to parents,” says the man whose son, Braam,
realises something many people may not like: “One thing is for sure: it’s much easier
to change the student profile than the profile of academic staff. It’s much more
difficult to diversify the academic staff profile because of security of academic
tenure, among other reasons.”

What will be his benchmark for his
eventual success as rector?

“I stand on the shoulders of giants, like my predecessor,
Prof Russell Botman. More postgraduate students,
stronger research outputs and more international
respect for Stellenbosch as a global player: More
social impact, like the legal aid clinic, which
recently scored a massive victory for the poor
against evictions. And he realises something many people may not like: “One thing is for sure: it’s much easier
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“For parents whose children want to
work overseas, he has simple advice: Accept it.

For the younger generation: Spread your wings, and gain experience to
make a meaningful difference locally, even if everything
doesn’t go according to plan all the time. Both
my daughters now live in South Africa. My son is a teacher at an inner-city
school in California.”

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New building projects abound at Stellenbosch University (SU). In 2015 the “greenest” building on campus was built, and new spaces for work and accommodation for staff and students are nothing less than innovative and modern.

By FRIEDA LE ROUX

hat used to be a woodwork workshop is now one of Maties’ newest and most innovative environments. The Nedbank LaunchLab, close to the Faculty of Engineering and right next to the new IT building, aims to help students – and lecturers – to commercialise their intellectual property.

Philip Marais, executive officer, says a lot of students and lecturers come up with clever ideas which deserve a wider audience. The idea, therefore, is to promote entrepreneurship on campus. These new businesses range from information technology to food and drinks establishments.

The funding for the redevelopment of the building comes from the Department of Trade and Industry, with Nedbank as private partner. “We looked at other, similar environments in our research, including that at Oxford and Leeds,” says Marais.

Upon arrival one is greeted by a large coffee shop – the entrepreneur’s thinking space! – as well as an open plan area with approximately 70 seats, and a further 18 offices situated around different-sized meeting spaces. Students can “buy” a seat, and in this way get access to the laboratory and the facilities it offers. The building also offers Wi-Fi and storage space for bicycles.

Marais says their goal – the full-time staff is five – is to help students to develop an idea into a sound business model.

Next to the LaunchLab, the new Information Technology building opened its doors in September 2015 – officially the “greenest”, most eco-friendly building on campus.

This sought-after status is determined by the Green Building Council of South Africa’s Green Star Office criteria for green buildings. Among other things, the IT building boasts energy efficiency and renewable energy, as well as indoor environment quality (IEQ).

The new building features large open plan working areas – much like the interesting working spaces of companies such as Google and Apple in America. Space for colleagues to meet and break-away rooms will be balanced between shared and private areas. Digital communication facilities in these areas will make virtual meetings easy.

It is not only staff work spaces on campus that are being redesigned; the nature of teaching in our age requires that students also work in spaces outside where they have to meet and discuss work as if they are already in the professional working environment.

At the end of 2015, building also started on the new student study centre and cafeteria for the Faculty of Engineering. The existing parking area will be redeveloped to house the new facilities.

This new development is not quite “planned for”, and is the result of needs among the students that were highlighted once the new engineering library was taken into use.

It became clear that the new work stations were very popular with students and they asked for more, similar spaces.
According to the Faculty of Engineering’s faculty manager, Enzo D’Aguanno, the new study centre will have various spaces where students can work on their own, in silence, or where they can get together as a group, as the Engineering Council of South Africa (ECSA) outcomes require from engineering students.

Apart from a card-managed entry system that will enhance security, students can in future also make use of lockers (with power supply) and Wi-Fi in both the cafeteria and study centre. The study centre will consist of eight group workrooms with six to ten seats each, an Information Systems Research (ISR) office, approximately 80 individual work stations as well as an informal sitting area for 24 people. There will be a number of computer terminals.

“The bigger and more effective cafeteria will have seating for approximately 190 people as well as semi-partitioned cubicles where students can eat and at the same time carry on with group work. The serving area will be considerably larger than the existing one. We are even considering lengthening the hours in which food is sold to include afterhours and Saturdays,” says D’Aguanno.

This is only the beginning of a lot of work to be done at Engineering. The building which IT occupied will be renovated and transferred back to Engineering. New lecture halls will be built and the entire Engineering building complex, nearly 45 years old, will be renovated over the next few years.

The residence was designed to provide a new living and learning community for students who are either in their final year or doing postgraduate studies. The study centre will consist of various spaces where students can work on their own, in silence, or where they can get together as a group, as the Engineering Council of South Africa (ECSA) outcomes require from engineering students.

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Accommodation facilities on campus are also growing. Russel Botman House is the newly built senior residence at SU. This residence in Marais Street opened its doors in January 2014 and accommodates 252 students. The residence was designed to provide a new living and learning community for senior students who are either in their final year or doing postgraduate studies. This gender-inclusive residence sees community as the tool for real social integration amongst its residents and was designed to facilitate this through communal areas for groups of ten students, including a communal kitchen where they can enjoy meals together.

The LLL houses – Listen, Live and Learn – are not completely rid of paint brush and hammer yet. This residence in Victoria Street is currently made up of 27 houses of which 12 are freestanding and 15 are townhouses. The construction of the 15 townhouses was completed at the beginning of 2014 and each house accommodates eight students. The freestanding houses will be renovated one by one in order to make them more comfortable and suite the needs of students. Each house will also be remodelled in such a way as to increase the number of beds to eight per house. This gives LLL a current capacity of between 180 and 200 students.

Change never stops, and to stay abreast of trends, SU makes sure it is innovative when it comes to the design of work and study spaces on campus.
A medical team of Stellenbosch University (SU), led by Prof André van der Merwe of the Division Urology, made world news after performing the world’s first successful penis transplant.

By WILMA STASSEN

News of the world’s first successful penis transplant dominated headlines after a team of surgeons from Stellenbosch University (SU) and Tygerberg Hospital made the announcement in March 2015.

For many South Africans, this ground-breaking achievement was not only a feather in the university’s cap, but it also became a symbol of pride for their country as news of this success spread around the world.

The marathon nine-hour operation, led by Prof André van der Merwe, head of SU’s Division of Urology, was performed on 11 December 2014 at Tygerberg Hospital in Bellville, Cape Town. The 21-year-old recipient’s penis had to be amputated three years ago in order to save his life when he developed severe complications after a traditional circumcision.

Van der Merwe was assisted by Prof Frank Graewe, head of SU’s Division of Plastic Reconstructive Surgery, and Prof Rafique Moosa, head of the Department of Medicine, transplant coordinators; anaesthetists; theatre nurses; a psychologist; an ethicist, and other support staff.

“This procedure is another excellent example of how medical research, technical know-how and patient-centred care can be combined in the quest to relieve human suffering,” says Prof Jimmy Volmink, dean of SU’s Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences (FMHS).

“We are proud of the medical team, who also form part of our own staff complement at Tygerberg Hospital,” says Dr Beth Engelbrecht, Western Cape head of health. “It is good to know that a young man’s life has been significantly changed with this very complex surgical feat.”

Even the National Assembly congratulated Tygerberg Hospital and the university during a session in parliament.

The procedure was part of a pilot study to determine whether transplantation was a feasible option for men who lose their penises due to medical causes such as cancer or amputation – it is estimated that up to 250 amputations occur annually in South Africa due to botched circumcisions.

“This is a very serious situation. For a young man of 18 or 19 years the loss of his penis can be deeply traumatic. He doesn’t necessarily have the psychological capability to process this. There are even reports of suicide among these young men,” says Van der Merwe.

The patient has made a full recovery, has regained all urinary and reproductive function in the transplanted organ and is looking forward to becoming a father. Despite a few post-operative complications, the patient has shown only minor side effects of the immunosuppression treatment that he will have to take for the rest of his life, as is required by all transplant patients.

“We are very surprised by his rapid recovery,” says Van der Merwe. “Our goal was that he would be fully functional in two years and we are very surprised by his rapid recovery,” says Van der Merwe.

In addition to the physical recovery, the patient has also made an emotionally recovery. “The transplant has completely changed his life. Before the operation he was very quiet and withdrawn. Although he is still reserved, he is happy and confident, and very mature for someone his age,” Van der Merwe adds.

The planning and preparation for the study started in 2010. After extensive research, Van der Merwe and his surgical team decided to employ some parts of the model and techniques developed for the first facial transplant.

“We used the same type of microscopic surgery to connect small blood vessels and nerves, and the psychological evaluation of patients was also similar. The procedure has to be sustainable and has to work in our environment at Tygerberg,” says Van der Merwe.

This procedure could eventually also be extended to men who have lost their penises from penile cancer or as a last-resort treatment for severe erectile dysfunction due to medication side effects.

Nine more patients will receive penile transplants according to the study protocol, and the team is eagerly awaiting the go-ahead from the provincial authorities that has to approve the budget.

“We’ve done a thorough cost analyses and realised that the transplant was a little more expensive than we initially thought,” says Van der Merwe. They administered a higher dose of immunosuppression treatment in the first month after the operation to ensure that the organ was not rejected.

By the second month the treatment and accompanying cost was more than halved, and by month three the medicine costs were similar to standard post-transplant treatment.

“If you look at it from a cost perspective, consider what it means for these men, for the hospital and university and the country, then I think it is worth it,” said Van der Merwe.

• Wilma Stassen is a communication officer at the FMHS.

PIONEERS AT WORK

A medical team of Stellenbosch University (SU), led by Prof André van der Merwe of the Division Urology, made world news after performing the world’s first successful penis transplant.

MAKE A CONTRIBUTION

A fund has been created to raise money to help cover the first month’s treatment for the other patients. To make a contribution:

Standard Bank – Local Payments
Account Name: University of Stellenbosch
Account Number: 07 300 695 5
Branch code: 05 0610
Payment reference: cost centre 55373

First National Bank – Foreign Payments
Account Name: University of Stellenbosch
Account Number: 62116972416
Branch code: 204-109
Payment reference: cost centre 55373
The SU/KU Leuven ThinkTank allows students from north and south to address issues which have an impact on their future and that of the world around them.

By AMANDA TONGHA

Amanda Tongha studied journalism at SU and is currently the communication and liaison officer at the PGIO.

We cannot change the past and we are in the present, but the future, however far or near it may be, can be planned for.

The future is inevitable. We cannot change it, we can only affect it. Our current environmental impacts will have repercussions far into the future. We cannot change the past and we are in the present, but the future, however far or near it may be, can be planned for.

Future-focused, the SU/KU Leuven ThinkTank allows students from north and south to address issues which have an impact on their future and that of the world around them.

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Africas richest natural resource-endowed continent Africa is also the poorest continent (visit www.Worldmapper.org for a tour). Its wealth and its potential wealth currently seem to be serving exclusion rather than inclusion (maybe Piketty has it right). Our people in several regions suffer from a system of connected wicked problems (problématique) such as unemployment, pitiable skills, dismal incomes, scanty housing, extraordinary crime environments, bad health and the consequences of the rent-seeking behaviour of so many “leaders”. Africa, and in particular sub-Saharan Africa, has abundant natural resources and a young population and it needs to find a way to turn this potential into sustainable wealth for the continent. It finds itself in a time of radical global changes, of demanding environmental strains as well as challenging economic conditions.

In 2001, Stellenbosch University (SU) founded a company called USB Executive Development Ltd (USB-ED). It was instituted as a company with SU as major shareholder at a time when such an act was out of kilter with the business school thinking of the day. The pioneers were thought leaders who wanted to ensure a sustainable future for the University of Stellenbosch Business School (USB) and had no proof of concept other than their belief in this innovative and daring act of separating the executive education from the business school.

Although the prime drive was to create an additional income stream, this entity also has in its DNA to impact the African society through the systemic lever of management development. Using the latter as a main strategy to contribute to economic competitiveness, it makes a serious effort to combat social exclusion.

The company grew in purpose and impact from a meagre bip on the international radar screen to being the number 1 of its kind in South Africa and the rest of Africa (PMR ratings) for the past five years and to become a global Top 100 (from about 7000 worldwide) provider of management development on the London Financial Times ratings.

The seeds of USB-ED’s entrepreneurial culture were planted in its conceptual phase and it generated an organisational life of continuous innovation to ensure sustainability in the absence of funding, grants or any other subsidised existence. A tradition unfolded of being and remaining relevant and focused on praxis, developing learning interventions inspired by the needs of the real world.

Other than SU, the company focuses mostly on the adult, working market. Its 130 faculty members (formed in a virtual pool of carefully recruited and academically sound practitioners) facilitate uniquely designed learning interventions across all industries in the private sector, the public sector, as well as entities in civil society (NPOs etc.) in about 13 African countries.

An outstanding characteristic of USB-ED is its responsiveness to real market needs and its ability to integrate academic quality with real back-at-work application. These interventions are bespoke in nature and take months to design and agreed upon with the client.

The basic philosophy and approach is to go to a country, a company or client with a “clean sheet of paper, a pair of ears and a pen” and through a diligent analysis determine the nature, content and process of the intervention. These learning interventions are designed to run over a period of six to twelve months with feedback loops in between and a year-on follow up to ensure the learning is well vested in the individual and the organisation.

Although the company has its own brand it flies under the colours of the university. The brand message signals it is from Africa, that its story is interdependently tied to that of Stellenbosch University, it is simultaneously writing its own story based on the script of its vision and mission, it is a responsible citizen of Africa who has relinquished all forms of mediocrity and it is pursuing the best in all it says and does; it is not only about teaching but about doing, practicing as well as becoming what it is teaching.

The way forward is that management schools across the world face many challenges that require the removal of traditional thought scaffolding. Even so, the response to these challenges is contextual. So the vast ocean of development needs in Africa and other emerging economies demand aspirational approaches and scaling strategies to embrace this challenge. Although transacting mostly in Africa, USB-ED is required to be globally relevant and to be able to measure its impact (economic, social and environmental) regarding management development against global criteria.

USB-ED will add to its current competencies, investment in sound applied research and scholarship that will generate knowledge upon which one can act. It will also leverage its collaborating partners, the USB, School of Public Leadership (SPL), and Institute for Futures Research (IFR), in ways that will ensure the inclusion and consideration of tomorrow’s society and tomorrow’s organisation and leader.

To gain momentum and to have an impact on the sustainable economic growth and social development needs of Africa the brand and the capabilities are put to use to focus on this aspirational and expansive growth strategy. The development of managers and leaders is a key driver of economic competitiveness in Africa and to gain momentum on their development requires a different approach and speed to market.

By 2020, USB Executive Development will find itself operating in five regions, 17 countries and 19 African cities serving about 25 000 leaders per year.

Frik Landman is CEO of USB Executive Development Ltd (USB-ED)
Transformation and student success are two of the many challenges facing South African universities. But Stellenbosch University (SU) is addressing both through various initiatives – Visit@Tygerberg being one of these.

By MANDI BARNARD

Student success is central to just about everything that Stellenbosch University (SU) does, and the university boasts one of the highest undergraduate pass rates in the country. At the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences (FMHS) more than 90% of all undergraduate students successfully complete their studies. The FMHS has over the years implemented various initiatives to address the challenges of increasing diversity in a sustainable manner. This year, the number of first-year black, coloured and Indian (BCI) students who registered for the MB,ChB programme is 144 of a total of 235 students, an increase of 10% over the past five years.

One of the initiatives, the Visit@Tygerberg, has been integral to the retention and eventual registration of BCI students.

The programme was established in 2004 with the aim to orientate students to the Tygerberg campus. In the first year, only 29 BCI students were selected to study medicine at the faculty and invited to the visit. From this group, 12 students registered to study at SU in 2005.

The recruitment and selection of BCI students has grown exponentially over the past 12 years, with well over 112 BCI students registering at the faculty in 2014. Visit@Tygerberg is an annual recruitment initiative that takes place during the third-term school holidays. “It aims to give these students an opportunity to experience what the faculty has to offer to its students at the Tygerberg campus,” says Farah Fredericks, coordinator: student recruitment and support at the FMHS.

Prospective students are exposed to learning facilities like the Clinical Skills Centre and Morphology Museum, extra-curricular on-campus activities, information sessions on student support and degree content. They are also given an opportunity to engage with SU students and staff first-hand. Visit@Tygerberg has developed into a strategic programme for the FMHS and SU which is aligned to the SU’s Recruitment Bursary Project.

Fredericks explains that a student should be selected for a mainstream programme in the faculty and must also meet the recruitment bursary requirements in order to receive an invitation.

According to her the programme has been used as a vehicle to dispel various negative perceptions about the university and in particular the Tygerberg campus.

It allows students to engage with other prospective and current students who come from similar schools, cultures and backgrounds before making a decision to study at SU and to familiarise themselves with the faculty environment,” she says.

As a part of the programme the group takes part in an open discussion on their attitudes towards SU which gives the organisers a lot of insight into possible barriers and negative perceptions students have about SU. Senior students in the faculty attend this session to share their experiences at SU and Tygerberg campus.

Fredericks, who has coordinated the visit since 2010, notes that “the faculty has not only seen growth in the number of BCI students in recent years, but we see these students actively engaging in leadership and extra-curricular activities on campus, while maintaining a good academic record”.

“Tygerberg really becomes a home away from home,” says Fredericks.

Pamela Mahada, fourth-year Occupational Therapy student – Visit 2011

My friends and I always used to joke about Stellenbosch University. I always thought that you only get accepted to study at the university if your surname is “Van der Merwe” or “Van Schalkwyk”. Despite being warned about the university by my parents I still went on and decided to apply just to see what would happen.

When I was invited to the visit, I was curious more than anything to see this university that I had joked about all year long. The three days that I spent on the visit changed my perception about the university and erased all the doubts that I had about it.

The love and warmth that I received from everyone made me realise that if I decided to come study at SU, I would not only be in one of the best universities in the country, but that I’d also have a family away from home.

Siviwe Mila, sixth-year MB,ChB student – Visit 2009

After being robbed just before the open day of another university, I was disappointed in the treatment I got from them. Coming to Tygerberg for those few days in September 2009 was one of the best decisions I have ever made.

I was picked up by a friendly lady who ended up being one of my many moms in Cape Town. The staff at SU’s FMHS has been friendly and helpful throughout these six years. At this campus I have made relationships that will last a lifetime.

Leago Minguni, first-year MB,ChB student – Visit 2014

It was never a possibility in my mind. Coming from Gauteng, I only thought of a minute number of universities that I could seriously go to. But the campus changed all of that very quickly. It brought to my attention what Stellenbosch University really was.

It was not the ugly step-sister of UCT. It was home. It is currently home. Tygerberg proved that you can form close bonds with people even though you are in a very competitive field.

Feedback from students
The competitive environment in higher education requires that universities constantly find innovative strategies and actions to recruit top achieving students.

By CHRISTELLE FEYT

Enormous sums of money are spent on advertising and recruitment campaigns to achieve these goals. Universities evidently cannot undertake their marketing on an ad hoc basis anymore. Although prospective students worldwide regard the reputation of an institution as the most defining factor when it comes to selecting a tertiary institution for their studies, the so-called “Ivy League” universities can no longer rely solely on their brand names to guarantee them an influx of top students. The competitive environment necessitates well thought-out and focused strategies – coupled with institutional-wide marketing and recruitment actions. At Stellenbosch University (SU), faculties as specialist experts in the various fields of study have become primary marketing and student recruitment partners not only in terms of chasing enrolment targets, but also in terms of positioning SU as the preferred choice for university study.

Building a meaningful and lasting relationship with the client base is a prerequisite for marketing strategies in the corporate and higher education fields to succeed. A student’s final choice of university or field of study is not merely a transaction. Where universities invest in school communities by providing innovative development opportunities for both learners and teachers, and constantly meeting the demand for relevant and accurate information, there is evidence of continuous growth in loyalty to the university brand name.

The SU community interaction and schools outreach programmes introduced by internal partners such as the Division of Social Impact and the SU Centre for Pedagogy (SUNCEP), together with faculty initiatives such as the Visi8Maties campus visits and winter schools, contribute significantly to attract prospective students to Maties. In a South African study, an overwhelming majority of learners indicated that they already want to start associating themselves with their university of choice during their school years. That creates an excellent opportunity for universities to turn a potentially loyal learner into a sure choice.

The Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences recently established a student ambassador’s programme that uses trained students as advisors and mentors to support provisionally admitted students during their matric year in preparation for their studies at SU. This allows learners to become part of the student community early on. This project is also in keeping with a large-scale Maties loyalty programme planned by the Centre for Student Recruitment. The purpose of the programme is to start investing in a diverse group of would-be Maties as early as Grade 9. Worldwide there is a sharpened focus on so-called diversly recruitment to guarantee that student communities reflect the demography of the broader communities from which students are drawn. SU strives for an enrolment demography of newcomer first-year students by 2018 of 50% white and 50% black, coloured and Indian (BCI) students.

SU has made a decision to create a specialist post within student recruitment that will focus specifically on relationship marketing in terms of target markets within the basic education environment, as well as enhanced recruitment strategies to attract BCI students to SU. Dr Gillian Arendse, former head of the Centre for Mentor Tutor Leadership (MLT) Development within Student Affairs, was appointed specialist advisor to this post. He has a thorough understanding of the experiences of students and prospective students given his involvement in marketing and developing science over the past 20 years or so.

To stay in touch with the market of prospective students, SU uses the candidates’ preferred channels of communication, including electronic technology such as social media platforms, email, websites, podcasts and promotional videos. The Contact and Client Service Centre assists with this task. Although traditional marketing activities will continue to play a valuable role in student recruitment, it is to be expected that Stellenbosch University will increasingly include relationship-oriented practices in the marketing mix used to recruit students.

To be able to reflect the entire student recruitment cycle within an institutional client relationship management (ICRM) system would seem to be the most favourable strategy. This means high-quality client data could be captured via information technology throughout the student life cycle in order to establish and maintain a mutually beneficial relationship.

Christelle Feyt is SU’s senior director: prospective students.

The competitive environment in higher education requires that universities constantly find innovative strategies and actions to recruit top achieving students.
One of SU’s key strategic priorities is to do research which has an impact on society. As part of his new position, Mawethu Nyakatya will make sure communities and Stellenbosch University (SU) take hands to address societal issues.

By JOANNE WILLIAMS and PIA NÄNNY

With one eye on the Division of Research and Development and the other on the Division of Social Impact, Mawethu Nyakatya is a matchmaker: He facilitates the interaction between researchers at Stellenbosch University and community members who have identified certain research questions.

Nyakatya’s role involves establishing new and fostering existing partnerships between the university and external social partners, such as government, business, and civil society, as well as identifying community research opportunities and linking these with the university’s research expertise.

“SU has a world-class research and development system which has produced a number of distinguished researchers and ensured quality research outputs in the form of research papers and products. This output has enriched the world of science and the global community,” says Nyakatya.

“However, the university strives to be locally relevant and local communities should have the benefit of SU’s research capabilities to address pressing challenges facing them. Hence, additional attention is being given to the university’s ability to respond to research opportunities in the surrounding communities.”

In this regard, SU established the position of manager: community-based research within the Division of Social Impact. This role supports community-university research partnerships which aim to empower local people to shape the future of their communities. Nyakatya, who previously held the position of coordinator: research partnerships and communication in the Division of Research Development, was the perfect fit.

He is currently managing the project of creating an online tool where community members can enter their needs and where researchers can look for possible research opportunities. Everyone benefits. The research will be useful to the communities while it creates opportunities for student training and the gathering of information that could lead to the publication of articles. It also gives students the chance to apply their knowledge in real-life situations.”

Examples of this include the Department of History assisting residents of Kayamandi with writing their own history. Another example is the Water Institute’s involvement in a water project in the Hessequa Municipality.

SU doesn’t give financial support to projects, but it can offer support in the form of knowledge-sharing. Collaborative research between universities and local communities has been proven to improve decision-making, create a shared sense of ownership and belonging, and ultimately strengthen the socio-economic vibrancy of communities.

Furthermore, universities as public institutions have a three-pronged reason to exist namely teaching and learning, research, and community interaction. And the best way for a university to engage civil society is on the basis of its teaching and learning, and research expertise (engaged scholarship),” Nyakatya says.

SU HAS A WORLD-CLASS RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM WHICH HAS PRODUCED A NUMBER OF DISTINGUISHED RESEARCHERS.

Until the online tool is available, a database of community research opportunities (follow the links on www.sun.ac.za/ci) has been developed and is available on the university website as a resource for academics and students who wish to pursue research that responds to challenges as identified and experienced by SU’s neighbouring communities.

This database is adapted continuously to reflect the research interests of the university and those of external communities.

• Joanne Williams works for SU’s Division of Social Impact. Pia Nänny is a freelance journalist who studied at SU.
African university networks should be like spider webs in rainstorms. Resilient. That is the premise for the work and world view of Periperi U, an African disaster risk reduction network of which Stellenbosch University (SU) is the secretariat.

By CHRISTOPHER MULLER

For Periperi U, the strength and resilience of African networks lie not in checking the chink in the armour, or the weakest link in the chain, but in understanding the tensile strength in each strand of a simple spider web. On a continent that faces challenges of food security, armed conflicts, extreme weather and public health emergencies, Periperi U brings alive the value of engaged, pan-African risk scholarship. This energetic partnership of African universities seeks to build locally relevant disaster risk related capacity, and to promote scholarship on disaster risk. The rapidly emerging cross-disciplinary field recognises that recurrent disasters not only undermine livelihoods across the continent, but also Africa’s prospects for progress.

In 2006, when the five founding partners – Makerere University in Uganda, one of the founding members and the coordinator. Visit www.riskreductionafrica.org and email allaholloway@sun.ac.za, or phone +27 10 808 9281.

The University of Antananarivo has run disaster risk management short courses in Madagascar since 2010, with more than 275 people from 2010 to 2014 attending these 7-day sessions. The University of Ghana’s courses also reach at-risk settlement.

The courses are offered in no less than eight languages, bridging language divides and disciplinary boundaries. According to Dr Ailsa Holloway, Periperi U coordinator, the introduction of new cross-disciplinary disaster risk academic programmes in so many countries was no easy task.

The courses are offered in no less than eight languages, bridging language divides and disciplinary boundaries. According to Dr Ailsa Holloway, Periperi U coordinator, the introduction of new cross-disciplinary disaster risk academic programmes in so many countries was no easy task.

For example, following the launch of the Millennium Development Goals in 2005, we have seen an array of academic programmes emerge in Sustainable Development, Urbanisation Studies and Climate Change. Yet, since 2005, the occurrence of market and informal settlement fires in Africa, along with communicable disease outbreaks and losses due to flash floods call for a much sharper scholarly focus on risk and resilience.

Higher education institutions do not lightly embark on new academic initiatives. The inclusion of an explicit risk perspective within an existing field, or the introduction of a cross-disciplinary disaster risk management degree always involves institutional adjustments. The disaster risk domain is complex, requiring an understanding and integration of various disciplines, and instruction that must be informed by local risk profiles, national policies and international frameworks.

The Periperi U network has risen to this challenge. To date, the partnership has introduced 18 applied academic programmes that now graduate urgently needed local disaster risk reduction professionals and scientists. Stellenbosch University's Disaster Risk Studies and Development module requires students to conduct a community risk assessment in an at-risk settlement. The rapidly emerging cross-disciplinary field recognises that recurrent disasters not only undermine livelihoods across the continent, but also Africa’s prospects for progress.
SUSTAINABLE TO THE CORE

Sustainability is not merely a buzzword at Stellenbosch University (SU); it is part of our very essence. However, all stakeholders are required to pull together to advance sustainability at SU.

By BARBARA POOL

Sustainability forms part of the strategic framework of Stellenbosch University and is imbedded in the Institutional Intent and Strategy 2013-2018. This document serves as a basis to position SU in the 21st century, while this position in turn is imbedded in the four strategic focus areas of SU, one of which is systemic sustainability* (the others being student success, diversity, and the SU’s knowledge base).

When we refer to sustainability, we purposefully look at the bigger picture – seeking ways the current generation and future generations can function in a sustainable way,” says Van Huyssteen.

“Systemic sustainability is a culture that needs to be inculcated and this requires a behavioural change. Everyone has a role to play for this to succeed, not only our alumni, current students and staff, but also future students, the community, the business environment, schools, and government organisations.”

Ideally, SU alumni should act as role models by sharing with others what they are already doing in their various environments. Most important: to support the university with this cultural change as part of the Institutional Intent and Strategy.

To this end, SU not only focuses on financial support, but also on various levels of involvement, such as attending SU events and supporting academic activities.

“Everyone has a role to play, and coordination between divisions, functions and services is of critical importance.”

Van Huyssteen believes we should all pull together to make a difference.

“Systemic sustainability has a broader focus than a mere balance between the various elements of sustainability, such as ecology, economy and people. The emphasis is on the mutual connection with interdependence on and influence of all the elements in relation to each other – directly or indirectly, good or bad. The aim is sustainability of the whole entity, not merely parts of it. This in broader context, each division and individual has a role to play, and coordination between divisions, functions and services is of critical importance.”

• Mobility: Matie bicycles; campus commuting service; lift club webpage

• Water conservation: Eco-friendly shower heads; indigenous plants; grey water irrigation

• Three-drum recycling: Recyclable material (paper, tins, glass); non-recyclable waste (wet tissues, cling film); food/compost (organic waste)

• Energy conservation: Low-energy globes; light sensors; eco-friendly cooling systems

• Landscape design: Organic compost; integrated pest control plan; endemic plant species

• Financial sustainability: Faultless reporting; budget process management; diversification of revenue sources

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*WHAT IS SYSTEMIC SUSTAINABILITY?

Systemic sustainability has a broader focus than a mere balance between the various elements of sustainability, such as ecology, economy and people. The emphasis is on the mutual connection with interdependence on and influence of all the elements in relation to each other – directly or indirectly, good or bad. The aim is sustainability of the whole entity, not merely parts of it. This in broader context, each division and individual has a role to play, and coordination between divisions, functions and services is of critical importance.
WHOSE KNOWLEDGE COUNTS?

Over the course of a year, the seminar series “Indexing the Human” opened up an intellectual space at Stellenbosch University (SU) around classification, transformation and knowledge production at institutions of higher education.

By LYNNE RIPPENAAR-MOSES

When the “Indexing the Human (ITH)” seminar series hosted its first academic talk in August 2014, the group of academics driving the series could not have foreseen the impact it would have on Stellenbosch University, its student population and staff, and institutions of higher learning both locally and internationally.

“The series has not only produced a research group with a number of interconnected projects and initiatives, but most importantly, what we have achieved, is to open up an intellectual space at the university and in South Africa in general where we can start asking rigorous and critical questions about the human sciences, how knowledge is produced and how we think about managing populations and classifying people,” explains Dr Thomas Cousins, one of the academics leading the ITH programme.

The “Indexing the Human: From Classification to a Critical Politics of Transformation” series is a year-long programme of seminars, workshops and collaborative learning opportunities focused on rethinking the past and future of social anthropology and human sciences more broadly at the institution and in the region.

With funding from the Mellon Foundation, Stellenbosch researchers Profs Steven Robins and Kees van der Waal, as well as Drs Cousins, Lindsay Reynolds and Bernard Dubbeld led the programme, drawing on a number of local, regional and international scholars to participate.

“More particularly, by thinking with this concept of the index, by looking at the history of anthropology and how other related disciplines have classified and indexed human populations in the past, we are able to look with fresh eyes at contemporary issues around politics of difference today – for example, citizens versus foreigners, the healthy and the sick, settlers and indigenous persons,” says Cousins.

Quoting from the ITH group statement which was issued in May 2015 in support of transformation at SU and more broadly within higher education in South Africa, the researchers elaborate: “Right now in South Africa and across many parts of the world, we are desperately in need of critical scholarship, reflection, and debate, of the most rigorous and robust kind, on the various ways in which exclusion and inclusion, identification and classification, enumeration and administration, operate together in subtle and pernicious ways to dehumanise ourselves and our brothers and sisters – whether we are from Klerksdorp, Kilsrivic, KZN, Kenya or Kazakhstan.

“We must question carefully and specifically how ideas of skin, tribe, ethnicity and race are welded together with language, class, purity, and entitlement if we are to make sense of the histories of conquest and exploitation that we all inherit and live with today.”

During its run, the series also drew some criticism, mainly from those associated with the former Anthropology Department (now the Sociology and Social Anthropology Department) and some other spheres.

The entire programme was organised around four thematic focal areas and took the form of seminar themes: “Technologies of Governance and the Shapes of Politics”; “The Place of Race”; “Science, Experimentality and Intervention”; and “Kinship, Ethics and the Everyday in South Africa”.

These seminars included leading international and local scholars from the likes of Prof Peter Redfield (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, USA); Saul Dubow (University of London, UK) who specialises in the history of race in South Africa; and Keith Breckenridge (University of the Witwatersrand), whose research is focused on biometrics and governance in colonial Africa.

Talks and debates that have drawn a lot of interest were that by scholar and philosopher Prof Achille Mbembe on “Decolonising the University Now” in April 2015, and a public debate on “Language and Transformation at Stellenbosch University – critically rethinking the language policy at Stellenbosch now.”

In his talk, Mbembe spoke about the current focus on campuses across South Africa to bring “white supremacy to its knees” and the removal of the Cecil John Rhodes statue from the UCT campus.

“These versions of whiteness that produced men like Rhodes must be recalled and de-commissioned if we put to history to rest, free ourselves from our own entrapment in white mythologies and open a future for all here and now,” said Mbembe.

However, he was quick to caution those who wished to relegate white people to the position of “settlers” and exclude them from the long-term project of transforming higher education institutions in South Africa.

The ITH team says: “This series has fundamentally shaped the way SU is responding to issues of race, transformation and language. We had a number of debates that went beyond the scope of academics but focused more on community engagement, for example, and the debate on the language policy at SU.”

Other community engagement initiatives included co-hosting the David Goldblatt exhibition on “the red ribbon in the time of HIV”, holding a debate on museums and representations of race, and co-hosting the exhibition Diseases of Secrecy and a debate on South Africa’s chemical and biological warfare programme.

“We have made it possible for scholars to connect their own empirical work with very contemporary public concerns around curriculum change, transformation, language and race in public life in general and in higher education in particular, so that we are able to provide both empirical detail and critical concepts to contribute to opening up the public space for thinking and debate,” says the team.

While the programme itself has come to an end, the team says this is not the end of the platform they have created.

“In the future we hope to turn this programme into a teaching and research programme and also take up some of the themes we discussed in our series and expand on them in future.”

For more information on the programme, visit www.indexingthehuman.org.

• Lynne Rippenaar-Moses is the marketing officer at the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences.

ON CAMPUS

ON CAMPUS

ON CAMPUS
Blain van Wyk, a Political Science Master’s student at Stellenbosch University (SU), has turned his own hardships with a cleft palate and lip into an opportunity to help others.

**FAST FACTS**

- Every three minutes, a child with a cleft palate and lip is born somewhere in the world. These children are often unable to eat, talk, socialise or smile.
- One in ten babies born with a cleft palate will die before the age of 1.
- Children who do not receive reconstructive surgery often struggle to breathe, eat, drink and talk. This results in malnutrition as well as medical and psychological problems.
- Many children with cleft palates and lips develop permanent hearing loss.
- It takes as little as 45 minutes for one operation to repair a cleft lip and change a child’s life forever.

**BECOME INVOLVED**

- Visit the Operation Smile SA website at http://southafrica.operationsmile.org/, or look for “Operation Smile Student Society” on Facebook.
- Name Operation Smile SA as the beneficiary on your Woolworths MySchool card.
- You can also collect the caps of Fair Cape milk bottles and hand them in at various points across the Cape Peninsula. Visit http://www.faircape.com/millionsmiles/ for more information.

**INSPIRATION**

“People don’t necessarily ask me about the fact that I was born that way – I suspect they may be a bit scared to ask. But many people want to know how they can become involved. I also wear an Operation Smile bracelet, which catches people’s attention and leads to conversation about it. I’m not ashamed of it at all, so I’m always more than happy to answer people’s questions.”

“When I was in Rwanda, 228 patients turned up in the hope of receiving reconstructive surgery, but Operation Smile SA could only assist 138. So, the more awareness and funds we raise, the more people we can assist.”

Today, Blain is a proud and confident ambassador for Operation Smile SA, but he admits that self-acceptance wasn’t that easy at first.

“When I was younger, I used to wonder why I had to be born that way – I so wanted to look like the other children. But since I have come to truly accept and love myself for who I am and what I look like, everything has changed. Now I can use my own experience to make a difference in the lives of other children born the way I was. When I look back today, I know exactly why I was born that way.”

Sonika Lamprecht is a journalist at SU’s Division of Corporate Marketing.
Maties Sport continues Stellenbosch University’s (SU) proud sporting tradition with its five new focus units.

By PIA NÄNNY

Maties Sport means business. It wants to achieve a dominant position within focus sports at tertiary, regional, national and international level; develop world-class sportmen and women; deliver an excellent university sport experience; increase participation in recreational sport; build social capital and raise the university’s societal impact.

To move forward we need innovative thinking and an excellent understanding of the current sport environment.

To move forward we need innovative thinking and an excellent understanding of the current sport environment.

"Sport can make a significant contribution to the University’s commitment to holistic student development by facilitating the pursuit of both academic and sporting excellence as well as providing opportunities for a healthy and active lifestyle.

"Transformation is also important to us, but we don’t just want to recruit a group of students; we also want to look after them well.”

As chief director, Groenewald’s task is to focus on strategic leadership, as guided by SU’s Institutional Intent and Strategy (IIS). This means that Maties Sport, just like any other support or academic division at SU, strategicaly focuses on broadening access and improving the institution’s diversity profile; maintaining the student success rate and contributing to the research agenda; as well as providing visionary leadership to enhance the university’s societal impact.

"Sport on tertiary level has changed significantly over the last 5 to 8 years,” says Groenewald. “There is a bigger emphasis on demonstrating success in both academic and sport performances.”

Maties Sport has identified seven high performance or priority codes, namely athletics, cricket, football, hockey, netball, rugby and swimming.

“The aim is to increase this number to 10 by 2019. Rugby remains one of our flagship sporting codes and for me our biggest asset as a result of its status at international, national and provincial levels. It also has the highest level of participation if you take into consideration the very popular codes like any other support or academic division at SU, strategically focuses on broadening access and improving the institution’s diversity profile; maintaining the student success rate and contributing to the research agenda; as well as providing visionary leadership to enhance the university’s societal impact.

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"Stellenbosch University has a long and proud sporting tradition and its contribution to the University’s (SU) proud sporting tradition

Focus sport codes: The FNB Maties Rugby team, Stellenhof Maties Men’s and Women’s hockey teams and the Maties Football team won their respective leagues. Three athletes and one swimmer represented South Africa at the World Student Games in South Korea where Justine Palframan (read more on page 71) won gold in the 400 m. She and Maties discus athlete Victor Hogan were included in the SA team to participate in the IAAF World Athletics Championships in Beijing in August.

ParaSport: The Paralympic sprinter Ilse Hayes set a world record in the T13 class when she ran the 100 m in 11.89 s. Maties ParaSport athletes set five African records and seven South African records at the national championships. Paralympic swimmer and law student, Hendri Herbst, won two bronze medals at the IPC World Championships and Maties ParaSport cyclists also took gold at several international competitions, among others two gold medals for hand-cyclist Justine Asher.

USA (July results): Maties Cycling and Maties Badminton were crowned champions in their respective University Sport South Africa competitions. Maties Surfing, Maties Gymnastics and Maties Hockey’s women’s team were all runners-up, while Maties Hockey’s men’s team finished third. Maties Rugby and Maties Netball took fourth place in their competitions.
the homestretch of her career and is pulling out all the stops to end it on a high note at the 2016 Paralympic Games in Rio de Janeiro.

Ilse Hayes will take part in her last Paralympic Games – Rio 2016 – shortly after her 31st birthday. She aims to conclude her international career, which started in 2001, after the IPC World Championships, to be held in the Olympic Stadium in London in 2017.

In 1996, Hayes was 11 years old when she was diagnosed with Stargardt’s Disease, a condition that affects the central vision and the ability to distinguish detail. The warning signs came when Hayes, an outstanding sportswoman and especially tennis player, started missing volley shots at the net because her eyes could no longer follow the ball. She took part in her first international athletics meeting in 2001 and went from strength to strength. She won five medals at three different Paralympic Games: bronze in the 400 m in Athens, and gold in the long jump and silver in the 100 m in Beijing, as well as in London.

"ParaSport has developed a lot over the years," says Hayes. "It has become a great deal more professional, countries invest more, and the public is better informed. The London Paralympic Games were almost completely sold out. The spirit at the Paralympic Games is something special. Everyone attending has experienced some form of hardship; everybody needs somebody for something."

After the highlight of London 2012, where she defended her long-jump title despite a torn quad muscle, 2013 turned out to be a very difficult year. Hayes was plagued by injuries and had to work hard to strengthen her body and her mind. She gave up long jump and decided to focus on her track items – the 100 m and the 200 m.

She also gave up her job at a community sports project to give herself one last chance to be able to concentrate fully on her sport. Her performances over the past year prove that this was the right decision. Hayes kicked off 2015 with a new African record in the 200 m and followed this performance with a world record in the 100 m in the T13 class, and another Africa record in the 200m. She bettered both records at the IPC Competition in São Paulo, Brazil. She also took part in IPC athletics in Europe (Italy and Germany) where she dominated the 100 m and 200 m items in her class.

In September 2015, she had to withdraw from an exhibition race in Rio de Janeiro and also missed the African Games due to injury. Her rehabilitation and preparation were aimed at the IPC World Championships in Doha in October 2015.

Hayes has served as an inspiration to many others over the years and has been recognised in various ways. The Order of Ikhamanga: Silver was bestowed on her in 2013, and in the same year she was included in the Mail & Guardian’s list of “200 Young South Africans”, a list that recognises influential South Africans under the age of 35.

She has been nominated for and has received the Western Cape Government’s Sportswoman of the Year with a Disability Award a few times, among others in 2015. In Augustus 2015, Gsport honoured her in the same category.

"I wouldn’t change my life for anything. God brought these circumstances across my path and it is my responsibility to make the most of my talent and use the opportunities I get to the fullest. I see it as a platform to inspire people and give them hope," she concludes.

"Dr Suzanne Ferreira has been Hayes’ coach since 2005 and she trains with other Paralympic stars such as Fanie van der Merwe and Arnu Fourie. Other track and field athletes preparing for possible participation in Rio de Janeiro are Arrund Liebenberg, Anika Pretorius, Charl du Toit, Dyan Buys, Zanele Situ and Reinhardt Hamman."

• Pia Nanny studied at SU and is a freelance journalist.
With the SU Woordfees taking over the management of the University Choir this year, the 80-year-old choir is set on a path to even more successes.

By FRIEDA LE ROUX

The SU Woordfees 2015 is in the past, but the energy at the Erfurt House, where the festival offices are, doesn’t seem to lessen. Apart from the festival itself and the WOW Project, which runs throughout the year, the Woordfees team is now also responsible for the management of the University Choir and the Buya Project.

“We have taken over management of the choir in April already,” Saartjie Botha, festival director, says of this new development. “It means the choir in April already,” Saartjie Botha, festival director, says of this new development. It means the choir itself and the WOW Project, which runs throughout the year, the Woordfees team is now also responsible for the management of the University Choir and the Buya Project.

Botha says the choir is getting ready to defend its championship title at the World Choir Games in Sochi, Russia, in 2016. At the previous event held at Riga, Latvia, in 2014, the choir was the winner in all three categories they participated in: Musica Sacra, Spirituals and Mixed Choirs. If you keep in mind that less than half of the choristers can read music, it makes this achievement so much more remarkable.

But a good choir is led by the strong hand of a good conductor. And with André van der Merwe at the helm, Stellenbosch’s singing students couldn’t ask for better. Apart from also conducting the Stellenberg Girls Choir, he has a very busy programme as judge and guest lecturer at various international competitions and summer schools.

This year, he has already been a judge at the Portuguese Summer School and Choral Competition, where he also presented workshops. From there he went to Wernigerode and Magdeburg, where he presented master classes. Furthermore, he will be a judge at the International Choral Competition & Grand Prix of Nations, an international competition in Manila in the Philippines, and in November the IFCM World Choral Expo 2015 in Macau, China.

Van der Merwe’s programme for 2015 is also a busy affair: he will act as judge at the European Choral Grand Prix in Germany and the third International Choral Festival in Singapore. He is also presenter of the BBC Choir Competition in England.

Botha says it is important that Van der Merwe – the choir’s seventh conductor – is able to focus on what he excels at, and not waste his time and creative energy on management issues.

The University Choir, founded in 1936 and celebrating its 80th year in 2016, is also the oldest university choir in the country. Will we be celebrating this achievement? “Of course,” says Botha. She will not let the cat out of the bag just yet, but says that a successful visit to the World Choir Games will make the eighty wonderful years even more memorable.

• Frieda le Roux is a freelance journalist who studied journalism at SU.
The recording studio at SU’s Conservatoire has produced soundtracks for Hollywood movies. And if they play their cards right, they might just outdo the famed Abbey Road Studios in London.

By NAUDÉ VAN DER MERWE

The famous Abbey Road Studios in London has hosted some of the best musicians in the world. The Beatles recorded there, also The Hollies and Pink Floyd. Abbey brags on its website that its studio space is the largest in the world, but Gerhard Roux, lecturer in music technology at Stellenbosch University (SU) and main sound technician as the SU’s Higher Education at the moment, says Roux, “Four people sit there with the best equipment. One guy has to make a dialogue change, but his workstation computer can’t be creative, after all. Roux speaks of his experience at Hollywood in my huis voila the ever-growing list. "Movie soundtracks give us our edge at the moment," says Roux. An example: the percussion parts of the 2012 animation movie Zambesia - the score was composed by Bruce Relief – was recorded in Stellenbosch, while the strings and winds were put to tape in Los Angeles, using mostly musicians from the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra.

Roux, who worked here and abroad as the project’s sound technician, convinced the producers to record the entire score of their next project, a film called Kumba, at the Stellenbosch studios, using the local Stellenbosch Camerata as orchestra. This orchestra consists of ad hoc professional players and students. It would cut costs, and Roux believed that because of the systems in place, he would also be able to enhance the quality of the recording. And voila! "Kumba is a better product, the students understood the weight of the situation. They truly give their best. We know we’re working with not-so-experienced musicians, so we know that we have to develop better socio-technical systems. Film music also reaches a larger audience than the ones who attend concerts. Local movies like Skoonheid, Hollywood in my huis and I now pronounce you black and white also recorded soundtracks here. "If everyone who saw Kumba had to sit in the Endler Hall, we’d fill the hall to capacity every night for 311 years. That’s the sort of pressure that make students really concentrate," explains Roux.

Socio-technical systems is something Roux, currently busy with his doctorate in this field, is clearly very passionate about. In October 2015, he presented a paper in New York at the international Audio Engineering Society about the system they use at the SU studio. He believes systems should be developed in such a way that humans do what they do best, and the same counts for computers. A computer can’t be creative, after all. Roux speaks of his experience at Star Wars director George Lucas’ Skywalker Sound, a state-of-the-art studio now also used by Disney.

"Four people sit there with the best equipment. One guy has to make a dialogue change, but his workstation computer can’t be creative, after all. Roux speaks of his experience at Abbey Road should watch out, Stellenbosch is on the way up. "We have Master’s students from Economics, Visual Arts and mechanical engineers. Mechanical engineers have a practical way of thinking. We want people who think in weird ways. Creativity is the key," Roux himself studied theology at undergraduate level. "It teaches you how to trust when things go wrong!" he laughs. But at the moment he feels he is exactly where he should be, and the Hollywood sound don’t interest him. He enjoys lecturing as well as the research aspect of his job, and feels like he’ll struggle to come to terms with their more rigid socio-technical systems. There’s one exception: Nashville, the world’s country music Mecca.

"Most of the things I use when recording classical chamber music is borrowed from country music, because those guys’ perspective and the way they use sound are truly inspiring. Nashville is years ahead." Roux says he only has "Unisa Grade 1 music theory" behind his name, but that doesn’t mean esteemed musicians don’t respect him.

While working as an assistant for seven-time Grammy-winning sound technician for Deutsche Grammophon, Wolf-Dieter Karwatky, on Schumann and Magalhães’ first CD, the piano duo spotted his talent. Schumann says: "Gerhard really impressed us with his expertise, but also with his sense of humour. Over the years he has made us sob with laughter.

"Being able to use a wonderful hall like the Endler is a fantastic experience. Most sound studios are small and you can artfully you have to try and transport yourself to a concert hall. Here we have the opportunity to play for the hall with a microphone that lets you into people’s living rooms. We’re also in an environment we are familiar with," says Schumann. Abbey Road should watch out, Stellenbosch is on the way up.

Naudé van der Merwe is an SU alumus, freelance music critic and script writer for Homebrew Films.
Why did you choose Arnold van Wyk as subject?
I encountered his music while working towards my doctorate in Oxford. In the process, I met his friend of many years, Howard Ferguson, who had an amusing way of talking about Van Wyk. He showed me amazing handwritten manuscripts, among them the *Misso in illo tempore*. That was the start of my Van Wyk project. It gained momentum after I moved back to South Africa with my family in 2001.

*Nagmusiek* is a grandiose work. Is it not intimidating for readers who aren’t academically inclined?
For me, academic writing isn’t distinguishable from creative work. The way in which a book, article or thesis takes form is never an automatic process that occurs because of pre-conceived ideas. It develops as you engage with the material. I would hope to think that the book became what it is because I constantly tried to listen to my material. I am high when I think about possible readers – my target audience is my sons: Johan (10) and Willem (16). They are smart, wilful, don’t take rubbish, keep me on my toes, and forgive me the right wrongs.

How much time did you spend working on *Nagmusiek*?
The whole process, from conception to publication: fourteen years. The research consisted of compiling the archive, sorting a legacy, conducting interviews, studying manuscripts and other primary documents, developing form, writing, rewriting, and rewriting the manuscript again, dropping into and recovering from depression, discovering myself as writer, losing people who were important to me, and finding comrades along the way. When I think back it’s difficult to recall the emotions that the work awoke in me. I remember how fear gripped me when I sat in the university’s library, day by day sorting through a sea of documents. Sometimes I had to leave the space just to brace myself, only to go back to my bunker to continue the slow process of sorting through things. And then I remembered how perplexed I was to see the word ‘Ansbach’ in one of Van Wyk’s diaries, years after I created the character Werner Ansbach, the biographer in the book. It was harrowing working under the expectation that the book might not find a publisher. When I started with the project I had just turned 30.

For the last years if the project I was a much older man who had to finish the work started by a young man. I was discouraged by that young man’s attempts, felt how the book was shaping and tormenting me during my change of life.

‘Nagmusiek’ ravages writer
Prof Stephanus Muller, head of Stellenbosch University’s (SU) Documentation Centre for Music, was awarded the University of Johannesburg’s creative writing prize for a debut work in 2015, and has received two nominations for the kykNET/Rapport prize. Part fiction, part biography, *Nagmusiek* (Fourthwall Books) consists of three volumes about the South African composer Arnold van Wyk (1916-1983).

In this book (Sun Press), the historian Albert Grundlingh discusses the part played by black and coloured soldiers — a group often ignored — during the First World War. Grundlingh tries to find answers to questions like why black and coloured men voluntarily fought in a war that had little to do with them. The gripping conclusion is that they didn’t necessarily do it because of a sense of patriotism or because they tried to escape from drought and poverty, but because they had hoped that full citizenship would be theirs if they were willing to prove themselves by fighting in the war. Although the story of the SS Mendi is rather well-known, it is still worth reading this book for the chapter about this tragedy and the way the truth was manipulated in order to serve political agendas. The SS Mendi sank with 823 crew members of the Fifth Battalion of the South African Native Labour Contingent [SANLC] on board. Of them, 616 died.

Grundlingh also investigates the reason why these soldiers were usually without weapons, how they were recruited, and the way in which white people overseas reacted to seeing black soldiers.
As you wander through the space in the SU Art Museum that houses the history of Stellenbosch University (SU), in words, photos and video, there are various aspects that strike you: there are many more buildings in SU’s words, photos and video, and the composition of the student corps is completely different.

It’s indeed a journey back in time – but it’s also a mirror that reflects both the past and the future. Five years ago, says Prof Matilda Burden, cultural historian and curator of this exhibition, a team of external evaluators made up of local and international experts recommended that the museum include in its exhibitions one that also depicts the history of SU.

A university museum should, after all, reflect the changes that have taken place at SU over the past nearly 100 years. Does Burden believe there’s loss as things change? “I don’t think there is a great loss with change because change simply means things don’t continue in the same way as before. Culture is highly dynamic. As long as there is judicious conservation so that everything that was is not obliterated, change is, in fact, a very good thing. What you gain is the latest in trends and technology, and this prevents you from becoming stultified; after all, renewal brings progress, fresh ideas, variation, different visual impacts. Change should never, of course, be imposed simply for the sake of change – as often happens – it should always be necessary and meaningful.”

Burden explains that it was important to her to depict a part of the history of the institution as factually correctly as possible. “It was also important that, as the researcher and designer of the exhibition, I make no social or political commentary but that I remain as objective as possible. The exhibition therefore tries to portray SU’s past, present and future factually – without interpretation, conjecture or commentary.”

The exhibition focuses on various facets of university life: the academic side of things, life in the residences, sports happenings, cultural activities. As a visitor to the exhibition, you realise, once again, that students have always, together with the seriousness of academic life, also taken recreational life seriously. “For me, it’s important that visitors to the exhibition find information both interesting and stimulating, that they’re visually provoked and that they understand and appreciate the impact of this institution over the past 130 years where education and the community are concerned,” explains Burden.

The part of the exhibition that deals with the future ends with a video of the late rector and vice-chancellor Prof Russel Botman, who unexpectedly passed away in June 2014. In this video, he explains his vision for the future of the university and the principles of the HOPE Project, a set of developmental objectives and a university-wide spirit through which SU is of service to the community. “The HOPE Project remains relevant because hope is infinite,” says Burden.

• Stephanie Nieuwoudt is a freelance journalist and books editor.

JOURNEY OF 100 YEARS

Although Stellenbosch University celebrates its centenary only in 2018, its origins can be traced even further back in the past to 1890, when a theological seminary was founded in Stellenbosch. Seven years later, a high school, Het Stellenbosch Gymnasium (today’s Paul Roos Gymnasium), was founded with a view to educating students who might study at the seminary. This developed into the Stellenbosch Kollege, which, in 1887, became Victoria Kollege.

SU was officially inaugurated amid great festivities on 2 April 1918, but an act had been promulgated in 1916 already to convert Victoria Kollege into a university. SU officially came into being two years later.

Without the generous donation of ‘Stellenbosch’s benefactor’, Jan Marais (or Oom Jannie), SU would not have come into being, however. As a 20-year-old, Jan Marais, along with three of his brothers – Pieter, Alfred and Christiaan – and his uncle Marinus Neethling, went in search of fame and fortune on the diamond fields of the Vaal River in 1870. When Uncle Marinus discovered a large diamond, he decided to buy all the remaining claims. Christiaan, however, had already staked out a claim at the lowest point of the river in the area and found a wealth of alluvial diamonds there. In 1871, the Marais brothers also bought and successfully mined claims at New Rush, as Kimberley was known back then. Much later, they would become large shareholders in De Beers Consolidated Diamond Mines.

On his return to Stellenbosch, Jan and his brother Frikkie bought the farm Coetzenburg from their mother and it was here that Jannie’s work as a philanthropist had a lasting impact on the Stellenbosch community. Shortly before his death in 1915, he left £100 000 for the founding of SU out of the original Victoria Kollege.
To say that I was less than an outstanding student would be somewhat euphemistic: I squeezed my three-year BCom degree into four and a half years. Hopefully my children will study with a better sense of seriousness!

There is a legion of reasons for my poor academic showing: initially the wrong course, me underestimating the workload, the wrong major... But my attempts were also just plain dismal.

An old investment proverb goes as follows: “Past performance is no guarantee of future results”. I’ll use myself as an example: I wasn’t the top student at school, but I definitely wasn’t horrible either. Maybe I thought that my reasonable academic marks at school would cushion me from the realities of university?

The thing that definitely did not count in my favour was that I chose to express my tertiary freedom by mostly sitting around and talking nonsense in Bohemia, rather than attending class. The long and short of it was this: in my fourth year, Financial Accounting 3 beat me senseless – for the second time.

During the first round, a year earlier, Financial Accounting knocked me out in the third term: after two tests my marks were far too bad to make predicate. After throwing in the towel, I was determined to make the second time around count. I went to class often, even asked a Master’s student in financial accounting to help me get ready for my first test. Plus, as you know, I had experience on my side.

The time for said test arrived, but fate, damned fate… The exam was on the same night as the “Henne-and-Hane” ball. Nonetheless, I wrote the test (my mind might have wandered somewhat). Some of the questions resembled Greek, but overall I thought it went well. That night I drank punch without worry. 

Oops.

About two weeks later, after relapsing into the same bad-attendance routine, I receive a text from a friend: “The marks are out.” I walked from Dagbreek to the Van der Ster building to find mine on the board.

My name is there, but no score. Only the curious words, “paper with lecturer”. Cool, I thought, maybe he wants to congratulate me personally on my achievement. I should have realised my optimism was severely misplaced when the second student in front of me in the queue at Prof Leon Loxton’s office ran out in tears. (Loxton is actually a very kind man and currently teaching at the University of the Western Cape).

“Sit,” Prof Loxton instructed when I walked in, pushing my paper over his desk without fanfare.

How did it go? Well, when you play cricket, your first objective as batsman is to get off the mark. That I achieved. The second is to at least reach double figures. With this I was... well, less successful. Out of a possible 100, my mark was... one. One!

While that sank in, Prof Loxton, with commendable self-control (I would have thrown a financial calculator at my head), explained that I am wasting state money as well as my parents’

“Prof, if I may ask, what is the class average?” I fished rather wantonly.

“Is that information I don’t have to share with you,” he replied retaining his composure.

“Yes, that is your good right. But I looked at the class marks, and it isn’t very high, so you have to ask yourself if you did your job,” I dared. After this Prof Loxton asked me to leave his office. I immediately marched over to the Admin building to change my major to Economics 3, a thing I should have done long ago.

Now it’s a decade later and somehow I’ve found myself in the financial services industry. I’m extremely glad that I finished my BCom degree; I regret that I didn’t work harder; and in the coming year I’m aiming to further my financial knowledge with postgraduate studies. This time I have the right mentality.

Initially, I told this story to anyone who wanted to listen. But now? If one of my children spoke to a lecturer in that way…

But in all honesty, I wouldn’t do anything differently. Even if this cock-up cost my parents and myself an extra year – something I tried to pay for, unsuccessfully, by attending medical trials overseas (that’s a story for another time, and don’t judge, we’ve already established my decision-making skills back then were dodgy).

Eventually it took hard work (academically and financially). It was an expensive lesson but one from which I gained an immense amount of knowledge, the most important being that nothing worthwhile comes easily.

And now that I have my own children: good manners never go out of fashion.

So, to Prof Loxton, and my parents, if you read this, I apologise!

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