

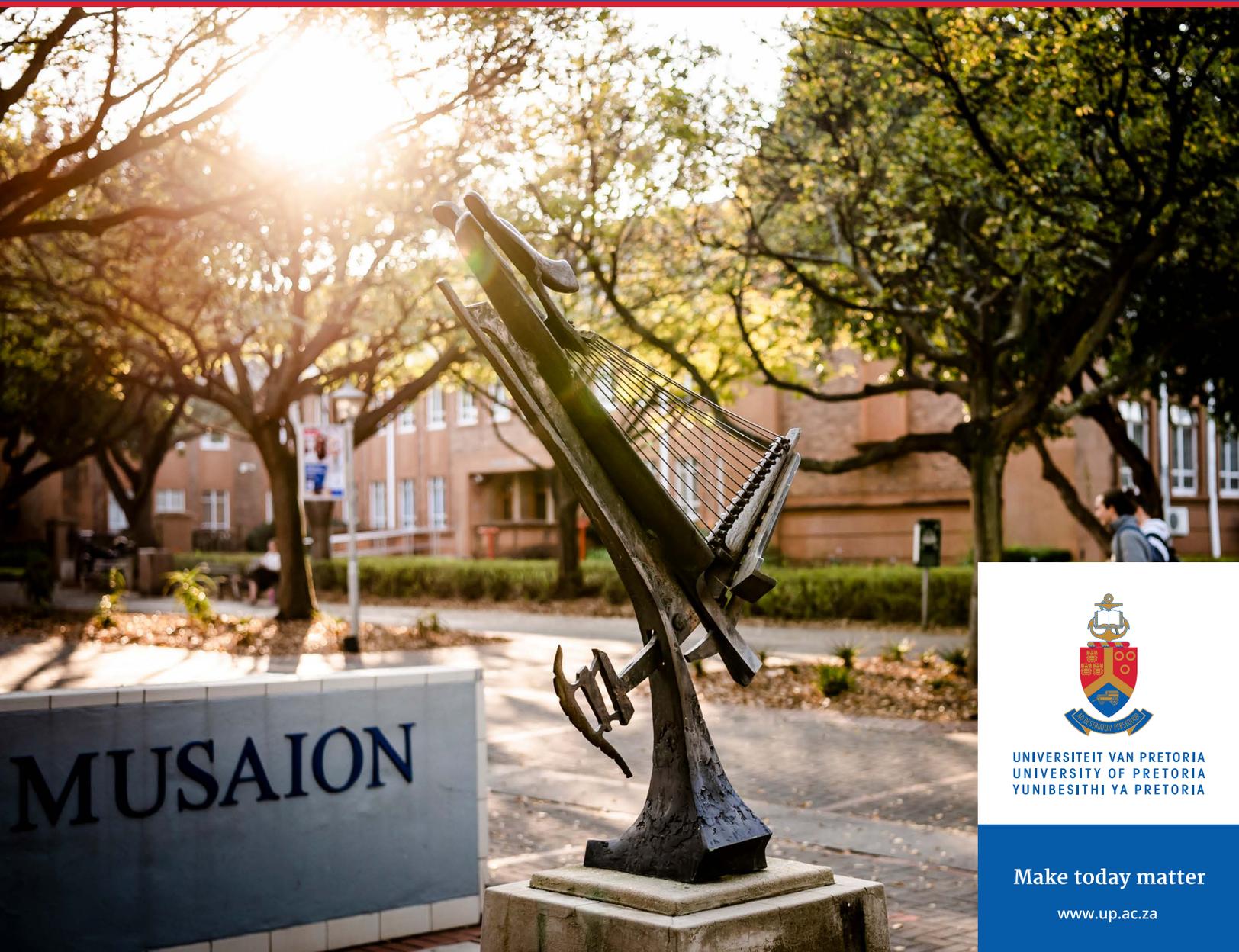
# Lentšu La Sechaba

THE VOICE OF THE CE COMMUNITY

Department for Education Innovation  
Unit for Community Engagement



Spring: Volume 18 – September 2023



MUSAION



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA  
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA  
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Make today matter

[www.up.ac.za](http://www.up.ac.za)

# Table of contents

Occupational Therapy with Community Healthcare Workers	1
Matters of interest	3
Acknowledgement	4
Community-Based Participatory Research as Engaged Scholarship—Why, How, Where?	5
A Story of Persistently Pursuing the Goal: My Academic and Career Journey at the University of Pretoria	7
Rust de Winter Community Engagement: In Commemoration of the World Animal Vaccination Day 2023	8
Quadriplegic Mouth Painters: Inspiring Art Education Students through Unconventional Art Techniques	10
Charity Begins at Home Part of the Solution, not the Problem: Empowering Community Members of Hatfield, Sunnyside, and Arcadia through Education and Skills Development Focusing on Social and Environmental Justice	11
Rhodes University Community Engagement Symposium Explores the Impact of Higher Education Community Engagement: 9 to 11 May 2023 in Makhanda, South Africa....	13
Building Victorious Women	15
Reach Out, Unite and Advocate	17
Collaborating as a Community for the Benefit of All	18
Nurturing Future STEM Participation through Youth Community Engagement	19
Providing Access to Justice while Gaining Skills and Competencies for the Legal Profession	21
The Need is the Call to Responsive Action	22
Honours Marketing Students Pioneer Digital Marketing Strategies for Wollies Animal Shelter: Highlighting the Power of Community Engagement	23
Professional Ethics at the Heart of Community Engagement of Social Work Students	25



# Occupational Therapy with Community Healthcare Workers

**Khomotso Magongoa (Fourth-Year Occupational Therapy student) and Helga Lister (Lecturer: Occupational Therapy, Faculty: Health Sciences)**

**C**ommunity healthcare workers (CHWs) are the members of the community who are essential members of the primary healthcare team. Amongst others, they provide home visits to offer services at the household level. Through this, they improve the community's access to relevant health information and primary health care (PHC).

The CHWs are trained with PHC training packaging, which includes home-based care, counselling, support and stress relief, health promotion and education at a household level, referrals to relevant departments, and how to initiate and support home-based projects. They also focus on screening, mapping, educating, linking, and extending PHC in the communities they are providing services (White, Govender & Lister, 2017). CHWs offer social services and psychosocial support to the communities (Thomas, Buch & Pillay, 2021).

In 2019, the occupational therapy group interventions with CHWs commenced in different communities, specifically Mamelodi, Eersterust, Daspoort, and Melusi. These were implemented to provide the CHWs with the necessary life skills training and mental health support for their work demands. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19, the



Community healthcare workers Holani (CHWs): Danville

group therapy sessions in the East ceased, whilst some of the sessions in the West continued. The number of CHWs ranges from six to 24 per site (six at Holani and Laudium each, nine at Danville, 116 at Jack Hindon, 18 at Eersterust, and 24 at the Atteridgeville clinic).

During their first visit, the students analysed the assets and needs of the various groups. Many of the CHWs are very motivated to provide support to their communities. They work long hours, mostly walking from house to house.

*continued on page 2*

Although each site identified unique challenges, most of the sites experienced the need for mental health support and debriefing. Unfortunately, this is currently not available for them through the Department of Health (their employer).

Most of the sites experienced conflict and communication issues, lack of motivation, and self-esteem in terms of the services they provide for the community. Other priorities identified included low energy due to extreme physical and mental exhaustion (fatigue) and an inability to manage their time effectively.

During group therapy, the Occupational Therapy students implemented sessions focusing on specific topics. Examples included management of conflict, stress, fatigue, time, health, communication, gratitude cultivating strategies, relaxation techniques, education on the difference between burnout and stress, advocacy in the community regarding the importance of the CHWs, and improving self-esteem.

Stress management was implemented according to the different priorities at each of the different sites. The focus included stress relief strategies, coping with trauma, awareness, balance, control in problem-solving, decision-making, goal setting, and assertiveness training. The CHWs reflected on the positive difference the sessions made. Some sites also included the training of specific skills for their work in the community, including wheelchair transfers, ergonomics, and training on psychiatric conditions.

Evaluation of the service varied. Most of the feedback was very positive in that the services increased the CHWs' self-esteem and enabled



them to develop or improve the skills that they will apply in their workplace and at home. As one of the CHWs stated, the sessions motivated them to have a reason to wake up every day, go to work, and gain important information that they will use either on themselves or their clients in the future.

The education and training also assisted the CHWs to share their newly developed skills with the wider community. Unfortunately, there were also CHWs at some sites who did not experience the intervention as beneficial. Challenges remain in the weekly schedules of the CHWs, which may mean that, added to their workload, they may have difficulties allocating additional time to attend the group sessions.

An evaluation occurred with the various team members involved in this project. During the second WIL block, the Occupational Therapy students will now provide structured training on mental health

in the community, whilst the work will cease at other sites. Important lessons have been learnt, whilst the communities continue to benefit from the occupational therapy presence and intervention.

## References

1. White, MS, Govender, P & Lister, HE. 2017. Community health workers lensed through a South African backdrop of two peri-urban communities in KwaZulu-Natal. *African Journal of Disability*, [online] 6(0):8. Available from: <https://ajod.org/index.php/ajod/article/view/294/625> [accessed on 22 March 2023].
2. Thomas, LS, Buch, E & Pillay, Y. 2021. An analysis of the services provided by community health workers within an urban district in South Africa: a key contribution towards universal access to care. *Human Resources for Health*, 19(1):22.

## Matters of interest

- Reimagine Community Engagement workshop will be held on Friday, 29 September 2023
- The next Community Engagement Forum meeting will be held on Wednesday, 29 November 2023.
- Refer to the links below to some of the recommended journals for submission of community engagement articles:
  - [International Journal for Research on Service-Learning and Community Engagement](#)
  - [Community Development Journal](#)
  - [Journal of Rural and Community Development](#)
  - [ASEAN Journal of Community Engagement](#)
- Community Engagement e-book 2023 <https://indd.adobe.com/view/ed1812b0-a66e-44d9-a3f4-287ce61e1f1c>
- Copies of the previous CE Newsletters are available at <https://www.up.ac.za/education-innovation/article/257709/community-engagement>

The Unit for Community Engagement invites you to report on community engagement activities by submitting articles for publication in the next newsletter (Summer 2023).

**Contact person: Dr Eugene Machimana**

Head: Curricular Community Engagement, Department of Education Innovation

Email: [eugene.machimana@up.ac.za](mailto:eugene.machimana@up.ac.za) or Tel: 012 420 5199 (w)

## Transdisciplinary Community Engagement Seminar: 2023

The Unit for Community Engagement, in collaboration with the Mamelodi campus, invites you to a Transdisciplinary Community Engagement Seminar.

The seminar aims to allow lecturers, students and community partners involved in academic community engagement to share their projects, network and identify possible collaboration opportunities. You are invited to present a 10-minute flash presentation on your module or a specific project in your module that you want to showcase. You are welcome to invite one community member and/or a student to be part of your presentation.

As the Sanlam Auditorium has a capacity of 250 people, we will monitor the number of presenters, community members and students that would like to present. Catering will be provided. Kindly support your community partner's transport to the Hatfield Campus.

**Date:** Tuesday, 10 October 2023

**Time:** Registration: 08:00 – 08:30  
Seminar: 08:30 – 17:00

**Venue:** Sanlam Auditorium, Hatfield

**Link:** Kindly complete the Google form if you want to attend <https://forms.gle/eJrvsQnw9bSWHLr68>

**Enquiries:**

Ms Lorraine Makena: [lorraine.makena@up.ac.za](mailto:lorraine.makena@up.ac.za) or

Ms Londiwe Mahlangu: [londiwe.mahlangu@up.ac.za](mailto:londiwe.mahlangu@up.ac.za)

# Acknowledgement

Editor: **Dr Eugene Machimana**  
Graphic Designer: **Mr Keith Mankgane**  
Language editor: **Mandy Jonck**  
Proofreader: **Ms Londiwe Mahlangu**

## Contact details for the Unit for Community Engagement

**Dr Eugene Machimana**  
**Head: Curricular Community Engagement**  
[eugene.machimana@up.ac.za](mailto:eugene.machimana@up.ac.za); +27 (0) 12 420 5199

**Mr Albert Matlhekethla**  
**Project Coordinator: Community Engagement**  
[albert.matlhekethla@up.ac.za](mailto:albert.matlhekethla@up.ac.za); +27 (0) 12 420 4068

**Ms Londiwe Mahlangu**  
**Project Coordinator: Community Engagement**  
[londiwe.mahlangu@up.ac.za](mailto:londiwe.mahlangu@up.ac.za); or  
[communityengagement@up.ac.za](mailto:communityengagement@up.ac.za) +27 (0) 12 420 2826



**From left:** Mr Albert Matlhekethla, Ms Londiwe Mahlangu and Dr Eugene Machimana

# Community-Based Participatory Research as Engaged Scholarship—Why, How, Where?

Prof Timothy K. Stanton (Senior Engaged Scholar: Ravensong Associates – Founding Director, Bing Overseas Studies Programme -Cape Town, Stanford University)

Scholars and community activists have long engaged in what is now commonly labelled ‘community-engaged research’ (CER). Early expressions of this work came from social psychology, promoted by Kurt Lewin as ‘action research’ in the 1940s. These efforts, largely in the business world, sought to bridge theory and practice by involving stakeholders in investigating their problems and formulating strategies to address them. In the 1960s, ‘participatory research’ and ‘participatory action research’ arose when community-based practitioners in Africa, South America, and Asia involved citizens in research and community development processes with explicit community/social change goals.

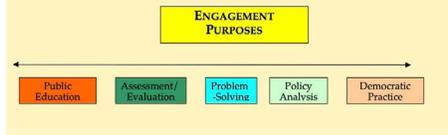
At first, this work was mostly practiced outside universities, but in later years it became embraced by scholars in disciplines such as sociology, anthropology, and community planning. Regardless of the label, these early efforts called for a transformation of research relationships from communities as objects of study to communities as active participants in investigating their problems and challenges.

Since the turn of this century, this work has greatly expanded in health, social sciences, and other fields around the world carrying labels such as ‘community-engaged research’ (CER), ‘participatory action research’ (PAR), and ‘community-based participatory research’ (CBPR).

I was very pleased and honoured to be invited by Dr Martina Jordaan to address a group of University of Pretoria (UP) academic staff interested in this work in October

## Features of Engaged Research

- Intentional **public purpose** - direct or indirect community impact locally or distant; advance knowledge - high standards of research quality.



### CER purpose

2022. In my talk, I briefly outlined the history of this work, its conceptual roots, and evolving definitions.

I discussed both principles and ethical recommendations that guide current practice. These are especially important when scholars engage in this work with historically oppressed and indigenous populations where extreme power differences between campuses and engaged communities exist. These differences can relate to who provides project approvals, who controls and owns data gathered, and who determines the nature and aims of dissemination and implementation of findings.

These complicated relationships must be sensitively established, monitored, and reflected upon collaboratively by all parties. Inaccurate assumptions and unexamined expectations can create hazards, even conflict, that can disrupt efforts, and possibly shut them down.

I discussed the many features of CER including its multiple public purposes and degrees of collaboration between scholars and community people throughout the research process from defining questions, deciding methodologies to use, planning for data gathering, collecting the data and analysing it, and determining

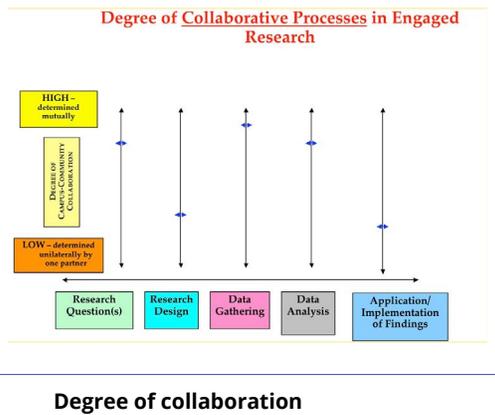
steps to disseminate, apply and/or implement findings. The degree of collaboration can vary across all project steps. What’s critical is that those involved in the research determine them collaboratively.

Following this rather theoretical discussion, I offered numerous examples of contemporary CER practice from my work with undergraduate and graduate students at Stanford and at the University’s Cape Town overseas studies campus, which I founded and directed for several years.

I also provided examples from other universities and from CER partnerships established by community-based organisations, which organised collaborative projects with both academic and government partners. I closed my talk with a detailed discussion of eight steps scholars can take for establishing partnership-based CER:

1. Identify a partner(s) and form the partnership—*relationship building*.
2. Collaboratively formulate a research question that responds to community partners’ information needs.
3. Explore and learn about the research-relevant community context and plan the research—including the content and extent of the collaborative process at each step.
4. Conduct the data gathering.
5. Analyse the data.
6. Determine appropriate strategies for sharing research findings in the community and the academy.

*continued on page 6*



7. Take appropriate action.
8. And one final, equally important recommendation: Both community and academic partners should keep journals of their experience for ongoing critical reflection on the partnership process as the research unfolds. They should plan for periodic meetings to share and consider their reflections as part of the formative

evaluation of the project. These journals and reflection outcomes can serve as methodological appendices to publications that result.

I very much hope this presentation was and will be useful to UP colleagues as they move into this work. It was a pleasure spending a morning with them and I hope our paths may cross again before too long.

# Medical Students' Experience at Daspoort Clinic

Grace Cockburn, Jonathan Ross, Nika Parvin, and Alexander Jordaan (Final-Year Medical students: University of Pretoria)

As part of our final-year Family Medicine block, we attended Daspoort Clinic for three and a half weeks to get exposure to the primary healthcare system.

The clinic has a wonderful multidisciplinary team, including the receptionist: Tanja Smith, Pharmacy Assistant: Charlene Meyer, sisters Kedibone Shakwane and Phindile Masemola, Community Oriented Substance Use Programme (COSUP) Coordinator: Ivy, Clinic Coordinator: Kenny Mafala, Consultants: Dr Botha and Dr Esoop, and teams of dieticians, physiotherapists, psychologists, audiologists, social workers and dentists—including both seniors and students.

As students, we consulted individually with the patients, formed a comprehensive assessment and plan, and then presented each case to the senior doctor. This allowed us to experience first-hand the common conditions that burden the Daspoort population. Non-communicable

diseases are highly prevalent, with many patients having multiple comorbid conditions. We were taught to take a holistic view of the patients and not to focus only on their medical conditions. We experienced home visits where we walked into the community and witnessed the living circumstances of patients.

This gave us great insight into the effect of a patient's context on their conditions and vice versa. We worked with COSUP patients and became more aware of the practices of COSUP, which gave us greater insight into the substance abuser population. We also became familiar with the pharmacy and prescribing and dispensing of medication.

The responsibility of seeing patients individually along with the guidance and education of our senior doctors allowed us to practice and improve our consultation skills and clinical knowledge which will be of great importance as newly qualified doctors next year. The staff are

friendly and always willing to help and educate. The clinic is well run and efficient. The reasonable patient load allows for attention to detail for each patient. The extensive multi-disciplinary team is one of the greatest benefits of the clinic.

Not only do the patients benefit from the holistic and extensive management by the team, but we learned so much from one another. Each Thursday morning, a presentation was made by a different department, displaying how patients were managed within that team and the uses and benefits of their discipline, with a discussion on how other departments could also assist that patient.

As students, we greatly benefited from the emphasis on education and improvement at Daspoort Clinic. We thoroughly enjoyed the friendly and cooperative atmosphere and felt welcomed and included as part of the clinic's team. We thoroughly enjoyed our time at Daspoort Clinic.

# A Story of Persistently Pursuing the Goal: My Academic and Career Journey at the University of Pretoria

Miss Yeukai Muruzi (PhD Social Work - in progress: University of Pretoria)



I enrolled at the University of Pretoria in 2016 to pursue a Bachelor of Social Work. I completed my bachelor's degree in 2019, and the following year, in 2020, I registered for a master's degree in social work research. In June 2021, I completed my master's and graduated later that year in September. Currently, I am in the process of completing a PhD degree in Social Work.

## Career path

After obtaining my Bachelor of Social Work degree in 2019, I had the opportunity to work as a Social Worker intern at Reliable House in Hatfield for two years (2020-2021). The shelter, managed by the Unit for Community Engagement at the University of Pretoria, aims

to assist chronically homeless men recovering from substance abuse. This period was challenging as I had to balance my master's studies with my internship work.

Nevertheless, working at Reliable House provided me with an opportunity to integrate theoretical knowledge with practical context, promoting my professional development. I also had the privilege of working as part of a multi-disciplinary team from the Community Oriented Substance Use Programme (COSUP), which offered valuable feedback on my practice abilities.

## Motivation for my career path

During my upbringing, I lacked clarity on my desired profession due to limited exposure to career guidance opportunities. However, I had a deep-seated passion for helping disadvantaged individuals in society, though I was uncertain about the suitable profession for pursuing this passion.

It was only when I had a conversation with a family friend who was a social worker that I became captivated by the profession. Her description of her work and its impact on others inspired me to pursue a career in social work. Shortly after, I applied for a social work degree at the University of Pretoria and was accepted.

## Experiences in community engagement and professional development

Being part of the community engagement efforts through Reliable House exposed me not only to social work-related roles but also to various broader social welfare initiatives. As a social worker intern, my responsibilities included providing psycho-social support for service users, participating in community engagement projects, and guiding final-year social work students with their practical work.

These roles allowed me to apply my theoretical knowledge in practical settings, despite the challenges of working with severely vulnerable individuals affected by substance abuse and chronic homelessness.

I received valuable supervision and support from a senior social worker at COSUP, which helped me navigate through these challenges and develop critical thinking. The experience equipped me with networking, problem-solving, communication, crisis intervention, and active listening skills.

## Current involvement in social responsibility projects

Currently, I am participating in a pilot project called the Social Work Readiness Program, run by the South African Council for Social Service Professions. This project aims to support newly qualified social work graduates in transitioning smoothly into the workforce, and my role involves being a part-time supervisor.

*continued on page 8*

As a supervisor, I provide direct support and supervision to two social work graduates employed at a primary school to enhance their professional development.

This role has diversified and broadened my career path, allowing me to contribute to the social work profession's cause and bridge the gap of unemployment among social work graduates.

**Advice for students planning to take part in community engagement projects**

My advice to students considering community engagement projects is to embrace the opportunity without hesitation. Engaging with communities challenges individuals to develop problem-solving skills and truly understand the essence of promoting social justice in society.

**Specific skills I could have learned**

I acknowledge that more learning was needed in administrative tasks, such as report writing and monthly reporting on the services offered. These tasks are essential for disseminating information about the

community's upliftment efforts and the challenges faced.

**Diligent efforts and career milestones**

I have diligently worked to build a strong career profile by combining practical experience with further studies. A significant current milestone for me is pursuing a PhD degree at the University of Pretoria, which I am in the process of completing. This doctoral journey is helping me acquire essential research skills and the ability to work independently.

# Rust de Winter Community Engagement: In Commemoration of the World Animal Vaccination Day 2023

**Monde Mzamani (VetSCO: Community engagement), Prof Chris Marufu (Associate Professor: Veterinary Parasitology) and Dr Alfred Kgasi (Chair: Primary Animal Health Care)**



**O**n a cold morning at 06:20 on Tuesday 25 April 2023, just over 100 Faculty of Veterinary Science students and three academic staff members set out on an excursion to conduct an outreach in Rust de Winter. This was a resuscitation of the COVID-19-hampered, annual Rust de Winter vaccination campaign which is a collaborative effort between the Gauteng Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (GDARD), Faculty of Veterinary Science (Community Engagement Group, Onderstepoort Veterinary Student Committee [OPVSC] and Veterinary Student Community Outreach [VetSCO]) and the Farmers' Association of Rust de Winter.

This year's event was initiated by Prof Chris Marufu, Prof Musafiri Karama, Ali Makgato of GDARD, and student leaders from OPVSC and VetSCO. The other academic staff member



who volunteered to assist in this outreach was Dr Alfred Kgasi. The main objectives of the outreach were to vaccinate smallholder farmers' livestock while providing students with an opportunity to gain practical skills and to educate and upskill emerging farmers.

World Animal Vaccination Day is observed on 20 April every year to raise awareness about the importance of vaccinating animals against various infectious diseases. The day also aims to promote the welfare of animals and their role in human society.

For that reason, during the outreach students conducted vaccinations, and shared some of their knowledge with the farmers. Vaccines are instrumental in preventing the transmission of diseases among animals, which could potentially impact humans as well. This day

provides an occasion to recognise the crucial role vaccines play in safeguarding both animals and humans.

During the outreach, the students, who were composed of undergraduate Veterinary Science and Veterinary Nursing students in different years of study and a couple of postgraduate MSc and PhD students, were divided into 13 teams of about eight students each.

Each team of students travelled with a veterinarian or an animal health technician who supervised them. Student groups were assigned to different rural farms to vaccinate livestock and educate the farmers. It was a great experience for many students considering that this outreach allowed them to utilise their skills and share their knowledge with the farmers. This also was a great opportunity for some students

to improve their confidence and communication skills. On the other hand, farmers gained more information about animal handling, disease prevention, and disease management.

Through this collaborative effort, we were able to vaccinate about 4 000 animals (cattle, sheep, and goats) against anthrax, blackleg, and lumpy skin diseases, while a small group of students also vaccinated 20 dogs against rabies at the nearby Vergenoeg Mine. Farmers were also equipped with knowledge and skills in animal husbandry, animal handling, and welfare. Therefore, it is evident that community engagement is a crucial transformative tool that can be used to address some of the major One Health challenges.

#### Special thanks go to:

- Ali Makgato, Dr Farah Abdool-Khader, and the GDARD team for liaising with farmers and arranging the vaccination campaign.
- Rust de Winter Farmers' Association for their support and for allowing us to engage in this activity in their community.
- Dr Eugene Machimana for assistance with funding the Onderstepoort (OP) delegation's trip and catering.
- Metse Mdlongwa and the Department of Security Services for assistance with security clearance.
- The South African Police Service (SAPS) Rust de Winter for providing round-the-clock security and patrolling the area during the event.
- The Faculty of Veterinary Science and OPVSC (Veterinary Student Committee) for permitting and mobilising students to participate in this event.

# Quadriplegic Mouth Painters: Inspiring Art Education Students through Unconventional Art Techniques

Dr Raita Steyn (Senior Lecturer: Art Education – Groenkloof Campus)



Artists Chris Opperman (Left) and Anton van den Berg (Right) demonstrating their mouth-painting techniques to a group of Art Education students



A group photo was taken as Art Education students displayed their newly discovered talents.

**D**r Raita Steyn from the Department of Humanities Education hosted a one-of-a-kind event on 19 May 2023, with the purpose of challenging preconceived notions about artists and their creativity. Dr Steyn invited Anton van den Berg and Chris Opperman, two quadriplegic mouth painters, to showcase alternative painting methods to second-year Art Education students.

Their demonstration aimed to dispel the misconception that artists can only be creative with their hands. At the event, Anton van den Berg and Chris Opperman showcased their impressive skills and expertise by creating stunning artworks using unconventional techniques that involved their mouths. Their goal

was to challenge the idea that artists can only be creative with their hands. After a motivating demonstration, Art Education students had the chance to try out new techniques introduced by these two experts. They kindly shared their knowledge and helped guide the students in painting with their mouths.

This event was a valuable learning experience for the students, allowing them to appreciate and explore different forms of artistic expression. It challenged their preconceived notions about creativity and encouraged them to think outside the box regarding artistic practices.

Dr Steyn's initiative and the involvement of Anton van den Berg and Chris Opperman created

an inclusive and empowering environment where students could learn from individuals who have overcome physical challenges to pursue their artistic passions. This event serves as a reminder that creativity has no limits and can be expressed through various methods and techniques.

Under the guidance of quadriplegic mouth painter experts Anton van den Berg and Chris Opperman, the students gained a valuable understanding of the limitless potential of human capability.

They recognised the talent of these two skilled artists. The students could see the fantastic talent, accuracy, and innovation required in mouth painting up close. They were incredibly touched by the artists' determination to overcome physical obstacles. This experience gave the students a new understanding of art's impact and the potential to overcome difficulties. It motivated them to approach their artistic pursuits with a fresh outlook and a readiness to try unconventional methods.

# Charity Begins at Home Part of the Solution, not the Problem:

Empowering Community members of Hatfield, Sunnyside, and Arcadia through Education and Skills Development focusing on Social and Environmental Justice

Dr Magriet Coetzee-Spies (Senior Lecturer), Rioné Coertze and Thomas Wiesner (Second-year Bachelor of Social Work [BSW] students—Department of Social Work and Criminology, Faculty of Humanities)



The second-year students from the Department of Social Work and Criminology participated in emancipatory action research and acted on community challenges

to foster sustainable social change in the communities of Sunnyside, Hatfield, and Arcadia where most of their peers reside. The goal of the project was to empower and support

the communities regarding universal challenges, fears and needs that they face. A community profile was

*continued on page 12*



SAPS, Community Oriented Substance Use Programme (COSUP), and relevant NPOs equipping them with knowledge regarding personal safety and protection against criminal activity by highlighting safety measures and offering community members the opportunity to harness available resources to address their right and needs for a safer community.

- link with the necessary support services on campus as well as in their communities regarding mental health, alcohol, and substance use challenges.
- link with relevant stakeholders and resources in their communities through information pamphlets and discussions focusing on their biopsychosocial functioning.

By mobilising the community to become involved and take responsibility for their environment and welfare through ongoing networking efforts, it aimed to create mutually beneficial outcomes, facilitating the growth and development of all stakeholders involved. This project embodies the University's vision and mission of community engagement, reflecting a commitment to both teaching and learning.

conducted, after which the students engaged with the communities through meaningful dialogue, including individuals, business people, religious institutions, schools, government employees, non-profit organisations (NPOs), service delivery organisations, students, street vendors, and the homeless.

The identified challenges of the communities were universal, and it was evident that all community members, irrespective of their living conditions or social stature, shared a common desire to address the prevailing challenges and inequalities in their communities.

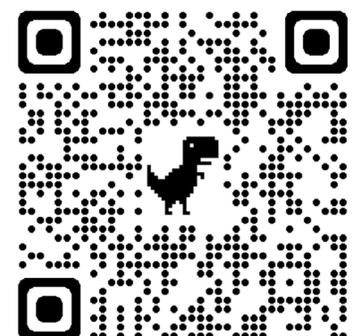
Some of the identified matters were crime, personal safety, unemployment, homelessness, and poverty, alcohol and substance abuse, mental health challenges and lack of support, environmental

injustices such as unsafe and unclean parks, lack of clean water and dirty streets, lack of social responsibility, not participating in efforts to address issues identified or to take collective action.

A community awareness project was held on the Hatfield Campus in May 2023. Various stakeholders participated by addressing the challenges and inequalities. Information sessions and discussions took place with environmentalists, counsellors, and the South African Police Service (SAPS). Students were encouraged to:

- become part of a volunteering programme to clean up their communities, as a means of assuming social responsibility by participating in a well-organised action plan to clean their community.
- link with student support, the

Scan to view the Facebook page of the Department of Social Work and Criminology to view the awareness campaign images.



# Rhodes University Community Engagement Symposium Explores the Impact of Higher Education Community Engagement: 9 to 11 May 2023 in Makhanda, South Africa

Mrs Di Hornby (Director: Rhodes University Community Engagement Division), Dr Margie Maistry (Rhodes University Research Associate), Dr Bertha Sibhensana (Lecturer, Rhodes University Community Engagement: Service-Learning Coordinator), Dr René Oosthuizen (Senior Lecturer, Rhodes University Community Engagement: Engaged Research Coordinator)

The Rhodes University Community Engagement Learning Symposium took place from 9 to 11 May this year, bringing together academics, researchers, and practitioners to explore the importance, relevance, and impact of community engagement in higher education in South Africa and Africa as a whole.

The symposium, titled 'The Significance, Relevance and Impact of Higher Education Community Engagement for South Africa and the Rest of Africa', focused on key themes such as engaged citizenry and community-university partnerships, engaged teaching and learning, engaged research, and social innovation. Ninety-seven participants attended in person and 57 participated virtually.

The symposium had active involvement from 22 public South African Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), including the University of Pretoria. Furthermore, one private HEI and nine international universities also participated in the symposium. Thirteen South African community partners and two international community partners also participated.

Distinguished keynote speakers enriched the discussions with their



Community-University Partnership

thought-provoking presentations. Dr Sam Fongwa delivered a captivating talk on the concept of universities as anchor institutions, sparking important conversations about their role within local communities.

Dr Jessica Cockburn emphasised the importance of social learning through university-community partnerships, shedding light on the mutual benefits of such collaborations. Prof Peter Clayton shared valuable insights into the challenges of engaged research and the ethical considerations surrounding research approval processes.

A dialogue session with Prof Tim Stanton stood out as a highlight, exploring the early history of service learning and its evolution into a form of community engagement.

Prof Stanton noted a shift toward a more holistic perspective, where service learning is now viewed as just one aspect of community engagement. Dr Marisol Morales, Executive Director of the Carnegie Classification of Community Engagement (CCCE), introduced the CCCE and highlighted its potential

*continued on page 14*



Poster presentation

and advocating for inclusivity and the co-creation of knowledge.

Participants delved into the challenges associated with the co-creation process, emphasising the importance of collaborative and participatory research approaches.

The Engaged Citizenry roundtable explored the impact of volunteerism on student development, recognising its role in fostering critical thinking, self-confidence, leadership qualities, and a heightened sense of awareness and responsibility.

The symposium provided valuable takeaways, showcasing the growth and maturity of community engagement within higher education. The discussions emphasised key concepts such as epistemic justice, the cultivation of humanity, and community access to university knowledge, underscoring the broader goals of community engagement.

Furthermore, the event highlighted the interconnectedness of various forms of community engagement, including engaged teaching and learning and engaged research. It emphasised the need for ethical practices in both research and practical community engagement, addressing legal and moral imperatives.

In conclusion, the Rhodes University Community Engagement Learning Symposium created a platform for fruitful discussions, knowledge sharing, and exploration of the impact of higher education community engagement.

By fostering collaboration among academia, researchers, and practitioners, the symposium contributed to the growth and development of community engagement in the higher education sector.



Knowledge for change (K4C)

for African universities, stressing the need to improve the quality and relevance of community engagement in higher education.

The symposium also featured Prof George Openjuru from Gulu University, Uganda, who shared insights on the history of Community Engagement in Africa and the role of communities in establishing universities in African countries.

Prof Openjuru emphasised the importance of universities being an integral part of their communities, encouraging academics and students to contribute to societal development within their own countries.

Roundtable discussions played a crucial role, offering participants the opportunity to engage in meaningful conversations. The Community University Partnerships (CUPs) discussion emphasised the significance of considering culture and spirituality in rural community-university collaborations.

It also raised thought-provoking questions about the nature of the relationship between universities and communities, challenging the notion of whether it should truly be a partnership. Engaged research and engaged teaching were explored in another roundtable, introducing the concept of knowledge democracy,

# Building Victorious Women

**Gloria Khoza (Accounting Sciences: Co-Chief Executive Officer and Executive Director: Keep That Gold Shining)**

**W**omen with aspirations evolve from young girls with dreams. These young girls hailing from small and humble townships possess immense potential and are the generation we have eagerly anticipated.

They confront and overcome significant adversities, and it falls upon us, as the advocates of empowerment, to equip and ensure their victorious emergence.

The establishment of Building Victorious Women stemmed from the obstacles confronted by township girls. Recognising that girls are vulnerable individuals, it is crucial to provide them with proper guidance and nurturing from an early age, facilitating their growth, wisdom, and ability to make informed choices.

Initially, Building Victorious Women's mission revolved around supplying sanitary products to underprivileged girls while motivating them to develop their potential. However, due to the escalating societal challenges, its scope expanded significantly.

In our society, young girls often face the expectation to solely focus on household chores, cooking, getting married, and raising children. However, as times change, there is a growing demand for female leaders in various domains such as corporate, academia, and business—areas traditionally dominated by men. Girls living in townships



encounter numerous challenges, including abuse, both physical and emotional, bullying at school, and traumatic childhood experiences.

They are exposed to toxic behaviours within their households, witnessing their parents engaging in physical altercations. As their parents become overwhelmed by their problems, they vent their anger, resentment, and aggression onto the children. Girls, being inherently vulnerable and sensitive, tend to internalise these negative experiences. Tragically, some girls fall victim to rape, which irreversibly alters the trajectory of their lives.

Moreover, when these girls reach adolescence and experience their first menstrual periods, they often lack proper education or guidance on this natural process. Consequently, they struggle to find the necessary support and financial resources to purchase sanitary pads. They resort to using unsuitable substitutes like old pieces of cloth or tissues, resulting in infections and vaginal diseases for

which they may never find proper treatment.

To avoid embarrassment among their peers, some girls seek relationships with older men who provide them with basic necessities, including sanitary products. This path, however, ultimately derails their promising futures. The stress and depression stemming from these circumstances become overwhelming and difficult to overcome. Carrying these burdens into their final year of high school (matric), even those who manage to enter university often struggle academically.

They may seek therapy and experience temporary improvement but subsequently encounter new triggering events that reignite their emotional turmoil. As a result, their academic performance suffers, leading to failure and exclusion. This setback thrusts them back into the very circumstances they fought so hard to escape, and some feel compelled to take their own lives, as the shattering of dreams becomes tragically normalised.

To address the social issues faced by women, we must tackle them systematically, focusing on different aspects one by one.

One crucial goal is to increase the representation of women in corporate, academic, business, and leadership roles, particularly those

*continued on page 16*

hailing from humble townships. By providing the necessary support and opportunities, we can help bring the dreams of these young girls from townships to fruition.

One way to achieve this is by teaching them self-love, self-care, and self-nurturing, while also addressing their basic needs. This includes providing essentials such as sanitary pads and cosmetics. Our initiative aims to expand its reach, starting with 230 girls in 2021, growing to 250 girls in 2022, and ultimately reaching at least 1 500 girls by 2023.

Creating positive and supportive environments is crucial for their growth and development. We strive to foster spaces that are caring, attentive, encouraging, fulfilling, confident, and focused. It is important to emphasise practices such as sound nutrition and regular exercise to promote their overall well-being.

Additionally, we seek to connect them with individuals who have walked similar paths before, inspiring them to dream big through our quiz competition. Furthermore, we recognise the importance of addressing the coding education gap and offering inspiring role models.

By equipping these girls with coding skills and introducing them to successful women in the field, we can empower them to navigate the challenges of the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

Our Girls Code Too Competition aims to open doors to new opportunities and encourage their participation in the technological sphere. By pursuing these initiatives, we aspire to empower girls from townships, ensuring they emerge victorious in all their endeavours and granting them access to a brighter future.

During the event, we will gather accomplished women from various fields such as corporate, academia, business, and leadership as guest speakers.

These remarkable individuals will have the opportunity to share their personal experiences and insights, serving as a source of inspiration for the young girls in attendance.

Their stories will demonstrate what can be achieved through determination and hard work. In addition to the guest speakers, we will incorporate an interactive coding competition called Girls

Code Too. This competition aims to introduce the girls to the world of coding through engaging games like Tanks, Rangers, and Boats.

By presenting coding in a fun and accessible manner, we hope to ignite their interest and provide them with foundational skills in this important field. To facilitate the learning process, the girls will receive training from second-year students at the University of Pretoria who are well-versed in coding.

Furthermore, as part of the event, we will organise a quiz based on a book that the girls have read. This quiz will not only test their understanding of the book but also serve as a platform to reward their knowledge and efforts. Prizes for the quiz will include books and other exciting rewards, motivating the girls to engage in reading and further expand their horizons.

Overall, the event aims to create a dynamic and enriching experience for the young girls, exposing them to diverse role models, fostering an interest in coding, and encouraging their intellectual growth through interactive activities.

MC	Guest speakers	Speakers
Gloria Khoza	Dr Kris Marsh	Rapelang Ramatlhodi Siphesihle Msibi Refilwe Ngwako Noreen Mutavhatshindi Ntiyiso Baloyi Amogelang Mawela



# Reach Out, Unite and Advocate

Mr Isaac Marara (LLD candidate - International Trade Finance in progress, University of Pretoria)

Following that, from January 2020 to December 2021, I served as a Candidate Legal Practitioner at Strydom & Bredenkamp Attorneys, a law firm based in Brooklyn, Pretoria, specialising in corporate and commercial law. I continued as a legal practitioner at Strydom and Bredenkamp Attorneys until the end of 2022. My duties encompassed legal advising and drafting, client consultations, and court appearances, among others.

raising awareness of issues affecting individuals and communities. These projects provided valuable opportunities to engage with different stakeholders in the community, enhancing my communication, people skills, and administrative abilities. This advantage proved beneficial in transitioning from university life to the corporate world, where I had to interact with clients, address the court, and coordinate trade fair projects.

I was enrolled in my undergraduate degree, Bachelor of Laws (LLB), from 2015 to 2018 and graduated in April 2019. After completing my Law School and passing the attorney's board exams, I pursued my postgraduate studies in Master of Laws (LLM), specialising in International Trade and Investment Law, in 2019.

As of May 2023, I am currently enrolled in my doctoral studies focusing on International Trade Finance.

## **Career trajectory since graduating**

From October to December 2019, I worked as an International Trade Advisor at Zurcom International (Pty) Ltd, a trade facilitation and trade investment firm based in Pretoria and Durban.

My responsibilities included advising foreign investors on African trade and investment, providing guidance on customs and excise rules, and organizing trade facilitation fairs.

Since the beginning of 2023, I have been employed on a part-time basis as a legal consultant at Youlander Jele Attorneys, a young dynamic law firm specialising in various fields of law.

## **Motivation for current profession**

I view the law as a noble calling, where lawyers should provide valuable services to society not only through court litigations but also through legal research and academic writings. My motivation to specialise in international trade and investment stems from recognising their pivotal roles in the economic development of African countries, and I am eager to contribute to my continent's economic growth.

## **Experiences in community engagement projects at UP contributed to my professional development**

Participating in community engagement projects has significantly contributed to the professional development of my career by

Currently, I am mentoring two final-year LLB students under the university's Mentorship program. This experience has allowed me to develop leadership skills, improve communication, and enhance professional networking opportunities.

## **Advice for current students planning to participate in community engagement projects**

I highly recommend every student to take part in community engagement projects as they empower the community and increase knowledge about issues affecting diverse backgrounds.

Over the four years of my community engagement involvement, I had the privilege of volunteering at Kungwini Welfare Organisation's fundraising events (home for the disabled) during semester breaks and weekends.

These opportunities provided me with the necessary skills required in my field.

# Collaborating as a Community for the Benefit of All

Jakomina Swart and Kwena Rapotu (Final year occupational therapy students)



**W**e are part of a group of final-year Occupational Therapy students who were placed in Daspoort and surrounding areas for their community block. During our time in the community, we had to implement a community project.

We identified Happy Sabby Day Care Centre as a site for our community project. Happy Sabby has 109 children and four teachers but they only have four classrooms among them.

These classrooms are not spacious enough for the number of children that are in each classroom. We noticed that there was an extra classroom that was being used as a storeroom. For the project, we decided to clean out the storeroom and organise it so that it could be used as a classroom for the Grade

Rs because it was bigger than the classroom that was currently used for the 38 Grade Rs.

We worked together with Thabo Skosane, the Grade R teacher, as well as Sabina Monyoko, the school principal, to clean the storeroom. We removed everything from the storeroom so that we could sort and organise it.

Together with Thabo and Sabina, we had to decide what could still be used at the school, what could be donated to the community, and what had to be thrown away.

Everything that could still be used at the school was cleaned of all the dust it had collected in the storeroom where the floor was still unfinished. Bags of cement were needed to

complete the floor to convert the storeroom into a classroom. After cleaning, everything was distributed among the various classrooms, and some of the resources were packed and organised into shelves.

While sorting the resources in the storeroom, we identified educational toys and activities. Based on this, we decided to compile an educational booklet that incorporated the toys and activities to guide the teachers with age-appropriate classroom activities.

We compiled two educational booklets, one for three- to four-year-olds and another for five- to six-year-olds. Each teacher received a booklet according to the ages of the children in their classroom. In the final stages of the project, we distributed the relevant resources to the classrooms for the teachers to use. Among the things in the storeroom, we found a pile of blankets that the children could use during their nap time. The teachers volunteered to wash the blankets at home since they had limited time during school days to sort the storeroom with us.

## **Interdisciplinary collaboration**

During our time in the community, we met two stakeholders from New Schools of Hope, a non-profit organisation (NPO), who are in the process of establishing schools in the area. We worked together with them to learn about the community of Melusi, the needs that they had

*continued on page 19*

identified there, and how we could make a difference as they had been involved in the community for a few years. They supported and guided us throughout the process.

Furthermore, we met a group of five Architecture students from the University of Pretoria who are currently developing the Community Youth Centre in Melusi. We collaborated with the Architecture students to design shelves for the Happy Sabby storeroom.

The students also donated leftover wood from their project for us to build the shelves. The shelves were then built by our group members and Thabo and are now used at Happy Sabby to keep their storeroom organised. While compiling the

educational booklet we realised that there were resources that the school would benefit from.

We then reached out to Trevor Strauss who does woodwork in our Occupational Therapy department. He helped us to design and build 11 clocks for the children to use to learn how to read analogue time, and 120 building blocks.

We are truly grateful for the support, donations, and other forms of interprofessional collaboration that we had from the community and other stakeholders. We enjoyed the experience and learned so much from everyone who collaborated with us. We hope to foster these relationships and that there can be future collaborations.



Before and after

## Nurturing Future STEM Participation through Youth Community Engagement

**Mr Tedson Nkoana (Future Africa), Dr Sunday Ochai (Department of Veterinary Tropical Diseases), and Dr Jeanette Wentzel (Hans Hoheisen Wildlife Research Station)**

The participation of youth in the science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) space has been emphasised in assisting South Africa and the rest of Africa to tackle challenges in food security, information and communication technology (ICT), energy production, and trade (Blom et al., 2016). Participation of youth in the STEM space is often hindered by curriculum challenges at the school level, the absence of required knowledge and information needed to explore available options, opportunities, and the lack of necessary mentorships.

Often than not, most young learners who grow up in rural communities are limited to the career options



*continued on page 20*

that they see in their immediate environments, and this often limits their thinking and aspirations. True to this assertion are the famous words of Karl Max who said, 'Man is the product of his environment, and of conditions; he cannot therefore be free in the choice of his profession...'

This therefore necessitated the need to expose young people to the various career options in STEM and conservation as the region is well known for wildlife conservation.

The University of Pretoria (UP) Future Africa Research Chair on People, Health and Places (One Health) recognises the need to expose youth to such opportunities from a young age and collaborates with other stakeholders such as Department of Veterinary Tropical Diseases (DVTD) and the Hans Hoheisen Wildlife Research Station within UP that share this passion.

The Timbavati Foundation, in collaboration with Global Conservation Change, created the Careers in Conservation Expo and Fun Day and invited the UP Future Africa Research Chair and UP collaborators to participate. The 2022 instalment of the career day was themed 'The path to success is community' and benefited over 780 learners from 13 different schools in Acornhoek and Hluvukani areas near the Kruger National Park.

The activities and arrangements of the day were made possible by different members of the community, businesspeople, and various institutions that donated resources and volunteered skills. Professionals that were present included the K9 dog unit, veterinary scientists, field technicians and rangers, ecologists, and hospitality experts. This was indeed a big learning opportunity for both the learners and their teachers.



Colleagues from UP Future Africa Institute and the DVTD presented and shared materials on career and study opportunities in health, veterinary, and zoological sciences.

In his keynote address, Mr Tedson Nkoana, from Future Africa Institute, emphasised the importance of exposing oneself to different communities and settings that can serve as support systems for achieving personal and collective goals.

Dr Sunday Ochai and Mr Dean Herbig from DTVTD gave learners important insight about veterinary sciences and how to enrol into the programme, options for undergraduate and postgraduate funding, and various opportunities in the space. This was quite an eye-opener to the learners as most of them were not aware of the responsibilities of a veterinarian in the community.

This was followed by a brief awareness session for the teachers where they were exposed to what zoonoses were and the common zoonotic diseases that were endemic in that region. They were also given

educational material on zoonotic diseases to create awareness at their schools.

It is often said that education is the key to success but what is even more important is knowing and having the right key for the lock. The event exposed and educated youth from rural and disadvantaged settings to opportunities that await them in the future. Community engagement involving different stakeholders is key to achieving a prosperous and equitable society.

It is therefore important to organise events that bring together different career experts to stimulate the minds of young people to inspire them to achieve their dreams.

### References

- Blom, A, Lan, G & Adil, M. 2016. *Sub-Saharan African Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics Research: A Decade of Development*. Washington: International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/The World Bank.

# Providing Access to Justice while Gaining Skills and Competencies for the Legal Profession

Samantha Getsos and Tiya Balakisten (Department of Procedural Law) #fitforpurpose, #graduateattributes

The UP LLB curriculum covers extensive theoretical knowledge in various fields of the law profession. During the 2022 Faculty Forum, Law House debated the skills and competencies required for entry into the legal profession.

It was concluded that postgraduate studies can no longer be the only factor when applying for articles of clerkship as there is an increasing need for undergraduate students to gain some practical experience.

The Dean advocated for ‘... contextual legal education [that] equips [students] with the necessary skills and competencies to enter the legal profession ...’, which echoes the call from Law House for increased undergraduate practical experience<sup>1</sup>. This call for practical work aligns with the graduate attributes adopted by the University of Pretoria, as shown in the figure below, save for the competency to do the job. Universities need to engage purposefully with the LLB curriculum to determine its contribution to the board examination results.

Since practical legal training can no longer be limited to articles of clerkship, it has been proposed that Practical Law (PRR) 400 should be adopted as a capstone module in the LLB curriculum.

The University of Pretoria Law Clinic (UPLC) forms part of the Faculty of Law and engages in clinical legal education (CLE) for final-year LLB students. Practical Law is an elective module for final-year LLB students in CLE and is presented by qualified, practicing attorneys at the UPLC. The UPLC allows students to apply legal theory by providing legal aid services to the indigent, thereby increasing access to justice. Students are trained for practice in the practice. See <https://www.up.ac.za/up-law-clinic-home-page/article/52631/practical-law-prr-400-module->

Students’ daily tasks include consultations with clients, taking instructions, drafting correspondence, pleadings and notices, and mediating amicable solutions. These tasks are performed in groups of six to ten

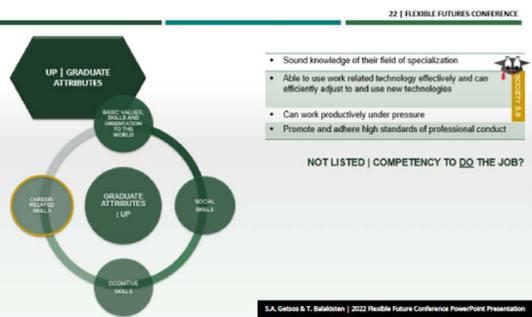
students under direct supervision.

Cases are consolidated weekly at the UPLC or via Blackboard Collaborate. The students’ practical exposure to a diversity of clients and contexts is enriching and exciting and ensures their ability to do the job, #fitforpractice.



Tiya Balakisten

Incorporating a module focused on practical legal training in the LLB curriculum will not only prepare students for the law profession but will also allow them to acquire the attributes—basic values, social skills, cognitive skills, and career-related skills and competencies—that UP graduates should attain. To meet this objective, Practical Law (PRR) 400 is a necessary intervention.



SA Getsos & T Balakisten | 2022 Flexible Future Conference PowerPoint presentation



Samantha Getsos

## Acknowledgment

This article was first published by Dr Ina Louw in the 8th T&L @NAS Bulletin regarding the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences.

<sup>1</sup> Student Communication from the Dean’s Office dated 22 September 2022.

# The Need is the Call to Responsive Action

Similo Siyenga (Co-Founder and CEO: M-Powerment Recruitment)



- Tshwane Haven – 40 people
- Reliable House – 50 people around the area
- Gracia Child and Youth Care Centre – 80 people
- SOS Children’s Village Mamelodi – 208 people
- Homeless Solutions – 50 people

The rest of the sandwiches were distributed to homeless people around Brooklyn, Silver Lakes, Hatfield, and Arcadia.

The impact of the event was significant, with many people in need receiving vital nourishment and necessities for the upcoming winter. The Drive was made possible through the volunteers’ hard work and dedication, the local community’s support, and generous donations from our collaborative partners. We would like to thank all the partners listed below for taking part in this initiative.



The event was organised as a team effort, with volunteers coordinating the making and distribution of all the received donations.

M-Powerment Recruitment took the lead in the initiation and implementation of The Drive. Despite the initial challenges with receiving donations, the group managed to overcome this obstacle with the help of the collaborative partners that joined hands with the group.

The sandwiches and grocery packages were distributed to the target audience of those in need of food and basic essentials. The partnering shelters are listed below with the number of people to whom sandwiches were donated through this initiative.

- Brooklyn Studios
- Hatfield Studios
- Apartments on Williams
- Faculty of Engineering, Built Environment, and Information Technology
- Lynnpark Foodhall Hatfield
- Department for Education Innovation – Unit for Community Engagement
- NatHouse
- UP Rag

**O**n 6 May 2023, a group of students from the University of Pretoria gathered to host a multifaceted drive to feed 750 people. The initiative is referred to as The Drive as it involves numerous types of essentials.

The event was a success, as exactly 750 sandwiches were made and numerous grocery items, toiletries, clothing, and blankets were donated to the needy.

We hope to continue this work in the future and make an even bigger impact on our community.

# Honours Marketing Students Pioneer Digital Marketing Strategies for Wollies Animal Shelter: Highlighting the Power of Community Engagement

Mrs Bianca Frost (Lecturer: Department of Marketing Management)



The honours marketing students were tasked with an assignment that required them to apply their marketing knowledge to develop a digital marketing strategy for Wollies with the objectives to increase awareness on online platforms and encourage fund-raising, food donations, and adoptions.

The assignment brief was released on 28 March 2023. Taking the time to understand the client's needs allows marketers to develop strategies that resonate with their target audience, leading to more successful marketing outcomes and long-term business success. Accompanied by their lecturer, Mrs Bianca Frost, the students visited the shelter to gain a better understanding of the environment to be able to provide marketable solutions to this 'real-life' problem.

During their visit, the marketing students dove deep into the operations of the shelter, witnessing first-hand the compassionate care the animals received. The shelter visit proved to be meaningful as a range of emotions were stirred among the students. Some described the shelter visit as a transformational learning experience as it changed their thinking in some way. This experience instilled in them a profound belief in the organisation's mission and further fuelled their determination to make a difference.

*continued on page 24*

**M**arketing in Practice (BEM 783) is one of the most diverse modules in the Marketing Management Honours Degree programme offered at the University of Pretoria. In this module, students are provided with valuable opportunities to bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and real-world application.

Community engagement is a powerful learning tool that enriches the educational experience and is incorporated as a significant component in this practical module. Digital marketing is one of the main focus areas of the module, together with personal and professional development.

Community engagement plays a pivotal role in personal development by fostering a sense of belonging, empathy, and social responsibility. Students are provided with

opportunities to partake in community engagement initiatives that are relevant to the field of marketing, which aid in preparing them to become well-rounded and socially responsible marketing professionals.

In 2023, the honours students embarked on a transformative journey with Wollies Animal Shelter. Wollies is a non-profit organisation that provides care and shelter for abandoned, neglected, and abused animals. The shelter is a safe haven for animals that have been found or given up and relies heavily on donations and volunteers to keep its doors open.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, more people have been forced to give up their animals and the shelter is currently completely full. This has amplified the need for assistance in various strategic initiatives.

Some of the comments by the students after the shelter visit are provided below:

- The Wollies project created a mix of emotions. On one hand, I was extremely sad that there were so many animals left all alone, and on the other hand, it was great knowing we could share some love and affection with them and, hopefully through our campaign, we will be able to help them even further.
- The site visits really opened my eyes to how much more we can do to help. It made me sad to see all the dogs, especially the ones that have owners who never come to fetch them. From a marketing perspective, it was a challenge to try and visualise a plan that could help Wollies, because their first priority is looking after the dogs, not marketing. I had to adapt my thinking into a way for us to help them implement a plan that they could use, without knowing much about marketing.

Considering the limitations placed upon the non-profit organisation, particularly financial constraints and reliance on volunteers, the students presented their digital marketing strategy suggestions to Wollies on 23 May 2023. The students highlighted the benefits of social media to communicate with their target audience and increase awareness, which can be implemented cost-effectively via daily posts.

Social media platforms are also useful for acknowledging donors. Students highlighted the importance for Wollies to post their success stories on social media as this would boost their credibility.

The students also developed social media content calendars and demonstrated how these could be drawn up monthly to serve as a plan to be followed to ensure coherency



and consistency for social media posts with various goals in mind. Suggestions were made for Wollies to send out an electronic monthly (or quarterly) newsletter. Creative mock-ups were provided for various strategy suggestions.

Importantly, the students highlighted a primary benefit for non-profit organisations related to Google networks. Google networks are free of charge as grants are allocated for non-profit organisations. Google is the most utilised search engine and comprises both display and search networks. With search networks, individuals can actively search to adopt a dog or cat, which will lead to higher conversion rates. As a registered non-profit organisation, it receives \$10 000 for free each month for search networks, something to be capitalised on.

Some of the creative themes included 'It's a match!' and is similar to an online dating app, where individuals can search for their perfect 'pet' match considering various characteristics and information provided about the animal. Other campaign themes were 'Home is with you', 'Paws for a Cause', and 'Tail

Tales' which contain short stories of the animals that are up for adoption.

Some of the students also went the extra mile and partnered with organisations to donate food and blankets. Some also sourced social media influencers who indicated their willingness to include posts about the shelter on their personal social media pages.

One standout campaign by one of the honours marketing students, Wanya Visagie, co-founder of the esteemed 4Time Creatives agency, is the identification of the convergence of professional services and volunteerism. Wanya and her team have generously offered their expertise to implement some of the devised strategies and create a cohesive online digital marketing approach for Wollies going forward.

As the University of Pretoria continues to encourage community engagement among its students, these honours marketing students serve as examples of how academic knowledge and practical skills can be harnessed to make a meaningful difference in the lives of our community.

# Professional Ethics at the Heart of Community Engagement of Social Work Students



**Dr Gerna Wessels (Practice Coordinator: Department of Social Work and Criminology)**

Our Head of Department, Prof Antoinette Lombard, co-signs this Solemn Declaration of which the content reads as follows:

### **I believe:**

- in the uniqueness, responsibility of self-determination and ultimate worth of every human being, irrespective of status, culture, gender, religion, lifestyle and other differences,
- in a society in which all members share the same basic rights, security, opportunities, obligations and social benefits,
- in collective human responsibility for the well-being of society, and
- in the capacity of all people to change, grow and develop under the stimulating influence of other people, through their own life experience and beneficial living conditions.

### **I therefore solemnly undertake:**

- at all times, to conduct myself in such a manner that it will be to the benefit of the profession of social work, its clients, colleagues and social service organisations,
- to serve my fellow human beings and the community, and at all times to strive for the enhancement of their effective social functioning,
- to continually strive for the promotion of social justice,
- to always work under the supervision of a registered social worker,

supervision of a registered social worker,

- to perform all functions as a student social worker and not to overstep this boundary or misrepresent myself and/or my responsibilities,
- to always adhere to the ethical code of the profession, as contained in the Social Service Professions Act, and
- to fully accept the consequences that may result from non-compliance with these provisions.

Congratulations to our students. We know you will make us proud in the way you engage with all stakeholders during your future community engagement activities.

**S**ocial Work is a four-year, professional degree consisting of social work theory and social work in practice modules. Students are not allowed to engage in any Community Engagement (CE) activities before their registration as student social workers at the South African Council for Social Service Professions (SACSSP), the professional board, at the beginning of their second year.

Upon receiving their registration certificates from the council, the Department of Social Work and Criminology hosts a 'Pledge Ceremony' for the students where they sign a Solemn Declaration regarding their commitment to upholding the ethical principles of the SACSSP, namely:

- social justice
- respect for worth, rights, and dignity
- competence
- integrity
- professional responsibility
- care and concern
- service delivery

**SOLEMN DECLARATION  
STUDENT SOCIAL WORKER**

I \_\_\_\_\_, a student social worker registered with the South African Council for Social Service Professions (SACSSP Registration Number 40-\_\_\_\_\_), and attending the University of \_\_\_\_\_ (Student Number: \_\_\_\_\_), believe:

- In the uniqueness, responsibility of self-determination and ultimate worth of every human being, irrespective of status, culture, gender, religion, lifestyle and other differences;
- In a society in which all members share the same basic rights, security, opportunities, obligations and social benefits;
- In collective human responsibility for the well-being of society, and
- In the capacity of all people to change, grow and develop under the stimulating influence of other people, through own life experience and through beneficial living conditions;

**I therefore solemnly undertake:**

- At all times, to conduct myself in such a manner that it will be to the benefit of the profession of social work, its clients, colleagues and social service organisations;
- To serve my fellow human beings and the community, and at all times to strive for the enhancement of their effective social functioning;
- To continually strive for the promotion of social justice;
- To always work under the supervision of a registered social worker
- To perform all functions as a student social worker and not to overstep this boundary or misrepresent myself and/or my responsibilities;
- To always adhere to the ethical code of the profession, as contained in the Social Service Professions Act (Act 110 of 1978, as amended); and
- To fully accept the consequences that may result from non-compliance with these provisions.

*I declare that I do not have any objection to taking this pledge  
I consider this to be binding on my conscience, and  
I commit myself to upholding this declaration.*

Signed at \_\_\_\_\_ (place on date) \_\_\_\_\_

DEPONENT \_\_\_\_\_ UNIVERSITY SUPERVISOR \_\_\_\_\_

Endorsed by the SACSSP for completion by students social.work@www.sacssp.co.za