



Lentš'u La Sechaba

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Community engagement highlights 2022



Crossing the great STEM barrier with robots

Prof Tania Hanekom (Department of Electrical, Electronic and Computer Engineering, Faculty of EBIT, University of Pretoria)



Setting up tracks to have some fun with the robots in the University's community garden, Moja Gabedi



Yes, yes, that is right! Along the track you go! A team of learners watch how the robot that was built over a period of eight weeks performs

How is South Africa doing in terms of providing engineers to serve our country? Not too good, according to the Engineering Council of South Africa (ECSA). This statutory body, which regulates the engineering profession in South Africa, reports that South Africa currently has only one engineer to serve every 3 100 people.

This certainly does not compare well with countries such as Germany, the United States of America (USA), the United Kingdom (UK) and Japan, where there is one engineer to support the needs of every 200 to 300 people¹.

Considering the unique challenges that we face in South Africa, even a conservative tenfold increase in engineering graduates might still be grossly inadequate if we want to make our mark as an international economy to be reckoned with.

So why do we not simply train more engineers? This question does

not have a simple or single answer. One thing is certain, however: too few learners with the potential to become engineers succeed in gaining access to the university programmes. Issues such as gender, socio-economic standing and early exposure to the world of technology are among the barriers that dissuade the next generation of Nikola Tesla's, Benjamin Bradley's and Sarah Guppy's from choosing a career in engineering.

The Department of Electrical, Electronic and Computer Engineering (EECE) at the University of Pretoria launched the EECE Robot School in 2021 amidst the turmoil created by the global COVID-19 pandemic.

This project aims to create a fun but informative platform to expose high school learners to the process of designing, developing and finally constructing a simple tracking robot. This helps to demystify the inapproachable and somewhat futuristic idea of creating machines

that are able to do things that require some intelligence and make it more accessible.

The Robot School provides an avenue for second-year students enrolled for the Faculty of Engineering, Built Environment and Information Technology's (EBIT) community engagement module JCP203, to share their passion for technology and their dreams for the future with high-school learners.

Before the classes commence for the year, final-year and postgraduate students who share the desire to increase the number of learners who choose a career in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM), train the second-years to present the curriculum.

The Robot School communicates the message that it may, after all, not be such a far-fetched idea that a bright kid with little more than eyes beaming at the sight of these wonders may choose to join the profession.

¹<https://www.ecsa.co.za/about/SitePages/Transformation.aspx>.

Reading Days presented at Confidence College (Pretoria CBD) and Mmabana Primary School (Soshanguve) to celebrate International Literacy Day, 8 September 2022

Dr Mia le Roux (Department of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology)



Why do we celebrate International Literacy Day?

The day is celebrated to advance literacy, which enables people to create a more cultured, literate and sustainable society. Even in modern society, there is a need to raise awareness about illiteracy, the need for basic education, and the acquisition of literacy skills.

International Literacy Day aims to remind local communities—which is where literacy begins—one person at a time, that literacy is an essential factor in the building of a nation. It helps people to think independently and empowers them. By celebrating International Literacy Day, we aim to highlight the urgent need to help build more literate societies around the world.

Why and by whom was International Literacy Day declared?

International Literacy Day, sometimes called World Literacy Day, is observed internationally and is celebrated annually on 8 September. International Literacy Day was established during the World Conference of Ministers of Education in Iran's capital Tehran in 1965 and was proclaimed by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in 1966. The intention was to remind people all over the world that the ability to read and write is a human right and a matter of dignity. The first International Literacy Day was celebrated in 1967.

Why is literacy so important?

Although literacy is seen as a human right, millions of people worldwide still have low literacy skills. Higher literacy rates are associated with healthier populations, less crime, greater economic growth and higher employment rates. Being literate is a foundational skill that is essential to facilitate the acquisition of advanced skills, which relate to higher wages and more employment across labour markets. Lacking basic reading and writing skills is an immense disadvantage. Literacy not only enriches an individual's life but generates prospects for people to develop skills that will help them provide for themselves, their families, and their communities.

Practical activities in celebration of International Literacy Day include the donation of books to local classrooms, gifting a book to someone, or starting a community lending library. The Reading Day team (Drs Mia le Roux, Salomé Geertsema, Carmen Milton, and Helena Kruger-Roux) from the Department of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology and the Unit for Academic Literacy, University of Pretoria, in collaboration with the Literacy Association of South Africa (Litasa), the Gauteng Department of Education, and the World Literacy Foundation did all of this and initiated reading days at schools.

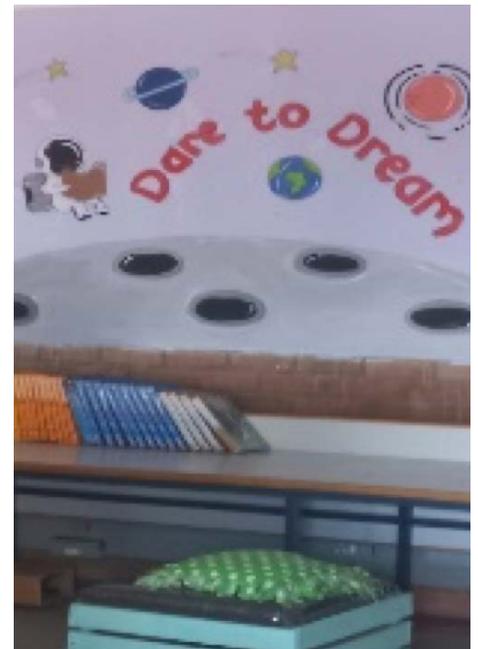
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The vision is to help grow a love of reading and to enhance the literacy skills of learners by engaging in fun educational literacy activities. Students from the Department of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology read stories with each class and afterwards did educational activities with the learners based on the stories read.

The team also donated books to the two schools that were visited. The donated books were sponsored by Book Dash, the National Reading Coalition, and the Faculty of Humanities at UP as part of their literacy drive, Reading Matters. Transport to the schools was sponsored by Litasa, the World Literacy Foundation, and Sun Books. The team is excited to report that the two schools decided to dedicate each Friday to reading by hosting a weekly mini reading day. This year's

theme for International Literacy Day was 'Transforming literacy learning spaces'. The Reading Day team optimised the opportunity to literally transform literacy learning spaces by donating books for the reading rooms of the two schools. They also focused on the fact that literacy learning can take place anywhere where a child and words are together. Some classes sat outside while listening to the stories while others sat in smaller groups away from their desks.

All the activities focused on literacy being fun and making learners aware that reading is not, or should not be, limited to the classroom and academic tasks. Focusing on the theme of transforming literacy learning spaces, the slogan 'Dare to Dream' in the reading room of Mmabana Primary School caught my eye.



I would like to believe that our team, with the support of our sponsors, is encouraging the learners at all the schools we visit to dream about the magic to be found between the pages of a book: literacy success, academic progress, and a prosperous life.

Transdisciplinary hospital-based team and student volunteers' experiences of the Bags of Hope intervention

Ms Hafsa Essop, Dr Eugene Machimana and Dr Mable Kekana

During the Sustainability Research + Innovation (SRI) Congress 2022, Ms Hafsa Essop, Dr Eugene Machimana and Dr Mable Kekana presented a paper titled 'Transdisciplinary Hospital based team and student volunteers' experiences of the Bags of Hope intervention'.

The Congress was held online and in person at the Future Africa Campus, University of Pretoria (UP).

Bags of Hope

In view of its fifth strategic goal, which is 'to strengthen the University's social responsiveness and impact in society', the University of Pretoria (UP) places great value to community engagement.

The UP Bags of Hope (BOH) was started in response to the high number of babies being abandoned in the Tshwane district. The project, which is run by the Department of

Radiography and facilitated by Ms Hafsa Essop, the project leader, has been approved by the Faculty of Health Sciences Ethics Committee as a research project and consists of three phases: (1) a donation drive, (2) creating the bags and (3) distribution. By listening to the team's shared experiences, the investigators will explore how the UP Bags of Hope have impacted the community. This will contribute towards sustainable

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community engagement research, which addresses the World Health Organisation’s Sustainable Developmental Goals 3 and 17, namely Good health and wellness (SDG 3) and Collaboration and industry partnership (SDG 17).

The project serves to uplift and support our local communities and has given rise to considerable interest from the international society. Donations have been received from the United Kingdom and Botswana, and to date 60 bags have been made and distributed. The project is therefore fostering collaboration between people from different backgrounds who come together in the spirit of Ubuntu.

Abstract presented

The intervention, called the Bags of Hope project, entailed creating and distributing care packages to abandoned babies and mothers in

need at university training hospitals. The current study explored how student and qualified radiographers experienced the project.

Methodology: This was a qualitative, descriptive study. The study population included student and qualified radiographers who were directly involved in the project. We conducted individual in-depth interviews with participants using an open-ended interview guide. The data collected was analysed using content analysis.

Results: Interviews were conducted with three qualified radiographers and three student radiographers and the following three themes emerged: the psychological effect of the intervention, sensitisation towards patients’ socio-economic backgrounds and an increased sense of belonging within the hospital team and community.

Conclusion: The community engagement intervention evidently addressed key concepts associated with positive mental health, which are related to the Maslow’s hierarchy of needs and the Warm Glow Effect. It is therefore assumed that community engagement may well be an alternative strategy for supporting the mental health needs of radiographers.

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University of Pretoria Pre-University Academy learners took part in a global cultural exchange project

Dr Martina Jordaan (Head: Community Engagement Research and Postgraduate Studies at the University of Pretoria's Mamelodi campus)



Over a period of five weeks, 28 high school learners from the University of Pretoria's Pre-University Academy (UP-PUA) participated in a global knowledge-sharing initiative that gave them an opportunity to discuss university life with students from five countries from around the world.

Students from the University of Pretoria, India's [ICFAI Foundation for Higher Education](#), Morocco's [Sidi Mohamed Ben Abdellah University](#), the USA's [Merrimack College](#) and Iraq's [Tishk International University](#) took part in the programme, which exposed the learners to cultural and other differences between various countries and universities.

Each week a different group of students consisting of one student from each university presented a session to the learners via the Zoom

online video-calling platform. The sessions included information about movies and entertainment, music and dance, food and festivals, and fashion.

A facilitator from each university monitored the process. The facilitators were Dr Martina Jordaan for the University of Pretoria, Dr Bkashara Rao for the ICFAI Foundation for Higher Education, Prof Nour El Houda Chaoui for Sidi Mohamed Ben Abdellah University, Prof Audrey Falk for Merrimack College and Dr Samira Saeed for Tishk International University. All the facilitators are country directors of the Higher Education Teaching and Learning Association (<https://www.hetl.org/>).

'I learned a lot about the different countries,' said Neo Molekoa, a Grade 9 learner who attends the

UP-PUA. 'I learned about different cultures, dances, music and food varieties about which I did not know much'.

The learners enjoyed interacting with students from other countries. When reflecting on the experience, they indicated that it had taught them to be receptive to new ideas, which aids self-directed or autonomous learning. They improved their existing soft skills and acquired new ones, including teamwork, problem-solving and practical oral and communications skills.

By encouraging greater global awareness, the students' and learners' ability to work collaboratively with persons from diverse backgrounds was also enhanced.

University of Pretoria's Humanities Education lifts dreams in Mamelodi

Nozibusiso Sibiyi



On Saturday, 15 October, Higher Certificate in Sports Sciences and fourth-year Bachelor of Education students from the University of Pretoria assisted as volunteers at the Mamelodi organisation Lifting Dreams, where they tutored learners at the Love Christian Primary and Lehlabile Secondary School and helped them with their homework.

When asked about the experience, Siyabonga Sibiyi, a Higher Certificate in Sports Sciences student, said: 'Some children in townships rarely meet people who can inspire them to dream big. By being here today and helping children with their school work, I hope that we can influence them in positive ways.

Hopefully some of them will dream of furthering their studies at the University of Pretoria.'

He further stated that it is very important for universities to invest in community development programmes to show the people in the area that the University cares about them. 'The University of Pretoria is recognised across Africa as an excellent learning institution, so we need to be here. It shows the community of Mamelodi, especially parents, that the University cares about their children and wants them to perform well academically'.

Ayanda Zwane, a tutor at UP and the leader of the Community Engagement programmes, said

that she enjoys working with an organisation like Lifting Dreams because it teaches her a lot, especially since she is preparing to become a teacher. She added: 'I have the opportunity to help children from disadvantaged backgrounds with their homework and assignments. I am truly honoured to be part of such an amazing programme.'

She emphasised the need to help children in deprived communities with their education to enable them to get to the same level as their peers who attend schools with sufficient resources. 'I have learned that we need to do more to help

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improve the quality of education offered in township schools with inadequate resources. Children from townships struggle due to a lack of proper learning materials, and through our presence as representatives of UP we have been able to help many learners,' she said.

André Kelbrick, the leader of Lifting Dreams at Life Christian Primary School, says that they have experienced a few ups and downs, but that working in Mamelodi has changed the way he views life and has taught him a lot about how other people live. He said: 'I have not yet been to most of the township schools, but I think that there are significant shortcomings with regard to the level of education provided.

Although there are children who excel in Maths and English, which are the subjects we teach here, there are also Grades 6 and 7s who cannot do basic multiplication or add numbers without using their fingers'

He added that it is very important to continue working in township schools as they have seen a huge difference since they started. 'It's crucial that Lifting Dreams continues to work in townships. I do not know the exact statistics, but I think the pass rate among the children we work with in Soweto has increased by 20%. By being available to help learners every Saturday, Lifting Dreams helps to improve their grades'.

He explained that for an organisation like Lifting Dreams to continue to thrive and make a difference, they need a lot of help from volunteers. 'Usually, we have at least eight volunteers a day and their presence mean that the learners receive individual attention, which is very important as it enables them to learn more.'



Nthabiseng Mathole, a Lifting Dreams volunteer from Mamelodi says that she has been involved in many community projects aimed at uplifting her community, especially the children in her township. She explained: 'Community projects are close to my heart and since I grew up in Mamelodi and know how much work is needed here, I volunteer regularly.

The Lifting Dreams team tutors Mathematics and English and also plays games with children. People come to Mamelodi in search of work, but there are also many underserved people in the township. The children we work with seldom miss a day because this project clearly gives them hope.'

Since being raised in poverty affects a child's sense of self, Nthabiseng believes that giving back and helping to educate children in her community will also increase their self-confidence. She explained: 'Growing up in an underprivileged home affects a child's self-esteem. Some children avoid raising their

hands in class because they feel that talking in front of people is embarrassing. When you ask them a question, they shy away from giving you the answer. I always try to build their confidence because that is my duty as a tutor. Even today I experienced the same thing in a class where a child was too shy to read the letters of the alphabet.'

She was grateful to the University of Pretoria for sending volunteers to help to inspire children to study harder so that they can choose to further their studies at the University of Pretoria.

'The presence of volunteers from the University of Pretoria here today is very important as it teaches them the importance of giving back and shows the children that if they work diligently they may be able to study at the University of Pretoria after finishing school. It would be really useful if the University could send someone to inform older learners on the courses that are offered and how to apply for admission to UP,' she concluded.

Change starts from within

Emanuel Maringa (Reliable House)



Thanks to the multidisciplinary team of Reliable House, assisted by occupational therapy and social work students from University of Pretoria, student social workers Karabo Matlakala and Sharon Khumalo joined Reliable House in early 2022. The students are supervised by Sukhulohle Tshuma and Dr Magriet Coetzee-Spies.

Thanks to the help received from the students from the University of Pretoria I saw changes in many of our clients. Kamohelo Matima, for example, quitted using drugs and was reunited with his family, with whose help he is now registered with Drivio Driving School, hoping

to obtain a driver's licence. I also witnessed Nkululego Mhlongo recovering from drug abuse and being reunited with his family after their broken relationship had caused him to become homeless.

Skills development was managed by three teams of Occupational therapists throughout the year and had a positive impact on our clients' ability to manage their finances, job readiness, anger management, entrepreneurship and artistic endeavours.

We saw Noel De Larey opening a small business selling sweets and snacks with a starting capital of R1

000,00 so that he can now participate in the City of Tshwane's economy.

The partnership between Reliable House, Moja Gabedi, the Community-oriented Substance Use Programme (COSUP) and the University of Pretoria has certainly borne fruit. When reflecting on the success achieved by individuals at Reliable House I have to agree with the saying that 'change starts from within'. However, I have also seen the truth of the saying that 'you can lead a horse to the water, but you cannot make it drink!' We sincerely thank all who have contributed to bringing about change in the lives of others.

Sprinkles of kindness in the community



Arlie van Beest (Occupational therapy student) and Nthabiseng Phalitse (Lecturer: Department of Occupational Therapy)

on health and well-being, making appropriate referrals to the clinic and following up on referrals. When her CHCW contract expired five years ago and was not renewed, she felt powerless.

However, she saw a need in the community and voluntarily continued to provide services to community members. Tannie Corlia is the go-to mother for people in 114 homes who trust her and prefer to discuss their problems with her. She usually walks within a radius of seven kilometres from her home to visit people in need. But that is not all she does.

Corlia Smit,¹ known as Tannie Corlia in her community, is a former Community Health Care Worker (CHCW) who now volunteers at the Daspoort Poli Clinic. A CHCW is 'any health worker delivering health care services and who is trained in the context of intervention, but has no formal professional, certificated or degreed tertiary education'.²

Tannie Corlia completed her degree in Foundation Phase education and has educated children for 14 years. After moving to another neighbourhood she reapplied for work, but has so far not been successful. A doctor from the Daspoort Poli Clinic approached her to ask if she would be interested in helping them and she attended training sessions to become a CHCW, which qualified her for various responsibilities, including home visits, providing education

- She hands out food parcels for which she relies solely on donations and sponsors. Each parcel contains a packet of maize meal, a packet of self-rising flour and two tins of canned food. Kairos, a small non-profit organisation (NPO) located close by provides her with 20 parcels weekly, which she delivers mainly to older community members.
- She ensures that every individual feels welcome and safe when asking for support. She has a bathroom near her office space where any member of the community in need is free to freshen up. She supplies them with soap, shampoo, toothpaste, toothbrushes and sometimes clothes. These items

are sponsored by her loving husband and daughter. When clients come to the clinic, she shows them where they can freshen up if they would like to and this boosts their confidence. On average, four to five people use this facility daily. Tannie Corlia says that she enjoys seeing the healing effect that a bath and a bit of counselling can have. It delights her to know that people trust her and feel comfortable about sharing their stories with her after some bath therapy.

- She used to cook and serve food to community members who were waiting for appointments and although temporarily put on hold during the COVID-19 lockdown period, she hopes to be able to resume this service soon. However, she will need some basic items such as disposable containers and utensils to restart the project.

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The street is my home: Access to basic hygiene is my right

Dr Magriet Coetzee-Spies (Department of Social Work and Criminology, Faculty of Humanities) Sharon Khumalo and Karabo Matlakala (Fourth-year BSW students)

The final-year Bachelor of Social Work students' community work project at Reliable House and the Community-oriented Substance Use Programme (COSUP) focused on reducing harm by restoring the dignity of the homeless in the City of Tshwane.

COSUP is a bio-psychosocial service partnership between the City of Tshwane and the University of Pretoria (UP). Reliable House, which is part of the University of Pretoria's

community engagement outreach programme, hosts a COSUP site. At COSUP and Reliable House, various community outreach programmes are coordinated and implemented by stakeholders and faculties.

For this community work project, students collaborated closely with multidisciplinary team members representing a wide range of different professional groups and service providers.

The students' community project at Reliable house was aimed at empowering and supporting the homeless and substance-use community through a skills development project that focused on personal responsibility and hygiene. The project supported service users and empowered them to reduce harm by enabling them to make informed decisions regarding their psychosocial circumstances and health, as well as through networking.

The focus was on vulnerable individuals and community members living with substance use disorders, and the project made use of group work to provide meaningful and effective community-based support to restore the functionality and improve the health and psychosocial well-being of individuals. An attempt was also made to improve the relationships between community members and health care and other service providers. This project contributed to the mandate of the United Nations 2030 Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals,

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specifically Goal 3: 'Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all' (United Nations, 2015).

During group work, critical dialogue revealed the community's needs and challenges in a supportive atmosphere. Challenges included:

- Maintaining proper personal care and hygiene routines is impossible due to a lack of resources such as public sanitation.
- Unemployment and poverty, coupled with a lack of entrepreneurial skills contribute to poor personal hygiene due to not having access to toiletries such as soap, shampoo, deodorant, toothpaste and toilet paper.
- The difficulties experienced with regard to maintaining personal hygiene at Reliable House are due to a lack of facilities, such as basins, showers, toilets and electricity.
- It is difficult to obtain medical health care due to stigmatisation at health facilities. Stigmatisation is caused by physical neglect, poor personal hygiene, dirty hair and nails, and bad dental care, which all contribute to bad odour. As a result, infections and wounds remain untreated.

The objectives of the community project were achieved through an action plan for which the Community Education Model (Weyers, 2011) was used.

- By facilitating critical dialogue through support groups, a trusting relationship was established with the community and various topics could be discussed. The intervention included demonstrations about sanitisation and personal hygiene, how to clean personal spaces and laundry, as well as

how to prepare food.

- Networking with stakeholders, including religious institutions, law enforcement, medical specialists and various non-profit organisation (NPOs) was facilitated to support the community.
- By facilitating a hygiene awareness event at Reliable House, critical dialogue between the homeless and community stakeholders such as the Councillor of the City Improvement District (CID) Hatfield, Arcadia, a Medical doctor, a Dentist, and a barber was initiated. Community members received free consultations and a basic hygiene toiletry pack, as well as a meal sponsored by a religious establishment and COSUP.

This community project empowered the community through education by teaching them how to prevent contracting and spreading infectious diseases such as the Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), Tuberculosis (TB), hepatitis C and Sexually transmitted infections (STIs). They were also warned against sharing needles and how to network with the needle and syringe programme of COSUP, which organises the distribution sterile needles and collection of used needles. The prevention of poor mental health triggers was also discussed.

The project responded to individual needs and challenges through respect, confidentiality, trusting relationship, and non-discrimination. By linking community members with resources, they were empowered and motivated to secure income through their own strengths and basic entrepreneurial skills, such as cutting and shaving hair, recycling materials, car washing/ guarding, gardening, cooking and cleaning.

The strength-based perspective guided the community engagement. The project further empowered and supported the community by improving their knowledge and enabling them to make informed decisions for themselves regarding their appearance, health and dignity.

Through collaboration with various stakeholders, this project offered a rich learning opportunity to BSW students from the University of Pretoria. By utilising community engagement resources and combining health and psychosocial empowerment, they offered support to the community of Reliable House through teaching, learning and skills development, and enjoyed mutually beneficial outcomes. This is consistent with the University's vision and mission.

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Oink oink: A day at a pig farm

Lerato Nedzanani (BVSc V – Faculty of Veterinary Science), Dr Japhta Mokoale (Senior lecturer and pig specialist), Jade Hadaway and Kerri-Lyn Kellock (BVSc V – Faculty of Veterinary Science)



On 11 October 2022, a group of eight veterinary science students visited the Mothapo pig farm under the supervision of Dr. Japhta M. Mokoale, a Senior lecturer and pig specialist.

Mothapo pig farm is a black female-owned business that is currently in the process of expanding. The farmer was fortunate enough to receive a donation of gilts from the

government to help her grow her business. The farm facilitates student training as students from agricultural colleges do their practical's there under the supervision of the farm manager. This is a great way to give back to the community and supports youth empowerment and the development of practical skills.

The farm visit was a valuable learning experience. Students were able to

put into practice the theory they had learned in the PHP 510 module during the first semester of their fifth year of study. At first glance, the farm did not seem to have any pigs, but the signature pig smell loomed in the air and the students were eager to go into the pig houses since to most of them, this was the first time they visited a pig farm in many years.

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The main purpose of the veterinary students' visit was to gather information to compile a pig farm report as a group.

The report had to contain an evaluation of the pig farm and a proposal of recommendations for farm improvement. This was a team-building exercise as individuals from different backgrounds and different levels of experience in the pig industry had to come together to achieve a single goal and that is to learn about pig production.



The students visited the different pig houses, starting with the youngest pigs at the farrowing house then went into the weaner houses, and later followed by the dry sow house to assess the health and welfare of the pigs. Whilst moving along, the students made notes on possible changes to improve certain aspects of farm management in terms of the production parameters, health, and welfare of the pigs.

The students ensured the farm biosecurity measures were observed by taking the necessary precautions. They wore protective clothing and used footbaths while moving through the different houses. Areas in which the farm was performing well were noted.

One of those areas was increased piglets born alive per litter and this suggests that something is done well in their breeding unit. In this pig farm, the piglet mortality rate is low, which is very encouraging and recommended. Every effort is made to ensure that all the pigs are sheltered from the sun and that the ventilation is adequate. At the time of the visit, a student from Tompi Seleka Agricultural College in

Limpopo (Mr Thabang Sello) was working at the farm.

He was very eager to talk to and exchange knowledge with the veterinary science students and shared valuable information on how to manage dystocia cases in the farrowing house, and also shared information about his experience on the farm concerning normal postpartum changes one should expect to see in a sow and which could be confused with the urogenital pathology

The farm manager thanked the students for their visit and said: "We are very happy that you were able to come here today. We want to learn and improve our facilities so that our farm can grow and become profitable". Dr. Mokoale stated that he was impressed by the improvements made to the infrastructure in the farrowing houses and praised the manager for the progress made on the farm since his previous visit.

In general, the challenges that the developing pig farmers face include amongst others lack of funding to build proper and fit-for-purpose pig

facilities and lack of funding to feed pigs as we know that for the pigs to be productive, they need proper and well-balanced nutrition.

Lastly the cost related to maintaining their proper health and associated welfare needs of the pigs. The involvement and participation of our institution through community engagement as a vehicle will provide practical veterinary interventions to developing pig farmers so that they can farm better and become commercially viable enterprises.

As they say in Sepedi "Matsogo a hlatswana" this becomes a win-win situation because students can integrate theoretical knowledge with practical farm skills. Most importantly the developing farmers benefit from the wealth of information from the veterinary experts associated with the University of Pretoria.

We sincerely thank Mothapo pig farm for this invaluable experience and for their continued collaboration with the University of Pretoria in facilitating student training and learning.



Educate women: Empower a nation

Lister Setwana (Centre Administrator: Lesedi la Batho)

On 26 August 2022 we held a Woman's Day event. The purpose of the event was to educate the community of Mabopane and the surrounding areas about burning issues, such as Gender-based violence (GBV) and mental health. Lesedi la Batho strives to be a beacon of hope for the community of Mabopane and the surrounding areas. Our target audience was people who are affected in any way by GBV.

The event was held at our centre so that we could communicate directly with people who are affected by GBV. We discussed various topics and also invited experts in the relevant fields to address the audience. We believe that if you empower women, you empower the nation.

Representatives of the Department of Justice attended the event and provided information on the channels to be followed when reporting cases of gender-based violence. They also explained the procedure to be followed after reporting such cases and informed the audience about safety houses and personal protection.

The main purpose of the event was to ensure that members of the community are well informed and are able to identify and distinguish between different types of GBV and how to deal with them.

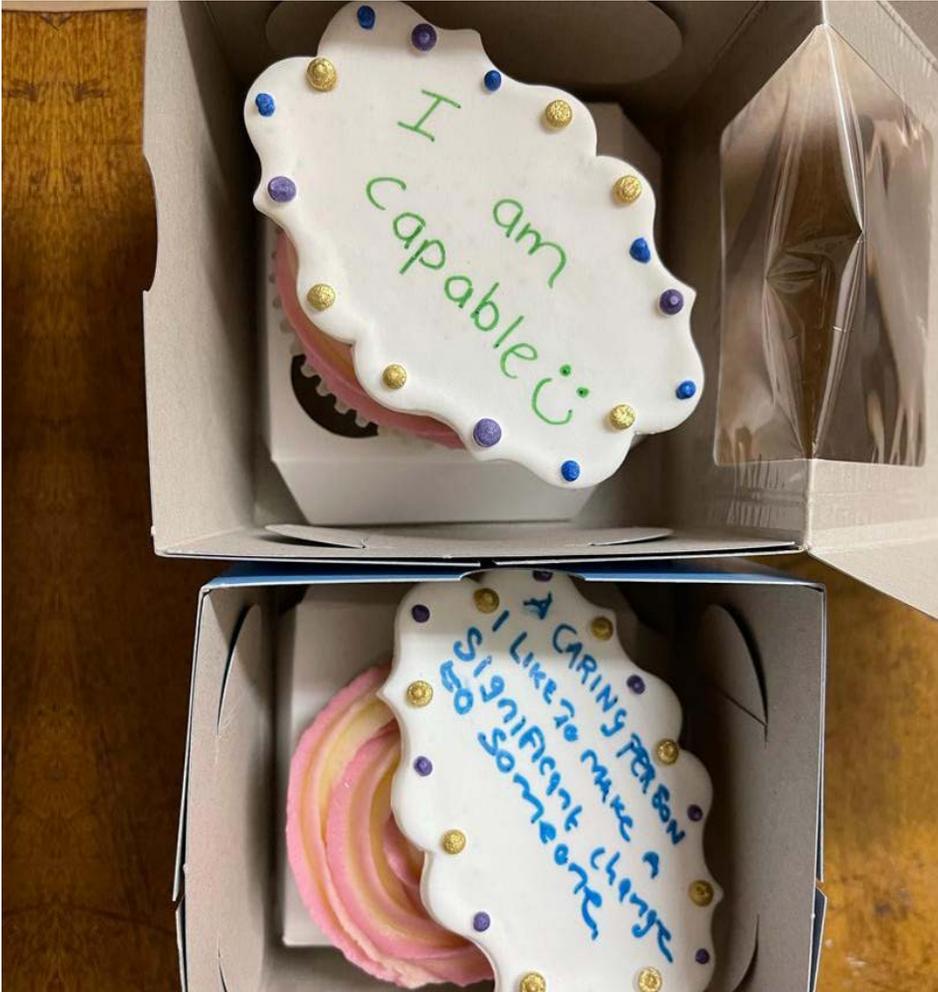
A number of GBV survivors shared their experiences and told the audience how they overcame abuse. Entertainment was also provided in the form of a drama that demonstrated various types of GBV.

The event was successful and those who attended were pleased as they had gained an understanding of how to respond if they, or people they know, are affected by GBV.



Championing the resilience of high school learners

Miché Conway (Supervisor of OPR 801 URI, Department of Educational Psychology) and Prof Linda Theron (Professor & Co-supervisor of OPR 801 URI, Department of Educational Psychology)



As part of their practicum in their master's programme, student educational psychologists are provided with an opportunity to engage with high school learners in group-based interventions. The purpose of these interventions is to facilitate therapeutic activities that aim to champion the resilience of high school learners in a group context. The student educational psychologists are supervised throughout the process of designing and implementing their own resilience-focused interventions. They each work with their own small group of learners and serve as co-facilitators to observe and support

each other in the implementation of their interventions. This year, the interventions involved groups of Grade 8 to Grade 11 boarders who attend a public high school in the community.

The value of group-based, resilience-focused interventions at schools

In South Africa, the children who could benefit from educational psychology far outnumber the trained educational psychologists who can offer them psychoeducational services¹. Community engagement by our student educational psychologists is therefore crucial

to provide psychoeducational services to schools in need of such services. By implementing group-based interventions, the student educational psychologists can maximise access to, and positive outcomes for a larger number of learners at a time. The need for psychoeducational support is also critical during this time when children and adolescents are increasingly faced with challenges that can contribute to poor mental health and negative developmental outcomes². Mental illness is rising among adolescents^{3,4,5} and group-based, resilience-focused interventions can provide an opportunity for adolescents to learn how to access the resources needed to overcome the challenges they face.

Overview of the group-based, resilience-focused interventions

The student educational psychologists planned and implemented three weekly sessions of one hour each. Throughout these sessions the activities were designed to improve the boarders' personal resources or qualities that can help them to be resilient when facing problems. Alongside these personal resources, activities were also designed to help the boarders to identify and access external resources that can help them to overcome challenges and provide support to them when life gets tough⁶. The student educational psychologists facilitated fun and collaborative group activities to encourage connection between the boarders. They also included

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self-reflective activities to support the boarders in making personal meaning around resilience. Many of the boarders in the interventions expressed feeling pleasantly surprised that the interventions were 'not like schoolwork' and said that they were 'excited by the types of activities they were doing'. Some learners also expressed gratitude for the opportunity 'to explore themselves', 'to learn about their fellow boarders' and 'to focus on something other than school pressures' during that time. The interventions allowed some learners to 'see that we are not alone' and 'that we need ask others for help when we need it'. The student educational psychologists provided reflections throughout the practicum, which indicated that it was also a valuable learning experience for their own personal and professional development.

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Building victorious women who are ready for the Fourth Industrial Revolution

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

In order to cope with the demands of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, young women need to be able to keep up with change and utilise methods that prepare them for the future. On 6 August 2022, Keep That Gold Shining (KTG) held a Building Victorious Women event at Thulaganyo Secondary School.

This was the first-time robotics were incorporated in the event and female learners were introduced to coding via TANKS, RANGERS and BOATS games. Approximately 250 female

high school learners participated in this event, which served as an opportunity for them to be exposed to successful women in academia and the corporate world.

The female guests addressed various topics, including confidence, the power of our imagination, dare to dream, goal setting and business success.

During the event sanitary pads were also distributed to the learners. The sustainability of this project is

ensured by contributions received from Friends, Families and Elevate Africa. Gloria Khoza the Co-Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of KTG, always says: 'If we want our women to come out victorious in all battles they come across, we have to support them'.

KTG women leaders believe that we are the ones we have been waiting for (a generation that supports each and holds each other's hands), who show up to support girls and make sure they are equipped to win their battles.

A culture of caring: Community engagement in practice

Annemarie van Zijl (Co-founder, Eseltjiesrus Donkey Sanctuary)



The idea of a Donkey Sanctuary was born and suitable land was found to rent. Rescued donkeys began to arrive, with the first one called Adam – how else? In 2007 Eseltjiesrus was registered as a charity. Later the Sanctuary acquired its own farm, and a board consisting of professionals from diverse backgrounds has been attending to governance and organisation.

The Sanctuary exists firstly for the donkeys. Permanent staff deliver the daily care required, which includes feeding, grooming, cleaning eyes and hooves and attending to any little scrapes or injuries. We always consider the herd dynamics when interacting with these gentle creatures.

The need for education

It became clear that Eseltjiesrus cannot rescue all the donkeys in need, and our community engagement and educational component was created. To date workshops with the focus of 'One Health, One Welfare' have been presented in the Western and Eastern Cape, with plans to extend the areas covered. The workshops are aimed at people and organisations that engage with donkeys, such as Veterinarians, State Veterinarians, the SPCA and similar entities, including those with little experience of this species. Professionals registered with the

The Eseltjiesrus Donkey Sanctuary, situated outside the village of McGregor in the Western Cape, has promoted the status and welfare of donkeys since 2007.

Why donkeys? And why a donkey sanctuary?

Some 20 years ago the local Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) approached Johan and Annemarie van Zijl to provide a permanent retirement home for two donkeys rescued from a brick kiln near the village. The two bedraggled donkeys had, for years, toiled in the

hot sun, blindfolded and walking in circles to turn the paddle that mixed the clay and straw used to form bricks. Vaal and Japie, as they were named, moved onto the van Zijls' property in the village and flourished under the care and attention they received.

It became evident that there were many more donkeys needing a safe haven to retire to once they were no longer fit for work and surprisingly many local residents showed interest and were keen to introduce their children and grandchildren to the donkeys which, even in that rural area, were quite a rare sight.

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South African Veterinary Council (SAVC) earn Continuing Professional Development (CPD) points by attending the workshops. Eseltjiesrus appreciates this as it is the only such accredited activity that focuses on donkeys.

Raising the status of donkeys

The status of donkeys is problematic. Since they are not classified as production or companion animals, they tend to 'fall through the cracks' as far as professional attention is concerned. They are often ignored in many veterinary curricula across the world, with little research available on their welfare.

They generally belong to poor owners who struggle to meet their own needs, let alone those of their animals. Donkeys tend to lead hard lives, whether through ignorance or wilful cruelty.

Donkeys may not be production or companion animals, but as workers they are almost unequalled. They are small, strong, willing workers with low maintenance requirements and

are easily handled by women and children. They subsist on land where most other species struggle and are therefore often blamed for denuding land even though they are in fact the only species that can survive there.

Eseltjiesrus strives to raise the status of donkeys. Once the status of donkeys has improved their value will be recognised and their welfare will be taken seriously. The Sanctuary is open to the public four days a week. The trained guides who accompany visitors to the fields tell the donkeys' stories and enable people to experience the magic of interacting with these gentle animals.

At no time are any of the donkeys haltered or made to interact with people. The shy donkeys watch as their more confident companions approach visitors to enjoy the attention showered on them. Many of the donkeys are extremely intuitive and sense the emotional pain of some visitors. It is not unusual for a person to weep when nuzzled by a donkey who seems to say 'I too have suffered, like you'.

Groups from local schools are welcomed and an age-appropriate programme is offered, with storytelling and other activities that include meeting the donkeys and learning more about them, and about animals in general. This is how our motto, 'A culture of caring', is implemented.

Obese donkeys

Apart from retired working donkeys, there are many donkeys from domestic situations where well-meaning owners have been 'killing them with kindness' through wrong feeding. Dr Eric Davis from the University of California, Davis, states that 'Few creatures are better at hoarding energy than donkeys'.

Fat accumulates inside the abdomen and can lead to fatal hyperlipaemia. Research demonstrates that adipose tissue is not an inert blob that stores energy. It produces chemicals that promote inflammation, hormones that alter metabolism, and fatty acids that can permanently damage the liver and other organs. These tragic cases are preventable.

Community engagement

A better understanding of donkeys can be promoted by exposing the public to donkeys in our tranquil setting. Information sharing through publications and media channels further enhances this. Together with our workshops, this leads to greater awareness of and respect for donkeys. More attention and action to promote their welfare will ensue. The answer lies in more extensive community engagement.

www.donkeysanctuary.co.za
<https://www.facebook.com/eseltjiesrusdonkeysanctuary/>
Info@donkeysanctuary.co.za

Plunging into Psychotherapy

Dineo Rapapadi, Liam Erasmus, Helandri Haasbroek, Nqobile Hadebe and Tyler Reynolds (Clinical psychology students)



The Practical Site

1 Military Hospital is a medical facility located in Thaba Tshwane, Pretoria. It is part of three military hospitals that are located across the country and provides quality health care to members of the South African National Defence Force and their dependants. As trainee clinical psychology students, we are placed in the hospital's Psychology Department, which takes care of the mental health of military personnel and their families.

This department employs registered clinical psychologists, intern psychologists, student psychologists and other supporting staff members. The services offered include psychometric assessments, psychotherapeutic treatments for adult and minor patients, as well as a family clinic. The psychologists in the department form part of a multidisciplinary team that also includes other healthcare practitioners who provide holistic care to both in and out-patients.

Engagement with the Military Community

Our practical work at 1 Military Hospital began expeditiously. Not long after our orientation at the

University of Pretoria (UP), we travelled to the hospital to meet our on-site supervisors and for orientation on what the practicum component of our training would entail. In that same week in the latter half of February, our practical exposure began and we saw our first patients. Since then we have continually engaged with our patients on a weekly basis, conducting psychotherapy at the hospital for two hours once a week.

Back at UP we also engage in an hour of supervision with our supervisors every week. Supervision is an opportunity to discuss our work at the hospital and receive guidance to ensure that our patients receive appropriate psychological treatment to alleviate their presenting symptoms. It is also within the supervision space that our personal and professional development is cultivated and continuously monitored.

The Process

The first step in our engagement process begins when we receive a referral. The patients referred to us present with a wide range of concerns, ranging from interpersonal problems to complex psychopathology. The second step is the intake interview, during which we gather information about the patient's history, symptoms and other relevant details. The third step is formulating and conceptualising a treatment or assessment plan.

The fourth step comprises either psychotherapeutic intervention, psychometric assessments, or both depending on the patient's needs. Termination, which is the last step in the process, can occur after 10 to 12 sessions of psychotherapy. We also collaborate with a multi-disciplinary team and, when necessary, refer patients to other departments such as psychiatry and occupational therapy.

The Academic Component

Our engagement with patients at 1 Military Hospital is based on an integrative application of what we learn in class, that is, our coursework. This includes theories that enable us to understand our patients' needs and plan interventions, clinical diagnostics, psychometric assessments, and report writing. We are exposed to modules such as Clinical Interventions and Therapeutics,

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Clinical Psychopathology in Context and Clinical Assessment and Patient Management, which guide how we approach working with our patients. To advance our cultural awareness and sensitivity to matters of diversity, including race, gender/sexuality, age and class, we also have lectures that focus on developing this aspect of our academic and professional development.

The Experience

Initially, this experience was one that we all found to be daunting and challenging as we were still adjusting to this new process and establishing ways in which to bring our theoretical knowledge into the therapeutic space.

However, the staff members with whom we work in the Psychology Department at 1 Military Hospital have been immensely supportive. They are always willing to offer a helping hand or advice on patient work and as a result, we soon found our footing and the practical training component of our degree started to run more smoothly.

Although this experience has presented us with challenges, it has been a rewarding one as we have been given an opportunity to see growth in our patients as well as in ourselves. Through this experience, we have learned more about the field of clinical psychology and different ways to engage with a diverse population of patients.

KTG MAP Programme

**Matthew Beekman (Third-year Computer Engineering student - KTG Executive Director) and
Marios Joannou (Third-year Electronic Engineering student - KTG Executive Director)**

In 2022 the Keep That Gold Shining (KTG) Mathematics Programme (MAP) underwent many changes, largely due to the varying levels of the COVID-19 lockdown restrictions in South Africa. A hybrid teaching and tutoring programme was developed to cover the entire Mathematics syllabus for Grades 10 to 12.

The programme further expanded its tutoring capabilities by developing online lessons in each of the Mathematics topics for each grade. In particular, this benefited learners who had missed those topics due to the COVID-19 regulations and the regular absence of teaching staff in rural schools. An added advantage is that the programme can now be implemented at schools much further from KTG's central location in Hatfield, Pretoria.

The programme kicked off when the Joint Community Project (JCP203) students from the University of Pretoria started creating teaching videos on each of the Mathematics topics across the various grades. The videos were complemented by a set of notes, as well as exercises and answers, to create a full lesson for each topic. Once all the lessons had been developed in Phase A of the programme, the online tutoring phase began. Every week throughout Phase B of the MAP Programme, one or two lessons were distributed to the learners through WhatsApp. Each learner had access to a JCP tutor from whom they could request further assistance to help them

understand the work. Since many of the learners who use the KTG programme struggle to afford mobile data and airtime, KTG, along with the JCP department at the University, provided mobile data to these learners each week to enable them to access the lessons on WhatsApp.

A few months after the COVID-19 state of emergency was lifted, KTG hosted three MAP days at different schools in and around Pretoria with the aim of creating an interest in mathematics through various mathematics-based activities and competitions.

We also provided mentorship and university application guidance during these MAP days to further inform learners of the endless opportunities universities and higher education institutions have to offer. The events were very successful and will definitely be repeated and expanded in 2023.

KTG aims to further enhance the MAP programme in 2023 by including more JCP students, reaching more schools in and around Gauteng and developing an online platform that learners can use to access all the lesson content developed by KTG. The platform will also give the learners access to rolling tutors who can answer any questions they may have while working through the lessons. The KTG MAP programme has grown exponentially this year and we are excited to see what the next year will bring.

Conducting interviews: Postgraduate student voice in the university

Dr Vukile Msizi Ngema (Academic Supporter at the Faculty of Education, University of Pretoria)



In 2018 I enrolled for a PhD in Education Management, Law and Policy at the Faculty of Education. I commenced my studies by writing a proposal titled 'Postgraduate student voice in the university decision-making processes and practices'. I successfully defended this proposal in February 2019 and applied for ethical clearance, which was approved in July 2019.

Immediately after the University of Pretoria's Ethics Committee approved my ethics application, I commenced the process of data collection, using a sample consisting of postgraduate students who were in their final year of master's and PhD programmes. I used a South African university as my research site. My supervisor, Prof Maitumeleng A. Nthontho, helped me with the wording of a letter to invite postgraduate students to participate in my study.

It was easy for me to gain access to the university I selected as a research site since I was a student there,

and approaching postgraduate students who were qualified to participate in my study was also not a problem. The students to whom I gave invitation letters without explaining the context of the study did not agree to participate as they thought that my study was about student's politics.

Once I realised this, I approached students and explained that the aim of my study was to explore the voice of postgraduate students in decision-making processes and practices that involve research activities. It was then that most of the students I approached agreed to participate and I could arrange appointments with them.

Some of the students honoured their appointments and participated in semi-structured interviews. Others made excuses, which indicated that they were no longer interested in participating. For example, I called one of the students to let him know that I was waiting at the venue where we had agreed to meet. He did not realise that I could see him from where I made the call and told me that he was on his way to fetch his child from school! I just laughed and approached other students who were willing to participate in my study.

The postgraduate students who participated in my study showed genuine interest and they participated enthusiastically. However, during the interviews I could sense that some of them regarded the interviews as a chance to vent. In other words, they perceived the interviews as an opportunity to share their frustration about their postgraduate studies.

The data I obtained through the interviews helped me to answer the main research question, which was: 'How do South African universities promote postgraduate student voice in their decision-making processes and practices?' The study revealed that postgraduate the student voice is not as loud in university decision-making processes and practices.

Stress management for teachers: Learning to take care of oneself

Prof Maretha Visser and MA Counselling Class (Department of Psychology)

Teachers can be regarded as the backbone of education and play an important role in children's lives. Due to their various roles and responsibilities in the school system, they may experience stress and negative emotional reactions. South African schools are plagued with negative interactions related to racism, violence and antisocial behaviour such as bullying, with which teachers are expected to deal.

Teachers have to maintain a learning environment in the class, play multiple roles (teacher, social worker and counsellor), cope with a high administration load and continuous changes in the education system in a situation where the necessary infrastructure and resources are often lacking and overcrowding is a common problem. This can contribute to teachers experiencing a lack of efficacy and high stress, which can result in diminished psychological well-being, negative teacher-learner relationships and low productivity.

To assist teachers with improving their ability to deal with the many challenges, the master's students in Counselling Psychology presented an intervention for teachers to cope and manage stressors and promote their psychological well-being despite the challenges.



After a needs assessment during which focus group discussions were conducted with primary school teachers, an intervention was developed to address the most important challenges faced by teachers. Since we could not address systemic challenges (like salaries) in this intervention, the focus was on providing teachers with skills to help them cope with and address some of the challenges and to develop their psychological well-being.

Primary school teachers were invited to join the intervention on Tshwane South's informal WhatsApp communication platform for teachers. Fifty-two teachers interested in the intervention, volunteered to participate. The intervention consisted of six sessions presented once a month at the University of Pretoria's (UP's) Mamelodi Campus.

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The following themes were presented in workshop format:

- Stress management
- Bullying and victimisation
- Burn-out, time management and self-care
- Personal issues, emotional well-being and identification of competencies and strengths
- Dealing with multiple relationships and boundaries in relationships
- Finding meaning in life, acknowledgement and accomplishment ceremony

The feedback received from the teachers proved that they valued the sessions.

What have they learned?

- 'To identify stressors helps me cope with them effectively.'
- 'I have learnt to prioritise my own needs and goals.'
- 'I have learnt to be assertive at all times and not let anyone infringe on my rights.'
- 'I have learnt not to look away when someone experiences bullying. It starts with me.'
- 'I have learnt how to identify burnout and deal with it through time management and self-care.'

- 'We all have strengths that we can use in the workplace, at home and everywhere.'
- 'I learned more about myself and the person I truly am.'
- 'Boundaries in relationships are important.'
- 'Clear communication is important in every relationship.'

How will they use what they have learned in their personal and professional lives?

- 'I will teach others to create good relationships and also be able to communicate about things that can set them free.'
- 'I will make a positive impact on people around me, especially my learners, so that they can become someone someday.'
- 'I can use it by acting to reduce my stressors and take part in activities that can improve my mental attitude—to see things from a positive perspective.'
- 'I can make sure that I deal with my stress level on a daily basis and by not allowing my problems to prevent me from realising my dreams and achieving my goals.'
- 'I will use these coping strategies to deal with my problems.'
- 'I will use the technique to relax

more, and the strategies to cope with anxiety and stress.'

- 'I have learnt to set boundaries, communicate clearly, listen attentively and be in relationships that will benefit both parties.'

The sessions allowed the teachers to focus on themselves, to talk about their challenges and to freely express their feelings, which led to a sense of unity among them due to their shared experiences.

They realised the importance of prioritising their personal well-being and were equipped with skills that allowed them to do so. They became aware of the importance of being assertive and setting boundaries, both in their workplaces and in their personal lives, which will help them to maintain a work-life balance that could contribute to their psychological well-being.

This intervention can be a first step towards helping teachers to ensure their own psychological well-being. The intervention should continue to involve more teachers until such interventions become part of the educational system.

Working together to replenish game on private properties supporting African Wild Dog conservation efforts in the Waterberg

Reilly Mooney (Project Coordinator: Waterberg Wild Dog Initiative)



The Waterberg Wild Dog Initiative (WWDI) has facilitated a donation of 75 impalas to three private game farms near Lephalale, Limpopo that supported a pack of African wild dogs during their 2021 denning season. The impalas, which came from the Schuinsdraai Nature Reserve, a provincial reserve near Marblehall, were donated by the Limpopo Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism (LEDET) and were translocated earlier this month to the three privately-owned properties.

This translocation was conducted to offset stock losses on the three properties that had hosted the dogs for an extended period while they remained stationary around their den site to raise a litter of pups. The stationary behaviour has the potential for the local predation impact to be high, thus putting a financial strain on the private properties hosting the pack.

As a way of recognising the efforts of private properties in conserving South Africa's most endangered carnivore during a critical time, LEDET agreed to donate the 75 impalas to replenish the game numbers in the area.

'Coordinating this live game donation showed the private properties that they do not have to bear the costs of protecting these special of animals on their own', said Reilly Mooney, WWDI Project Coordinator.

'We are very grateful to LEDET for recognising the importance of the Waterberg Wild Dog population and the responsibility placed on private members of the community to care for them as a free-roaming population'.

This game translocation is one of the tools that the WWDI has implemented to reduce conflict with private properties hosting the pack.

The WWDI uses GPS data from collars placed on the pack to facilitate an early warning system for community members living within the pack's range, providing opportunities to proactively mitigate potential conflict.

During the 2021 denning season, the WWDI also coordinated an ecotourism project that generated funds from visitors who paid to see the wild dog pack and the funds were distributed back to the landowners impacted by the pack denning in the area.

Through this successful ecotourism operation, the WWDI managed to raise funds to assist the landowners supporting the dogs during this time. To reduce the impact the dogs had on game in the area, carcasses were also provided during the ecotourism project to supplement the pack's diet.

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The impalas were divided between the three properties based on the dogs' usage of each property. Data received from the GPS collars allowed the WWDI team to identify the areas being utilised and allowed them to divide the funds and the impala donation proportionately. The translocation of the impalas was made possible by donations from Africa's Wild Dog Survival Fund, the Puma Garage in Vaalwater, Elite Mica in Lephalale and additional funds raised through crowdsourcing. The impalas were safely captured and translocated by Nylsvlei Game Traders.

'This public-private partnership is an important step forward in working together to achieve conservation goals,' said Reilly. 'This project brought together members of the public sector, NPOs, private landowners and private businesses to all assist in the conservation efforts of this incredible species'.

All seven pups that were born to the pack in May 2021 have survived and are present in the pack today. A 100% survival rate is a remarkable achievement for a free-roaming pack and shows the importance of the pack and the safety of their chosen den site for their conservation. The pack has recently concluded their 2022 denning season in the same area, making it the third year in a row that the pack has successfully denned in the area.

'Maintaining this area as a safe and suitable space for the pack is crucial to their survival and prosperity in the area,' said Reilly. 'This translocation project is important for achieving that'.

For further details, please contact the WWDI at coordinator@waterbergwilddogs.org.za.

Editors' Notes

The Waterberg Wild Dog Initiative (WWDI) is a non-profit, community-driven organisation that aims to conserve the free-roaming African wild dog population in the Waterberg, Limpopo, South Africa. The WWDI works alongside the community to decrease human-wildlife conflict, increase tolerance and foster a sustainable and safe environment.

The WWDI aims to spread awareness, gain accurate information, educate and work with community members and landowners to protect the dogs on the private properties in the Waterberg biosphere. By taking steps to mitigate human-wildlife conflict, the WWDI addresses concerns surrounding the wild dogs and works to support the local community that ultimately hosts them. The WWDI seeks to ensure that the Waterberg will always be a safe place for free-roaming African wild dogs.

The TOOG area breeding pack is the largest free-roaming pack in South Africa. It consists of 19 dogs and includes five adults, seven sub-adults born in May 2021 and seven pups born in May 2022. The pack ranges across 65 000 Ha between Lephalale and Vaalwater, Limpopo, covering 55 private game farms.

The WWDI has monitored the pack with GPS tracking collars since August 2020 and facilitates an early warning system for community members in the area to provide updates on the pack's movements and reduce the potential for conflict.

The pack recorded a 100% survival rate in their 2021 litter of pups to yearling stage, making it an incredibly successful free-roaming pack.

African wild dogs, also commonly known as painted wolves, are South Africa's most endangered carnivores

and are a highly social species that is well-known for their caring and rearing ability and their devotion to their packs. Packs are led by an alpha pair, who are the only ones to breed. All members of the pack help raise the pups by feeding, protecting, teaching and playing with them.

African wild dogs benefit the ecosystem by thinning out the weak and sick animals to keep the prey herds strong. The main threats to their survival include habitat loss, habitat fragmentation, disease and conflict with humans. Fewer than 6 000 are estimated to survive in the wild.

Waterberg wild dogs are a unique, free-roaming population of African wild dogs that naturally reside in the Waterberg. Historical records of wild dogs in the area date back to the early 1800s. Rock art depicting African wild dog also exists in the Waterberg, which is currently home to 32 free-roaming wild dogs in two resident packs.

Wild dogs disperse to and from the Waterberg to areas in Botswana, Zimbabwe and northern Limpopo. As a free-roaming population they range mainly on private game farms and nature reserves, regularly crossing over fences and roads.

Contact details

For further information, please contact Reilly Mooney from the Waterberg Wild Dog Initiative at:
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Find us online at:

www.waterbergwilddogs.org.za
Facebook - Waterberg Wild Dogs
Instagram - @waterberg_wild_dogs
YouTube - Waterberg Wild Dog Initiative

Vet Books for Africa team returns from donation drive to Zimbabwe and Zambia

Faculty of Veterinary Science



University of Pretoria (UP) veterinary science students who are members of the MTB Petroleum Vet Books for Africa Society completed the first leg of their 2022 endeavour. During their winter recess, they undertook an eventful 4 000 km trip from the Onderstepoort Campus to Zimbabwe and Zambia to donate boxes of veterinary textbooks, twelve microscopes and loads of veterinary supplies to worthy causes in those two countries

Vet Books for Africa, a non-profit student- driven society affiliated with the UP Faculty of Veterinary Science, was first established in 1993. Under the banner 'Vets on a mission', the members of the Society set out to distribute textbooks, journals and other veterinary supplies and equipment to veterinary faculties and organisations in various African countries and to also offer assistance at veterinary clinics and conservation sanctuaries along the way. Over the years 14 trips have been completed with a total of 97 000 kilometres

travelled. So far more than 2 600 books have been donated to six African universities.

The 2022 team

Eight veterinary science students are part of the 2022 Vet Books for Africa committee: Le Roux Pepler (Chairperson), Marjon Schouwstra (Treasurer and secretary), Marnus Zaaiman (Sponsors, books and equipment), Lara du Plessis (Sponsors, books and equipment), Daniel Archibald (Vice-chairperson, routes and itinerary), Stian Wessels (Routes and itinerary) and Jenna Lewis and Christine Kruger (social media, websites and fundraising).

Their first trip for the year took place from 30 June to 9 July 2022. In Zimbabwe their ports of call were the University of Zimbabwe and Twala Trust animal sanctuary, and in Zambia it was the University of Zambia, Lilayi Elephant Nursery and the Leopard Hill veterinary clinic. The team distributed five boxes filled with 60 veterinary science textbooks, twelve microscopes, four spay kits, cleaning materials and other supplies needed by vets. This included different kinds of surgical instruments, reels of chromic cat gut, bandages, dressing, disinfectant and darting equipment. They also distributed 100 kilograms of dog food.

'It was heart-warming to walk through the university libraries we visited and to note just how many of the books at veterinary science students' disposal have over the years been donated by Vet Books for Africa', said Pepler, a fourth-year veterinary science student. One of Pepler's highlights

during the trip was seeing the 'absolute delight' of the veterinarians at Leopard Hill Veterinary Clinic in Lusaka when they received a box filled with veterinary supplies and a new microscope to replace the very old model they were using for diagnostic purposes. In a voice note, Dr Lara Nicholson of the clinic thanked the MTB Petroleum Vet Books for Africa team saying: 'We have already put your donations to use. Every time we look through the microscope we will remember you, no doubt.'

The trip was however not all plain sailing. After one of the students had suffered a serious back injury, the team had to cope, among other things, with the logistics of having to seek medical attention and organise MRI scans in a foreign country. Pepler thanked their hosts along the way and for all the help they received. 'Our sponsors have also been wonderful. Without them we simply would not have been able to do the work we have been doing,' Pepler said.

MBT Petroleum is the main sponsor and provided the team with vehicles and fuel for their trip. The trips are also made possible thanks to Montego, Global Supplies, Pneu Dart, Wildlife Pharmaceuticals (All platinum sponsors), Hills (Gold sponsor), Elanco, (Silver sponsor), Kyron Agri, MSD Animal Health, South African Veterinary Association (SAVA), Molatek, Avimune (Bronze plus sponsors), Acorn, Sanlam, OVK, Zoetis, Sapmok, Hoedspruit Elephant Rehabilitation and Development (HERD), Afrivet, NuPro Veevoere and Sky Information Supplies (Bronze sponsors). The team is already hard at work planning the second leg of their trip, which will take place from 2 December 2022 to 9 January 2023. 'By splitting our donation drive into two trips, Vet Books for Africa will

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this year for the first time also be able to visit Rwanda and Burundi, two countries that have not been visited by them in the past,' Pepler explained. 'During the second trip we will also be visiting universities and organisations in Malawi, Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda.' During the course

of the year, the committee members have not only had their sights set on endeavours across South Africa's borders, but have also volunteered at non-profit organisations in South Africa. Along with the HERD Trust, they took part in a rabies and veterinary awareness drive. Thanks to Montego,

they were also able to distribute dog food in local communities. They also lent a hand with feeding the cheetahs, vultures and wild dogs being cared for at the Hoedspruit Endangered Species Centre and helped to clean the vultures' feeding area and the leopards and wild dogs' watering holes.



Community service completed by Industrial Psychology honours students

Madele Klingenberg (Organisational effectiveness Head Momentum Life; Part-time Lecturer, University of Pretoria)

Time spent with students fills me with hope, optimism and anticipation for the future. We have a responsibility to raise leaders, not only for our own benefit, but also for the benefit of many generations to follow.

I facilitate the community service module for the Industrial Psychology honours class and every year the experience leaves me in awe. This year 148 hours were spent reaching out, lending a hand and creating experiences for those less fortunate or learning a skill. The students had to identify their own projects, complete project plans, execute their projects and report back. The creativity, diversity of projects and quality of execution was exceptional, and the level of teamwork an example of what can be achieved if we work together.

This year's projects touched the hearts of many and was truly diverse.

- Express professional CV screening
- Recruiting for a position and optimising the process
- CV writing workshop for learners
- Children's home engagement (baking, team building and fun)
- Cancer centre mindset focus
- Mediclinic administration outreach

- Young professionals' engagement (CV writing; LinkedIn profile and Job readiness)
- UP museum volunteer and help

Well done to the Department of Human Resources for taking community service seriously and allowing students time to focus on investing in others.

The students had a session with two executive industry experts, Dr Dieter Veldsman and Lettie Phume, who shared their life and career journeys with them. A key message taken from the sessions was: Own your own journey, do not compare it to the journeys of others, build real connections and always be open to learn from anyone.

Connections between industry and students are vital for students' exposure and learning—we were all students once, and encouraging the youth truly bears fruit for many years.

I would like to congratulate the Industrial Psychology honours class on their excellent performance. May your future exceed your expectations! By helping others we automatically help ourselves or, to quote my favourite saying by James Keller:

'A candle loses nothing by lighting another.'

Some comments from the students about the module:

The IPS703 community project was a truly humbling experience; the feeling of pure joy and happiness after helping someone is unmatched—it truly keeps one's soul alive.

Thanzila Noor Mahomed, Infinite Hope Foundation (Group Name)

Our journey through the year was one of teamwork, head-scratching, fun, hardship, critical thinking and giving back to others. One never knows the impact you leave on others, but this journey left its mark on us through personal growth. It is something we will forever treasure.

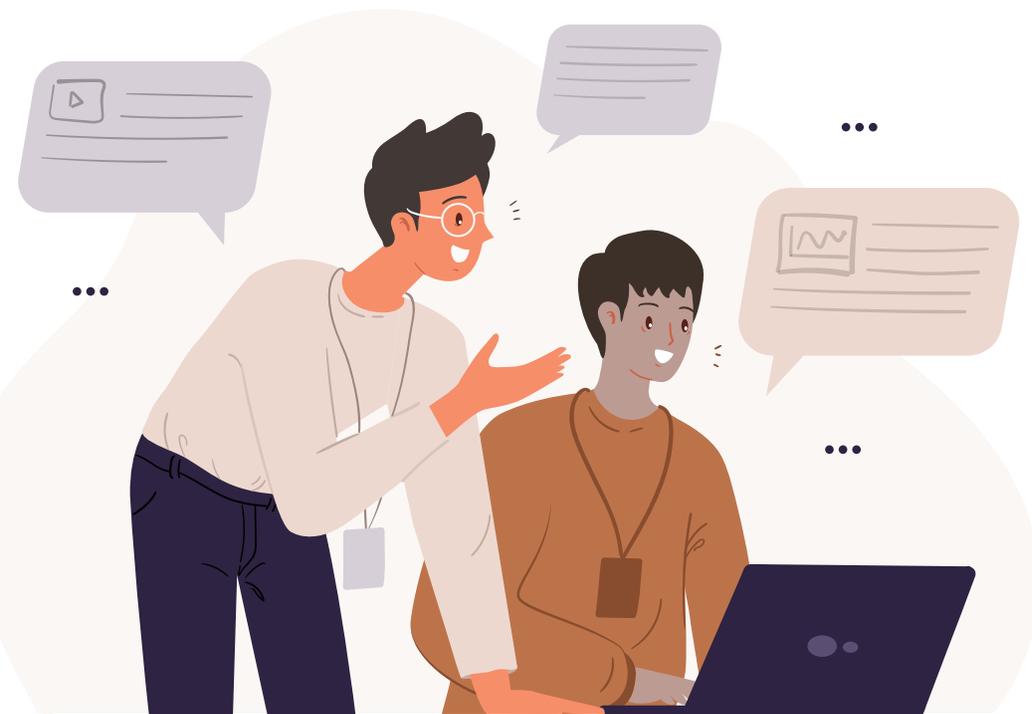
Anika Weit, Charl Coetzee, Esmari Watson, Herman Raubenheimer, Musengeli Ravele and Sonaly Ranchod (The Young Professional Programme (TYPP))

It was very thrilling to help so many students to better understand the basics and value of compiling a CV. Their gratitude was proof of the need for students (especially matriculants) to have this skill.

Allyssa Jardim, CV associates.

University of Pretoria's Career Services Mentorship Programme

Dr Krinesha George (Project Coordinator: Mentorships and Employability Career Services Office)



The advantages of mentorship relationships identified by research conducted at the University of Southampton (2022) include the following:

- Being encouraged and empowered in personal development
- Being helped to identify and achieve career goals
- Being helped to identify and correct gaps in generic skills and knowledge
- Increasing confidence
- Developing and maintaining a broader perspective on career options and opportunities
- Having access to a senior role model
- Gaining insight into the university or work culture
- Developing mentoring/coaching skills

The journey of mentorship is a process that involves the development and growth of an individual with the aid of an experienced professional. Mentorship has existed for more than a thousand years (Ragins & Kram, 2007) and had its origin in Greek mythology. However, mentoring is no myth. According to Kram (1985), mentorship involves a relationship whereby experienced mentors are paired with less experienced mentees to support their career and psychosocial development. The role of mentors is to provide support and guidance to their mentees regarding aspects of their social life or career functions.

Career functions can be summarised as 'learning the ropes' and preparing the mentee for career advancement. Mentoring within the career function sphere involves assistance with coaching, sponsorships, increasing

the mentee's exposure and visibility, and providing guidance and challenging assignments (Ragins & Kram, 2007). The psychosocial function of mentorship is based on trust and interpersonal bonds within the relationship and includes personal and professional growth, identity, self-worth and self-efficacy (Ragins & Kram, 2007).

Mentorship is a complex process. During the mentorship journey mentors and mentees share different roles, responsibilities, costs and benefits. According to Allen, Eby, Lentz and O'Brien (2008), mentorship leads to beneficial outcomes, such as career growth and favourable attitudes. Post-COVID-19 the dynamics of the industry have evolved drastically regarding career patterns, organisational experience and technological advancement, and the need for mentorship has never been more apparent.

The diversity between mentors and mentees significantly impacts the mentorship relationship. These characteristics include age, gender, cultural diversity, collectivism and individualism. They can also affect relationships within mentorship, for example, it may be difficult for an individual to seek help from someone from a different ethnic group as it may not be a norm in that individual's ethnic background. According to Burke (1994), females tend to seek psychosocial mentoring more often than males. South Africa is known for its rich diversity and culture. Although race, gender and cultural ethnicities affect mentorship relationships, we structured the programme in a

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manner that allowed participants to choose the gender of their mentor. The University of Pretoria Career Services Mentorship Programme was developed in 2019. It is currently being implemented across all faculties and is available to final-year students. The mentorship programme recognises the importance of students needing the guidance of industry specialists to prepare them for the world of work. It aims to link students (mentees) with industry experts (mentors) for a period of six months. The minimum requirement is four mentoring sessions, conducted either online or face-to-face.

The Career Services office identifies mentors through various platforms, such as LinkedIn, our alumni platform and our industry database. Mentors who qualify to participate in the programme are matched with mentees based on the gender preference of the mentee and the mentor's qualifications, skills, expertise and field of interest.

To measure the programme's success, we set goals for both mentors and mentees to attain by the end of the programme. The goals set out for mentors included:

- Growth of leadership skills
- Development of reputation as an advisor and guide for others
- Strengthening of emotional intelligence and communication skills
- Gaining new perspectives
- Gaining recognition for one's skills and experience
- Benefiting from a sense of fulfilment and personal growth
- Enhancing one's CV

The goals set out for mentees included:

- Skills development
- Career planning
- Networking
- Workplace learning and exposure

- Problem-solving skills
- Gain visibility for potential opportunities
- Gain practical advice on job search techniques and skills

The programme included a series of webinars that were available to all mentees. We hosted a total of 36 webinars based on topics relevant to the student population.

Our webinars were also extended to industry, where students were offered volunteering opportunities, graduate placements, internships and bursaries.

Our mentor database consists of 1 370 industry experts and a total number 1 193 final-year students who applied for mentoring in 2022. The feedback survey was completed by 87% and it was concluded that 85.4% of final-year students who participated benefited from the programme.

The University of Pretoria Career Services Mentorship Programme for 2023 will be launched in December 2022 to ensure that final-year students can gain maximum benefit from the programme.

The Career Services office will share this invitation via TuksCareers and social media platforms.

Some of the positive feedback received from mentees are referenced below:

'My sessions with my mentor have given me an idea of what the work industry is like and what I should expect and prepare for. These sessions have made me realise the factors I need to be considering. I have been invited to my mentor's workplace for job shadowing, which will enable me to learn and observe what the workspace is like.'

'Dr Hans Reetoo has informed me on what to expect in my clinical years, which started 10 weeks ago. He explained to me what senior doctors expect from students and that has helped me a lot during my ward work and clinical work in hospitals.'

'I was offered guidance and opportunities. I also received advice regarding my academics and assistance with applying for honours and looking for bursaries.'

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Breastfeeding awareness at the Stanza Bopape Community Health Centre

Nicole Otterman, Tayla Pretorius and Magdeli van Niekerk (Fourth-year dietetics students, Department of Human Nutrition), Phumudzo Tshiambara (Community Nutrition Lecturer, Department of Human Nutrition, Faculty of Health Sciences), Dr Christa Ellis (Therapeutic Nutrition lecturer, Department of Human Nutrition, Faculty of Health Sciences) and Dr Heather Legodi (HOD, Department of Human Nutrition, Faculty of Health Sciences)



Breastfeeding is placed in the spotlight annually in August, when the world celebrates World Breastfeeding Week. On 17 August 2022, final-year dietetics students hosted an intervention day at Stanza Bopape Community Health Centre (CHC) to encourage continued breastfeeding.

Breastfeeding is considered to be a primary focus area in sustainable development strategies as it not only improves nutrition, but will ensure food security and help to reduce inequalities in countries.¹ Breastfeeding remains vital to help sustain human health and development.² The aim with

celebrating the day was to raise awareness regarding the benefits of continued breastfeeding and discuss strategies to overcome the perceived barriers that mothers face in this regard. Continued breastfeeding is defined as breastfeeding your baby

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not only for the first six months of life, but up until the age of two. The intervention was therefore aimed mainly at mothers with babies aged between six and 24 months, but also at all staff members based at the facility.

Fourth-year dietetics students

To ensure the success of the day, the students provided snacks and breastfeeding booklets to 75 caregivers. They also created four posters to enhance their educational sessions. They were fortunate enough to obtain sponsorship for the printing of the booklets from Humacel Pty Ltd, trading as Active Africa, and Stanza Bopape Community Development Centre donated thirty apples and snacks. To ensure that all costs could be covered, the students decided to market the day at a busy intersection and accepted any donations. This resulted in sufficient awareness for the day being created and they were also able to cover all their costs.

Overview of the events of the day

The day's activities started promptly at nine o'clock, with song and prayer led by the Ward-based Outreach Teams (WBOTs). This was followed by an introduction by the facility and supervising dietitian, Bongiwle Nkondo.

Thandaza, a mother from the community, was excited to share her experience of expressing breastmilk with the group. Her story gave other mothers hope that they too could overcome the barriers that they might experience while continuing to breastfeed their babies. Petunia, a member of the health promotion team, led a vibrant and interactive discussion about the perceived barriers mothers experience with continued breastfeeding and how they can be overcome.

One of the fourth-year student dietitians, Tayla Pretorius, defined continuous breastfeeding from six months up until two years of age. She also provided insight into the benefits associated with breastfeeding for both mother and baby. Sister Malesa,

who is employed at the facility, shared her experience of how breastfeeding can be beneficial from a health care worker's perspective.

Student dietitians Nicole Otterman, Magdeli van Niekerk and Tayla Pretorius presented interactive nutrition education sessions, which included demonstrations of breastmilk expression, feeding of expressed breastmilk using a cup and the introduction to solids.

Participants' knowledge was tested by giving them a pre-test prior to commencement of the programme and the same test after the completion of the programme. The results of the two tests were compared and it was clear that their knowledge with regard to continued breastfeeding had improved. Overall the intervention strategy day was a massive success.

We would like to conclude by thanking everyone involved in the planning of this event, as well as the participants. Special thanks go to the Stanza Bopape CHC facility manager, health promoters and entire staff.



Breastfeeding is a mother's gift to herself, her baby and the earth



Pamela K. Wiggins.

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Matters of interest

- Visit the University of Pretoria's online Community Engagement Management System (CEMS) for updates on community project opportunities.
- The Unit for Community Engagement invites you to report on community engagement activities by submitting articles for publication in the next newsletter (Autumn 2023).

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From left: Londiwe Mahlangu, Prof Ana Naidoo, Dr Eugene Machimana and Albert Matlheketha