

*Full English translation of bilingual video text.*

**Virtual conferral of degrees, diplomas and certificates by Stellenbosch University (all faculties),  
for the graduation ceremonies originally scheduled for 31 March to 3 April 2020**

Webcast at 14:00 on 3 April 2020 ([www.youtube.com/user/StellenboschUni/videos](http://www.youtube.com/user/StellenboschUni/videos))  
Names and qualifications in online publication (via [www.sun.ac.za](http://www.sun.ac.za))

## **1. WELCOME**

### **Dr Ronel Retief, Registrar:**

Hello, everybody. Welcome to this virtual conferral of qualifications, a formal ceremony of Stellenbosch University taking place under extraordinary circumstances.

In terms of the University Almanac, we would have had our autumn graduation ceremonies this week. But because of the national lockdown to curb the spread of the coronavirus, that was not possible.

However, as a University community, we still wanted to celebrate our students' achievements. So we decided to host this virtual ceremony – coming together, albeit online, to congratulate our students, and also allow them to share their joy with family and friends.

In a moment, our new Chancellor, retired Constitutional Court judge Justice Edwin Cameron, will confer degrees, diplomas and certificates on all our qualifying candidates in absentia. So, get ready!

Two important things to note, though:

You will still get the opportunity to walk across the stage at our December graduation ceremonies, depending on how the COVID-19 situation develops.

And although we cannot currently send you your qualification by mail because of the lockdown, you will get it as soon as possible. We will keep you updated on our website, [www.sun.ac.za](http://www.sun.ac.za).

I now hand over to our Chancellor, Justice Edwin Cameron ...

## **2. CONFERRAL OF QUALIFICATIONS**

### **Justice Edwin Cameron, Chancellor:**

It's a great privilege and also a pleasure for me to be able to preside at this afternoon's ceremony.

I too received a degree from Stellenbosch University – many years ago, more than I care to remember. So, it is quite an adjustment for me to think that this afternoon, in my formal capacity, I'm the one who is conferring the degrees on behalf of the University – a particular honour, because this is my first official duty as Chancellor.

But, of course, all of us are undergoing enormous adjustments. In our personal lives, family life, our national life, and internationally, because of the COVID-19 disaster.

As President Cyril Ramaphosa said when he declared a national state of disaster some weeks ago, we're in this together, and we will also emerge from it together, and also stronger.

I am particularly proud of Stellenbosch University being at the cutting edge of our national response to this disaster. Firstly, SU is conducting world-class research. Then there are our healthcare workers and medical staff and graduates. And thirdly, our personnel and students are making significant adjustments to prepare for distance learning and teaching. We are in this together.

Today, in this virtual ceremony, we have the joy of awarding more than 3 000 diplomas, certificates and degrees. That brings the total awarded by SU for the 2019 academic year to over 9 000 – an enormous achievement.

Congratulations to those of you who are today being recognised for your dedication and hard work. Let me also congratulate the members of your immediate and extended families who supported you, as well as the donors and friends who were there for you.

Of course, the immense opportunities afforded each of you come with certain responsibilities – the responsibility to plough back into our national life and into our world the gifts, the expertise, the opportunities that we obtained through our studies.

Now I have the particular pleasure of going over to the formal part. By virtue of the powers vested in me as Chancellor by the Statute of Stellenbosch University and by the laws and the Constitution of this country, I hereby confer the degrees, diplomas and certificates that are listed in the graduation brochures for this graduation season. The names will appear online and are also available in those brochures.

I look forward to seeing you in person in December, when we have come out on the other side of the disaster that is besetting our country and the world at the moment. We will hold graduation ceremonies then.

### **3. CLOSING**

#### **Professor Wim de Villiers, Rector and Vice-Chancellor:**

Thank you, Chancellor. This is certainly a ceremony we will never forget.

Congratulations to all our new graduates! Well done! We are all very proud of you.

I want you to remember that Stellenbosch University will always be your academic home. Once a Matie, always a Matie!

Visit our online alumni platform, [www.matiesconnect.com](http://www.matiesconnect.com), to reconnect with your friends, and find job postings, mentors and networking opportunities – all in one place. We are all experiencing now just how important it is to be connected to each other. Please stay in touch with your alma mater.

I would like to thank every member of our University community for helping us through this trying time. I appreciate all your hard work and sacrifices.

Lastly, let's stop the spread of COVID-19. Please stay at home until the lockdown is lifted. And if you have to go out, take care to maintain a safe distance from others, don't touch your face, and remember to wash or sanitise your hands.

I wish you all the best, until we meet again ...