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MEDIA RELEASE

Double win for the University of Pretoria at SA's 'Science Oscars'

Two researchers from the University of Pretoria (UP) have emerged as winners of the highly coveted National Science and Technology Forum/South32 Awards, affectionately referred to as South Africa's "Science Oscars."

The NSTF-South32 Awards acknowledge exceptional contributions to science, engineering, technology (SET), and innovation, and are supported and endorsed by the Department of Science and Innovation (DSI). The awards are widely recognised as the country's most prestigious and extensive accolades in the realm of public SET and innovation.

Professor Paxie Wanangwa Chirwa was the recipient of the Management Award for his people-centred contribution to future forestry development in South Africa, and for training future foresters with the aim of helping them recognise the importance of communities in proximity to the forest resource in sustainable forest management and use.

Prof Chirwa is the South African Forestry Company Limited (SAFCOL) Forest Chair and Director of the Forest Science postgraduate programme in the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences at UP. He is a forest scientist and specialises in socio-ecological systems in forests, agroforestry, and social or community forestry. His research group works on a range of projects in remote regions of South Africa and other forest ecosystems in Africa, including the miombo dry forest and woodlands of southern Africa.

Senior Research Fellow from the Department of Zoology and Entomology, Dr Daniel William Hart, received the TW Kambule-NSTF Award: Emerging Researcher. This was in recognition of his contributions to utilising concepts from evolutionary biology to address biological questions of health, biological, social and economic relevance to humans. His research focuses on using knowledge of evolutionary biology of mammals to improve treatments of human medical conditions and to predict future consequences of climate change.

The University of Pretoria proudly celebrates the remarkable achievements of these exceptional individuals that use their scientific contributions to *make today matter* and create a better tomorrow.

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>> Watch Professor Chirwa's winning moment here:

<https://www.youtube.com/live/PwfYz9sZgLI?feature=share&t=9522>

>> Watch Dr Hart's winning moment here:

<https://www.youtube.com/live/PwfYz9sZgLI?feature=share&t=9986>



From left: Dr Daniel William Hart and Professor Paxie Wanangwa Chirwa with their 2023 NSTF awards.

Credit: Ms Sithembinkosi Tlale

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ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA

The University of Pretoria (UP) is one of the largest contact and residential universities in South Africa, with its administration offices located on its Hatfield Campus in Pretoria. This 115-year-old institution is also one of the largest producers of research in South Africa.

Spread over seven campuses, it has nine faculties and a business school, the Gordon Institute of Business Science (GIBS). It is the only university in the country with a Faculty of Veterinary Science, which is ranked the best in Africa. UP has 120 academic departments and 92 centres and institutes, accommodating more than 56 000 students and offering about 1 100 study programmes. It has the most academic staff with PhDs (70%), NRF-rated researchers (613).

The 2023 QS World University Rankings by Subject ranked UP first in South Africa in Accounting and Finance, Law, Economics and Econometrics, Mechanical Engineering, Electrical and Electronic Engineering, Chemical Engineering, Mathematics, and Veterinary Science.

For more information, please go to www.up.ac.za