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Interface and CAAC Newsletter

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Alternative Communication
(CAAC)

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**Centre for Augmentative
and Alternative
Communication**

CREATING NEW OPPORTUNITIES

National Newsletter

Attitude is Everything

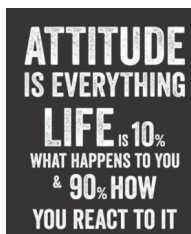


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Attitude is usually described as a pre-disposition to react positively or negatively towards a certain idea, object, person, or situation. Your attitude can influence your choice of action, and responses to

challenges, incentives, and rewards. The four major components of attitude are (1) Affective (emotions or feelings); (2) Cognitive (belief or opinions held consciously); (3) Conative (inclination for action), and (4) Evaluative (positive or negative response to stimuli).

What does your attitude say about you?



All four major components mentioned above could influence your attitude. During consultations at our centre, we often become aware that parents' or significant others' attitudes could influence the progress of

their loved one with disability either positively or negatively. For example, sometimes parents focus too much on their child's disability that they forget to acknowledge their child's abilities. This may be a result of feelings of guilt by the mothers who think that they did something wrong when they were pregnant (which is not true). The result is that they respond negatively and blame themselves for their child's disability. On the other hand, there are parents who respond in a positive manner by focusing on their child's abilities and what they can do for their children to help them achieve their full potential. These different reactions of the parents of their children could influence their child's potential outcomes. Now the question arises – what could we do as parents, significant others and professionals to support persons with disabilities?

"Attitude is everything: Change your attitude....Change your life!"
(Jeff Keller, 1999)

The title of this book by Keller actually sums

up what our actions should be. If you tend to react negative to the curveballs that life throws at you, the outcomes will be negative. You will continue to focus or blame others for your loved one's disability. By doing this, you may miss the opportunities that can arise to support the person with a

disability. If the parents of Martin Pistorius (a renowned author of the book *Ghost boy* and a person with disability himself) stayed focused on potential misconduct by the doctors who treated Martin, Martin's potential would have never been realised and achieved. But Martin's parents, took the bad experiences in their life and learned from it. They continued to take Martin to the care centre; they investigated various options for Martin to thrive; and as a result, a therapist saw Martin's reaction to a joke she told—and the rest is history! Martin was assessed by a team at the Centre for AAC, he received intervention and he was able to write his own life story. Today Martin is well-known throughout the world and is invited globally to share his story.

Maybe it is time to ask yourself: What is your attitude?



**Ensa Johnson
Editor
Centre for AAC**

Interface promotes communication for people with little or no functional speech by supplementing existing communication with gestures, communication boards and assistive technology (thus, augmentative and alternative communication)

CAAC News

Staff visits

Prof Bornman visits Kenyatta University and presented at the 6th East African International Conference on Communication Disability

Talk about Kenya and vivid images of safari's, lions, elephants and the migration of the wildebeest probably come to mind.... Or maybe, if you're a coffee lover like me, mention Kenya and you start smelling roasted coffee beans... (For the Kenyans, however, coffee is considered an export product, not something for local consumption – tea and Tusk (beer) at room temperature – seems to be the local favourites).

This east African country with its population of 44 million lies on the equator. Therefore it only has two seasons – a dry and a wet one! Kenya's Great Rift Valley was formed around 20 million years ago, when the crust of the Earth was split, and it runs all the way from Turkey to Mozambique.

In the heart of the capital Nairobi, lies Kenyatta University which hosted the **6th East African International Conference on Communication Disability** from 9 – 11 February 2017. **Prof Juan Bornman** from the Centre for AAC, and Prof Ulrike Lüdtke from the Department of Speech and Language at Leibniz University-Hanover, Germany,

were invited as the keynote presenters. Prof Bornman's presentation was entitled

“Communication for persons with disability: A necessity for meeting human rights.” In this presentation she

linked disability and the Sustainable Development Goals as then described Human Rights and its link to communication. She emphasised that communication represents an essential important human need as well as a basic human right. Through communication we can exchange opinions, thoughts and meanings, express ourselves and show our own points of view. Communication makes us who and what we are and therefore strengthens human dignity while also validating our human equality. In Prof Lüdtke's presentation, she described the speech-language profession in sub-saharan Africa and illustrated it with a growing seed metaphor, saying that the seeds have been planted as there are now SLP's in most African countries –

although they are mostly restricted to the capital cities. Springer will be publishing the “Handbook of Communication Disabilities and Language development in Sub-Saharan Africa” and you can read more about these presentations as well as other conference highlights in this book.

The conference organizers and sponsors did an outstanding job in putting together a interesting programme with a variety of sessions focussing on assessment intervention and inclusion. The breakaway sessions allowed for conversation and deeper interrogation of some concepts and students who presented their Master's and PhD research obtained valuable feedback form the panellists.

On Monday, 13 February **Prof Bornman** visited the Department of Special Needs Education as the guest of Dr Nelly Otube, the chairperson of this department. During this discusison with various members of the Department it became crystal clear that collaboration between the Centre and this department would be highly beneficial to all involved... so watch this space!

In conclusion, I would like to quote Prof Paul W. Wainaina, Kenyatta University's Vice-Chancellor who reminded all the conference delegates of the following : “The group of people living with disabilities is also the only minority group that any single person can join, at any time, through illness, accident, conflict or , quite simply, getting older”.

This conference and a follow-up visit planned for June were just the first drops of water that can become a beautiful river of exchange, strength and power that has the potential to make a difference in the lives of persons with disabilities all over our beautiful continent.

Juan Bornman
Centre for AAC



CAAC News (cont.)

Constance Ntuli visits University of the Witwatersrand (WITS)



Constance Ntuli, a staff member at the Centre for AAC and a person who uses AAC, gave a talk on the 10 March to the 4th year WITS Speech pathology students. Dr Munyane Mophosho, a lecturer at WITS University organized the talk. Constance spoke about her life as a person who uses AAC and how she was introduced to the FOFA communication empowerment programme at the Centre for AAC which inspired her to become a Disability Advocate. She also spoke about being employed at the Centre for AAC, where she focuses on raising awareness and educating others about AAC and the rights of persons who use AAC.

Constance Ntuli
Centre for AAC

Prof Bornman visits new Nelson Mandela Children's hospital



Dr. Karin van Zijl, a registered Child Life Specialist and her colleague, Mrs. Isabel Schimper, invited

Prof. Bornman to the Nelson Mandela Children's Hospital in Johannesburg, South Africa. They met with the child life specialist team from SickKids Foundation in Toronto, Canada to discuss how to support the child patients through play and communication.

Juan Bornman
Centre for AAC

Prof Bornman publishes 2nd edition of her book

Prof Juan Bornman, together with Mrs Jill Rose, a former staff member of the Centre for AAC, published the second edition of **Believe that all can achieve — Increasing classroom participation in learners with special support needs**.



Every learner and teacher has a unique blend of personal characteristics and background factors that change with time and context and which affect their life experience and development. Traditionally, the education of children with disabilities focuses on the nature of specific conditions in an attempt to alleviate barriers to learning. The emphasis is on the disability, and not the impact of the impairment on participation at school or at home. The current focus is on the strengths, attitudes and positive functioning of children within meaningful contexts. *Believe that all can achieve* recognises inclusion as the foundation for education in an attempt to celebrate diversity in the classroom, to capitalise on the strengths each learner brings to the learning-teaching dyad, and to welcome every family member as part of the broader classroom community.

Believe that all can achieve embraces the core values of the South African Constitution, namely freedom, dignity and equality. It shares best practice and evidence-based techniques and strategies to build a deeper understanding of core issues. Narratives, case studies, screening checklists, engaging illustrations and clear examples enable the teacher to translate theory into practice in the classroom. The chapters on challenging behaviours, various types of disabilities (intellectual, learning, physical and sensory), autism spectrum disorders, and medical conditions add a wealth of information and constitute an essential reference.

Believe that all can achieve is aimed at students and teachers in the field of inclusive education.

Robyn White
Centre for AAC

Congratulations Dr Monyane Mophosho!



Congratulations to **Dr Munyane Menge Mophosho** who recently was awarded her PhD! She was a valued staff member of the CAAC from 1994 - 2004 during which time she was a fellow of the Kellogg's International Leadership Program. We always take delight in following the career development paths of former colleagues and current friends. Well done Dr. Mophosho, we are very proud of you!

Research projects

Recent research highlights from students and staff

There's an app for that! Or at least, there will be one soon! In collaboration with Georgia State University, Centre staff is involved in a research project that looks at using mobile technology to supplement communication intervention services for young children with neurodevelopmental disorders who are receiving speech and language therapy through the public health system. The team has conducted focus groups with parents and therapists to understand what their needs are, and also to guide the development of an app. The project is funded by the US National Institute for Health.



Hearing their voices.... People with aphasia post-stroke usually need to cope with major adjustments in various life areas that affect not only them, but also their families. Since people with aphasia have trouble communicating, they may not be given the chance to voice their opinions about what matters most to them in inter-

vention – service providers may make decisions about intervention goals without input from them. They may consult families, but even family members may not know what the person with aphasia really wants. **Lauren Pettit**, a Master's student in AAC, completed a study comparing the perspectives of adults with aphasia, their significant others, and their speech-language therapists regarding intervention priorities. By using the Talking Mats™ approach, she was able to elicit the opinions of people with aphasia. Although there were similarities in the priorities of the three different groups, there were also differences. The Talking Mats approach can be used by intervention teams as a tool for collaborative goal setting. Read more about Talking Mats at www.talkingmats.com. The results of the study have been published in the journal *Topics in Stroke Rehabilitation* and can be obtained from this link: [doi:10.1080/10749357.2016.1207148](https://doi.org/10.1080/10749357.2016.1207148)



April was Autism Awareness month and subsequently two articles on studies related to children with autism and their families were published by CAAC alumni, and staff members.

The first study dealt with **Sibling relationships.**

These can be some of the most rewarding relationships we have, but they are not necessarily easy!

Christine van der Merwe, a Master's student in AAC, administered a rating scale to adolescents who had a sibling with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), to find out how their attitude towards their sibling had changed over time. In general, adolescents reported becoming more positive about their sibling with ASD. When supporting siblings of children with disability, it is important to acknowledge that their view and feelings towards their sibling are not static, but may change over time.



The article, published in the *South African Journal of Communication Disorders*, can be downloaded by clicking on this link: <http://www.sajcd.org.za/index.php/sajcd/article/view/184>



The second publication was based on the PhD study of **Liezl Schlebusch**, and was published in the *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*. This article reports on a survey done with 180 families of children with autism who receive disability-related services. The survey found that families were most satisfied with disability-related support services they received. While this was an encouraging finding, families were least satisfied with their emotional well-being. It is therefore clear that service providers should not neglect this important aspect in intervention. Not surprisingly, family quality of life was influenced by the type of family constellation (two-parent versus one-parent families); by how families felt about their income (whether they felt it was enough or not) and also by the severity of the child's autism.

This interesting article can be downloaded at [doi:10.1007/s10803-017-3102-8](https://doi.org/10.1007/s10803-017-3102-8)

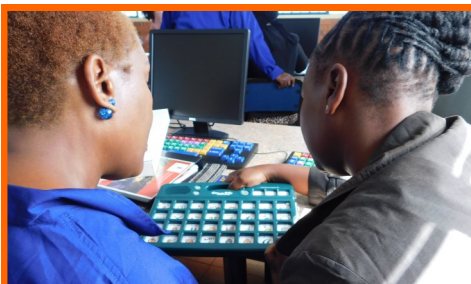
Kerstin Tönsing
Centre for AAC

CAAC news (cont.)

AAC training at Tsakane Special School

Prof Juan Bornman, Mrs Enid Moolman and Ms Constance Ntuli from the Centre for AAC had the privilege to visit the Tsakane Special School on 2 and 3 May 2017.

Tsakane Special School is situated in Acornhoek in the Bohlabela District of Mpumalanga and caters for learners with a variety of disabilities ranging from physical to intellectual disabilities. The learners enrolled at the school are from the surrounding areas of Manyeleti, Shatale, Arcornhoek and Casteel. The school is brand new and only opened its doors to the community in October 2014. It has since grown to 160 learners.



As most of the teachers at the school come from mainstream schools and have limited knowledge about learners with disabilities and AAC, they needed training in this field. The Centre for AAC team trained the 14 teachers who currently work at the school in the implementation of AAC strategies within the classroom. The teachers were also trained in the use of the GoTalk speech generating devices that were donated to the school. At the end of the training session all the teachers were able to record messages and were empowered to use the devices with their learners who are unable to speak.

The training also involved a session with the parents, entitled **"No parents – no progress!"** More than 100 parents attended the training. Ms Constance Ntuli, who uses AAC on a daily basis, once again inspired parents and teachers with her story of hope and how her "voice" opened doors to her future.



The Centre for AAC are looking forward to see how the teachers at the school go from strength to strength in the use of the devices in your classrooms. Thank you to Ms Sakienah Mnisi who went out of her way to make our time at Tsakane most enjoyable. Ms Mnisi truly is pursuing

the African dream for a better life and a better tomorrow for all the learners with disabilities in the Acornhoek area.

Mrs Enid Moolman
Centre for AAC

Centre for AAC receives Global Innovative Education Award



The Centre for AAC won the Regional Gold Award for Africa at the Reimagine Education Conference & Awards 2016 in Philadelphia, USA on the 5th December 2016.

Reimagine Education is a leading global education competition and it awards the most innovative Higher Education & EdTech projects. The Centre for AAC was shortlisted for the Hybrid Learning category which focused on the best project that unified web-based learning delivery and traditional learning practices. They additionally looked at how the team improves learning outcomes in a way that foregrounds the learning team (educator and present students), while also leveraging web-based internet resources.

This award ceremony is the global awards for innovative education pedagogies enhancing learning and employability. This year's Reimagine Education was the most competitive to-date, with over 500 applications received for the 14 award categories. The panel of judges had repeatedly remarked on the high quality of applications for 2016, with hours of conversation and reflection necessary to determine – with difficulty – on each of the 14 shortlists for this year's competition. Prof. Bornman and the Centre for AAC would like to send our heartfelt thanks to the Dean of Humanities, Prof Reddy and the Faculty of Humanities at the University of Pretoria for providing funding to Prof. Bornman so she could attend the award ceremony in Philadelphia.

We here at the Centre for AAC are passionate about providing an innovative blended pedagogy to our students resulting in enhanced student learning outcome and the acquirement of knowledge and unique skill sets that will impact the lives of people with communication disabilities. That is why we are so incredibly proud of this Award!

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all past and present students for choosing to study our post-graduate courses, because this programme has now received a global award! Thank you for believing in us and for your hard work and commitment!

Robyn White
Centre for AAC

Student news

Autumn graduation



Graduation is a time of joy and happiness.

Graduation also marks the beginning of learning and not the end. In the words of Mahatma Gandhi:

"Live as if you were to die tomorrow and learn as if you were to live forever".



The Centre for AAC celebrated the graduation of its postgraduate students on April the 24th and 5th May 2017. The Autumn graduation saw 17 Honours AAC graduates, 2 MAAC graduates and 13 MECI graduates.

We are so proud of our graduates and wish them only success on their learning journey.

Robyn White
Centre for AAC

SMU students learn about AAC

On the 25th of April 2017, The Centre staff were joined by 22 students (enrolled for their final year in Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology at Se-fako Makgatho University) and their lecturer, Prof Anna-Marie Wium, for a 'hands-on' session with AAC



technology.

Three persons using AAC shared their experiences and expertise with the students. **Constance Ntuli** is a staff member at the Centre for AAC, and shared how AAC made it possible for her to find a job. She also shared about her new role as a mother and how much she is enjoying her gorgeous baby girl Bokang. Carla van Nieuwenhuizen, aged 26, shared about her passion to write poems, her completion of a make-up course and her business enterprises. Zainab Omar, aged 13, shared how AAC makes it possible for her to participate in the school in her community and connect with friends. But she also warned that patience is needed in engaging with someone using AAC, and, sadly, people do not always have it!

Students were also given a brief introduction about AAC technology and then had the chance to handle and use some of the communication aids and interact with Constance, Carla, and Zainab. The students always comment about the life-changing experience it is to see people using AAC live full lives, and to be given the opportunity to interact with them. One of the students, Ms Kambuhle, commented:

"From the beginning of the presentation where we were introduced to AAC users I was blown away by the positive impact that AAC has on people's lives. This was an eye opening experience in the sense that from this I saw the importance of my role as a speech therapist in assisting those that have communication difficulties through the use of AAC. It was really good to hear those who use AAC speak about their own personal experiences....It was really amazing to see people with a disability achieve so much."



It is always encouraging to see how enthusiastic and knowledgeable these young professionals are, and we are confident that they will make a positive difference for all the clients in need of AAC whom they will serve during the course of their careers.

Kerstin Tönsing
Centre for AAC

Interface Branch News

News from KZN



Interface KZN has had a very busy year thus far, made all the more exciting by our growing team, which is slowly increasing our capacity.

This is an on-going vision of ours.

Following all the hard work and preparation in the last few months of 2016, the Valley of 1000 Hills Project is now full steam ahead. We now have a core group of children who receive intervention three days a month from Meg and Casey. Delani Doncabe has been an invaluable addition to the team, as our translator and assistant. Positive collaboration with the Valley Trust Community Facilitators has had a hugely positive impact on the implementation of this project. The facilitators visit the families regularly and their support to the children and their families ensures follow-through AAC interventions at home throughout the month.

The Teenage and Young Adult Communication Circle has had a busy start to the year. The group has been working with a Psychologist, Ms. E Nel, whose PhD research is to train the Police in taking statements from people with complex communication needs through the use of AAC. The group has been supporting her with their views and feedback on her proposal. One or two of the members of the communication circle may assist her with her training.

The Khethiwe Project started in February, and is being implemented by Meg. Khethiwe Rehabilitation Centre sees a number of children with physical difficulties from the surrounding areas. Interface KZN is working with the staff at Khethiwe to provide AAC services to 2 of these groups of children, including support to their caregivers. Meg visits the Centre every other week and is working with two groups of 6 children. The purpose of this project is to incorporate AAC in addition to physiotherapy services.

In addition to our projects, we are busy with on-going individual evaluations and AAC intervention for adults and children of all ages and diagnoses

related to complex communication needs. Whilst most of these interventions are provided at our Centre, Jocelyn is also available to consult in the Pietermaritzburg area.

We have an Introduction to AAC workshop scheduled for the 8 & 9th of June. The focus of this workshop will be to provide Educators with information about core / beginning strategies for introducing AAC into the classroom. Through this workshop, we hope we will be able to support many Educators and schools, and most importantly, learners who require AAC for communication.

Please do not hesitate to contact Trudi Louw at our Centre, on 031 708 1785, should you wish to learn more about any of our services and upcoming events.

Felicity Jonck
Chairperson
Interface—KZN

The first term of 2017 has had such a mixture of

School news

Pathways – Polokwane

challenge and opportunities. It began for the staff with a couple of days of training and has continued with so many opportunities to re-assess important issues for the Enrichment Centre, our programmes, waiting list, vision, parent involvement and how we fundraise to sustain these aspects of the school.

Our classes have reconfigured. With Neo Setwaba's graduation a ripple effect throughout the EC began. New students were welcomed and they bring different dynamics to the class. So the first term of 2017 has been such an interesting time of getting to know these new young people and to settle the refreshing change and challenge that they bring with them, into a healthy environment conducive to learning for each child.



Platorand School

Blissymbolics as a language and literacy tool in the special needs classroom

During an honours onsite week at the Centre for AAC in 2012, Drs Johnson and Tönsing gave a lecture on a variety of symbol systems and sets and how they are used by persons with LNFS as part of their daily multi-modal communication devices. Blissymbolics was one of the symbol systems that were introduced to us. Dr Johnson explained that Blissymbols were more difficult to learn than other symbols system or –sets due its large vocabulary. Dr Tönsing explained how Blissymbols could be combined together to form new words. It all came together in my mind. If you have a symbol system with a large vocabulary that can be combined to form new words, you have a “language” that could be used for literacy and language learning in the LSEN classroom.

Blissymbolics being a linear graphical system consisting of clear shapes and clean lines thus renders itself as a useful tool for teaching reading. It is easily used with verbal children that suffer from invisible disabilities. People told me that learners with dyslexia do not see letters as such, but rather as lines and shapes. I had to see this for myself and as most of us do, I’ve consulted the all-knowing Google. What I found gave me a whole new perspective on how to use Bliss with learners who present with Dyslexia and other neuro-developmental delays.

To verify what I’ve read on the internet, I’ve done the following:

I wrote an “e” on a piece of paper and asked one of my learners what he sees when he looks at the letter. He said that he saw only the vertical line of the “e”. This meant that he omitted the “c” that completed the “e”. Another learner saw only the bottom part of the letter “o” and one learner told me that he can see the first letter of the word, the rest of the word “swims” away.

The first time a teacher writes with Blissymbols on a board, the child only reads the symbols. With repetition the child starts to put lines together to form words. After a few more months the letters start to form “words”. With more repetition

the child begins to do “whole word recognition”. As Dr Jennische (from Blissymbolics International) mentioned in the Blissymbolics course, *“Everything in language learning is there, except for phonology”*. Blissymbolics has all the necessary components to teach reading: syntax, morphology, a huge vocabulary and semantic understanding. New pathways are built in a short amount of time through repetition.

The Blissymbolics Communication International board reviewed a range of indicators that wasn’t used regularly by persons with LNFS. These indicators are in use now for the purpose of teaching grammar in the LSEN classroom.

Bliss Authorized Vocabulary 2016 is for teaching reading in the English language and it should be used for educational purposes only (Jennische, 2016). The Authorized Vocabulary 2016 opens up a whole new learning experience for our learners. www.blissonline.se added most of these indicators

Child with Dyslexia Progression

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in their vocabulary which makes lesson planning a breeze.

Yes, some learners will never be able to read and write

without Bliss. They have to be catered for after school and that is why we are on a quest to assist these learners. How? By incorporating Bliss everywhere we can, so that Bliss books can be readily available to the Bliss user in all retail stores.

Prof. Juan Bornman and Dr Johnson taught us the 14 AAC Intervention principles. Principle 13: AAC intervention should result in positive change and principle 14: **Keep things as simple as possible** (Bornman & Johnson, 2013). By abiding to these principles no one can falter. Ten of my learners bridged from Bliss to traditional orthography within two years. Just follow the principles, keep it simple, don’t set the aims too high and last but not least, don’t give up.

Louisa Alberts
Platorand School, Belfast

User forum

Carla van Nieuwenhuizen

We asked one of our FOFA graduates and mentors, Carla van Nieuwenhuizen, to tell us more about herself.



I am Carla van Nieuwenhuizen, 26 years old and living in Roodepoort on the West Rand. My parents are Marlene and Paul and I have one sister, Melissa. She is turning 21 this year!

I was born normal, but at 6 months old, I started to have convulsions, which was caused by a genetic disorder. Because of a lack of oxygen, I got brain damage. My disability is mainly physical which mean I cannot sit, walk or do anything on my own. But I am a very clever girl with a photographic memory!

My school years

I attended the West Rand School, a school for learners with special educational needs in Krugersdorp from the age of 3, starting in their preschool. At the age of 18, I left school and my parents found a wonderful Centre for Disabled persons called Pathways Roodepoort. I have been at the centre for 4 years now. The centre caters for all ages of disabled persons. I am in a group of 8 adult girls. Our activities ranges from cooking and baking, arts and crafts and "Spa" days where we get treated to manicures and pedicures, which everyone enjoys.

As part of my disability, I have a speech impairment. I find it very difficult to talk normally, so people would think I am stupid because I cannot communicate. Then I got to use a AAC communication program on my laptop and an alphabet board with which I started communicating. This opened a world of possibilities for me.

My dream came true!

I was very honoured to be invited to a FOFA course at the University of Pretoria 5 years ago, where they taught us to use the AAC program to its full extent. I have attended it as a mentor for the last 2 years and have learned so much. In the first year, we were asked what our dreams for the future was. My dream was to do motivational speeches, to tell the public about my life, my dreams, my likes and dislikes and to educate everyone about people with disabilities. And I am so happy to say that I made my dream come true. I was invited to my first motivational speech shortly after the first FOFA course and I have been invited by all different groups like churches, woman's days and fundraisers to do my speeches. It is important that people know that inside this funny looking body, there is a normal person with feelings, dreams, hopes and that I want to be treated as such.



My best friend

During my school days, I met a wonderful best life-long friend called Tsholo Phiri. We were together in preschool and continued to be friends after school. Her disabilities are very similar to mine, which makes it perfect to understand what the other person is going through. We try and visit each other as

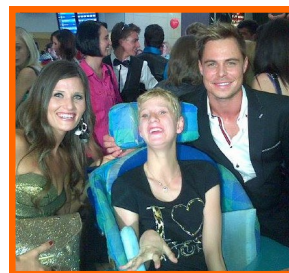
often as possible.

My "other mother", Virginia Patosi

I have an amazing caregiver Virginia Patosi. She has been my "other mother" for 5 years now and I don't know how I would cope without her. My mother calls her the angel sent from above. She is not only my caregiver, she is my friend.

My job and interests...

I am a very hip young lady that loves fashion and makeup. It was a dream to learn more about makeup. So I got invited to do a makeup course with one of the beauty colleges in Roodepoort called Face to Face Roodepoort. I completed this amazing course and received my certificate! I am very proud to say that I am also a sales consultant for Avon. This helps me to get an extra income. I love doing the sales and I am very good at it.



I love music and try and fill my days with lots of songs. My favourite artist (and I think the most sexy one too) is Bobby van Jaarsveld and I think I am his biggest fan ever. We try and see all his shows. At one of his shows and he actually got off stage to serenade me with the song "Just the way you are" from Bruno Mars. At all the shows we have attended, he made special time to come and say hello.

I have had a very exciting and challenging life. And I have accomplished some of my dreams. So where to now? ***I am a very positive person, and I believe in living every day to the fullest.*** I don't know what will come across my path tomorrow, but whatever it is - I am ready. As for my motivational speeches, I still want to continue doing this important task. I want to tell the world about me, people with disabilities and change the attitude towards us.

Carla van Nieuwenhuizen
FOFA graduate and mentor

Disability Awareness event at University of Pretoria

DisOlympics on campus: Transforming how we walk and talk

The Centre for AAC and The Department of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology, in collaboration with the Transformation Committee of the Faculty of Humanities at the University of Pretoria (UP), hosted an event titled, ***“DisOlympics on campus: Transforming how we walk and talk”***.

The aim of the event was to raise disability and accessibility awareness on campus as students with disabilities still often feel marginalized and excluded from the higher education sector. Natalie Vaz, the co-coordinator from Pathways-Studio in Pretoria, bought sixteen students to join in the fun activities with 40 staff members from UP.

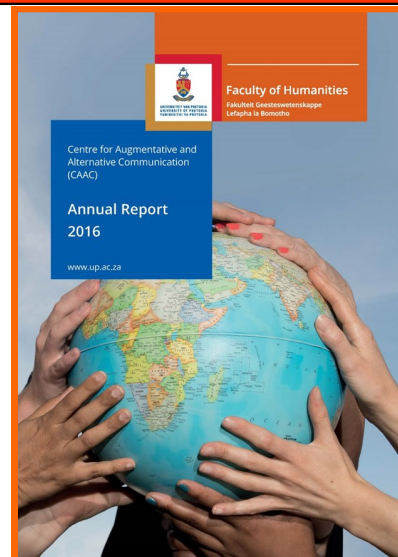


The final activity was a walk on campus that was aimed at raising the conversation of accessibility on campus and how we can transform the higher education sector that aims to integrate and include students with disabilities.

Robyn White
Centre for AAC



Centre for AAC Annual Report 2016

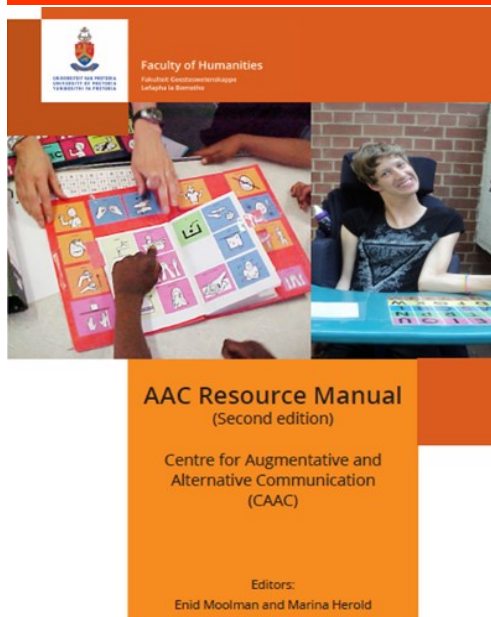


If you would like to read more about the work of the staff and students from the Centre for AAC, Our 2016 Annual Report can be downloaded by clicking on the following the link:

<http://www.up.ac.za/media/shared/212/annual-report-2016-zp113358.pdf>

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AAC Resource Manual



www.up.ac.za

The second edition of the AAC Resource Manual is now available

If you are working with people with complex communication needs (CCN), then this manual is just for you. More than a hundred useful, practical topics are covered, all written by South Africans who are involved with AAC provision.

Orders for the AAC Resource Manual (available on CD only) can be made from the Centre for Augmentative and Alternative Communication (CAAC) at the University of Pretoria.

Please contact Liza at (012) 420 2001 or

AAC Consultation services by CAAC?

The CAAC offers **AAC consultations** for potential candidates in need of AAC as well as for **Medico Legal** purposes. Please contact Liza Rosetti-Siefe at (012) 420 2001 or liza@up.ac.za for more information.

Do you want to study in the field of AAC?

If you are interested to do an Honours, Master's or PhD in AAC or Master's in ECI, follow the link to find out more about these programmes:

<http://www.up.ac.za/centre-for-augmentative-alternative-communication/article/56213/postgraduate-degree-programmes>

Disability training and other tender training services by CAAC?

The Centre for AAC offers training to any organisation that needs assistance with AAC, disability employment issues, training court officials to testify in court and so much more.

Please contact Ensa Johnson at (012) 420 2001 or ensa.johnson@up.ac.za for more information.

NBNBNB:

For future contributions to this newsletter, please contact the editor,

Ensa Johnson at ensa.johnson@up.ac.za

Next edition: October 2017

Due date for submissions: 15 September 2017



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