

MESSAGE TO STAFF OF THE FACULTY OF HUMANITIES: 23 SEPTEMBER 2015

Dear Colleagues

We share more good news about achievements and activities in our Faculty in the last couple of weeks.

Caxton Magazines Excellence Awards 2015

Congratulations to Prof Willie Burger, Head of the Department of Afrikaans, who received a Gold Award for excellence in the category Best Review at the Caxton Magazines Excellence Awards 2015. Prof Burger has been writing book reviews for *Vrouekeur* magazine since 2011. He believes that academics should make their research accessible to the general reading public and that book reviews are an ideal forum to do this. Caxton Magazines' annual awards event acknowledges excellent journalism in a variety of categories.

Mellon Grant for the Centre for the Study of Governance Innovation (GovInn)

Prof Lorenzo Fioramonti (Department of Political Sciences and Director of GovInn) received three years' funding to the value of just more than half a million US dollars from the Andrew W Mellon Foundation for the project 'Rethinking humanities in Africa: A transdisciplinary fellowship programme on social transformation, values and wellbeing'. GovInn will use the grant to fund 15 three-year fellowships (ranging from master's to post-doctoral level) that will focus on transdisciplinary research on wellbeing and societal transformation in Africa.

2015 UP Mimi Coertse Singing Competition

The Department of Music, in collaboration with UP Arts, hosted the 2015 UP Mimi Coertse Singing Competition on 4 and 5 September. The competition was organised by Prof Wessel van Wyk of the Department of Music. The Mimi Coertse Scholarship was originally established at the University of Pretoria in 1959 to give recognition to the achievements of internationally renowned South African soprano Mimi Coertse (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mimi_Coertse). The purpose of the scholarship is to provide financial aid to classical singers no older than 30 to further their vocal studies. The eight young participants were sopranos Suzanne Basson, Andiswa Makana, Cecilia Rangwanasha Masabane, Marina Botha and Caroline Modiba, mezzo-soprano Chanté de Klerk, baritone Mzwandile Mabuza and bass Sibusisu Shandu.

Soprano Marina Botha (a former master's student in the Department of Music) and baritone, Mzwandile Mabusu, a third-year music student at UP were among the finalists.

The winner of the first prize of R30 000,00 was soprano Andiswa Makana while soprano Caroline Modiba from Tshwane University of Technology (TUT) came second.

FOFA ('spread your wings') 2015: 'Words and beyond'

During the week of 7 to 11 September 2015, the Centre for Augmentative and Alternative Communication (CAAC) at the University of Pretoria successfully hosted their annual FOFA event. 'Fofa' is a Sotho word which means 'to fly' or 'to soar'. The aim of this project is to empower young adults who cannot speak to utilise augmentative and alternative methods of communication (including mobile technologies) to improve their communication skills and to soar above the challenges they face. This is the tenth consecutive year that the event was presented, and it was generously funded by Momentum.

The FOFA project is the first of its kind in Africa. After the training week, participants are supported by their personal helpers, who also attend the week's training, to put their newly acquired insights, knowledge and skills into practice at home and in their communities.

As a further outcome of the week, CAAC staff plan to publish some of the creative works by participants, personal helpers and students in a coffee table book. The book will be used to showcase the project and raise awareness of the abilities of people with disabilities.

See <http://www.up.ac.za/en/centre-for-augmentative-alternative-communication/news/post/2163011-young-adults-with-disabilities-showcase-their-creative-abilities> for the full story.

Faculty presence at the World Social Sciences Forum (WSSF) 2015

The Faculty was well represented at the recent WSSF (see <http://www.wssf2015.org/>). The opening plenary session on 13 September set the tone for a stimulating conference that unpacked the global challenges spawned by inequality. Naledi Pandor, Minister of Science and Technology, said that '[the] global knowledge economy demands a strong research and innovation capacity, is dependent on new forms of knowledge production and dissemination, and requires research contexts that are network enabled. We must create this innovation architecture if we are to have justice in knowledge distribution and knowledge creation.' Mr Desmond D'Sa, Chairperson of both the Wentworth Development Forum and the South Durban Community Environmental Alliance, made a plea to social scientists to 'speak the truth' about climate change.

In the session, 'Social transformation through sport and art', **Prof Marie-Heleen Coetzee (Drama)** and **Ms Fatima Cassim (Visual Arts)** delivered a paper on 'The relationship of art activism to social justice and active citizenship'. In the session 'Climate change and sustainability', **Ms Wedzerai Mandudzo**, a postgraduate student in anthropology, presented a paper entitled 'Negotiating climate change adaptation in transboundary conservation areas: An institutional analysis in Lower Zambezi Transfrontier Park'.

The session, 'Gender, education and activism' was chaired by the Dean, **Prof Vasu Reddy** (who also served as the Chair of the Local Organising Committee of WSSF 2015). **Dr Gerhard Wolmarans (Political Sciences)** chaired the panel discussion on 'The United Nations at 70: critical perspectives from Africa'. **Mr Anthony Bizos** and **Ms Sithembile Mbete**, both from **Political Sciences**, took part in the panel discussion with presentations entitled 'Where is Ezulwini? The AU, The UN, and R2P's crises of relevance', and 'Power and resistance in the UN Security Council: Lessons from South Africa's elected terms in the UNSC, 2007–2008 and 2011–2012', respectively. In the session 'Spatial inequalities and marginalisation', **Prof Rehana Vally (Anthropology)** and **Ms Nina Botha** (postgraduate student), presented a paper on 'Marginalisation and walls'. In the same session **Ms Inge Kriel** and **Prof Johann Kriel (Anthropology)** presented a paper on 'Social science and policy making: Reviewing the City of Tshwane's policy on homelessness'. **Prof Innocent Pikirayi (Anthropology and Archaeology)** and **Dr Linda Blokland (Psychology)** presented posters entitled 'Cities as spaces of inequality' and 'Community health care: A general and mental health approach to inequality', respectively.

In addition, 15 students from the faculties of Humanities and Education attended the WSSF and the Faculty (**Kotie Odendaal** and **Tracey Andrew** of the Dean's Office) hosted an exhibition on our faculty research themes and postgraduate and postdoctoral studies.

Relaunch of the Centre for Japanese Studies (CJS)

On 16 September, the Faculty relaunched the CJS, an important hub that contributes to the promotion of mutual understanding and co-operation between South Africa and Japan. Present at the launch were the Director-General of Science and Technology, Dr Phil Mjwara, the Ambassador of Japan, His Excellence Mr Hiroki, the Vice-Chancellor and Principal, members of the Executive, the public and several representatives from eight Japanese higher education institutions. The Faculty wishes the Director of the Centre, Prof Cyclic Hartell, everything of the best in developing the Centre. Colleagues in Humanities are strongly encouraged to meet with Prof Hartell to discuss ideas to take the Centre forward.

http://www.up.ac.za/en/news/post_2162467-university-of-pretoria-launches-centre-for-japanese-studies

R3 million Oticon Foundation grant for the Department of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology

Prof Bart Vinck and Dr Barbara Heinze, together with their team of researchers from UP and two Belgian universities (Gent and Antwerp), received a three-year grant from the Oticon Foundation in Denmark for the development of a diagnostic laboratory for clinical and experimental auditory-vestibular research. The funding will assist in developing further high-level education in clinical work (teaching and research) at both the undergraduate and the graduate level. The grant will also enable the provision of services to people who suffer from hearing loss, vertigo, dizziness and imbalance.

Regards

Vasu Reddy