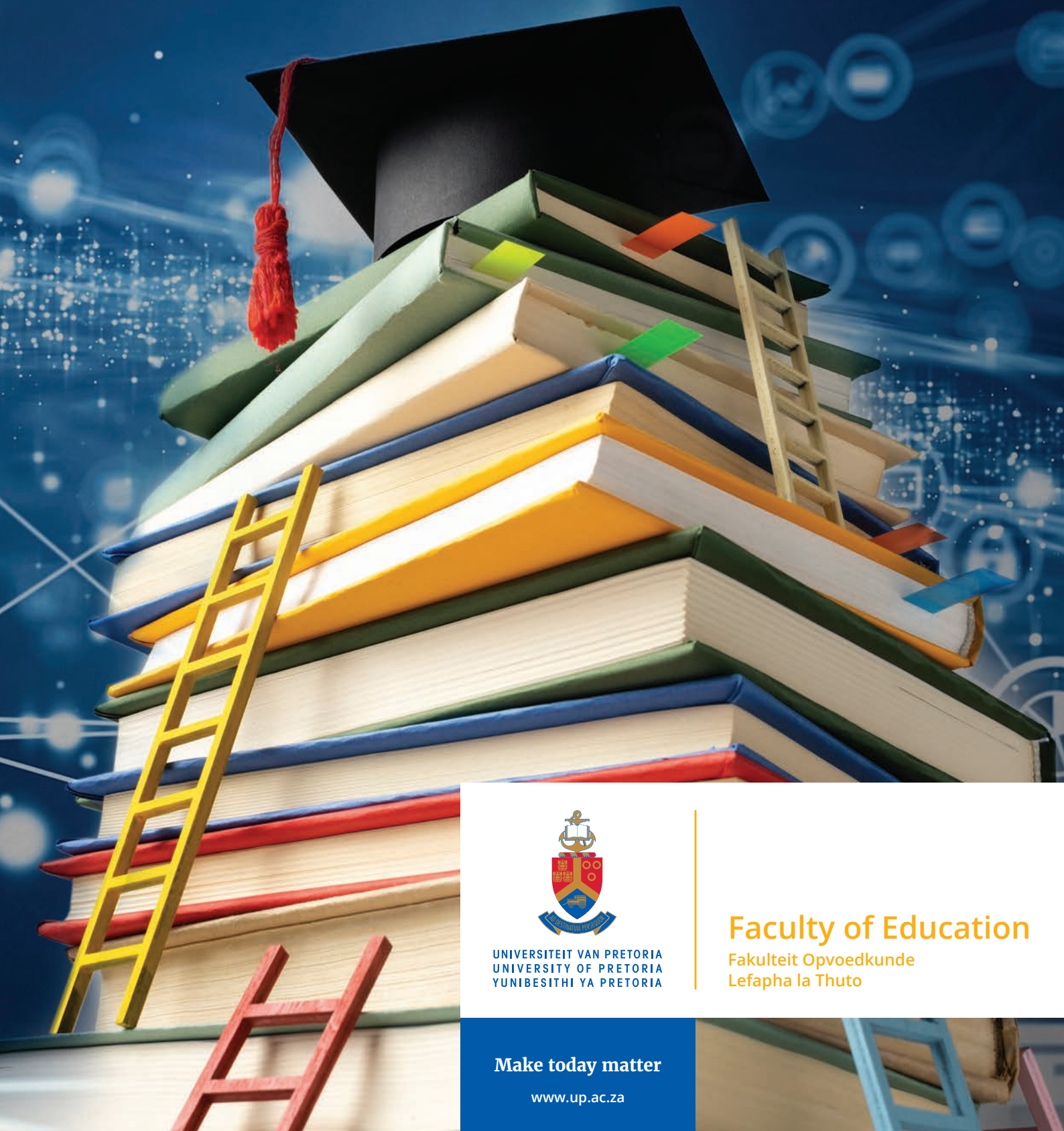


# In-tuition

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# MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

◀ *The Dean of the Faculty of Education: Professor Chika Sehoole*

During the week of 4-7 October 2022, I saw the display of the work of our students and staff. It provided us an opportunity to reconnect with one another and to reclaim our campus. All these activities are gradually assisting us to get back and settle into the post-pandemic "normal." We are grateful for having made it through. It is by grace. We appreciate being back in class, either virtually or in person, to run normal examinations, to host in-person graduations.

Throughout all these challenges, the Faculty of Education did not drop the ball. We continued to perform well. Our teaching and learning success rates are among the best in the university. Our research outputs have increased exponentially. Our students are supported and most of them complete in the minimum time. This is evidence

of the resilience, commitment, and professionalism of our staff. We have thrived amid adversity.

Thank you all for your contribution in making this Faculty what it is, a Faculty of choice that makes a difference in the lives of its students and staff. I am wishing you a happy end of the year and am looking forward to working with you in 2023.

Grateful and happy Dean.

**Prof. Chika Sehoole**

Dean: Faculty of Education

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# Professor Samuel Adeyemo appointed as visiting professor at the University of Victoria

Author: Prof Samuel Adeyemo



**Professor Adeyemo was appointed as a visiting professor and research fellow in the Centre for the Studies of Religion and Society (CSRS) at the University of Victoria in Canada from January to July 2022.**

The aim of his visit was to conduct interdisciplinary research on decoloniality and new postcolonialism, with a particular focus on African higher education. This research built on his book titled *The Education Systems of Africa*, published by Springer in 2021, which focuses on changes in African education and policy at the macro level. However, during his research at the University of Victoria he focused on the study of Africanisation, African knowledge, and postcolonial discourse in pre-colonial African society. Basically, his objective was to provide a new perspective on how history and society have shaped the purpose of higher education and knowledge production in Africa.

During his stay in Canada, Professor Adeyemo signed a book contract with Routledge in London for this research project and submitted a full manuscript on *Rhetoric of the Asia Higher Education Rankings* to Brill-Sense in the Netherlands. He also had an article accepted for publication in the *South African Journal of Higher Education* (SAJHE) and contributed a book chapter to the fourth edition of the International Encyclopedia of Education published by

Elsevier. At the CSRS he attended the daily academic talks with other fellows, made presentations about his research project and participated in 19 public lectures on various interdisciplinary topics presented by top scholars in different academic fields. A presentation at CSRS during which he explored the question about whether the editorial review process for African publications is mimicking the structure of colonialism was particularly noteworthy.

The above-mentioned presentation is included as one of the chapters in his forthcoming book, *African epistemologies in higher education research*, which will be published by Routledge. In this presentation, he addressed issues related to (1) power and global politics in knowledge production, (2) the purpose and what counts as knowledge, and (3) policy dimensions in academic knowledge production in Africa. He benefited from the feedback from CSRS scholars and especially those who sit on editorial review boards since he is interested in the kind of knowledge that matters, and who controls its production. Through these academic activities, Professor Adeyemo has established linkages with colleagues in North America with a view to involving academics in the Department of Education Management and Policy Studies (EMPS) and the Faculty of Education at the University of Pretoria in collaborative projects.

According to Professor Adeyemo, the CSRS at the University of Victoria has a culture of daily intellectual engagement through academic 'coffee talks'. These daily informal meetings bring together scholars who are participating in different fellowships to discuss critical topics. His experience at CSRS has therefore been intellectually enriching. The Centre also hosts public lectures every

Thursday when fellows and academics from different parts of the world can join in and debate academic issues. Essentially, he noticed that the Centre found his insights and perspectives on Africa and Asia helpful in grounding their conversations.

A special feature of the CSRS is its non-hierarchical structure, which allows academics to feel comfortable when participating in discussions, regardless of the stage in which they are in their careers. The office and amenities provided by the CSRS enabled Professor Adeyemo to complete his book manuscripts and article/chapter and secure two book contracts from world-class publishers within seven months. Now that he is back at the University of Pretoria, he focuses on providing capacity support to early academics and collaborating with colleagues in the Department and the Faculty of Education.

It was indeed a great academic journey during which he experienced the grace of God, according to Professor Adeyemo. He would like to sincerely thank the University of Pretoria for granting him sabbatical leave with funding to participate in the CSRS Visiting Research Fellowship Programme at the University of Victoria. He also wishes to thank the Dean of the Faculty of Education, Professor Chika Sehoole, for his continued support during the period of his fellowship in Canada, and EMPS HODs, Professors Cyril Hartell and Sipiwe Mthiyane, whose support contributed to the success of his fellowship and productivity during this period.

Finally, Professor Adeyemo would like to thank his wife Mary and their son Emmanuel for their constant prayers and support.

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#### Chief Editor

Mrs Sharon Mashau  
Email [sharon.mashau@up.ac.za](mailto:sharon.mashau@up.ac.za)

#### Copy and Language Editor

UP Language Unit  
Email [language@up.ac.za](mailto:language@up.ac.za)




#### Layout

Dreamwave Design Solutions  
Email [info@dreamwavedesign.co.za](mailto:info@dreamwavedesign.co.za)

#### Printing

Business Print  
Email [hello@businessprint.co.za](mailto:hello@businessprint.co.za)

#### Official social media pages of the Faculty of Education

-  UP Faculty of Education
-  [EducationUP@Educationtuks](mailto:EducationUP@Educationtuks)
-  @UPFacultyofEducation

Students and colleagues are urged to follow and like our pages, follow the Faculty's activities, and share them with friends, prospective students, and family.



## Prof Marien Graham's research visit to the University of Porto in Portugal

Author: Prof Marien Graham

Prof Marien Graham from the Department of Science, Mathematics and Technology Education in the Faculty of Education at the University of Pretoria visited Prof Fernanda Figueiredo at the University of Porto's School of Economics and Management from 14 to 15 June 2022.

During this visit, Prof Figueiredo and Prof Graham discussed possible new research collaboration between the University of Pretoria and the University of Porto with a view to researching the use of statistical

process control (SPC) procedures in monitoring learner performance in a comparative study between South Africa and Portugal.

During the visit, Dr Jean-Claude Malela-Majika from the Department of Statistics at the University of Pretoria, who will be a co-researcher in this international collaborative research project, joined the discussion virtually. This visit was an excellent opportunity for the three researchers to meet and initiate valuable collaborations.



▲ Prof Marien Graham (Department of Science, Mathematics and Technology Education, Faculty of Education, University of Pretoria) and Prof Fernanda Figueiredo (School of Economics and Management, University of Porto) at the University of Porto in Portugal.

## Dr Linette van der Merwe sings in Croatia

Author: Dr Linette van der Merwe

Mozart's *Le Nozze di Figaro* shaped the future of comic opera and is, in many ways, the perfect upside-down romantic comedy. Composed five years before his untimely death, *Le Nozze di Figaro* is one of Amadeus Mozart's most successful operas. Dr Linette van der Merwe was invited to sing the trouser role of the young teenage boy, Cherubino (translated as 'little angel'). Cherubino is in love with all women—his godmother, the countess Rosina, the gardener's daughter Barbarina and basically any other female within a 500-metre radius. This leads to many comic moments, a good dollop of farce, adultery, role-playing and cunning scheming.

The Opera Pannonica's production of *Le Nozze di Figaro* in Croatia was performed on the stage of the Marin Držić Theatre on 25 and 26 June 2022 during the Summer Arts Festival in Dubrovnik. Opera Pannonica is an opera ensemble of the Academy of Arts and Culture from Osijek, founded in 2010, which brings together classical music artists from the city of Osijek, music professors and numerous international professional guests (from Croatia, Hungary, Indonesia, Poland, South Africa, Greece). The Luka Sorkočević Art School orchestra accompanied the singers, and conductor Slobodan Begić led the ensemble.



▲ Linette van der Merwe as Cherubino in the dressing room before a performance



▲ The soloists relaxing in the Old Town of Dubrovnik after a rehearsal. From left to right: Anja Papa (Marcelina), Kevin Pančič (Figaro) Chris Mostert (Basilio/Curzio), Berislav Jerković (Count Almaviva), Marijo Krnić (Bartolo/Antonio), Danae Eleni (Countess Rosina), Manos Christofakis (lighting design), Linette van der Merwe (Cherubino) and Nika Boras (Barbarina).



▲ A *Le Nozze di Figaro* poster in the streets of Dubrovnik





▲ Ms Elmarie van Wyk

## Ms Elmarie van Wyk retires

Author: Dr Cherese Jones-Couto

Ms Elizabeth Maria van Wyk (Elmarie) was a lecturer for 30 years. In 1992, she joined the former College of Education, Normaál Kollege Pretoria, which merged with the University of Pretoria in 2002. She was employed in the Physical Education division in the Department of Humanities Education as a lecturer in methodologies in Physical Education for second- and third-year students. She was also a Sports Marketing and Sports Injuries and a Dance and Lifesaving practical lecturer. Her research foci were in the fields of Physical Education and School Sports Management.

Ms Van Wyk has published articles on the motor development of physical education students at University, the amalgamation of lecturers from former colleges of education and universities, teaching of physical education and school sports coaching. She retired in July 2022. She was known for her dedication and hard work, and her passion for movement rubbed off on her colleagues and students. The members of the Department, in particular the Physical Education division, will miss her and wish her a happy, well-earned retirement.

## The Faculty of Education hosts Professor Human-Vogel's inaugural address

Author: Dr Sharon Mashau

Professor Human-Vogel delivered her inaugural address in the Groenkloof Campus Auditorium on 3 August 2022.

The topic of her address was *'Why do you persist, Mr Anderson? Considering the role of meaning as a driver of academic commitment'*. In her address, she shared the findings of her research on why some students achieve academic success and others do not.

'What makes some students persist when others give up? Like the iconic character Neo Anderson in *The Matrix*, who realised that his ability to choose was what gave life meaning, students who choose to persist are at the heart of what I have come to describe as academic commitment. Like student engagement—a well-acknowledged driver of student success—my work suggests that students who are meaningfully committed to their studies are more likely to invest in their studies and persist. Contrary to studies of student engagement, which focus on student satisfaction and interest as pathways to academic achievement, my findings suggest that meaning can act as a buffer when low satisfaction and interest threaten engagement,' said Prof Human-Vogel.

She further stated that meaning arises when students perceive that their learning environment supports and promotes the expression of their identity. As a result, academically committed students regulate their behaviour in support of their academic goals even when the costs of achieving those goals may be high. The significance of her research should be considered against the backdrop of a higher education landscape that focuses on student success by increasing student satisfaction, effort and time spent on tasks as proxies for engagement. Future research on academic commitment must consider how student success interventions can support meaningful academic commitment as a pathway to academic success.

Prof Salomé Human-Vogel completed a PhD in Educational Psychology in the Department of Educational Psychology and is currently the Deputy Dean of Teaching and Learning in the Faculty of Education. She has been a registered educational psychologist for more than two decades, served on the Professional Board of Psychology from 2017 to 2020, and regularly acts as a convenor of professional board examinations and professional accreditation visits for the Board of



▲ Professor Salome Human-Vogel

Psychology. She also served as a Council member for the South African Council of Educators from 2018 to 2021.

At the time of her appointment as Deputy Dean, Prof Human-Vogel was a C3-rated NRF researcher. She has acted as supervisor for numerous master's and doctoral students in Educational Psychology, and regularly publishes articles in national and international journals. Her research interests are focused on meaningful academic commitment as a self-regulatory process and its implications for student success, while her professional and teaching interests and experience are focused on family psychology and counselling.



# The digital literacy campaign is progressively advancing towards reaching a national scale

Author: Thabo Masenamela

On 5 and 6 August 2022, the Unit for Distance Education in the Faculty of Education, in collaboration with Siyafunda CTC, held a two-day digital literacy campaign for the first cohort of Advanced Diploma School Leadership and Management students from the Northern Cape Department of Education at the Kimberley Teachers' Centre.

The objective of the digital literacy campaign was to bridge the digital divide so as to empower registered students with the digital literacy skills that are essential for successful participation in the advanced diploma programme and are also applicable to their roles beyond the classroom. This epitomises the Unit for Distance Education's desire to ensure that all learners receive the support

they need in their academic journey toward the successful completion of their studies in the standard time. The first campaign, held in Limpopo, was so successful that Siyafunda CTC and the Unit for Distance Education decided to roll out the campaign to also support students in Gauteng and the Northern Cape Province.



▲ Ms Marna Meyer addressing learners at the Northern Cape Digital Literacy campaign



▲ Elated learners from the Northern Cape with their certificates

## Teaching reading the UP Way

Author: Ms Nadia Swanepoel

The Department of Early Childhood Education hosted a three-part reading series, titled Teaching Reading the UP Way. Although this series was organised as part of the Eersterust Community Outreach Project, it was open to members of the public. The presenters were Dr Joyce West, Ms Nadia Swanepoel, Ms Matshediso Lekgetho and Mrs Paula Pretorius from the Department of Basic Education (DBE). Each workshop had a different focus.

The purpose of the series was to provide professional development for pre-service and practising teachers. The first workshop was hosted on 13 August by Dr Joyce West and Ms Swanepoel. Dr West presented

a workshop on story analysis from an international perspective. The participants in workshop learnt how to analyse a story in an interactive and creative manner.

During the second workshop, which took place on Saturday, 17 September, Ms Matshediso Lekgetho guided teachers on how to make big books with a difference. Teachers were asked to bring stationery to the workshop, and, with the guidance of Ms Lekgetho, they each produced a big book that can use to teach from.

The last workshop was hosted by Mrs Paula Pretorius, a language expert from the DBE. Those who attended the workshop

were guided through Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) and reading norms and standards for the Foundation Phase. The focus of the series was on the process and the product of teaching reading from a different perspective. The workshop not only equipped the attendees to teach reading the UP Way, but was also a wonderful opportunity for collaboration, networking and building a community of practice within the ECE community.

Thank you for all who made the Teaching Reading the UP-Way series possible. Watch this space for more professional development initiatives.



▲ Dr Joyce West and Ms Nadia Swanepoel



▲ Ms Matshediso Lekgetho



▲ Dr Joyce West





## Dr West serves on review panel for the University of Namibia

Author: Dr Joyce West

During two weeks in September, Dr West and other international experts served on an academic review panel for the Namibian National Council of Higher Education (NCHE) to review three programmes offered by the University of Namibia (UNAM). Other members of the review panel included Prof Charles M. Nherera from the University of Zimbabwe, Dr Aggrey Asitiba Okutu from Kiisi University, Kenya, Ms Ehrenfriede Mukungu from the Namibia Qualifications Authority and two industry representatives, Ms Bertha Haimbodi from the National Institute for Educational Development (NIED) and Mr Kensie Kazaronga from the Ministry of Basic Education.

The main purpose of the academic programme review was to assess the quality of the proposed Bachelor of Education for Early Childhood and Junior Primary, Senior and Secondary education programmes for accreditation purposes. The three programmes under review were not new programmes but had been revised as part of the University of Namibia's transformation process, which started in 2019. The review panel had to validate self-evaluation reports (SERs) drafted by UNAM against the NCHE's criteria for programme accreditation. The

panel also visited five UNAM campuses and conducted interviews with various stakeholders at the University, such as the academic staff, administrative staff, support staff, campus management and senior management of the school (i.e., Faculty) of Education. The review panel also had to investigate various documents and policies of the University and evaluate the physical and visual facilities at the various UNAM

campuses. Finally, the review panel had to provide feedback on their findings at each campus, write a report on each programme and do a presentation to the NCHE management on their final day. Dr West described this experience as 'enlightening'. According to her, it was a wonderful way to connect and establish a long-lasting relationship with another African university.



▲ The academic review panel for the Namibian National Council of Higher Education (NCHE)



# Introducing a global initiative to end discriminatory mindsets

Authors: Ms Nadia Swanepoel, Ms Suné Haasbroek, Ms Chandri Veraart and Ms Tamika Roopsingh

## *Thinking Schools South Africa (TSSA) was privileged to present the TSSA Spring Roadshow in collaboration with Leslee Udwin, founder of Think Equal.*

Think Equal is a global initiative to end discriminatory mindsets and the cycle of violence experienced across our world, and to ensure positive life outcomes for our children. The Thinking Schools Roadshow was hosted by Cornwall Hill College on 5 September 2022.

Upon receiving the invitation to attend the Thinking Schools Roadshow, Prof Keshni Bipath made funds available for two lecturers and two postgraduate students to attend the event. Ms Nadia Swanepoel and Ms Francinah Masola represented the Department of Early Childhood Education and the students who attended the event included Ms Tamika Roopsingh (MEd), Ms Chandri Veraart (BEd Honours) and Ms Suné Haasbroek (BEd Honours), who shared their experience of the event as follows:

### **Ms Suné Haasbroek:**

The curriculum of Think Equal is planned precisely to transform education, foster radical and critical thinking, change mindsets and, most importantly, to celebrate our differences. We as teachers, and everyone else, have a duty to care for and love ourselves and others. I will always remember the information Ms Leslee Udwin shared with us, and I see it as my duty to improve

the well-being of all the learners I work with. I am so thankful for the opportunity I had to be part of this workshop and would like to thank Ms Nadia Swanepoel for including me. I would also like to thank Thinking Schools South-Africa for hosting this amazing Spring Roadshow in Gauteng.'

### **Ms Chandri Veraart:**

The Think Equal Roadshow had an immense impact on not only my teaching career, but also on my personal life. It reminded me of the immense impact educators have on the development of learners during the early developmental years. I have learned about the necessity of teaching learners about the importance of equality, respect and compassion from an early stage as these values are important building blocks for a good character, which will have a positive impact in society for years to come. I will definitely make the values encouraged by Think Equal part of my life, career and classroom.'

### **Ms Tamika Roopsingh:**

I thoroughly enjoyed listening to what Leslee had to say regarding the Think Equal Programme, which equips young children between the ages of three and six years with skills, tools and resources to build character and instil essential values and morals. I believe that this programme should be introduced as a compulsory subject alongside numeracy, literacy and life skills. Many schools have different ways of teaching young children character development; however, as Leslee mentioned, these are not sufficient



▲ From left to right: Ms Tamika Roopsingh, Ms Nadia Swanepoel, Ms Francinah Masola, Ms Chandri Veraart, Ms Suné Haasbroek and Mrs Mariska Ellis

in our current shocking and unpleasant environment. Based on my personal experience, I have to agree with her. Many learners are not taught how to apologise, share, be kind, etc. The introduction of such a programme can have lasting benefits for our young children—benefits that will bear fruit as they grow older and eventually enter adulthood. Furthermore, being a researcher in the ECD faculty and focusing on children from birth to the age of four years I believe that this programme can be used to achieve miracles.'





# Paper presented by MEd student from UP, Andrea Vetter, at the World Association of Lesson Studies (WALS) conference in Malaysia from 19 to 23 September 2022

Author: Dr David Sekao

It was an honour to present the preliminary findings of my study at the 2022 WALS conference, which was held in Malaysia from 19 to 23 September 2022. This would not have happened if my supervisor, Dr Sekao, had not encouraged me to submit a paper. The conference was attended by approximately 800 researchers, teachers, teacher educators and policymakers.

In my research, which was guided by a qualitative interpretivist case study, I explored primary school teachers' diagnostic practices in mathematics in the context of Lesson Study. Presenting my

preliminary findings at a conference of this magnitude was a real achievement for me.

It was indeed opportunity of a lifetime as I was able to meet many of the authors I had cited (eg Profs Takahashi, Lewis and Dudley), as well as other speakers who are experts in the field of Lesson Study. The presentations I listened to enhance my knowledge and opened my eyes to the endless opportunities for improvement that Lesson Study can contribute to our South African education system, in particular mathematics teaching and learning.

The PhD programme presented on 19 September 2022, a day before the main conference, was the main take-away for me. It was dedicated to PhD students whose research focus is on Lesson Study. It was enlightening to listen to PhD students from all over the world when they shared their studies and to offer inputs on the work done by others. The expert knowledge of, and inputs made by experts in the field of Lesson Study provided me with valuable information to think about when I start my PhD journey in the near future. Overall, it was an insightful conference, and I cannot wait to attend the next one in Austria in 2023.



▲ Andrea Vetter and Prof Akihiko Takahashi



▲ Andrea with her supervisor, Dr David Sekao



▲ Andrea Vetter and Prof Pete Dudley



▲ Andrea Vetter sharing insights into Lesson Study with Prof Catherine Lewis



# Tribute to teachers on World Teachers' Day: Lest we forget

Author: Prof Chika Sehoole

*This article pays tribute to the role of played by teachers who sacrificed their time and lives during the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure that teaching and learning continued.*

The COVID-19 virus, which was first detected in Wuhan, China, mutated and rapidly spread across the world, reaching pandemic status by 11 March 2020. The South African government declared a national shutdown effective from 27 March 2020. This brought the operations of all private and public institutions to a halt. By mid-April, 192 countries across the globe had closed their schools and universities, which affected approximately 1.6 billion learners and students. The last time something like this had happened was with the outbreak of the Spanish flu just more than a century ago.

For almost three months no teaching took place in many public schools. In the midst of the pandemic, when it was considered dangerous to be in contact with people, including family members, teachers had to brave the Alert Level 3 conditions to return school to resume their teaching activities. Public schools were only allowed to resume teaching at the beginning of July after the Alert Level 4 had been reduced to Level 3. This posed several challenges for teachers. The loss of teaching and learning time had resulted in learning gaps which teachers had to attempt to remedy by offering extra lessons. However, the restrictions that were imposed during the different phases of the pandemic did not assist the catch-up programme. Because of the highly contagious nature of the virus, government imposed strict social distancing in classrooms.

Due to the regulations regarding social distancing, class sizes had to be reduced and schools were forced to introduce a rotation system, with learners attending school every alternate day. Learners in some grades attended school only once a month, which exacerbated the loss of teaching time and consequently also the learning gaps among learners.

According to the World Economic Forum, the pandemic has caused severe disruptions to many education systems. An estimated 147 million learners missed more than half of their usual in-person teaching in 2020 and 2021. As a result, this generation of children could lose \$17 trillion in lifetime earnings. The United Nations advises that governments must implement ambitious programmes to recover learning losses.

The resumption of some forms of contact teaching posed some risks for teachers who had co-morbidities. Consequently, those teachers were exempted from coming to work, which further contributing to the loss of teaching and learning time. In her 2022/2023 budget vote, Basic Education Minister Angie Motshekga mentioned that during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic approximately 3 300 teachers died due to the virus.

On this World Teacher's Day, we remember the teachers who bravely continued teaching during the pandemic to keep teaching and learning going. To ensure that teaching and learning would take place, many risked their lives by using public transport to go to unsafe schools and classroom environments where the numbers of infected learners and teachers were increasing.

There are many in our society who failed to appreciate the precarious situation these teachers faced. Instead of empathising with them, some armchair-warming commentators kept on asking hard questions about the quality of teaching that was offered under those conditions. Yes, there are times when such questions are important and need to be raised, but in the warlike situation that the world faced the focus should have shifted to saving lives, rather than winning the war. That is what the teachers were involved in. Can you imagine the catastrophe of having to lose an academic year and what impact it would have on the current and future generations, on the economy and the overall socio-economic development of the country? We have to thank our teachers who put their lives on the line to avert this catastrophe.

## The value of teachers

Despite the criticism they get from society, teachers are very valuable as educators. They equip learners with the knowledge, skills and ways of thinking and working needed for their future lives as leaders, entrepreneurs, scholars, innovators and workers in different vocations. They inspire students to achieve great things. Even in the midst of the pandemic, teachers had to support and inspire learners to be resilient, to aspire to achieve greater things in life, including passing the grades they were in. This year the matric class of 2020 is in their second year at various institutions of higher learning and those enrolled for three-year programmes will be completing their degrees or diplomas in 2023, thanks to the guidance, support and encouragement they received from their teachers.

It needs to be appreciated that teaching is not an eight-hour job with a few weeks



▲ Prof Chika Sehoole

of holidays. Teaching entails working long hours before and after school to plan lessons, mark work and connect with parents. It involves learning from colleagues and sharing good practice. It entails attending professional development programmes and upgrading qualifications in order to remain relevant in the teaching profession. On top of that, teachers are often required to spend afternoons and weekends assisting with sports and other school activities.

They have to organise and attend camps, school trips, award events and parent nights. Some of these activities had to continue and the effort they required tripled during the pandemic. In an attempt to make up for the learning losses, many schools around the country extended their teaching activities into the weekends. We appreciate the commitment of teachers and school principals who made these sacrifices to ensure that the learners were better prepared for the future.

Our society is the most unequal in the world and the education system may be characterised by inequalities in terms of the allocation of resources and the quality of teaching and learning that takes place in these schools, but there are men and women who wake up every morning to continue teaching in under-resourced schools and classrooms, who in the past two years braved the pandemic to ensure that the academic year would not be lost. Some of them lost the battle to COVID-19 with their boots on.

*On this World Teacher's Day we would like to assure our teachers that their sacrifices have not gone unnoticed. We appreciate your efforts and wish you a happy World Teachers' Day!*



# A play-based approach to learning about coding and robotics

Authors: Ms Nadia Swanepoel and Mrs Annél van Rooyen

After four years of collaboration with the Department of Science, Mathematics and Technology Education (SMTE), the interactive session on coding and robotics has become a much-anticipated annual event. This year Early Childhood Education (ECE) students were treated to coding and robotics with a twist. Mrs Trudie Didloff and her team from Tangible Africa presented a session on coding and robotics from the perspective of the coding app Boats, powered by Tangibl. As part of Science and Technology in the Foundation Phase (JST 320), approximately 60 ECE students attended the event held in the Norma Hall on Thursday, 13 October 2022.

The session started off with ascertaining what the students knew and understood

about coding and robotics. Mrs Didloff focused on demystifying coding and robotics by explaining that coding is the same as writing and executing a set of instructions. The students were given a practical example and asked to sequence the steps necessary to make a cup of tea. Another example that was given was that of playing the game 'Simon says'. Mrs Didloff gave instructions for the students to carry out by, for example, standing on a chair, clapping hands, nodding their heads or jumping up and down. Through a play-based approach, the emphasis was placed on unplugged coding.

Later on, students were guided to code using the applications Boats and Tanks, powered by Tangibl, to engage in practical problem solving as a way to develop a

code to move the boat in the app to the desired destination. It was a truly eye-opening activity during which the ECE students exhibited the values of diversity and acceptance, as well as collaboration, listening and reasoning skills. The discussions that took place in each group were testimony to the amount of learning that had taken place through play and enjoyable, collaborative discussions and creative problem solving. This amplified the need for the development and introduction of coding and robotics in the Foundation Phase.

Thank you to Prof Ronel Callaghan, Mrs Annél van Rooyen and Prof Jean Greyling from the Nelson Mandela University for making this initiative possible.



▲ Students listening to and carrying out the instructions



▲ Students sequencing the steps to make a cup of tea.



▲ From left to right: Ms Nadia Swanepoel, Mr Bafana Tsabalala, Mr Neo Cyprian Moleejane, Ms Abigail Mlambo, Ms Lerato Hlatshwayo, Mrs Trudie Didloff, Mr Gift Malope and Mrs Annél van Rooyen



▲ Students experiencing the dynamics of coding and robotics in a kinaesthetic and 3D manner



# UP master's students in Educational Psychology present symposium at 26th Annual South African Psychology Congress

Authors: Lufuno Ravhengani, Beverly Seabi, Estee van Niekerk, and Shannon Wakefield

The 26th Annual South African Psychology Congress, which was held from 12–14 October 2022, sought to address 'Emancipatory impulses and potentialities within the science, practice and profession'.

Each year, the organisers of the congress invite submissions that can add to thought, practice and activism in the profession of psychology. This year we were privileged to be able to present a symposium as a collective of professors and master's students from the Universities of Pretoria and the Witwatersrand.

## About the symposium

Professor Linda Theron headed the University of Pretoria cohort comprised of four master's students in Educational Psychology, namely Estee van Niekerk, Beverly Seabi, Lufuno Ravhengani and Shannon Wakefield. The University of the Witwatersrand was represented by Professor Kate Cockcroft and master's student Sabrina Benvenuti. Together, we shared our research on emerging adult and adolescent resilience. The symposium, titled 'Resilience in COVID-19-challenged times', focused on research based on two projects, namely: The multisystemic sources of human resilience to COVID-19-related stress: Learning from emerging adults in India and South Africa' and the 'Resilient Youth in Stressed Environments – Russia-South Africa (RYSE-RuSA) studies'.

Professor Linda Theron, who opened the symposium, reminded us of the multisystemic nature of resilience and gave an overview of the two primary studies on which the rest of the research was based.

Next, Sabrina presented on 'Predictors of risk and resilience outcomes in young South African adults exposed to COVID-19 challenges'. Her presentation of her quantitative findings was followed by Beverly's report on 'The spiritual underpinnings of emerging adult resilience amidst COVID-19 stressors and community disadvantage', which highlighted how spirituality was used to provide comfort, encourage grit and inspire hope amongst emerging adults. Estee continued this exploration of resilience enablers among emerging adults with a paper titled 'Social connectedness as a resilience enabler among emerging adults in urban disadvantaged areas in South Africa, amidst COVID-19'. Her findings showed how social connectedness enabled resilience by stirring

courage / creating a sense of connectedness, providing resources and practical assistance and giving information to young people. Next, Lufuno shared her insights into 'Social media, other opportunities for social support and resilience of adolescents during the COVID-19 pandemic'. Her focus was on adolescents and highlighted the importance of the social support in the form of emotional, instrumental and informational support that was provided and enabled adolescent resilience. Shannon shared her findings in her paper titled 'Exploring adolescent resilience during COVID-19 in a township context' and highlighted the multisystemic nature of resilience-enabling resources as seen in a sample of middle-adolescents living in a township.

Professor Kate Cockcroft concluded the symposium with a breakdown of the key findings of each paper and reminded the delegates of the contextual and multisystemic nature of resilience resources and the need for additional research on resilience enablers, focused in particular on young people in an African context.

## Student reflections

**Estee:** Attending the conference was a privilege as it provided me with insight into the various trajectories within the field of psychology. Presenting as part of a group allowed me to hone my presentation skills and to learn from my peers.

**Lufuno:** Presenting at the PsySSA conference was a great privilege as it reminded me of the importance of believing in myself. I learned that resilience is not only a psychological quality. I also learned the importance of acknowledging other resources that enable the resilience

of individuals while at the same time considering their context.

**Beverly:** The PsySSA congress provided me with valuable exposure. It was enlightening to listen to different academics/professionals presenting their insightful papers. I have learned that it is important for psychologists to keep nourishing their understanding of different topics and studies that frequently emerge in our field. I was intrigued by how passionately academics spoke about their studies and naturally transferred their enthusiasm to the listeners. I also learned that professionals/academics keep evolving as PsySSA provides opportunities for continuous learning and growth, which results in psychologists being empowered. For me, presenting my paper at the congress was the highlight of the day. I was challenged to step out of my comfort zone and appreciated the opportunity to share the importance and relevance of my study.

**Shannon:** I thoroughly enjoyed the various aspects of preparing for and presenting at the PsySSA congress. Being able to engage with my own research in a new way and to learn about the research of my peers was invigorating and made me excited about the field of resilience and the potential it has for real-life application. Presenting at such an esteemed event as a master's student was humbling and, in fact, overwhelming (in a good way).

Presenting at the PsySSA congress was an opportunity that we had never dreamed of (let alone while we are still students) and we would like to convey our sincere thanks to Professors Theron and Cockcroft for their guidance and support, and for making this valuable experience possible for us.



▲ From left to right: Ms Beverly Seabi, Prof Linda Theron, Prof Kate Cockcroft, Ms Sabrina Benvenuti, Ms Estee van Niekerk, Ms Shannon Wakefield and Ms Lufuno Ravhengani



# Ulwazi Lwethu Project takes hands with the University of Pretoria

Author: Dr Joyce West

The University of Pretoria and the Zenex Foundation have taken hands in a groundbreaking project called 'Ulwazi Lwethu'. Over the next few months, Dr Joyce West will coordinate the project alongside Drs Celeste Combrinck, Makwalete Malatji and Matshediso Lekgetho, and Mrs Francinah Masola, who will act as the project leaders. Nine African language experts from across Africa have also been recruited to contribute to this project. Two of those African language experts are faculty members at the University of Pretoria. They are Dr Connie Makgabo, who will serve as the Sepedi language expert, and Dr Nkhensani Maluleke, the Xitsonga language expert. Ms Tholakele Nyathi will be the project administrator.

Reading is an essential skill that needs to be developed in the Foundation Phase. The purpose of developing reading skills in the Foundation Phase is to ensure that learners can 'read to learn' in the successive phases. Reading material, such as graded readers and leisure reading material, are indispensable resources in helping Foundation Phase learners develop reading skills such as decoding, word recognition, reading fluency and, ultimately, reading comprehension.

A major contributor to the reading challenges among South African children is the paucity of level-appropriate reading material in indigenous South African languages. There is a dearth of linguistically sound, age-appropriate books that reflect the realities of most South African children. The Ulwazi Lwethu Project has brought together four non-profit organisations (Room to Read, the Nelson Mandela Institute, Molteno and SAIDE) in the children's literacy space and has produced more than 1 000 African language leisure and graded readers for the Foundation Phase (Grades 1 to 3). The Ulwazi Lwethu Project developed readers in one of the nine indigenous South African languages, ie Sepedi, Sesotho, Setswana, siSwati, Tshivenda, Xitsonga, isiNdebele, isiXhosa and isiZulu, and each of the original stories was then translated into the other eight South African languages.

The University of Pretoria's role in the Ulwazi Lwethu Project will be to quality assure the readers that have been developed. Quality assurance is a multifaceted process, especially in the case of multilingual reading material. It involves not only investigating the linguistic and educational quality of texts, but also determining their linguistic and cultural equivalence across different language texts by evaluating, for example, their readability. Readability analysis, as part of quality assurance processes, can assist in making evidence-based and informed decisions regarding the reading material provided to Foundation Phase learners. Readability analysis is essential in making decisions regarding the cognitive load of texts. For example, one text should not cause a higher cognitive load or be more cognitively taxing for some learners than for others based on how the text was versioned or adapted. Determining the difficulty and comparability of text is also necessary, considering the pedagogical aim of matching a reader's ability to the appropriate difficulty level of a text (ie graded readers).

The way in which quality assurance of multilingual reading material takes place requires meticulous design. In a multilingual context, such as we have in South Africa, where languages are constantly evolving, a need exists for a unique, comprehensive, inclusive and holistic approach to evaluating multilingual texts. For this project, a concurrent triangulation mixed research methodology will be used when reviewing and evaluating the quality and readability of the texts across the nine different languages. Using a mixed-method approach will help avoid common mistakes in traditional quality assurance processes and readability analysis, ensure cultural sensitivity and equality and address the needs of our African language Foundation Phase learners. Furthermore, the quality assurance processes will be guided by the latest reading research that informs educational views on progression, coherence, accuracy and scaffolding in teaching and learning material. The Science of Reading (SoR) will serve as the theoretical framework for this project.



▲ From left to right: Dr Joyce West, Dr Makwalete Malatji, Mrs Francinah Masola, Dr Celeste Combrinck and Dr Matshediso Lekgetho

The SoR, which is a body of scientific knowledge regarding the most effective teaching methods for young children, emphasises the systematic, sequential and explicit teaching of reading skills such as phonics. As this project will focus on assuring the quality of African language Foundation Phase reading texts, the SoR of African languages will also guide our quality assurance processes. The SoR aligns with reading research on African languages as both highlight the importance of phonological processing, phonemic skills and explicit phonics teaching. Combining the SoR principles with African language reading research will help us to avoid linguistic and pedagogical imperialism.

The members of the team working on this project are passionate about developing African languages and promoting multilingualism. We are excited about the project as we are aware of the urgent need for quality African language graded and leisure text for the Foundation Phase. We also advocate for quality assurance as we believe it can make a vast difference in developing Foundation Phase learners' reading skills.

**Keep an eye open for further developments—these are exciting times for African languages.**





## My PhD journey at the University of Pretoria

Author: Zijing Hu

Confucius, the famous Chinese philosopher, said: ***‘When I walk along with two others, from at least one I will be able to learn.’***

My journey of a thousand miles as a PhD student at the University of Pretoria began with a single step, but I walked along with someone, and I really learnt. My passion for teaching and learning was instilled and inspired by my family members, especially my grandfather and father, who were both teachers. Education is the key that opens the gates to Neverland, and this PhD journey will always be memorable because of the unwavering support I received from my family, my supervisor, Dr Roy Venketsamy, and the staff at UP.

I first met my supervisor, Dr Roy, by mere chance in 2020, and thus began the arduous journey. I was blessed and fortunate to find someone who shared my passion for education. Since I am a qualified medical practitioner, I wanted to teach what I know and had learnt and therefore accepted a lecturing post in the University of Johannesburg's Department of Complementary Medicine, where I was responsible for the acupuncture

programme. Teaching and learning were of paramount importance to me. To continue in this field and to become an expert, I knew that I had to pursue my PhD studies with a focus on teaching, learning, assessment and practice. Thus, the title of my PhD thesis was *‘Exploring teaching, learning, assessment and practice of an acupuncture programme to improve children's health’*.

When I met Dr Roy, I told him about my dream, vision and passion. Like a skilful artist, he was able to guide me through this journey. Initially I found the focus very confusing due to my medical background, but Dr Roy assisted and supported me in tailoring my study focus. The title of my study underwent panel beating several times. Initially this was often frustrating, but the result was very rewarding. In August 2020, I started writing my first two-page proposal, which was a requirement in the Department of Early Childhood Education (ECE). This proposal was very precise and I had to work laboriously to make sure that it was correct. After several attempts, I finally completed my first draft of the proposal in December 2020. I was advised to attend the first introductory workshop for all MEd and PhD students presented by Professor Keshni and Dr Roy. This workshop left me in awe as it became very clear to me that completing a



▲ Zijing Hu

PhD was certainly not a walk in the park but would require hard work and commitment. However, the guidance and support I received from Dr Roy was phenomenal and it showed in my final results. All three examiners, two international and one South African, awarded me an AA, which indicated that my thesis should be accepted without changes. This confirmed my belief that the standards set by UP are extremely high and the supervisors demand total commitment from their students. Together with my supervisor, I pushed myself to extreme limits and completed my studies within the minimum period of two years. This was made possible by the hard work done by

*continues on page 14 >>*



a committed supervisor who makes his student his number one priority.

During my PhD journey I constantly received brilliant step-by-step guidance from Dr Roy on how to conduct the research, which laid the foundation for my understanding of research and academic writing. Dr Roy's rigorous enthusiasm for knowledge and education was inspirational. To further enhance my knowledge of research, Dr Roy offered me opportunities to participate in the Research Camp organised by the Department of Early Childhood Education, which encouraged me and strengthened my resolve to complete my PhD studies within the required timeframe. While attending the camp, I realised that Dr Roy followed a phenomenal supervision structure that enabled his students to complete their studies in the minimum time. I was privileged to be present during his supervision sessions and realised how structured and focused he works with every student.

Despite having to revise my chapters several times, I realised that each version enhanced my knowledge and improved the chapter significantly. There were times when I was convinced that I had written the perfect chapter, only to discover that my supervisor did not agree. Today I can confidently say that I have learned from the best of the best at UP. I know that he structured guidance and support that I received from my supervisor will enable me to supervise my students at UP in a similar fashion. Apart from supervising my PhD studies, Dr Roy encouraged me to start publishing articles in

accredited peer-reviewed journals. Together we published eight articles in national and international journals. Every time an article was accepted, I was encouraged to start writing the next one. To add to my success, I was nominated for the VC Award for an emerging young researcher at UP. The acceptance of articles for publication encouraged me as an academic and researcher in the field of education and health sciences to write and publish more articles. I gained more confidence in research through my interactions with Dr Roy, who has many different skills and knows how to supervise and publish articles with ease and confidence.

I consider myself to be extremely fortunate to be guided in my studies by a committed, passionate and dedicated supervisor. While working with Dr Roy, I was impressed by the way he works and found a renewed passion for education. Time is not an issue for him. I always received feedback on my chapters timeously, and his comments were detailed and easy to understand. We (all his PhD students) could communicate with Dr Roy at any time.

He never brushed his students away, which in part explains his high success rate. I am one of five students who completed their PhD studies with Dr Roy and we all can attest to his commitment and the sacrifices he makes for his students. A phenomenal learning curve was Dr Roy's establishment of a learning community network with his PhD students, which helped us to cope with the stresses of a PhD and motivated us to forge ahead.

After my formal registration with UP at the beginning of 2021, I started working more closely and intensely with Dr Roy, who provided marvellous encouragement, guidance and support. According to the supervision policy, supervisors are allowed a 21-day period during which to provide students with feedback, but Dr Roy always provided feedback within a few days after I had submitted a chapter. I looked forward to reading his critical comments. My advice to other students is to work closely with their supervisors and to heed their advice. As students we sometimes tend to believe that we know everything, only to realise that our supervisors are more experienced in what they do. There were times when we agreed to disagree, but it is important to disagree without malice. In the end, your relationship with your supervisor and the journey that you both take should be a memorable one. Mine was definitely memorable and I would not hesitate to recommend Dr Roy to other students.

I truly appreciated Dr Roy's guidance and will be eternally grateful my super supervisor. Your encouragement, guidance and support remained outstanding throughout the period of my studies. Your rigorous attitude toward knowledge and education significantly influenced me both as a student and an academic. You are truly the BEST SUPERVISOR and a magnificent lighthouse in my life. I am sure that UP is proud to have an academic and researcher who is so highly skilled and competent. I also want to express my sincere thanks and appreciation to Profs Azwi and Kesh for their unwavering support.

## Geospatial Data Science Certificate (GDSC)

Author: Dr Clinton van der Merwe

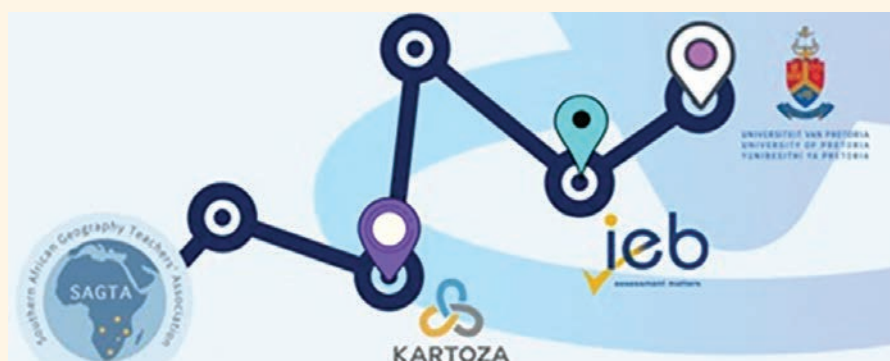
The Southern African Geography Teachers' Association (SAGTA), in partnership and collaboration with the Independent Examinations Board (IEB), Kartoza (an open-source GIS service provider) and the University of Pretoria, has launched the online Geospatial Data Science Certificate (GDSC) for schools in South Africa.

The GDSC is being piloted this year and offers Grade 10 to 12 learners the opportunity to put their skills in geographic information systems (GISs) to the test. Teams of between two and five learners (of whom only one needs to be studying FET Geography) will collaborate to successfully complete a two-part process to attain the GDSC. Part A involves theory and skills development (using GIS), and Part B requires the production of an academic poster in which the team, having used GIS, visually explains their solution to a geographic problem experienced in South Africa.

In 2022, our pilot year, 330 learners from 32 schools, and 48 teachers will be participating. SAGTA hopes to launch the South African GIS Olympiad (SAGISO), an offshoot of the GDSC, in 2023. This year, as a pilot of SAGISO, the best posters per province will be submitted for evaluation and the most impressive poster will be the 2022 winner of the SAGISO! The triumphant team will receive prizes from

various sponsors and attend a virtual FOSS4G Conference held in Kosovo to present their poster at an online GIS conference.

For more information about the GDSC, please contact Dr Clinton van der Merwe at [clinton.vandermerwe@up.ac.za](mailto:clinton.vandermerwe@up.ac.za), or visit the SAGTA website: [www.sagta.org.za](http://www.sagta.org.za).





## Ensuring the continued presence of a cultural tradition

Author: Marika du Toit

The signboard outside Anton van Wouw House reads: 'Reserved for visual arts exhibitions.' This beautiful historical house in Brooklyn, Pretoria contains Mr Van Wouw's preparatory sculptures and is now home to the Tangible Heritage and Conservation Studies students. The rooms are filled with printers, periodic tables and filing cabinets, which strangely makes it feel more homely that it did when it was an exhibition space. In one of the back rooms crumbling paintings and fakes share a table and when you enter, you get the feeling that you should breathe every carefully.

A group of Tangible Heritage Conservation postgraduate students gathered in the central room where the iconography class was about to start. We first moved around the room to introduce ourselves to each other and it was surprising to discover that many of those present had overlapping interests. Dr Raita Steyn from the Department of Humanities Education started her iconography lesson with a presentation on early Christian and Byzantine icons, pointing out the similarities between the two styles and how they were influenced by the Fayum Egyptian death portraits. She also emphasised the use egg tempera, a form of paint created by mixing egg yolk with powdered pigment and a little water, that was commonly used to paint icons on walls or wood. Dr Steyn showed us an Ethiopian icon painted in water colours on sheepskin, and as the students passed it around one could see how careful they were not to touch the surface, even though it was not one of the historical pieces that had to be carefully preserved. Some students even sniffed on

the painting to find out what sheepskin smells like! (It smelled like nothing—I checked.)

We then moved on to a painting demonstration by Dr Steyn. She cracked an egg in her hand and washed away white (albumen) from the yolk, which she then placed in a bowl with vinegar and distilled water with a ratio of 1:3. Next, she scooped a small amount of blue pigment into the bowl and started mixing. The mixture was then passed around the table and the students were instructed to paint from dark to light and wait for each shade for the egg mixture to dry slightly before painting the next shade.

The medium was surprisingly hard to work with, but I suspect that I just lacked the patience required. I asked why egg tempera was used for painting murals and the answer was very simple: It is more transparent than oil, holds less pigment and, once dry, is extremely difficult to remove.

Overall, I found the experience of painting using this historic method in Van Wouw House to be very poetic. The presentation of icons and the explanation of how they influenced each other inspired me to think of how these icons are seen today, and how humans have always had the urge to make art and represent things that were important to them.

Artists make their ideas matter. They use various materials to create physical images that will last long after those who created them have passed away.



▲ Painting demonstration



▲ Postgraduate Heritage Conservation students gather in the central room as the iconography class starts







## Society of South African Geographers – Gold Medallists 2022

Author: Dr Clinton van der Merwe

The Society of South African Geographers (SSAG) Gold Medal is awarded in recognition of meritorious contributions to Geography in Southern Africa. Recipients of the medal are granted honorary lifelong membership of the Society. This year, the SSAG awarded gold medals to Dr Clinton van der Merwe and Prof Serena Coetzee, both from the University of Pretoria.

Serena Coetzee, who is a professor and Head of the Department of Geography, Geoinformatics and Meteorology, has received a C1 taring from the NRF. She has an impressive publication record and collaborates with researchers from at least 20 countries. She has supervised and inspired a new generation of spatially skilled postgraduates and contributes to the development of science through her roles on editorial boards and as a reviewer for various journals and panels. She has led several applied projects that

have impacted positively on industry, policy and communities. The SSAG gold medal was awarded to her recognition of her significant contributions to the field of spatial data infrastructure.

Dr Clinton van der Merwe has established himself as a geographer through his contributions to debates and discussions on heritage. He has also made a major contribution to Geography Education as a teacher, an educator of teachers and as the founding editor of the Journal of Geography Education in Africa (JoGEA). He is a founding member of the Southern African Geography Teachers' Association (SAGTA) and the South African National Geography Olympiad (SANGO). He was awarded a gold medal in recognition of his research and teaching in the field of tourism geography and his contributions to the SSAG.



▲ Dr Richard Ballard (former president of the SSAG), Prof Serena Coetzee (UP) and Prof Jennifer Fitchett (SSAG president)



▲ Dr Richard Ballard (former president of the SSAG), Dr Clinton van der Merwe (UP) and Prof Jennifer Fitchett (SSAG president)



## A letter to my PhD students

Author: Dr Alta Vos

### My dear PhD students,

The moment is here. You have made it—you have finished your theses. You will wear your red hats as if you own them. My heart will sing a praise song at your graduation. I am your fiercely proud research mother who witnessed your growth into the confident, strong women that you became.

When you first walked into my office, I could sense a mixture of excitement and fear. We introduced ourselves, we talked about your career and personal interests, how you would manage the extra burden of studying and working full time, the research process and the topics you wanted to explore. I explained how the teamwork in our close working relationship will function and how we would be riding a motorbike to far-off, never explored places. We would find true gems on our journey, but also sometimes take an off-ramp, leading to a cul de sac. But YOU would always be the drivers while I would take the back seat, holding on to you and moving with you through the winding roads and bends.

I told you that this journey might change you more than you may be prepared for, and

you accepted my prediction gracefully, but did not believe me. Only after your results were out, you confessed to me that you had often wanted to give up and what hardships and challenges you had to contend with. But not once could the darkness of the challenges prosper over the enlightenment that education brings.

Your journey intrigued me; I felt my heart beat every time I received another piece of your intellectual puzzle on my desk, because I witnessed a small miracle every time: you started to see the world in a more complex way, dealt more easily with discrepancies and became tentative in judging people and issues in an essentialist manner.

I have supervised seven PhD students during my career and from each of them I have learned so much, not only about the fields they were working in, but also about their mental and emotional growth. Although each research journey and personal process unfolded uniquely, the outcome was always the same: They became strong individuals who changed their futures for the better. When my last PhD student handed in her final draft, I decided to write an open letter to my students as a result of my



▲ Dr Alta Vos

own meaning-making of the monumental challenge of supervising a PhD. What a privilege it has been!

Yes, the moment is here. Pause a while and celebrate, embrace the people that you have become; invite the warmth inside and know this is a watershed moment. I see women so powerful that people notice them when they walk into a room. And for many years to come, researchers will read your work, quote you, differ from you and ... always recognise you as scholars. Dear students, it is time to say goodbye—you no longer need me.

## NEHAWU's UP branch elects an academic to serve on the executive

Author: Dr Xolani Khohliso



▲ Dr Xolani Khohliso

The University of Pretoria branch of the National Education Health Allied Workers Union (NEHAWU) took a conscious decision when it was decided to elect Dr Xolani

Khohliso, an academic staff member from the Groenkloof Constituency, Faculty of Education, as its Branch Deputy Secretary.

History was made in this branch and the message is clear that the union is strategically changing its approach. Dr Khohliso commented: 'I am humbled and delighted to be serving the union and I appreciate the membership at large for the trust and confidence demonstrated in us as a collective. It is always a pleasure to contribute meaningfully towards the struggle of workers. The time has come, and that time is now, to change the face of the union and external perceptions towards it. NEHAWU's mandate and principles are clear and include protecting the job security of members, advancing their employment prospects and serving their individual and collective interests to foster unity, cooperation and comradeship among all workers within the scope of the union and other industries.'

Dr Khohliso is serving with fellow comrades who are experienced in stewardship. They are Cde Edward Matuba (Chairperson), Cde Rasentshadi Magwai (Deputy Chairperson), Cde Goitsewang Mathekga (Branch Secretary), Cde Mavis Matlou and nine additional members of the Branch Executive Committee. This is therefore a well-oiled machine that is ready to promote a conducive working environment at the University of Pretoria.

This collective leadership understands its mandate, which includes advocating for employees, dealing with collective agreements, attempting to resolve labour disputes, influencing labour policies and laws, and ensuring favourable conditions of employment. Furthermore, the collective is committed to faithfully discharging its duties and providing leadership to the entire membership. Amandla!!





## Dean's writing retreat

Author: Dr Sharon Mashau

The Dean of the Faculty of Education acted as host for 26 early career academics who were invited to attend a writing retreat at Kievits Kroon from 19–22 July 2022. The event was planned to demonstrate the Faculty's commitment to the career development of staff by assisting academics to realise their career aspirations. The aim of the workshop was to encourage and support the participants to work on and complete the research papers they were working on.

Addressing the academics, the Dean of the Faculty of Education, Prof Chika Schoole, indicated that publication comes with dedication, sacrifice and pain. He explained

that the writing retreat was an investment made in them to expose them to the art and skill of writing from draft stage to publishing and enable them to produce a publishable article in three days. He added: 'My aim is as the Dean of this Faculty is to ensure that every one of you is promoted: lectures to senior lectures, senior lectures to associate professors, and associate professors to full professors.'

During the three days there was some level of anxiety as the academics worked tirelessly trying to meet the Dean's expectation. The assistance of the invited professors who provided mentorship to the early academics



▲ Participants and their mentors at the Dean's Kievits Kroon writing retreat

helped to calm their nerves and gave them the courage they needed to believe that it was indeed possible to achieve such a milestone. The mentors included Profs Johan Beckmann, Funke Omidire, Rinelle Evans and Ugorji Ogbonnaya.

## Lunch Talk with Mr Monroe France, NYU Senior Vice-President for Global Engagement and Inclusive Leadership with Mr Monroe France

Author: Dr Sharon Mashau

From 19 to 20 July 2022, the University of Pretoria hosted a delegation from New York University (NYU) as part of the broader UP-NYU collaborative partnership led by the Vice-Chancellor Prof Kupe. The focus was on themes related to inclusive leadership, female leadership, transformational leadership and health equities. As part of the visit, Mr Monroe France, NYU Senior Vice-President for Global Engagement and Inclusive Leadership, addressed the early career researchers at the Faculty of Education, Groenkloof Campus during a lunchtime talk on 20 July.

The Dean of the Faculty of Education welcomed everyone who attended the event and expressed his appreciation to the esteemed guest speaker Mr France, who was accompanied by the Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Prof Tawana Kupe, the Department of Research and Innovation team led by Dr Carol Nonkwelo, the Senior Director: Research, Innovation and Postgraduate Education, and Dr Rakeshnie Ramoutar-Prieschl, Head of Research Capacity Development at the University of Pretoria (UP).



▲ Early career academics attending the lunch talk



▲ Mr Monroe France addressing early career academics at the Groenkloof Campus



## Faculty of Education participates in the Grade 11 Top Achievers event

Author: Dr Sharon Mashau

The Faculty of Education participated in a two-day exhibition at the Grade 11 Top Achievers event, organised by JuniorTukkie and held at the University of Pretoria's Hatfield Campus on 28 and 29 July.

The aim of the exhibition was to provide this group of learners, who came from different provinces, including Gauteng, Limpopo and Northwest, with information on the different faculties and the programmes they offer to encourage them to make UP their university of choice. During a formal event attended by the learners after the exhibition, they were given information about JuniorTukkie, the School Leaders' Conference and sports at UP, and finally listened to a motivational talk.

After the main event learners who had made prior arrangements were taken on a tour to familiarise them with the Campus and to further build brand equity.



▲ Students engaging with exhibitors from different faculties and departments at the Grade 11 top Achievers Exhibition

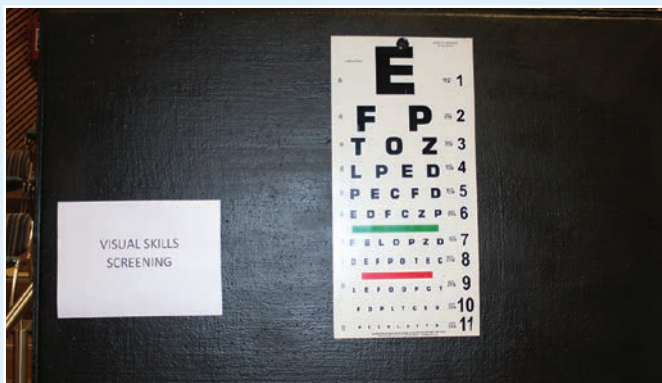
## Faculty of Education's annual health screening

Author: Dr Sharon Mashau

On 2 August 2022, the Faculty of Education, in conjunction with the Department of Human Resources, Employee Wellness, hosted a free health screening day on the Groenkloof Campus. Staff members and students who had booked in advance participated in different health screening tests based on their needs. The purpose of the event was to raise awareness of the many lifestyle diseases and / or congenital conditions that one can unknowingly suffer from and to encourage employees and students to regularly check their health status.

The free health screening included testing for visual activities and eye dominance, blood pressure, blood glucose and cholesterol tests, as well as BMI calculation, comprehensive body composition, lung function, heart health, hearing screening and in-body assessments.

Other services provided included mental health services, raising awareness of substance abuse and information on accessing free counselling sessions.



▲ Faculty staff participating in different health screening tests



## Faculty of Education participates in UP's final-year student motivational and information session and exhibition

Authors: Dr Sharon Mashau and Iyanda Phahlane

The Faculty of Education was invited to participate in the University of Pretoria's final-year motivational and information session and exhibition. The event took place on in the Aula on the Hatfield Campus on 9 September 2022. The purpose of the session and exhibition was to provide final-year students in all the faculties with detailed information about how to apply to be admitted to pursue postgraduate study programmes.

Dr Abbey Mathekga, Director: Enrolment and Student Administration, opened the event and welcomed the attendees. This was followed by a motivational session presented by Ashley Kellar, a recipient of the Vice-Chancellor's merit award, who addressed students on why they should choose UP for their postgraduate studies.

Phindile Mthimunye, the manager of Admission System and Projects, explained the application process for postgraduate studies and how to apply for merit-based assistance. Danny Bokaba, Manager: International Students, briefly explained the importance of having international students in the international student programme. Entertainment was provided by Tuks Camerata.

Dr Carol Nonkwelo, Senior Director: Research, Innovation and Postgraduate Education, discussed research and innovation matters pertaining to the University, after which Leanne van Zyl, Manager: Postgraduate Scholarship, explained in detail how students should go about applying for funding for their studies. June Ngcobo, Acting Head: Graduate Support Hub, discussed academic student

support and Lesego Makhafola informed the attendees of all the services provided by the University libraries.

One of the most important issues that students face during their studies is mental health. Ms. Ruqayya Seedat, a senior counselling psychologist in the Department of Student Affairs addressed the students about mental wellness services that are available to the University's postgraduate students.

The session was concluded by Michel le Grange and colleagues, who spoke about all the career services provided by UP. Following the motivation and information session, the students proceeded to consult with different faculty exhibitors to obtain more faculty-specific information.



▲ Dr Sharon Mashau engaging with some of the students who visited the Faculty of Education stall



▲ UP students visiting exhibition stalls to obtain information on postgraduate studies



## The WIL stakeholder debriefing session

Author: Dr Tanya Smith

On Wednesday, 21 September, the Work-integrated Learning office hosted a stakeholder debriefing session on the Groenkloof Campus.

Various principals, WIL coordinators and mentor teachers from schools attended the afternoon event, themed 'Heritage'. The dean, HODs and mentor lecturers engaged with schools as our stakeholders' unique contributions were celebrated and insightful discussions took place.

The Dean, Prof Sehoole, spoke about our Faculty and the work we do to

prepare teachers for the workplace. A representative of the Work-integrated Learning office shared more about its functioning and informed the audience of new developments related to the Work-integrated Learning System and the finalisation of the Memorandum of Agreement with schools. Valuable feedback and information was received from the representatives from schools. The placements of students and the experiences of schools relating to student teachers were also discussed.

The participants acknowledged the quality of UP Faculty of Education students, highlighting their excellent technological skills. Communication with schools, the

professionalism of students when gaining teaching experience at schools and the number of student teachers who require positions were discussed. The schools indicated that our students are mostly well prepared and employable in the authentic workplace.

The Work-integrated Learning office expressed gratitude for gifts and specifically acknowledged the role mentor teachers play in the development of pre-service teachers. The Relationships were strengthened and the schools provided the Work-integrated Learning office with valuable input and feedback to consider and work on.



▲ Internal and external stakeholders who attended the WIL Stakeholder debriefing session



# The Faculty of Education celebrates 85 years of teaching, learning and research with week-long event

Authors: Prof Chika Sehoole, Dr Sharon Mashau and Iyanda Phahlane

The Faculty of Education celebrated its 85th anniversary with several events that took place between Monday, 3 October and Friday, 7 October 2022.

The week-long celebration, which started with Faculty Research Day showcasing different research projects that academics are engaged in or that were recently completed, was followed by an awards ceremony during which we celebrated researchers who had excelled in the area of journal outputs and well as supervisors with the highest numbers of postgraduate students who had graduated in the minimum time.

At the Dean's Concert held in the afternoon, our music students showcased their talents. Two years had passed since the Faculty had last presented this concert and the celebration was heart-warming.

On Tuesday the Faculty celebrated with the postgraduate students who were invited to attend the Research Indaba, during which they also presented their work. This was followed by another awards ceremony at which postgraduates received different awards in categories ranging from novice research (Abstract: post-proposal level); research in progress (Abstract: preliminary result level); completed research (Abstract: completed dissertation or thesis); best presentation; and most innovative methodology presentation.

As the celebration continued, we watched with great pleasure and excitement how more than 500 students made their contribution by engaging in different activities. Wednesday was dedicated to the students' celebration of the Faculty milestone. The Faculty had entrusted the House Education Committee members with the responsibility to put together a programme for the students and they had organised an exciting programme that included sporting activities, board games and indigenous games.

The atmosphere was fun-filled as the students from different levels of study gathered at the Groenkloof Boma. Many students had the opportunity to meet their Dean for the first time and experienced exciting moments when he joined them in playing games, for example question-and-answer games, in which prizes could be won. This was followed by a photo session to capture memorable moments. As the end of the day approached, everyone was treated to ice cream and cotton candy.

## Faculty Research Day and Awards Ceremony



## Dean's Concert



## Postgraduate Research Indaba and Awards Ceremony





## Student celebration



## Staff celebration games, fun walk and other activities



What a night to remember! As the celebration continued, the Faculty hosted members of the University Executive and its external stakeholders at a gala dinner, which became a night of bliss. This was a closed event dedicated to the Faculty stakeholders who, over the years, had become an integral part of the Faculty's success in teaching, learning and research.

Dignitaries who attended the event included the Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Dr Naledi Pandor; Prof Jonathan Jansen, a distinguished professor of Education at Stellenbosch University and President of the Academy of Science of South Africa, who was also the guest speaker; Ms Michelle Mathey, Director of Teacher Education and Research in the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET); Ms Jenny Glennie, Executive Director of the South African Institute of Distance Education; and the newly appointed CEO of IEB, Ms Confidence Dikgole, who is also a member of Faculty of Education Advisory Board. Other dignitaries included representatives from national and provincial Departments of Basic Education (DBE), representatives from Wits University, education alumni, former deans, emeritus professors, current and former chairpersons of House Education, members of the University Executive and senior management, members of the Faculty Executive and management, as well as invited colleagues in the Faculty.

It was a night packed with much valuable information as Professor Johann Wassermann took the guests through the history of the Faculty. This was followed by congratulatory messages from different speakers. As the event drew to a close, the guests listened to a thought-provoking speech delivered by Prof Jonathan Jansen, for which he was thanked by Prof Themba Mosia. Guests were entertained by students and members of the Faculty's music department, who performed a variety of musical genres to which some guests started dancing. It was indeed a memorable night for all those who celebrated with the Faculty.

The last day, Friday, was dedicated to staff celebrations that started with a fun walk in the morning and ended with festivities at the Boma. The Faculty Dean, Prof Chika Sehoole, welcomed those present and wished them an exciting day. Staff members participated in many different indigenous and board games, sporting and other activities, which included the 30-seconds game, charades, netball, chess, hopscotch, mini-soccer, twister, dominoes and hula hoops, to name but some. This was a fun-filled event that was thoroughly enjoyed by all. A lunch-time picnic was catered for, and the staff also shared a celebration cake. All in all, it was a delightful day that enabled staff members to get to know each other better and also encouraged networking.



Gala dinner





## Prof Lizette de Jager presents keynote address at the South African-Finnish Partnership in Early Childhood Development and Teacher Training event

Author: Prof Lizette de Jager

Prof Lizette de Jager presented a keynote address titled 'Building bridges: adapting to the changing landscape of teacher development' at a high-level event of the South African-Finnish Partnership in Early Childhood Development and Teacher Training, which was hosted by the Finnish Ministry of Education at the Future Africa Campus, University of Pretoria, on 12 October 2022.

Through teacher development, teachers are expected to become capable of engaging with and transforming the world around them and touching and shaping their students' lives, which is an enormous responsibility. In her address, Prof Lizette de Jager supported Wally Morrow's view that the fundamental aim of teaching is to prepare the child to function in the modern world (a world of technology and the 4th IR), which she suggested may be the reason for the strong focus on technology integration in teacher development, and also in schooling. Further to this, the fundamental aim of teaching particular lessons is not to teach children the content of the subject, but to teach them how to learn and how to make links about content.

Prof De Jager mentioned that we are often addicted to content, especially in a digital/online learning space, probably because of habit—it is what we know—but also because of technology. We deliver knowledge transfer pedagogy on Blackboard, Moodle, Canvas, etc and tend to forget that learners need to DO things to learn. We almost always deliver too much content, typically in the 80%/10%/10% format, where 80% is content (videos, audio recordings, images and texts), 10% is activity (MCQ, quizzes, forms, worksheets), and 10% is feedback (automated or responsive feedback on activities). This is bad for learners, and bad for us. In this scenario learners are passive, there is a cognitive overload, and they learn little.

To help reduce content overload, Prof De Jager suggested using the Minimal Viable Content (MVC) approach to designing content that will significantly improve outcomes while reducing design costs and saving time.

In the MVC approach, we aim for 10%/80%/10% format, where 10% is content, 80% is activity, and 10% is feedback, thus creating learning experiences that are optimised for real, increased skills and knowledge development through more active and immersive learning. Such learning is more likely to be active and participatory, to engage learners, deliver personalised and adaptive learning experiences, and effectively manage learners' cognitive overload. Ideally, teachers themselves need to be excellent and possess the above-mentioned skills. Stakeholders should focus all their attention and spending on building a strong foundation, with teachers who have excellent subject knowledge, strong pedagogical knowledge and the ability to teach learners in a way they can understand.

Prof De Jager emphasised that if we are serious about changing education for all, we need those excellent teachers in our weakest schools, which are often our rural schools. How could we achieve this? By moving from the individual to the collective. It is in the collective where the magic happens, where real changes occur. She suggested that this can be achieved through a collective mentoring project, a mutual mentoring, where teachers mentor teachers at the schools where our learners need it the most. A mutual mentoring project requires serious consideration in order to harness the existing experience and expertise in our schools, namely teachers, and not by adding more content to the curriculum. This will require change in mind, attitude and practice.

An effective method for change is one that looks for indigenous sources of change. Prof De Jager claims that there are people in our institution or school or group who are already doing things in a radically better way. She suggests bringing these isolated success strategies of the so-called positive deviants into the mainstream so that they will not be



▲ Prof Lizette de Jager

overlooked. In this way we can intentionally change in ways that increase our capacity to bring about the just and liberated world we long for. We therefore need to look at our curriculum and ask: Will this enable our students to take the country forward? Can they be critical citizens?

When answering the multi-tiered questions about teacher development and schooling, an awareness of the tensions that exist may help with the reimagining and refocusing of teacher development. Tensions exist between what it is to teach, and the roles and responsibilities we ascribe to those employed as teachers. We should reconsider the burden placed on teachers as they are our most precious resource.

Prof De Jager is an associate professor in English Education (literature, language and methodology) in the Department of Humanities Education, Faculty of Education at the University of Pretoria. She is a Fulbright scholar for SETI (2006) and a Teaching Advancement at Universities (TAU) fellow (2019). She serves on the HELTASA Coordinating Council and the National Framework for Enhancing Academics as University Teachers (NFFEAUT), both for the project National University Teaching Awards (NUTA). Her research interests, publications, and supervision are in the field of English education, pragmatics, instructional design and pedagogy, multilingualism and translanguaging, and technology integration in language teaching.



## Two international workshops presented by Prof Marien Graham

Author: Prof Marien Graham

Prof Marien Graham from the Department of Science, Mathematics and Technology Education was invited to present workshops at two international conferences during October 2022.

The first, a two-day online workshop on 'Statistical Quality Control', was presented at the 2022 WCDANM (Workshop Computational Data Analysis and Numerical Methods) conference hosted by the Polytechnic Institute of Tomar (PIT) in Tomar, Portugal, and took place from 13–15 October. The WCDANM conference is a unique opportunity for researchers to share information about scientific research related to the areas of mathematics and statistics in general, with particular emphasis on new techniques used for computational data analysis and numerical methods in theoretical and practical fields. Special attention is paid to applications in medicine, biology, biotechnology, engineering, industry, environmental sciences, finance, insurance, management and administration. The conference provides a forum for the discussion of ideas that are of interest to the scientific community in general.

The second workshop dealt with 'Quantitative Data Analysis' and was presented at the 2022 South Africa International Conference on Education (SAICEd), which took place from 26–28 October. The SAICEd, organised by the African Academic Research Forum, is an

international refereed conference dedicated to the advancement of practices in education. The conference offers a platform for academics and researchers from all over the world to deliberate, network and share perspectives, scholarship and expertise in the pursuit of excellence in education. Prof Graham is tremendously grateful for these opportunities to share her expertise and experience on a global scale.



▲ Prof Marien Graham presenting an online workshop at the WCDANM conference

## Third-year Art Education figure-drawing workshop

Author: Danelle van Wyk

A lecture room was transformed into a figure-drawing workspace with easels angled towards a semi-nude model to enable the third-year art education students to capture a straight image with minimal head movement required.

Students were instructed by their lecturer, Dr Deléne Human, to use charcoal and/or graphite pencils throughout the workshop as those would allow them to freely build on previous marks.

Each of the four preparatory drawings took the participants fifteen minutes to complete, allowing them to gain confidence in the medium while drawing a live, continuously moving three-dimensional semi-nude model. After completing all the preparatory drawings, the students placed their four drawings side by side to compare them and note potential anatomical corrections before beginning the final drawing of the seated model using either charcoal or graphite pencil. They were allowed ninety minutes to capture the seated model.

The figure sculpting workshop that followed required more workspace preparation. As for the figure-drawing workshop, the model

was staged in the centre, but was reclining on a mattress placed on a table, which put her at the artists' eye level. After a fifteen-minute experiment to manipulate the clay into a female figure, the students were ready to move on to the final figure sculpture. The model moved into a comfortable position on her side, in which she remained for the next few hours while the artists studied her from different angles while attempting to create an accurate smaller replica. Once the sculptures were completed, a clay wall was built around each one to act as a barrier before the pieces were cast in plaster of Paris to capture the figures' negative spaces. Cement was then poured into the moulds to produce cement sculptures of the original clay figures.

The workshop aided in the perception of transitioning from two-dimensional flat drawings to three-dimensional sculpture—a skill that future art educators can apply in their own creative spaces.

This annual third-year project, which was developed by Dr Human to enhance students' perception skills and expose them to the study of the anatomy of a semi-nude model, was successful on many levels. The students not only experienced the development of a two-dimensional figure drawing into a three-dimensional sculpture, but also had a transformation experience.



▲ Preparation drawing



▲ Final sculpture made of clay



## Power in Fragility—art education exam exhibition

Author: Dr Delene Human

In preparation for an exhibition at the UP Student Gallery, third-year art education students were expected to critically and creatively create a body of work in which they identified a challenge or issue dealt with in their daily lives.

They had to choose their own year theme through introspective discovery of a topic with which they could identify within a contemporary, South African situation that had some impact on their lives.

They had to consider how, as art educators, they could visually present their views, feelings, thoughts and possible solutions, or create awareness of a specific situation. The exhibition addresses deeply emotional and even disturbing themes ranging from situations involving identity, i.e., their cultural understanding of themselves or their body image, eating disorders, shame or challenges related to mental health, such as anxiety, depression, living with ADHD, sexual violence in schools, bullying, death and loss of loved ones and other personal struggles. Nonetheless, each body of work conveys a message of encouragement and hope.

As suggested by the title of the exhibition, *Power in Fragility*, the works on display dealt with the human condition, things that expose us while also making us human, and are the result of a

process that the students went through. During the past year they discovered their own strengths, weaknesses and identities, but they had, throughout their lives, face challenges that, in many cases, became more apparent as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. According to Dr Human, who developed this project, this year has not been easy, but each student whose work is on display can be proud. It is easy to see how, over the past year, they have evolved to become the artists and educators they are today.



▲ Dr Delene Human (lecturer) and a group of third-year art education students at the opening of the exhibition.

## Congratulatory lunch for Commonwealth Games 2022 medal winners

Authors: Dr Sharon Mashau and lyanda Phahlane

**On 1 November 2022, the Dean of the Faculty of Education, Prof Chika Sehoole, took time to congratulate education students who had won medals at the Commonwealth Games that were held in Birmingham in the United Kingdom from 28 July until 8 August 2022.**

Our athletes, lecturers and professional staff were invited to attend the event that was held in the foyer of the Dean's office in the Admin Building to acknowledge the achievements of the athletes.

Prof Sehoole opened the event by welcoming those present and briefly explained the purpose of the function before congratulating the athletes, their TuksSport Director Mr Steven Ball, and the Sports Education team. He then proceeded to hand gifts to the athletes, stating their sporting codes and the medals awarded to them.

The first athlete was Ms Zenèy van der Walt (in absentia), currently a fourth-year student busy with her teaching practice. Zenèy won the bronze medal in the 400 m hurdles and

her speed over the last 50 m was impressive. The second athlete was Ms Kaylene Corbett, who competed in swimming and won a bronze medal in the 200 m breaststroke in a time of 2:23:67. She is preparing and hopes to qualify for participation in the 2024 Olympics in Paris, where she hopes to improve on the fifth place that achieved in Tokyo in 2021.

The third and last athlete was Mr Jovan van Vuuren, the University of Pretoria's Sportsman of the Year, who is a master's student writing a dissertation titled 'A Porthole into long jump education in South Africa' and a teaching assistant in the Higher Certificate in Sport Science programme. He won a bronze medal in the long jump with a distance of 8,06 m, which was just 2 cm short of the winning distance of 8.08 m.

In his congratulatory address Mr Steven Ball, the Director of TuksSports, referred to the challenges faced by athletes when they try to balance their sports life and education. He mentioned how being a full-time university student and taking part in a competitive sport is much more difficult than one would think. He stated that he appreciated the relationship he had built with his athletes



▲ From left to right: Mr Jovan van Vuuren, Prof Chika Sehoole and Ms Kaylene Corbett

and thanked the Faculty and the Dean for creating a platform to celebrate the students' sporting achievements.

In closing, the Dean thanked Sports Education team for ensuring that our students participate in sports and put the Faculty flag on the map.



# The Faculty of Education's annual Teaching and Learning Awards event celebrates its staff

Author: Dr Sharon Mashau

The Faculty of Education's Teaching and Learning Awards event, which is held annually to celebrate and thank outstanding academics from the various departments for their dedication, took place in the foyer of the Groenkloof Auditorium on 1 November 2022. In her opening address, Prof Salome Human-Vogel, Deputy Dean: Teaching and Learning, welcomed those present, and in particular the Deputy Vice Chancellor: Academic, Prof Loretta Feris, who spoke at the event.

In her address titled 'Teaching and learning in a period of change, uncertainty and innovation', Prof Feris referred to the fact that the teaching and learning environment is faced with constant change and uncertainty and said that it is important for higher education institutions (HEIs) to deal with uncertainty by considering how disruptions can be used to their advantage. She further stated that it is important to develop alternatives to the disruption and create opportunities, but that in doing so it will also be crucial to consider the crises that may still arise. Prof Feris also highlighted how the pandemic affected HEIs, showing them how they were able to adapt to the

chaos, make use of it, and come up with creative ways to teach and learn.

Hybrid learning was one of the new teaching and learning methods that HEIs had to develop. The teaching and learning team have the ability to influence the DBE system through educating them. It is also important that the teaching and learning team inspire and influence student teachers in ways that make an impact and improve the lives of learners and the community', said Prof Feris.

The following academics received awards:

## Category 1: Student-centred Learning Experience Design

- Small class category: Hanlie Botha
- Medium class category: David Sekao
- Large class category: Nelson Manganye

## Category 2: Future of Education Lecturer of the Year Award

- Small class category: Adebunmi Aina
- Medium class category: Nombuyiselo Caroline Zondi
- Large class category: Annelize du Plessis-de Beer

## Category 3: Model Lecturer of the Year Award

- Small class category: Clinton van der Merwe
- Medium class category: Nadia Swanepoel
- Large class category: Nele Loubser

In his final remarks, the Dean of the Faculty, Professor Schoole, thanked Professor Human-Vogel for organising such a wonderful event. He continued by talking about how teaching and learning can change people's lives and how, in a university context, it is important to recognise and value the outstanding work done by our lecturers.

Professor Schoole then thanked Prof Feris for her contribution and assured her that 'as a faculty, we have been successful in addressing and dealing with the challenges that you have mentioned'. He assured those present that the Faculty recognises and values the good work done by everyone and said that he had committed himself to annually writing an article on World Teachers' Day to pay tribute to teachers, including his Grade 1 teacher.



▲ Prof Loretta Feris presenting the keynote address at the Teaching and Learning Awards event



▲ Prof Salome Human-Vogel announcing the recipients of the Teaching and Learning Awards



▲ Awards recipients with the DVC: Academic, Faculty Dean and Deputy Dean: Teaching and Learning. From left to right Dr Adebunmi Aina, Ms Nombuyiselo Zondi, Prof Chika Schoole, Prof Loretta Feris, Prof Salome Human-Vogel, Dr Clinton van der Merwe, Ms Nadia Swanepoel and Mr Nelson Manganye



▲ Prof Chika Schoole offering closing remarks at the Teaching and Learning Awards event



# CODING AND ROBOTICS SYMPOSIUM 2022: Making coding and robotics accessible for all learners

Authors: Annèl van Rooyen, Jody Joubert and Prof Ronel Callaghan

## A symposium that involved teachers, academics, and researchers to explore Coding and Robotics implementation at school level.

Wednesday, 28 September 2022 saw a LLITUP dream come true as we hosted Coding and Robotics enthusiasts during the Coding and Robotics symposium. We welcomed about 60 people in the F-lab and had an additional 50 to 80 people who joined the different sessions online. Attendees appreciated the well-integrated Hyflex mode of presentation of the day. Opportunities for discussions, future collaborations, and true excitement about the good work being done in the field were evident.

The day's programme was filled with hands-on activities, the sharing of wonderful practices and practical insights. After Prof Callaghan's welcoming and introduction, Prof Jean Greyling of the Nelson Mandela University and Tangible Africa shared his thoughts on It's not about coding: The unplugged story. He also introduced the audience to the tangible coding game Tanks. Up next, was Mrs Anita van Vuuren who shared valuable insights about the demystification of coding in her online presentation titled Educational heuristics for designing an online TPD intervention to demystify coding.

Prof Marietjie Havenga and Dr Suki van Zyl from the North-West University presented an online presentation showcasing their work of integrating Coding and Robotics across different university-level subjects. They use, amongst others, tools like LEGO Mindstorms EV3, Micro:bit and 3D printing. The title of their presentation was Programming and robotics to develop self-directed learning. Up next, we had an explorative discussion where

Mrs Erna Erasmus from AROS and Ms Nadia Swanepoel from UP shared their experiences, challenges, and dreams of Coding and Robotics module design for undergraduate teachers. It showcased different ways of approaching this task and led to valuable tea-time discussions and idea-sharing.

The tea break's enjoyable eats and drinks refreshed us to engage in Prof Ronel Callaghan's session about Coding and Robotics as enabler for interdisciplinary teaching: The LLITUP story. Attendees in the room had a short hands-on play session with the Bee-bots, while online participants were shown what was happening across the room. After this, Dr Patricia Gouws from UNISA shared the value and practices of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) for teacher training, also aimed at Coding and Robotics. Her presentation was titled The use of MOOCs in support of Coding and Robotics advancement.

After lunch, three further speakers shared their in-practice experiences. Mrs Marietjie Havenga from Skuikrosies presented Coding for preschoolers. She focused on five coding terms that preschoolers can understand and provided exciting photo evidence of this from her own work with the young children. Mr Felix Spies from Split Second Science Education Foundation shared six key pieces to success in a rural setting. This relates well to the symposium focus of making Coding and Robotics accessible within different communities. His presentation was titled A case study of robotics academies in the John Taolo Gaetsewe District Municipality, Northern Cape. Before the day's end, Mr Keith Gibson from Collegiate Girls High shared the value and practices of developing learners' problem-solving skills in his online presentation titled Problem-solving: Learning to walk before the robot runs.

The symposium situated LLITUP as a place to soundboard ideas for innovative implementation of Coding and Robotics in the Basic Education sector, as well as a research partner in the Coding and Robotics focus area. The future and what it promises for Coding and Robotics teaching is exciting!



▲ Gontse and Fariyah welcoming attendees to the Collaboratorium



▲ Attendees engaged in hands-on activities



▲ Symposium presenters and the LLITUP team. Top, from left to right: Mr Felix Spies, Prof Jean Greyling and Dr Patricia Gouws; Middle: Ms Gontse Mthelebofu, Ms Nadia Swanepoel, Mrs Erna Erasmus, Mrs Marietjie Havenga; Bottom: Prof Ronel Callaghan, Mrs Annèl van Rooyen, Mr Jody Joubert and Ms Fariyah Jaffer



▲ Attendees in the F-lab





## LLITUP'S DRIVE FOR INNOVATIVE TEACHING:

Possible Coding and Robotics teacher training opportunities by LLITUP

Authors: Jody Joubert and Annèl van Rooyen

**The LLITUP research unit with its feet firmly within the Science, Mathematics and Technology Education (SMTE) and the Computer Integrated Education (CIE) unit of the department, has developed a range of training opportunities for teachers interested in Coding and Robotics.**

These include:

- Coding and robotics for Early Childhood Education
- Coding and Robotics for Intermediate and Senior Phase Education

With Bee-bots and mBots, amongst others, these training opportunities facilitate planning for the integration of Coding and Robotics within teachers' own contexts. Every training session is also customised according to the needs of the group.

Additionally, the long-standing Mobile Learning course provides a good basis for teachers of Coding and Robotics. The course allows teachers to develop their technological integration skills with the multitude of technologies that supplement the teaching of coding and robotics.



## Badges4Edu initiative for 2023

Authors:

Gontse Mthelebofu and Annèl van Rooyen

With Gontse Mthelebofu's passion to drive this initiative forward, lecturers can expect to be invited to sessions aimed at the conceptualisation of new badges for 2023.

The Badges4Edu initiative is valuable in its ability to stimulate innovative integration of technology and associated teaching methodologies in undergraduate teacher training. Several research projects, at both MEd and PhD level, have also originated in this initiative. We hope to see many lecturers across departments involved in 2023's initiative.

## Module Development Process and Progress:

Sharing the collaborative effort of the SMTE and Early Childhood Education departments to develop an ECE Coding and Robotics module

Authors: Annèl van Rooyen and Nadia Swanepoel

**"Collaboration = Dream job Coding and Robotics requires all to work together to achieve common goal."** Mr Lejone Lekhanya

Mr Lekhanya, attendee of LLITUP's Coding and Robotics symposium, came to a very valuable conclusion about the implementation of the teaching and learning of Coding and Robotics as quoted above. Staff members of the SMTE and ECE departments are experiencing just the same: the combination of expertise of Coding and Robotics and Early Childhood Education specialists hopes to achieve a collaboratively-designed module for undergraduate ECE students aimed at the teaching and learning of Coding and Robotics in future.

The task team is lead by Ms Nadia Swanepoel from ECE. While some departmental staff join us from time to time, Ms Swanepoel and LLITUP's Annèl van Rooyen have spent several hours in weekly

planning sessions. The module planning process is based on the Appreciative Inquiry (AI) process, as introduced to us during the first round of Re-imagine, presented by LLITUP in 2021.

The task team started off with a Dedication phase, an addition to the AI process. Here, we considered our motivation, possible contributions and dreams for the module development initiative. We spent several weeks in defining, discovering, and dreaming what content, pedagogy and technology (amongst others) we want to include. The Design phase, supported by Nadia and Annèl's preparation and Prof Callaghan's guidance as our consultant, saw us taking our planning to a new level. We considered our intended outcomes, assessment and teaching within the Backward Design model. To support our building of teaching and learning activities, we are currently engaged in hands-on exploration with several Coding and Robotics tools which is yet another exciting and enriching experience.



▲ The Appreciative Inquiry process used for the module design process



▲ Annèl hands Nadia her Thank You gift after Nadia shared our ideas and module planning process at the Coding and Robotics symposium



# DREAM2TEACH: Re-imagine teaching and learning at UP (2022)

Authors: Prof Ronel Callaghan and Annèl van Rooyen

A second round of LLITUP's Re-imagine teaching initiative was held at the end of the 1st semester of 2022

## Background

The aim of this initiative was to follow a conscious process of module re-imagining, whilst revisiting innovative use of space, time, and strategies to prepare students for a complex, changing world i.e. a complex system with interrelated parts. We aimed to design for immersive learning which are mindful and purposeful, layered, open, dynamic, and transformative. Annèl van Rooyen posed a few questions to Prof Callaghan about the initiative.

## When was this initiative presented?

8 June to 13 July 2022

## How many people participated this time round?

24 people, representing 16 different departments in the University attended sessions. 16 participants completed the re-imagine process.

## How was this round of the initiative different from the previous round?

This round was presented during the

examination period in the first semester, which enabled participants to focus on second semester modules. The process was distributed over a shorter period of time. We met weekly on Wednesday afternoons from 13:00 to 15:00. Participants often came earlier or stayed later to work on their designs. Most sessions were presented in HyFlex mode. It seemed to be more manageable for lecturers than during semester time.

## Did you change the process, content, order and/or structure after the first presentation of Reimagine in 2021?

We followed the same process as in the first UP Reimagine Teaching initiative in 2021. The process was again planned according to the Appreciative Inquiry design process (Whitney & Cooperrider 1998, Razzetti 2019). We find this to be an effective and positive change management approach.

It included the phases Define (which states the goal of the inquiry), Discover (finding the current strengths), Dream (allow for exceptional and innovative possibilities to reach the goal, based on the strengths discovered), Design (develop a plan that can make a dream or at least a part of the dream, reality), and Destiny (implement the design through immersion in the reality).

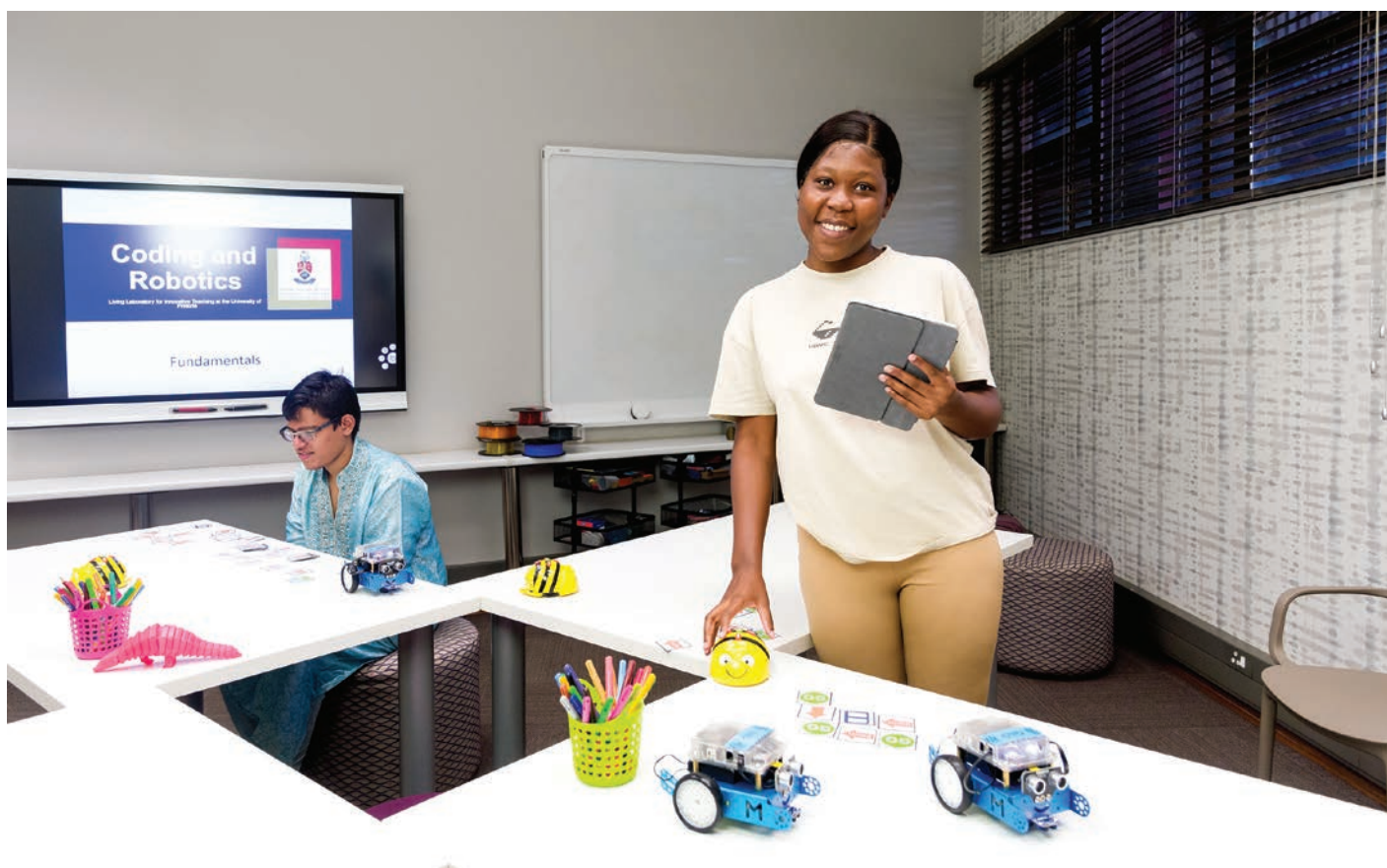
## What feedback did participants have?

Participants found the process meaningful and inspiring. The shared experience across disciplines enriched their thinking about not only their modules, but also their broader teaching approach and role as educators. All participants indicated that this type of intervention should be repeated yearly.

*"I did not feel like I was attending 'training'. Instead, I felt supported, empowered and guided through well-designed workshops and modeling from the facilitators on how I can improve my practice."* – Ms Nelé Loubser, SMTE department

*"I found the experience to be extremely fruitful and reignited my passion for teaching."* – Dr Ntombi Gama

*"For me, the weeks of engaging with the team and the colleagues from other faculties opened up a whole new creative and innovative world of teaching and learning in all my modules, not just the one I re-imagined, I approach the classes differently. My assessments have changed and even class attendance is not a challenge anymore."*  
– Mrs Elmien Claassens





## DREAM2RESEARCH:

### Prospects of more research focused on Coding and Robotics in postgraduate studies

Authors: Jody Joubert and Annèl van Rooyen



We have identified a need for research in the field of educational Coding and Robotics. This led us into 2023 planning aimed at including Coding and Robotics as a large focus in Computer-Integrated Education research.

While MEd and PhD students are already studying the topic, a prospect for Honours students to become involved in this field of research is emerging. We hope to inspire more MEd and PhD studies focused on the topic.

A question that we encounter frequently, is the best choice for Coding and Robotics tools. This is one of the focus areas of our intended research field. Other foci include the question of developing subject knowledge of Coding and Robotics; the integration of Coding and Robotics pedagogical knowledge with subjects and teaching in general; exploring how Coding and Robotics tools and other edtech support each other. We intend to also not be tool-driven, but keep the infrastructural footprint of the integration of Coding and Robotics into teaching and learning in

mind. This requires a consideration for the hardware and software considerations of such implementation plans as well.

Another focus will include robot exploration. This will involve more of a qualitative analysis aimed at the characteristics and teaching and learning possibilities, rather than simply quantified information about the different robots. We hope to identify the qualities that every robot brings to the teaching and learning setting whereby an educational focus is maintained.

The intended theoretical frameworks still include the Technological Pedagogical and Content Knowledge (TPACK) framework, technology acceptance models including Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) model, technology integration models like Technology Integration Planning (TIP) model, Substitution Augmentation Modification Redefinition (SAMR) model and others.

The accessibility of coding and robotics and other digital competences and skills across all education sectors. The integration of rapidly developing and readily available technologies in innovative, active and current teaching and learning practices.

The development of teacher skills in the teaching and learning of all subjects in 21st century education, digitally competent and future-oriented education.

As introduced during the faculty research day, LLITUP strives to be a building ground for inter- and transdisciplinary research endeavours within the faculty and beyond. The research unit has its values within the Living Lab paradigm, aiming to solve problems, enhance innovation and education transformation collaboratively and in a transdisciplinary manner.

Currently, we are focused on research that will inform three main foci:

- The accessibility of coding and robotics and other digital competences and skills across all education sectors
- The integration of rapidly developing and readily available technologies in innovative, active and current teaching and learning practices
- The development of teacher skills in the teaching and learning of all subjects in 21st century education, digitally competent and future-oriented education.

We look forward to many involvements in research on multiple platforms in all sectors of education.



## E-VENTS: Engaging Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) partners in Coding and Robotics

Authors: The LLITUP team

On 21 September 2021 the Faculty of Education welcomed multiple WIL partners to campus. LLITUP was there to showcase our work in the collaboratorium with a focus on the teaching and learning of Coding and Robotics. The team worked hard, and had a ball while doing so, in preparing for exciting learning endeavours in which to engage the attendees in. From badges, Bee-bot mats and stories, to new Bee-bot games aimed at Mathematics and numbers - a host of activities were displayed.

Attendees, including school principals, teachers, students, external lecturers, staff from the WIL office and also other faculties had the opportunity to engage with our tools and resources.

The road safety map, created by Jody in 2020 already, featured again. This time, however, it had ready-packed codes associated with it that attendees could come and debug (i.e.

find the error in the code) by placing bug pictures on the incorrect codes. This gave a new and exciting twist to the computational thinking practice of debugging.

The new Maths game entails some mathematical reasoning. The aim of the game is to reach the highest possible score within 10 moves on the mat. It works as follows:

- Choose a number to start off with
- Go through different Maths operations as indicated on the mat
- Do the Maths and calculate your score

For some of the attendees, Coding and Robotics was a new and exciting field. Others could share their own experiences in the field. Those that engaged with our activities managed to get badges including badges called Code Cracker, Bot Master, Programmer and Debugger. It is advantageous that no previous coding

experience is required for attendees to interact with the resources, tools, and games presented by LLITUP. An outcome of this event was that the WIL office shared our Coding and Robotics symposium invitation with everybody that was invited to the WIL event.



▲ Badges add an element of gamification to a learning experience. These four coding badges were designed and described by Fariyah Jaffer

## FROGGY'S TECH CORNER



### Exploring the Clevertouch interactive board

Authors: Jody Joubert and Annèl van Rooyen

#### The F-lab in the Natural Sciences building is now home to the 75" interactive board, the Clevertouch.

It was sponsored by Interactive AV Solutions. This versatile board is supported by both Android and Windows operating systems. While it allows for teaching using Lynx for quizzes, as well as other interactive activities, we have also experimented with this board in several ways. One element of LLITUP's exploration is the identification of additional apps that can be integrated into the device's own app store.

A highlight of this board is how it enables seamless integration into hybrid teaching and learning. As a tool, this board really assists us in bringing those beyond the classroom walls (especially online) into the face-to-face classroom experience.

One such an integration that had people talking and involved all audience members well, was at the Coding and Robotics symposium. Both participants in the room and the online attendees were equally well involved.

Some other benefits of the board include its mobility. Since the screen is mobile, it can be brought closer to the audience for better vision. This also has potential for flexible classroom teaching spaces. For writing purposes, the board allows the user to write on pictures. It can also transfer handwriting to text as well as recognise handwritten mathematics equations.

From the students' perspective, the board's Wi-fi and pin connectivity allows for sharing of materials between students and the board. Even more, students can write on the white board from the comfort of their chairs.

We are excited about the possibilities that the board presents, as well as further collaboration with Interactive AV Solutions.



▲ Prof Callaghan, Fariyah Jaffer and Jody Joubert welcoming the Clevertouch board to the F-lab



## Developing tangible tokens for Scratch

Authors: Jody Joubert and Annèl van Rooyen

Coding can be made accessible to learners by means of tangible computing. Tangible coding languages incorporate physical objects. Tools like *Tanks powered by Tangible* and *Scotty Go!* use tangible cards that are packed like puzzle pieces and then scanned using a digital device for some on-screen action. The block-based coding language *Scratch* is a screen-based application that teaches learners several coding concepts. It is also an open-source coding language which is highly beneficial in terms of accessibility. We have identified a need to turn these online coding blocks into tangible puzzle pieces as well.

When browsing for such tangible resources, online pictures are available. Prof Callaghan and Jody decided to design their own *Scratch* blocks to be cut from perspex. These blocks can then be built like a puzzle and modified

using dry-wipe markers. The puzzle-effect (i.e. the pieces must fit, otherwise the code cannot be executed successfully) is a key component of this tangible learning experience.

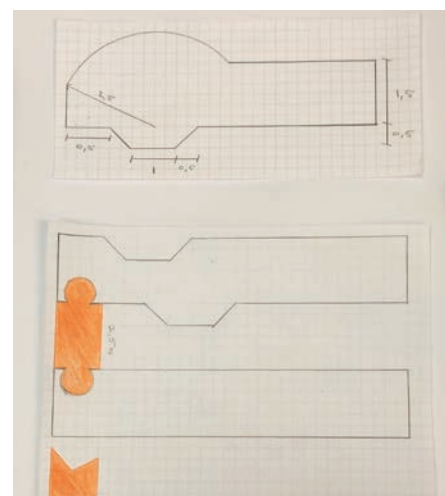
The approach to using these tangible *Scratch* blocks will entail the following:

- Start building block-based code using the tangible *Scratch* blocks
- Explore with the online *Scratch* coding application
- Progress to coding a robot like mBot, LEGO or Arduino-based robots

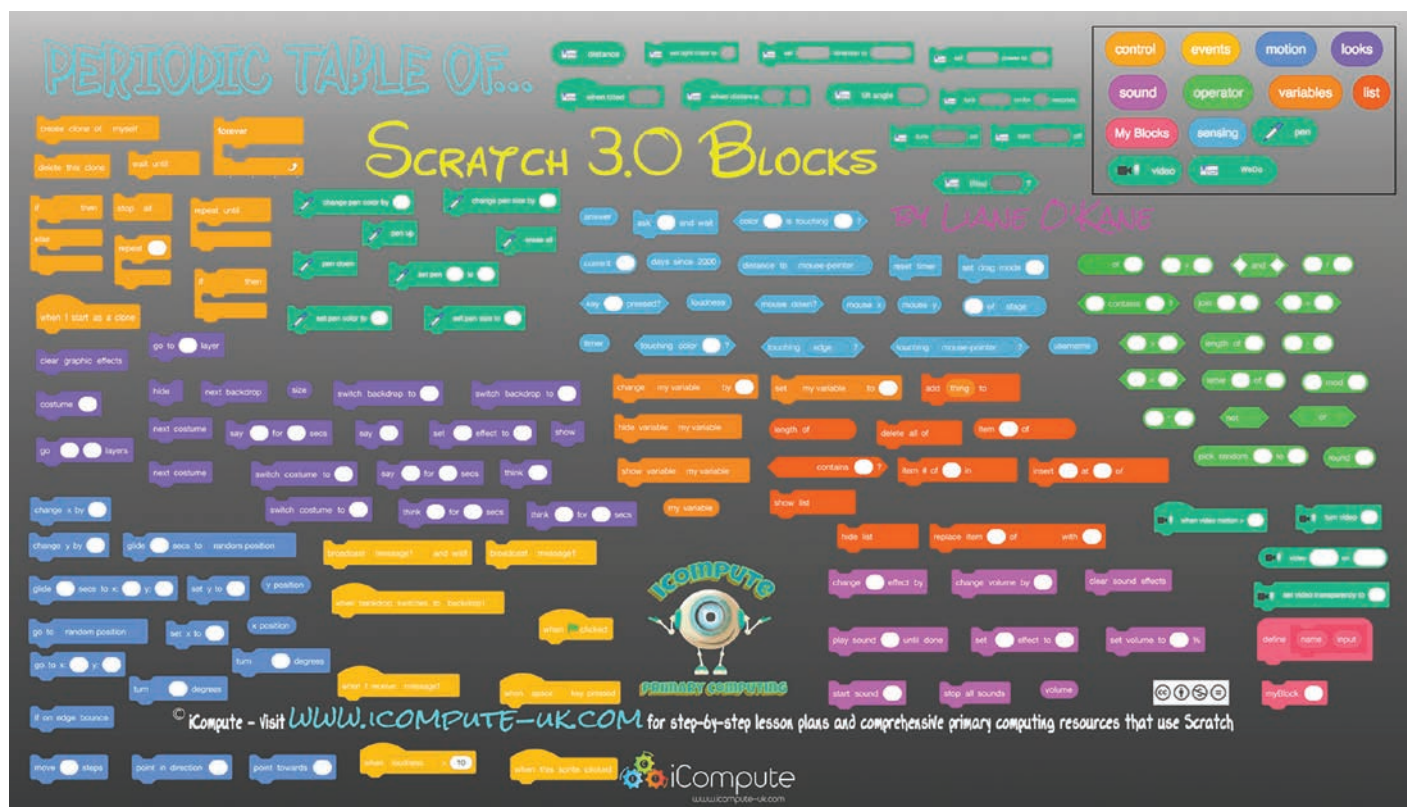
We are looking forward to making and playing with the anticipated final product.

Download it at:

<http://www.icompute-uk.com/news/editable-scratch3-blocks/>



▲ Jody's drawings in preparation for perspex *Scratch* blocks



▲ Jody's drawings in preparation for perspex *Scratch* blocks



## LLITUP's Coding and Robotics tools

Authors: Jody Joubert and Annèl van Rooyen

The LLITUP Collaboratorium is continuously testing and evaluating various educational (and other) robots, as well as Coding and Robotics tools that can be used in the teaching and learning of Coding and Robotics at all levels of education. Over the five-year period of the Collaboratorium's existence, various robots have been acquired for testing.

Our first engagement with robotics came with a beautiful pink mBot, provided by Google in early 2017. This paved the way for our questioning of the place and importance of robots in the educational sector. Currently, the Collaboratorium has 12 different robots that have been acquired. These robots have been acquired in two ways. Firstly, the Collaboratorium identifies and acquires robots after careful consideration. Secondly, stakeholders from private industry often donate, or lend robots to the Collaboratorium. In either case the robots (and other types of Coding and Robotics tools) are evaluated to identify key factors linking them to possible solutions that they can offer to education.

As these tools are regularly and rigorously tested for the possibilities they offer to the education sectors, we link it to evaluation criteria. These include, but are not limited to, the rationale for the tool choice; the computational thinking and other concepts that can be developed while using the tool; its cost and durability; the possible uses of the tool and the type of coding that can be done with the tool. Furthermore, we look at descriptions in terms of hardware and software; its technical requirements; manufacturer and/or supplier. We also consider its intended age spectrum; educational method; anticipated play situations built into the design; as well materials that can accompany the tool. We look

at how different tools can be implemented as mindtools and then we categorise the robots.

In 2022, Scotty Go! and Photon was sent to LLITUP for evaluation and exploration. While Scotty Go! is here to stay, Photon is only visiting Froggy in the lab. On our own terms, we have acquired Bopper, Hip and Hop, some members of the Coding Critter family. Our Bee-bot family has also extended from six to twelve members. Other robots from the TTS group, suppliers of the Bee-bot, that have joined our Coding and Robotics club include the Blue-Bot and the Pro-Bot. The BeCreeo kit is also amongst our current collection.



▲ From left to right, some of our robot family now includes the Blue-Bot, pink mBot, Photon, blue mBot, Bee-bot and LEGO Mindstorms EV3 (an elephant built here) in the back

## Introducing Coding and Robotics tools: Coding Critters

Authors: The LITUP team

### In search of a more affordable alternative to the Bee-bot, Farihah Jaffer decided to purchase the Coding Critter named Bopper.

The tool was easily available from Takealot at R800 (April 2022). By now, the Critters are priced at R1000. While affordability and easy accessibility were some of Farihah's criteria, she was introduced to the tool in MEd student Embeth van der Wal's study that used Coding Critters for teaching and learning.

Farihah acquired the bunny Bopper with playmates Hip and Hop. Other animals that form part of the Coding Critter family include Skye, the unicorn with a wand for remote-controlled coding; the dinosaurs Rumble and Bumble as well as the cats Scamper and Sneaker. While we have not welcomed an entire family of Coding Critters to the lab, we assume that every Critter will make different sounds and include different play scenes, but that the same coding principles will be applied.

The Coding Critters, produced by Learning Resources, are aimed at learners four years

and older. They enable tangible coding using buttons on the robot and allow for screen-free coding. The tool has a play mode where the robot's buttons can be used to play with the critters as real toys that move around and make different sounds.

While playing with the Coding Critter, Farihah compared her Coding Critter experiences with what she knows about the working of Bee-bots. Key differences that she highlighted, include the following:

- The Coding Critter does not make 90 degree turns, but rather more round movements
- The play set was accompanied with some footprint-shaped coding cards, but these are not enough to pack out a complete, more complex code
- The Critter has a memory of 30 steps, in comparison to Bee-bot's 40 steps
- The Critter has four wheels instead of two. Their alignment can also be changed
- Movements are shorter where Critters move 10,2 cm at a time in comparison to 15cm of the Beebot
- The Critters' movements are smooth without stopping between steps, while the Bee-bot makes a small pause after every step

- The Critter does not have a memory of punched-in movements. While this requires that the code needs to be written down or packed using the coding cards, it is not a problem for the intended age of the tool. Young learners, aged four years and older, typically do not want to repeat steps while playing. They prefer to explore different scenarios every time, thereby avoiding repetitiveness and including some variety in their play.

The Coding Critter's associated props (the playground) are cute, although this play scene limits the imagination. The robot's magnetic nose that can connect with the smaller critters, as well as its ability to draw a wagon do, however, provide enjoyable variation in the play scenes. While Farihah did not use the coding storybook that came with the set, it is another nice resource to introduce learners to the tool's different functions and possibilities. The Critter has a sweet variety of sounds.

To its disadvantage, the Critter is powered by 3 AAA batteries and not a rechargeable battery.





## Introducing LLITUP's Coding and Robotics tools: Photon and Scotty Go!

Authors: The LLITUP team

### Photon

Wherever you find yourself in the age range of 3 - 99, its designers claim that it can work for you! Photon can move anything from 10 - 60 cm at a time, makes both 45 and 90 degree turns, and has a bunch of sounds. Expect to hear Photon exclaim happy or angry emotions, copy a few animal noises, and even have sound effects to add to different situations. It is controlled by the app named Photon coding, through a Bluetooth connection. It is coded using badge coding, block coding, and can even advance into *Scratch* and *Python*.

Photon comes with various auxiliaries: Kits, lesson plans, and a demarcated working area mat with 30x30cm blocks. Priced at about R6000, Photon is quite heavy and expensive.

In comparison to the mBot, for us a more familiar counterpart, Photon has an active speaker that can do voice recordings. The robot also has sensors that are different, including a touch sensor, and sensors that allow responses to loud sounds like claps.



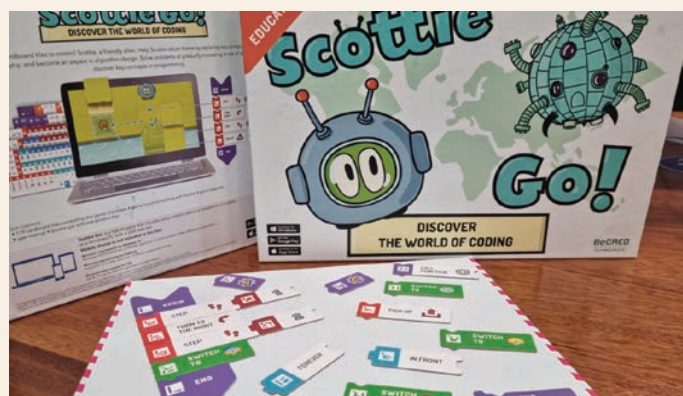
▲ Our robot family with the white Photon with its antenna ears at the back and Bopper, the Coding Critter with its blue ears in the front middle

### Scotty Go!

"Scotty Go is so cool!", Jody exclaimed. Jody always loves the unboxing of new tools. With Scotty Go!, the action of taking out all the command cards was already a learning experience, because it required classification to go into the box layout.

Scotty Go! is a tangible block coding kit with puzzle pieces like we have come to know through *Tanks powered by Tangible*. It is aimed at players of six years and older. It comes with a cardboard field that limits the size of the code, thereby encouraging concise coding.

Scotty is an alien who has to fight and avoid his enemies, the other robots. It can also turn into other characters like the panda, pangolin, cat, dog, penguin and koala. It works with a licensed app Scotty Go! Edu. You buy the box and receive the license key for one tablet, making the robot quite expensive.



▲ The Scotty Go! kit with its cardboard field and tangible cardboard coding pieces



## #TuksAthletics: Sportsman of the year 2022, Jovan van Vuuren

Author: Sindile Mahlangu



▲ Jovan van Vuuren

Jovan van Vuuren, who was named TuksSport Sportsman of the Year 2022, is a master's student in the Department of Humanities Education and a teaching assistant in the Higher Certificate in Sports Science programme.

He is the South African men's long-jump champion, who won his first South African men's senior title at the 2022 Birmingham Commonwealth Games with a jump of 8.04 m, and won a bronze medal at the World Athletics Championships with a jump of 8.06 m.

'Long jumping has been a part of my life for very long,' said Jovan, who started practising

long jump at the age of 11 and turned professional in 2018 at the age of 22.

*'What I have learned on my journey is that it is not only about the performance or everything that happens on the field, but also about opportunities, which includes the opportunity to further one's studies.'*

Jovan van Vuuren continues to make us proud, and we wish him the best of luck with his future endeavours.

## Commonwealth Games bronze medallist shares his experience with Higher Certificate in Sport Sciences students

Author: Henry van der Walt



Jovan van Vuuren, a master's student in Humanities Education and Higher Certificate in Sport Sciences teaching assistant recently shared his remarkable journey—which led to winning a bronze medal in the long jump at the 2022 Commonwealth Games—with Sports Science students.

Jovan immediately captured the students' attention when he stated that 'success is not pretty', and that they should not expect it to be pretty as success demands many sacrifices from those who are serious about achieving their goals in their sport. He then discussed some of the techniques he uses when he is in training and competition. He also reminded the students that not everything in life goes as you planned and referred to when he contracted COVID-19 at the 2022 African Championship in Mauritius and had to compete in the long jump final while when he should have been in bed. Another unfortunate hiccup occurred when the team travelling to attend the 2022 World Championship experienced problems with

visas, as a result of which he arrived only two days before the long jump heats and failed to qualify for the finals.

He explained to the class what had gone through his mind on both occasions, and what he had done mentally to still give 100% at the events, even though the odds were against him. He also shared what he had learned from those setbacks and how he succeeded in the next major championship, only one week after the World Championships. Something else he shared with the students was that he sits down after every competition and writes down the positive and negative aspects so that he can work on his mistakes. Even if a competition doesn't go as planned, one can still take something positive from it.

To give your best and perform to your full potential, you must be physically and psychologically prepared. Sometimes being psychologically prepared helps when an athlete does not feel 100% physically. Improving one's mental state is crucial before competing at a professional level.

To mentally prepare himself for competing in an event, he uses music and visualisation to put himself in a position where his focus is 100%. However, since we are all different, every athlete will have to find his or her own way to achieve a focused state of mind.



▲ Jovan van Vuuren addressing the students and sharing his experiences



# Humanities Education students celebrate Mini Olympic Day at Rosina Sedibane Sports School

Author: Nozibusiso Sibiya

*'I feel honoured to have been able to offer a helping hand. It is really gratifying to be part of a university that cares about the community.'*

These were the words of Siyabonga Bukhali, a Higher Certificate in Sports Sciences student at the University of Pretoria who attended the National Recreational Day Mini-Olympics at the Rosina Sedibane School Sports Ground on Friday, 7 October 2022. The event was hosted by Altus Sport in partnership with the Sport for Social Change Network.

Altus Sport is a grassroots organisation that uses sports as a tool for community, youth and girl empowerment. Their flagship programme, Life's a Ball, is sustainably run by their quality sports leaders at more than 120 venues throughout Gauteng. National Recreational Day was introduced in 2014 to keep South Africans active.

'Currently the programme is organised by the SSCN, which works with non-profit sports organisations throughout Africa. This year we also involved other African countries, namely Morocco, Kenya and Tanzania. To teach learners about the Olympic Games, Altus Sport is organising a full-on Olympic Day that will include the lighting of the flame and the parade with participants from different countries,' said Samantha Penells-Ingle, Head of Projects, Monitoring and Evaluation Management at Altus Sport.

The organisation emphasises the importance of the Olympic values in sports in their leaders. To achieve this, they host several conferences and events throughout the year to address Olympism and bring people of different ages, including young children, together through sport.

'We have broom hockey, touch rugby, street soccer and an art station where the kids make drawings that symbolise the Olympics. You don't have to go to the Olympics to be an Olympic athlete. As long as you adhere to the Olympic values, which are respect, responsibility and fair play, you are as good as an Olympics athlete,' Samantha Penells-Ingle said and added that her objective was to encourage more people to work at the grassroots level, teaching children important values from a young age, as this will produce more empowered athletes in South Africa.

'We will meet with L.J. van Zyl and his department to see if there are students who would like to join Altus Sport to become youth leaders next year. We are hoping to encourage students to see the need for people to work in development at the grassroots level. The most valuable lesson I have learned from working with young children is that we all need to care for each other. To produce outstanding athletes as a country we need to teach the players the fundamentals at a young age,' she concluded.

Tuks student Juanette Prinsloo agrees that by working at the grassroots level children can be taught leadership at a young age.

As a hockey player she hopes to get an opportunity to train younger kids before hopefully starting to work for Hockey South Africa.

'It is really interesting to see how children think and see the world. The values of Olympism are important because they teach them respect and how to treat each other. Children need to learn how to be empathetic,' Prinsloo said. She also mentioned that she was grateful to be part of a university that, unlike some others, helps students to find organisations where they can do practicals. Although most people struggle to find work, we receive emails informing us of amazing opportunities for which we can apply. It is also great to be studying at a university that cares about the community,' she concluded.



▲ The lighting of the Olympic flame



▲ A group of participants from different African countries flying their flags high



## Department of Human Movement and Higher Certificate in Sports Sciences Students in the Faculty of Education host their first Athletics Day at Groenkloof Campus

Authors: L.J. van Zyl, Lyanda Phahlane and Nozibusiso Sibiya

**On 20 October 2022, Department of Human Movement and Higher Certificate in Sports Sciences students in the Faculty of Education hosted an athletics day for their students on the Groenkloof athletics field. The event included long jump, athletics and relay races.**

The athletics day was held for first- and second-year Human Movement Studies and Sports Management students. One of their practical modules is athletics and, as part of their final assessment, they had to compete in the athletics day, for which they were divided into groups. The first-year students competed in the 100 m, 400 m, 1 500 m and 4 x 100 m relays, while the second-year students competed in the long

jump. The officials on the day were the Higher Certificate in Sport students who had completed an accredited Athletics South Africa Officiating course and officiated at the event to earn sports practical hours.

University of Pretoria lecturer and former Olympian, L.J. Van Zyl, indicated that the athletics day was very beneficial as it also taught students how to organise a sports event. Even though a few mistakes had been made, he was proud of their overall performance. Second-year student Lucian Bekker, who is enrolled for a BEd degree and started doing long jumping while at high school, was the winner of the long jump (6.70 m), and his group also won the men's relay. Bekker believes that if he is scouted by the right coach and remains humble he might one day represent South Africa in the Olympics.

First-year BEd student and TUKS netball player Sune de Jager, who won the 100 m race and came second in the women's relay competition, said that she had stopped running to join the netball team because team sports are more fun.

Her advice to people who want to participate in athletics is to make sure that they are mentally strong and to compete because of their love for the sport.

The event highlighted the students' passion and their remarkable talent. While the cameras captured amazing moments, staff and student spectators were entertained by TUKS cheerleaders showcasing their talents by dancing to great music that enhanced the atmosphere.



▲ Staff and student spectators at the Faculty of Education Athletics Day



▲ TUKS cheerleaders entertaining spectators



▲ Students participating in different sporting codes









# Groenkloofkampus / Groenkloof Campus / Khamphase ya Groenkloof S 25° 46' 10" E 28° 23' 56"



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10	Auditorium	F15	12	Guest Accommodation	E13	4	Natural Sciences	J14	8	Student Centre	G14	A	Lilium	E18
15	Boma	G13	13	Head: TuksRes	F12	9	Normaal Hall	F14	1	Technical Services	F20	B	Zinnia	D19
20	Cricket Club House	L4	14	Jak aranda Club House	G11	2	Old SACTE	H20	5	Tegnika	J13	UP Emergency Number: 012 420 2310		



# UP EDUCATION AT A GLANCE



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Total number of distance  
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**83%**

Percentage of  
black students

Total number of postgraduate students

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**83.89%**

Percentage of  
international publications



# 2022



# 2023

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