



Lentshu La Sechaba

THE VOICE OF THE CE COMMUNITY

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Editorial letter

The basic function of community engagement (CE) is to create a just and sustainable society by providing information, skills and co-generation of new knowledge through University-community partnership. This calls for a paradigm shift toward collaboration and cooperation between the University and community partners. As mandated by the Department of Higher Education and Training, the University of Pretoria (UP), in South Africa, is also tasked with the responsibility of engaging marginalised communities in social transformation through CE. Therefore, in my view, the marginalised community is able to bring about social transformation as they engage actively in reality with a critical and flexible spirit.

CE partnerships between universities and communities are

complex as there are differences in cultural experiences and gaps in understanding between the partners. The challenge is compounded by the fact that social problems are not aligned with disciplines; hence the need for multidisciplinary interventions in CE. This is part of the motivation for UP to advance collaborative CE interventions. As reported in this newsletter, some of the CE initiatives were implemented with diverse partners (multidisciplinary) such as the Fordham University in New York and University of South Africa. In such cases, the partners share mutual goals and benefits, in line with partnership principles.

Part of the highlight of the 2019 CE activities will be the exhibition of posters during the University Social Responsibility (USR) Week. The USR week will be held in the Aula from 7 to 10 October to showcase UP's

social responsibility. All faculties are invited to exhibit the work done by students for their CE modules. The preparation of posters, photos and other material took place throughout the year. Professional photographers accompanied lecturers and took the photos according to policy and regulations. Sponsored by our various business partners, we hope to publish a coffee-table book containing the material used in the exhibition.



Dr Eugene Machimana
Senior Education Consultant:
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Pathways out of Homelessness Research Project: Research not about but with people

Wayne Renkin (Programme Coordinator: Akanani: Tshwane Leadership Foundation Junior Research Officer: Centre for Contextual Ministry PhD Student: Department of Practical Theology, Faculty of Theology and Religion)

Vulnerable populations such as the homeless community are difficult to engage through traditional research channels for various reasons. The social and cultural divide between a university researcher and a homeless person limits the potential for deep and meaningful data gathering and analysis. For a long time, research has been extracting knowledge from vulnerable communities without real change for lived experiences of vulnerable populations.

The Pathways out of Homelessness: Going Deeper! Research project aims to produce research that will influence policy and budget and improve practices. Part of the methodology of the project is not to speak about people without truly engaging people about whom we speak. Current and formerly homeless people became research participants in the projects. They were the fieldworkers that did data collection and reflected and interpreted the data with the researchers. Their presence and engagement in the project shaped, and continues to shape, the project and the understanding of research. The fieldworkers received training and were not just participants but paid

as researchers. They were able to access homeless communities in a way that traditional researchers and students are not able to do.

Led by Prof Rehana Vally (Department of Anthropology and Archeology) and Prof Stephan de Beer (Centre for Contextual Ministry), this mixed-methods, trans-disciplinary project involves researchers from across several departments at the University of Pretoria and the University of South Africa, practitioners and homeless people to understand the complex realities of Pretoria's homeless community. This project is a continuation of a similar project that was launched in 2015; however, this phase of the study has a special focus on three subgroups of the homeless population: the elderly, students, and those afflicted with mental illness.

From religious studies to anthropology, this project uses engaged scholarship and research as a method of reaching members of Pretoria's homeless community but also as a process of mutual transformation. Homeless and formerly homeless individuals serve as researchers in the field to collect survey responses from members of the target population. Although

the University of Pretoria strives to be a public university engaged in trans-disciplinary research that empowers local (resource-poor) communities, the fieldworkers faced difficulties to access campus for research meetings.

The underlying philosophy of this project is that it must be about mutual learning and it cannot take the traditional path of research, which might be to gain access with the sole purpose of extracting data. The goal of this project is to use the rich survey data to influence policies, budgets, and practices that address homelessness. Questions on the 30-question survey range from demographic items like gender and age to more substantive questions like the cause of their homelessness and the most pressing challenges for homeless people in Pretoria. To date, 307 surveys have been completed in the Central Business District (CBD), Sunnyside, Arcadia, and Hatfield areas.

“Education is the most powerful weapon you can use to change the world” Nelson Mandela

Dr Nokuthula Vilakazi (Programme Coordinator: Future Africa - University of Pretoria)

Mandela Day reminds us of the 67 years of service in the life that Dr Nelson Mandela devoted to serving humanity. On 18 July South Africans and the international community are called upon to commit to serving, and making a difference to the lives of those less fortunate than we are for 67 minutes. The year 2019 marks ten years since the introduction of Mandela Day to keep the spirit of the man affectionately known as “Tata” alive by making every day a Mandela Day.

In honour of Dr Mandela’s values and his dedication to the service to humanity, the rights of children and the love of children, we at Future Africa dedicated a portion of the day to learners from N’wa-Vangani School. This is in line with President Cyril Ramaphosa’s call in his 2019 State of the Nation Address, where he said that he wants to see all South African children receive at

least two years of Early Childhood Development (ECD) before they begin Grade 1.

We would like to express our sincere appreciation to the following people and centres that partnered with us to make this day possible, namely:

- Dr Raita Steyn, Art Education Lecturer at the Department of Humanities Education, together with her students
- Puleg Tsie, Manager of Sci-Enza Science Centre, and her team.
- Susan Scheepers and Mike, Information Specialist at Medical Library, Faculty of Health Sciences
- Forestry and Agricultural Biotechnology Institute (FABI) students and staff
- Future Africa staff and residents



- Rassie Erasmus, Manager: Bookmark, University of Pretoria
- Dr Eugene Machimana and Gernia van Niekerk, Community Engagement
- Collin Stier and Brett Fischer, Tuksport

Getting geared up for the goal

Annika van Zyl (Professional Art Practice [VIT] 100, First year BA Fine Arts)

The visit to Baviaanspoort Correctional Services and Kgosi Mampuru II Correctional Centre unnerved me. I have always had a deep fear of crime within South Africa. I usually am very paranoid when in public or when walking to places with regard to the people around me. I was particularly alarmed by the sheer number of inmates within these Correctional Centres. To learn to what extent these facilities are overcrowded is frightening. Given the reportedly low success rate in both criminal investigations and obtaining convictions, the sheer numbers clearly demonstrate the extent of crime in South Africa and, in a sense, justify my paranoia. I am also afraid of how the experience could potentially change my view of the people around me. If the inmates act as normal individuals, as they

most probably will, and not as we expect them to be from media and television reports, it could potentially challenge my world view and grip on what a “normal” person is like. It may demonstrate how every person has a “dark-side” but outwardly seems to be quite normal. The only approximation I could draw to it, is a bomb in a suitcase. That being said, I am also very excited to see what kind of art would come out of such a project and perhaps the experience would not only remind me of the worst in people, but also demonstrate how a Correctional Centre is able to help these people.

At first I did not expect my peers to react too much. Prison culture is a very popular theme on television as proven by the success of programmes such as “Orange is The New Black” and “Prison Break”



so I thought that they would be desensitised towards the environment. I was proven wrong by their reactions to the prison uniforms once inside the correctional facility. They seemed to be amazed and

a little bit shocked that they could recognise the uniforms from television shows. Overall, however, most of them reacted with a remarkable curiosity to the inner workings of the Correctional Centre and exhibited openness to the idea of working with the inmates. I also noticed that, after the trip, most people seemed to be emotionally exhausted, all of them immediately going home and this could perhaps warn a person that the project will be taxing.

I think the exercise was successful in providing us with sufficient

information regarding the structure and conditions within and around the Correctional Centre. The experience also helped us to form a much better idea of what community engagement is and how to approach it. I doubt that this trip has truly made the next visit any more comfortable or less difficult. That being said, I seriously suspect that any trip to a Correctional Centre would be made less stressful with any amount of previous exposure.

In conclusion I believe that the visits to these two Correctional Centres were successful in providing the necessary information and ideas of community work. They have also hopefully made us more aware of the gravity and importance surrounding the project to come. I found that I should probably work on my ability to approach the situation in a calm and open way. I am, however, curious and excited with regards to the project and what both sides should gain from the experience.

Community engagement projects of students from Fordham University (New York) who are part of the Ubuntu Programme. Supervised by the Department of Social Work and Criminology

Caroline Romano (Fordham University in New York: Part of the UBUNTU programme)

For my community engagement project, I took children at the community centre Lesedi la Batho in Mabopane to the National Zoological Gardens of South Africa in Pretoria.

These children come from low income families, many of them are children of single, teenage mother households, and they have never been able to see the animals native to South Africa. In their classes, they had recently been learning about the big five animals, and I thought it would be great to show the students these animals as they were learning about them. I asked friends and family back home if they could donate some money, and I was completely overwhelmed by the response that I received: everyone wanted to contribute, and they were so excited that they were able to give these children a fun outing. I worked closely with the teachers to plan the trip, and the children had no idea where they were going all the way up until they arrived at the zoo.

At the zoo, the children ran from animal to animal screaming their names and making the sounds that they thought the animals made. I was impressed by the knowledge that the children had of each of

the animals. We were also able to provide lunch for the children, and we ordered McDonalds from down the street. We sent the children home with toys and snacks, and they quickly fell asleep in the transport on the way home. Being able to organise this excursion and seeing how happy the children were made me realise how important it is for children to go on field trips. The children were able to learn about each of the animals both in the classroom and by observation. The gorillas were a huge part of this, as the children were amazed by their size, as well as frightened by their movements: the gorillas looked and acted very much like humans. All of the animals brought their own excitement, and the children continuously had smiles on their faces. The zoo was not only an educational experience but it was a way for children to have fun and do something that they may never have had the chance to do because of financial constraints.

Overall, I was blown away by the generosity of friends and family from home, as well as slightly saddened by the fact that it was relatively easy for me to raise this money. Lesedi la Batho did not have the funds to take the children to the

zoo because they need all of the money that they have for necessities. I only wish that trips like this could become more of a reality for all underprivileged children in the greater Pretoria area, as well as around the world. I encourage other community engaged leaders to reach out to friends and family to organise other fun and educational excursions for children.



Health Awareness Day: The importance of play at Daspoort Poli Clinic

Julia Guimaraes (Occupational Therapy Student IV)

On Thursday 21 February the fourth year occupational therapy students from the University of Pretoria held a health awareness day on the importance of play for children. Studies have shown that children spend half the time playing outside compared to when their parents were children.¹ On average children are exposed to three hours of screen time each day and children start watching TV as early as the age of 9 months.² Screen time is the amount of time spent looking at a screen, including TVs, computers, smartphones, tablets and gaming consoles. Play is important as it helps with language, physical, cognitive and social development.³

Owing to these statistics we decided that a day highlighting the importance of play would be beneficial for the Daspoort community. Parents were invited to join the occupational therapy students for a talk and short demonstration of how play is used in therapy. Screen time was also discussed, including



From left: Miranda Rikhotso, Marizel van Niekerk, Sindiswa Ntshingila and Julia Guimaraes

the dangers and benefits of screen time. The speech and language pathology students also participated by answering questions that parents had regarding their field. The parents enjoyed the demonstration when one of the children took part in a short treatment session. This helped the parents see how play can be used to teach their children new skills in order to prepare them for the future.



The parents gained knowledge on how play is important for their children's development, not only now but also for the future when they go to school. We received positive feedback from the parents. This health awareness day helped us, as students, to develop our skills in organising an event and to present information in a contextually relevant way.

It was a new experience for the occupational therapy students and was highly rewarding to see how it benefited the parents in a practical way.

List of references

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All smiles at N'wa-vangani

Jhinelle Mudaly (BVSc III)

In February 2018, the veterinary students of Onderstepoort Campus were given a unique task of educating multiple schools on Rabies prevention as part of our Veterinary Professional Life (VPL) 300 community engagement. Our group was privileged to work with the amazing people and learners

at N'wa-vangani Primary School, in Mamelodi.

We were presented with multiple lectures and presentations by ambassadors of the Global Alliance of Rabies Control (GARC), in which we were allowed to gain the required knowledge to share with as many people as possible.

The Rabies booklets (n = 50) "Want a friend? Be a friend" helped us put together our presentation. On 20 July 2018, we were greeted by the friendliest principal and teachers at the school. They helped us get the Grade 5 learners ready for the presentation. As it was a beautiful day, we decided to take the learners



outside where we proceeded to teach them about the dangers of rabies. Moreover, we taught the learners about what they could do to prevent dog bite.



Some of the topics covered were the importance of vaccinations, reading animal body language and behaviour, dog bite prevention and good pet care. The learners were eager and attentive, answering

Photographs: Cherne Fortuin & Stephan Jordaan (BVSc III)

all the questions presented to them and, in return, asking us a few mind-boggling questions themselves. It was interesting to find out their thoughts about the presentation and just pet care in general. Many of them showed concern and were now more encouraged to take their pets to veterinarians for their vaccinations.

Our community engagement project implementation was a huge success and we are thankful to the VPL 300 course for allowing us the opportunity to make a difference in the community.

Feedback report from Entokozweni Day Care

Mrs Mpho Ndlovu (Principal: Entokozweni Day Care)

Overall, the involvement of the University of Pretoria (UP) students at our Early Childhood Development Centre (ECD) is highly appreciated. The purpose, results and outcomes were regarded as relevant and meaningful. Furthermore, we felt that “the lessons on the case studies of what had worked and what not were very insightful”. Other positive notes were that more insight was acquired on the issues related to education development. New ways need to be established to help ECDs around Mamelodi to develop networking platform. The network enabled the sharing of ideas, events and knowledge in the sector.

The Engineering, Built Environment and Information Technology (EBIT) students provided us with new effective tools to use in administration and in the class. Our teachers and children enjoyed their company and inputs. The students also installed a notice board on the outside area that can be viewed by parents and the public. Creating for us a drop off zone and an improved waiting area, the students also provided us with a Joint Community Project (JCP) proposal outlining key areas that they had improved and future improvement to be done at our centre.



Our teachers were happy with the toys and class improvements provided by the students.

The toys and teaching aids provided by the EBIT students make everyday education more effective for both the teachers and children. Creating space for “conversation” is essential when organising a conference. Conversation goes beyond interaction; it entails the actual sharing of experiences and lessons learnt between us and the students. Students had important moments for conversations with parents and

us during a parents’ meeting. Most parents were happy with the activities provided after the meeting.

We would love to say thank you to all the students who were involved in the case study. We benefited in knowledge and resources from them, which will be of positive use at the Entokozweni Day Care centre. We acknowledge and thank the students who raised funds by sponsorships of the amount of R7, 741.09. The funds were used to improve play areas and key points around the centre.

Anti-Drug: I Am ... Workshop

Audy Hendricks (Jabez Anti-Drug Organisation)

The I am... workshop was organised to empower four Early Childhood Development (ECD) Centres with regards to the dangers of alcohol and drug abuse. The main objective was to train the ECD practitioners on how to identify the problem but also what to do in order to help and assist the toddlers placed in their care.



From left: Thomas Smith, Audy Hendricks & Pat Moagi (MMC Office)

Background

Eersterust has, for many decades now, been caught in the grip of alcohol and drug abuse. Many people have held anti-drug marches and symposia in order to curb the scourge of substance abuse. Unfortunately, the problem has escalated to such an extent that

even our toddlers are now targeted. That is the motivation for this workshop.

Workshop for ECD practitioners

The workshop for ECD practitioners took place on Saturday, 18 May 2019 at the Apostolic Faith Mission Church in Eersterust. Although the organisation targeted four ECD centres, eight centres pitched up. A total of 44 practitioners participated in the workshop. It is interesting to mention that adults not involved with ECD also attended the workshop. The lecture was presented by Audy Hendricks who also produced the manual for the ECD practitioners. The lecture material, utilising the I am ... concept, is so designed as to affirm the uniqueness and abilities of toddlers to become whatever they put their minds to. The Member of the Mayoral Committee (MMC) for Community and Social Development Services, Sakkie Du Plooy also attended and gave an inspiring talk on ECD from a religious perspective. During the discussions, the practitioners participated very actively so that

even the MMC acknowledged them, saying that: "I have learned today".

Feedback from the participants

- They indicated that this was the very first workshop of this magnitude and that it was very successful.
- They indicated that the I am ... concept could now be incorporated into their curriculum.
- They were all very glad to receive a manual of the I am... concept.
- They would like to have workshops for all the parents of the toddlers.
- They would like to see this as a continued project to eradicate substance abuse.

Conclusion

In conclusion we would like to thank the Unit for Community Engagement of the University of Pretoria for the stationery, printing of manuals as well as the bottled water sponsored for the workshop.

It Takes a Village: Community Engagement, Itirele Zenzele Comprehensive School, Diepsloot, Gauteng

Susan Schoeman, Anel Schoeman, Elisma Williams, Anél Hattingh & Donné Barnard (Final Year Educational Psychology Masters Students, 2018)

On 18 and 25 August 2018, the MEd Educational Psychology final year Master's students from the University of Pretoria participated in community engagement practices in the community of Diepsloot, Gauteng. As part of the project, a parenting workshop was facilitated, informing parents about the various ways in which they could support and communicate with their children. In addition, a Career Expo, specifically for the benefit

of secondary school learners, was hosted.

The parenting workshop aimed to address certain topics as identified by the parents residing in Diepsloot, in order to best meet the needs of the community. These topics included: effective communication, relationship building, discipline and problem-solving. An interactive session, marked by collaboration, facilitated learning and expanded parental knowledge regarding these topics. A joint

partnership was fostered between the parents and the Ed Psych Master's students, enhancing the collective commitment towards sharing information for the benefit of the children in the community. Collaboration and establishing unity among individuals from multicultural backgrounds paved the way for creating a platform for learning. Parents provided localised knowledge and insight in relation to specific parenting challenges and triumphs in the community.



Their knowledge undoubtedly enhanced the value of the workshop presented and promoted collaborative conversations towards success and social cohesion.

The Career Expo hosted by the Faculty of Education was for the

benefit of the learners of the school to best expose them to a range of career options and job seeking skills and to provide information on funding opportunities and study orientations through interactive and creative means. Learners were supplied with informative pamphlets and additional media to guide their career decision-making process. The learners were inquisitive and participated in the interactive manner in which the Master's students presented the various career fields. In addition, a website was created to include additional information with the aim of developing learners' career knowledge and providing them with a tool to assist them to independently access information in resource-limited communities. This resource can be viewed at <https://diepslootcareerhub.wixsite.com/mysite>.

The entire Master's team was thoroughly impressed by the learners' overall vision and their enthusiasm to learn.

The amicable and respectful manner in which the University of Pretoria's Master's students were received has undoubtedly laid the foundation for future community partnerships in the Diepsloot community. We are thankful for the opportunity to engage in invaluable community engagement practices through the formation of collaborative relationships between the University of Pretoria and the community members of Diepsloot. After spending only two days in this incredible part of South Africa, the Master's students experienced the value of enhancing social cohesion by means of active engagement and knowledge sharing in order to better the lives of the people of our country.

VetSCO Ga-Motle outreach: An utterly fantastic day!

Erin Sinclair (VetSCO Vice chairperson)

It was still dark at 06:00 the morning of Saturday 23 March when the Veterinary Student Community Outreach (VetSCO) team set off for the Ga-Motle bovine outreach. The committee had been up since 04:00 that morning getting things ready, but met the student team with bleary smiles and steaming flasks of coffee at the departing bus. All students were able to catch a few winks on the hour-long trip. Upon arrival at the Ga-Motle farms, the group of 46 students split into two groups, one group made up of 13 Onderstepoort students (BVSc students and vet nurses alike) led by two VetSCO committee members (Bright and Bheki), and accompanied by Tsebeletso Kutamela, the former chairperson of VetSCO. The second group of 30 students, was led by committee members, Brandon, Kwena, JP and Erin Sinclair. This larger group of 30 people left the smaller group in the capable hands of Sister Oniccah and Sister Mara (animal health technicians who have been working in the area for over 15 years) and drove 5km down the road to our base for the



day. It was a large cattle crush built and maintained by local farmers, where 500 cattle stood waiting for us and watched us impatiently as we descended from the bus. We had a brief team meeting before the day kicked off, going over safety instructions, having a quick demo on how to draw up vaccines and vaccinate the cattle for the more inexperienced students of the group, and being introduced to the Veterinarian supervising us for the day, Dr Takula Tshuma, who also works at the Faculty of Veterinary Science.

As soon as the introduction to the outreach ended, the real work started. It was all hands on deck. Students were busy at various stations that rotated every so

often throughout the day. The stations included a dispensary that continuously churned out drawn-up dosages of the various vaccines we were providing and two vaccination stations, each one giving a certain vaccine to the waiting cattle. We were able to get all our vaccines sponsored by Onderstepoort Biological Products (OBP). OBP provided us with Anthrax, Blackquarter and Botulism vaccines, both in combination and individual doses, as well as individual Pasteurella vaccines. In addition, we were lucky enough to Pasteurella and Pulpy kidney vaccines from OBP as well. Finally, Dr Rebone Morane from the Faculty graciously provided us with some bottles of Supravax (a 3-in-1 combination vaccine that covers Anthrax, Botulism and Blackquarter in one handy dose). The students were able to get great practical experience and apply skills they might have learnt in theory only. These skills included cattle herding, tick ID and bite management, vaccinating cattle, treating failed branding burns, farmer education



about important bovine diseases and animal welfare and, most importantly, cattle handling. For many students it was the cattle handling that was the most intimidating. It was for the first time for many students to work near/ with cows. Most of the cattle pushed through the crush were horned Nguni/ Brahman crosses with little experience of being handled and none too pleased about being jabbed with needles. Well let's just say it was a steep learning curve for many students! But we vet students and nurses are made of stern stuff and soon everyone landed on their feet and the group fell into a great rhythm that saw the hours fly by! There were a few teething problems: firstly, we did not bring along any way to mark the cattle who had already been vaccinated, so group communication was essential to make sure no cows were double-dosed; secondly, inter-group communication was hard as trying to shout over 50 disgruntled cattle is no mean feat and, finally, many students were very inexperienced with cattle. Although the point of these outreaches is to provide students with learning opportunities, it did mean that processes moved more slowly than normal as the group had to be extra careful working in and around the crush and avoiding the hooves and horns the cattle tossed around. But the obstacles we faced as a group were easily overcome by the unbridled enthusiasm and willingness to roll up our sleeves and get our hands dirty (both literally and metaphorically), an attitude displayed by both the farmers and students. I can personally confirm that washing what we could only pray was mud kicked up

by the cattle out of other students' eyes was a fantastic group bonding experience!

By 13:00 the teams had treated over 860 cattle and 50 sheep and goats. Not too shabby for a single day's work! By the time the last herd of cattle had bellowed its way through the crush, we were down to our last bottles of vaccines and a loud chorus of disappointment sounded through the kraal when we announced it was time to leave. We took a few celebratory photographs with the farmers, crew and students and then piled back on to the bus and drove back to Onderstepoort campus. We were all sweaty, hot and dirty but with huge smiles on our faces.

The outreach at Ga-Motle was a massive success and we owe the following people our sincerest thanks for making it possible, namely: Dr Tshuma for being the vet-in-command for the day, providing gentle teaching and calm reassurances; Sisters Onicah and Mara for their expertise and firm directions; the many farmers who graciously allowed us on to their land and gave us the huge opportunity of working with their animals. Special thanks to OBP and other sponsors, without whose generous donations, this outreach would not have been possible. Finally, the students from Onderstepoort who gave us their time, enthusiasm, hard-work and their Saturday afternoon (optimum nap-time for students). From the VetSCO committee side, we loved hosting this outreach. It was as much of a learning opportunity for us as the community as it was for the attending students and are beyond excited to see what 2019 will bring for us as a society!

Matters Of Interest

The next Community Engagement Forum will be held on Monday, 18 November 2019.

Casual Day was celebrated on Friday, 6 September 2019.

Visit the University of Pretoria' online Community Engagement Management System (CEMS) for updates on community project opportunities.

Submit Your CE Activity

The Unit for Community Engagement invites you to report on community engagement activities by submitting articles of not more than one page for publication in the next Newsletter (Summer 2019).

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