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Bologna Summer School

Prof Tharina Guse (Department of Psychology, UP), co-organised and presented numerous lectures at the first International Summer School on Positive Psychology at the University of Bologna (UNIBO) with her Italian colleague, **Prof Chiara Ruini**. Another colleague, **Prof Maretha Visser** (Department of Psychology, UP), presented the topic *Understanding and Promoting Well-being in Different Cultural and Community*.

The Summer School took place from 11 - 13 September 2023 in Bologna, Italy, and was attended by students from Italy, Poland and South Africa. The focus was on theoretical and practical applications of positive psychology to support student well-being and resilience.

The Summer School stems from a fruitful international collaboration between the **Alma Mater Studiorum - Università di Bologna** and the **University of Pretoria**. It aims to **train** new generations of students and PhD candidates within the discipline of **positive psychology** with a strong emphasis on:

- understanding and exploring core concepts in Positive Psychology at personal levels;
- applying these concepts to everyday contexts in order to promote well-being;
- exploring their applications and implications in various cultural contexts.

If interested, click [here](#) for more information about the Summer School, the programme, topics and learning outcomes.



Image Caption:

Row 1: Prof Tharina Guse (HOD, University of Pretoria[UP], Psychology);
Row 2: Nthabiseng Mofokeng (UP Student), Prof Chiara Ruini (University of Bologna[UNIBO]); Prof Teresa Freire (University of Minho {UMinho}, Portugal);
Row 3: Miché Conway (UP Student), Puleng Khotlele (UP Student), Tayla Ponter (UP Student), Sharon Boyce (UP Student), Prof Maretha Visser (Lecturer, UP)

The Department Showcases Research at the 27th Annual Psychological Society of South Africa (PsySSA) Congress

by Dr Jarred Martin

The Psychological Society of South Africa ([PsySSA](#)) held its 27th annual congress and scientific conference from 04 to 06 Oct 2023 at Emperor's Palace in Johannesburg. Staff and students from the [Department of Psychology](#) presented several scientific papers and participated in roundtables as well as symposia. Collectively, the presented work showcased a diverse range of impactful and innovative research being done within the department across the fields of health and well-being, professional training and education in psychology, curriculum development and innovation, community psychology interventions, assessment psychology, as well as gender and sexuality.



Professor David Maree participated in the roundtable *Establishing Best Practices in Psychological Assessment in South Africa: Test Classification, Test Certification and the Role of Assessment Standards South Africa*. The discussion focused on the work of [ASSA](#), of which he is a founding member, along with other professionals.



Dr Sonja Mostert presented the paper, *Health Literacy as a Socially Constructed Concept: Recommendations for Intervention Development*. She also co-presented a paper with Dr Jarred Martin on developing a postgraduate module in health psychology.



Dr Anathi Ntozini presented the paper *Drug Addiction and Marital Conflicts: Exploring the Experiences of Drug-addicted Wives in Abuja, Nigeria*.



Ms Elné Visagie (right) presented two papers; the first, a rapid review titled *Exploring the Role of CBT in the Self-management of Type 2 Diabetes*, offered a comprehensive synthesis of current scientific evidence pertaining to CBT-based interventions and self-management practices. The second paper, *Exploring the Thoughts, Emotions, and Behaviours Related to the Self-management Practices of Adults with Type 2 Diabetes*, delved into the experiences and lives of South African adults. The goal of the research was to shed light on the complex and diverse challenges faced by individuals in their journey towards effective diabetes self-management.

The Department Showcases Research at the 27th Annual Psychological Society of South Africa (PsySSA) Congress (continued)



Dr Jarred Martin (right) chaired the symposium *Sex and Sexualities at the Margins: Re-centring Marginalised Subjectivities, Bodies, and Communities* and hosted the roundtable *The Big O - Overlap: Reflections on Curricular Overlap in Professional Masters-level Clinical and Counselling Psychology Degree Programmes*, with **Dr Kamilla Rawatlal** and colleagues from the University of the Witwatersrand and Rhodes University.



Dr Sonja Mostert (left) co-presented a paper with her student, **Carla Venter** (right), *Exploring health literacy amongst an undergraduate student sample: A comparative study*. **Dr Mostert** also presented a solo paper titled *Health Literacy as a socially constructed concept: Recommendations for Intervention Development* and co-presented a paper with **Dr Jarred Martin** on curriculum development in designing their postgraduate honours-level module on Health psychology.



A recent graduate, **Elizabeth Msimango**, presented the paper *Exploring the Subjective Experiences of Mothers with Children who have Committed Suicide*. She completed her Master of Arts Research Psychology mini-dissertation under the supervision of Mr Setagwa Mahlo (supervisor) and Dr Shingairai Chigeza (co-supervisor).

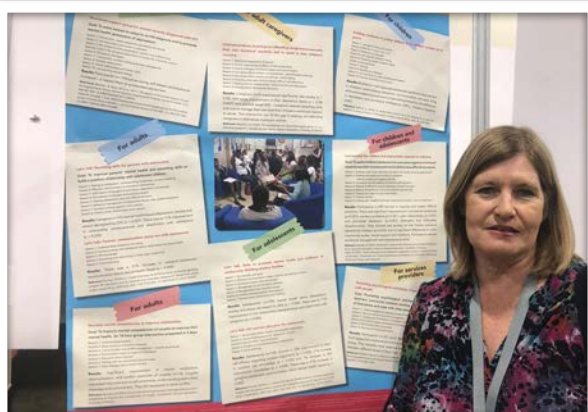


Students from the Master of Arts in Counselling Psychology programme presented their community project *Stress Management and Psychological Well-being of Teachers*. The student presenters **Cayla Bergman-Ally** (left) and **Georgie Kerr** (right) were accompanied by **Professor Maretha Visser** (farthest right), the facilitator of their community psychology module.

Staff Accomplishments within the Department of Psychology



Dr Monique Bezuidenhout, a lecturer in the Department of Psychology, received her Doctor of Philosophy in Psychology during the Spring Graduation Ceremony on 05 Sep 2023, with the title *An Exploration of the Psychological Factors that Contribute to Weight Maintenance after Weight Loss Surgery* under the supervision of Prof Nicoleen Coetzee.



Prof Maretha Visser attended the South African Mental Health Conference (24-25 Apr 2023) at the Emperors Palace. She learned a lot and became more motivated to contribute to ways to improve mental health in communities that cannot afford professional services. **Prof Visser** presented a poster highlighting previous work in communities on *Structured interventions to promote mental health as part of a task-sharing approach in resource-constraint contexts*. The photo above is Prof Visser next to the poster she presented.



Dr Sonja Mostert co-hosted the diabetes webinar titled *Mental Health and Well-being of People Living with Diabetes* in collaboration with **Dr Patrick Piotie** (Diabetes Research Centre). The webinar was well attended, and two keynote speakers shared their expertise along with the personal views of patients living with diabetes and a nurse active in the field.



Mr Sulaiyman Philander, a lecturer in the Department of Psychology, was appointed as an Executive Committee member of the Psychological Society of South Africa's ([PsySSA](#)) Division for Research and Methodology ([DRM](#)). The DRM is a longstanding branch of PsySSA, and has been devoted to the promotion of psychological research and theory as well as the improvement of psychological training and teaching. DRM's focus is currently on providing both the local and international public with information regarding mental health and social issues. The 2023-2025 DRM Executive Committee comprises of Sulaiyman Philander along with Leonie Vorster (Chair), Pakeezah Rajab (Vice Chair), Fatima Peters (Secretary/Treasurer), Dr Bronwyne Coetzee, Dr Kyle Bester and Prof Theophilus Lazarus.

Staff Accomplishments within the Department *(continued)*



Mr Ahmed Mohamed attended the 14th Congress of the European Association for Mental Health in Intellectual Disability in Helsinki, Finland (21 to 23 Sep 2023). He presented the paper *The caregiving challenges, needs and perceptions of current care among primary caregivers of children with intellectual disabilities in urban communities in Gauteng, South Africa: A mixed-methods study*.



Mr Ahmed Mohamed was incredibly fortunate to experience the Northern Lights during his visit to Helsinki, Finland for the conference, as seen in the selfie above.



Prof Maretha Visser and Dr Marilyn Saunders attended the European Conference on Developmental Psychology (ECDP) in Turku, Finland (28 Aug - 01 Sep 2023) and presented the paper *Marriage skills intervention to improve the marital competencies of couples in resource-limited communities in South-Africa*.

Prof Visser also presented a second paper with Robyn Wyman on *Experiences of adolescent girls who have been sexually abused that influence help-seeking behaviour* with Robyn Wyman.



Ms Elné Visagie talks to the host of the podcast *Not Artificially Sweetened* (Episode 33). This thought-provoking podcast delves into the lives of real people and their experiences with diabetes, seeking genuine solutions to the practical challenges of managing the condition. In this episode, she opens up about her PhD journey, highlighting her passion for Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) and her research in developing CBT guidelines for adults with type-2 diabetes. Listen to the podcast at <https://open.spotify.com/episode/7yWBdoDkZVP6ARF1kWs9j9>

Staff Accomplishments within the Department (*continued*)



Dr Kamilla Rawatlal published the book, *Clinical Supervision in South Africa: Improving practice with limited resources* (2023), with Springer International. Increasingly South African trainee Psychologists are faced with the responsibility of assuming multiple roles and responsibilities in diverse and sometimes resource limited practice settings.

This publication includes 10 chapters that focus on applying a systemic framework to the development of clinical competencies at the individual, interpersonal and macro-levels of influence to support trainees navigate contemporary practice realities. Various figures and diagrams included in the book highlight how this can be strategically achieved. The need to address self-care, a neglected area in the supervisory space, also informs the critical area of well-being of practitioners and is paid homage to in this publication. The publication will be included as a prescribed book/resource for the practicum module on the Master of Arts (Counselling Psychology) programme in 2024.

Prof Tharina Guse (HOD) also contributed to the Chapter *Towards well-being: Self care in the supervisory space*.

The hard cover will be released in Nov 2023. Click on the link below, for the table of contents and abstracts of each chapter:

<https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-3-031-41929-4>.



Mrs Juanita Haug the Operational Coordinator in the department and Day House Guardian of the Luminous Day House, won the *Day House Guardian of the Year* award for the consecutive year in a row.

The award was presented to her at the *2023 Student Life Awards*, arranged by the *Department of Student Affairs* on 11 Oct 2023. This is awarded to the Guardian that has made the biggest contribution to a Day House or a Faculty respectively. The nominations are scrutinised through a panel of judges who have the ultimate decision of who win.

Luminous Day House is a day house rooted in diversity dedicated to providing a platform to equip day students with the necessary skills to achieve optimal excellence within and outside of UP. Luminous aim to give members a platform to socialise, be themselves and try new things in order to broaden their horizons.

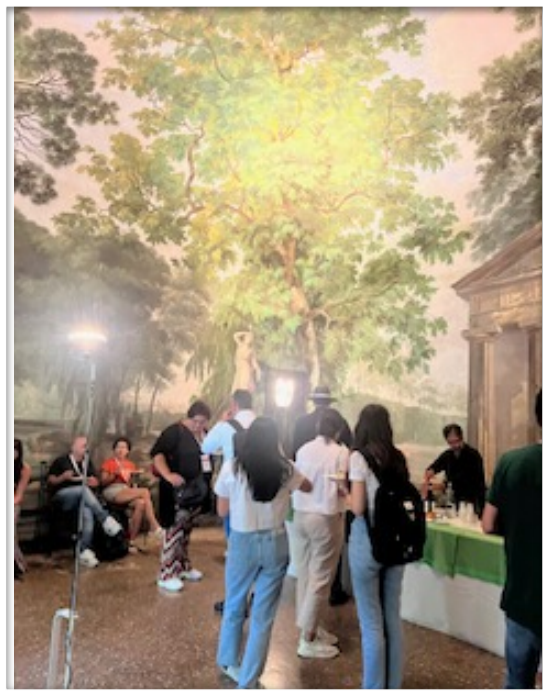
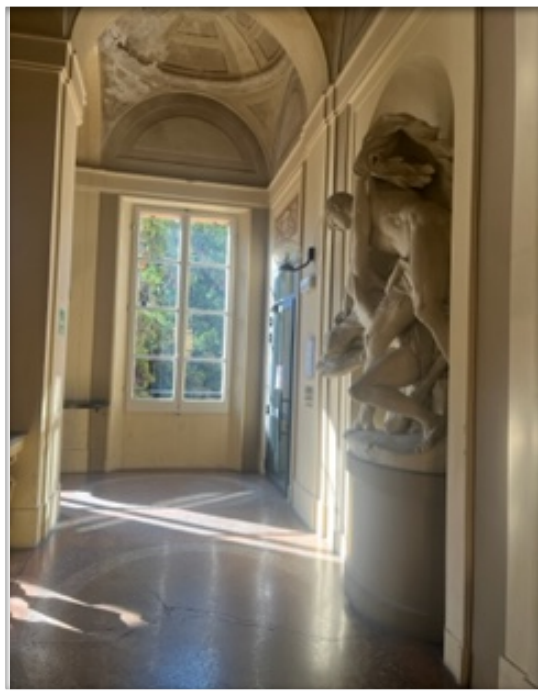
The House Luminous slogan is *Lux in Tenebris*, meaning *Light within the Darkness*.

Access the Luminous Day House website [here](#)

on the last page...

Additional photos of the beautiful venues at the Summer School at the University of Bologna...

Additional Photos from the Summer School at the University of Bologna



The photo above (left) was taken in one of the corridors, and the one above (right) in the beautiful lunch venue. The lecture halls, and venues are painted in beautiful Italian scenery.



The photo above from left to right: Ms Sharon Boyce (UP student), Prof Maretha Visser (UP Lecturer), Ms Puleng Khotele (UP student), and Ms Tayla Ponter (UP student) in the beautiful lunch venue.