



February 2010

EDITORIAL

Welcome to the February 2010 edition of **alumninews**. We start this year by welcoming an additional member to our team, *alumnus* Niven Maree who is joining us as Liaison Officer: Fundraising. Welcome back Niven. In this edition you will read about an international conference on multi-grade education which will be hosted by the Centre for Multi-Grade Education in Wellington during the month of March. You will further read about our new Alumni Mentorship Programme which is aimed at giving alumni and current students an opportunity to interact while learning from each other. We trust that you will be inspired to become a mentor too. Once again we urge you to join in with thousands of other alumni, who are giving towards the CPUT Annual Fund which assists students realise their dream of attaining a higher education qualification. More information on how to make a contribution is available on www.cput.ac.za click on Alumni.

Happy reading.

INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

International Conference on Multi-Grade Education to attract experts in the field

International and local experts on multi-grade education will descend upon the Wellington Campus this month to attend the first Southern African Multi-Grade Education Conference.

The three-day conference kicks off on Monday 22 March with the aim to develop a generic integrated policy and strategy on multi-grade education in Southern Africa.

The conference is further expected to raise awareness on the importance of multi-grade teaching as a strategy to improve teaching and learning and address teacher shortages in some education conditions. The conference, a brainchild of the CPUT Centre for Multi-Grade Education will see the convergence of more than 100 experts from African, Asian and European countries as well as Australia. Centre Director Dr Jurie Joubert said the conference will be the first of its kind on the continent and possibly the world. He said although there had been conferences on education which addressed aspects of multi-grade education before, none had been dedicated to the phenomenon.

Multi-grade education refers to settings where children of different grade levels are taught in the same classroom at the same time. In South Africa, 12 million children attend primary schools and 3 million of these children are taught in multi-grade classrooms. This picture mirrors that of the rest of the African continent where about 50% of classrooms are multi-grade.

There is, however nothing wrong with multi-grade education if resources and teacher training are available. Joubert said the multi-grade phenomenon was practiced seamlessly in developed countries like Finland but in local rural areas proper multi-grade education was hampered by the lack of learning materials and relevant teacher training. "The solution lies with the teachers," Joubert said adding that teacher training had to respond to learning environment needs in order for education to be effective. He said conference delegates would benefit from information sharing from delegates representing countries where multi-grade education was successfully practiced as well as from accounts of the Centre's successful intervention in local rural schools.

Apart from training teachers to be able to deal effectively with multi-grade environments, the Centre provides pupils and teachers with curriculum and teacher resources specifically geared towards multi-grade environments. This in turn ensures that the level of education of rural primary school pupils is brought on par with that of their counterparts in urban schools.



Of 12 million children in primary schools in South Africa, about 3 million learn under multi-grade classroom conditions. The Centre for Multi-Grade Education at the Wellington Campus seeks to equip teachers with the necessary skills and resources to better handle multi grade classrooms.

ALUMNI ON THE MOVE

Mauerberger Foundation Post-graduate Scholarship for Research Excellence Award recipient to graduate

One of the first recipients of the Mauerberger Foundation Post-graduate Scholarship for Research Excellence Award is set to graduate in April. Koketso Kujane received the award along with seven other CPUT post-graduate students when the scholarship award was established in April 2008. The scholarship, made possible by the Mauerberger Foundation is awarded to students with an academic achievement of 75% or more. Each recipient is awarded a research grant of R50, 000.00 per year. We asked Kujane, who is looking forward to receiving her M-Tech Electrical Engineering degree about her achievement:

Tell us about your research topic?

The title of my research project is: "Investigation and development of methods for optimal control of the activated sludge process". The motivation to choose this topic came from the fact that control systems is my chosen area of specialty; others choose heavy current, telecommunications, etc. No field can go without control, so this way I get exposure to many other interesting engineering stuff depending on the job I find myself in. So my topic really introduced me to advanced control systems, which gave me more than what I learnt at B-Tech level.

Not many people complete their post-graduate studies. What does it mean for you to successfully complete your research?

I managed to start something and complete it despite the difficulty, so I feel very proud of myself; I know that I can do anything I want to do. This is a motivation to me to continue aiming high and persevering through.

How will your studies contribute towards your advancement?

I gained advanced knowledge on the control field; I am now able to do research work, so really I can do anything I put my mind to. I made contacts with different post graduate students from all over the world, from different fields so that will help me very much in the future.

What's next for you career-wise?

I would like to be in the working arena for at least 3 - 4 years, see what it is they do, and if I can use what I learnt during the project. I started working for Eskom in Bellville from the 1st of March, I would like to be part of the collaboration that Eskom has with the CPUT Electrical Engineering Department, and hopefully be one of the leaders in the project that they collaborate on. I have dreams to become a specialist in my area, but it is very broad so I have to get as much exposure as possible so that I can choose what I like and hopefully develop something that I can concentrate on during my D-Tech studies. My aim is to continue with my studies but I have to be sure that I will be doing something worthwhile (for me and for the community). So until I find what it is that I want to do, I will put the D-Tech dream on hold and find my feet at Eskom while continuing to work with my supervisor, Prof. Tzoneva.

Tell us about yourself.

I am from the North West province from a place called Taung. I am the first in a family of four kids. My family is my daily dose of motivation; I never go a day without considering them. I will be turning 30 this year, single and without kids.

What obstacles have you had to overcome to be where you are now?

I was a very timid person, I still possess some of that, but I have grown very much in that area. That has been my number 1 obstacle in life. And when you are like that you tend to give up (more easily) in life, so I have had to learn to do things despite how I felt so now I am more open. I have made more friends in the last five years than I probably have made in my entire life. I came out of my cocoon and I believe in myself more, that is why I have bigger dreams now.



2008 Scholarship Recipients

Alia Adams - Business
Vernon Davids - Engineering
Anton Harris - Engineering
Koketso Kujane - Engineering
Donovan Malgas - Informatics & Design
Adriaan Rootman - Engineering
Brent Vallay - Engineering
Adrienne van As - Education



CPUT alumnus takes on world's second highest mountain

They may not have reached the summit of Mount Aconcagua this time around but CPUT mountaineers staff member Anette Grobler and alumnus Ntlaletseng Ramohlola have once again proven that there is no mountain high enough to keep one from following one's dreams.

Seven times the height of Table Mountain; Mount Aconcagua in Argentina, South America is the highest in the southern and western hemispheres and is one of the seven highest mountains in the world. Known for its harsh winds, brutal snow storms and dehydrating conditions, Mount Aconcagua saw the team returning from their attempt not distraught but humbled by their experience. Pictured with Ramohlola and Grobler is expedition leader, Sean Disney.

DEPARTMENTAL DEVELOPMENTS

Advancement department welcomes new staffer

We welcome our *alumnus* and now employee Niven Maree into our team. Niven was appointed as Liaison Officer: Fundraising from March 2010. He joins us from Octagon Marketing, a sports sponsorships agency where he was Accounts Director for Engen and Ackermans sponsorships. Before that Niven was a fundraiser at the University of Cape Town.

"As a graduate of this institution, I am extremely proud to have joined my *Alma Mater*. Within my portfolio, and as the newest member of the Advancement Department, I aim to instill in the minds of sponsors and the general public that CPUT is a worthy institution of choice, promoting technology education and innovation in Africa," Maree said.

CPUT alumni eager to mentor current students

CPUT alumni willing to pass on their knowledge and skills to current students can now do so through the newly established Alumni Mentorship Programme. The programme was piloted during a re-union held in Pretoria recently. Alumni attending the re-union indicated their willingness to impart their vocational and life skills to students as a way of giving back to the university.

Alumni Officer responsible for the programme Nandipha Madadasana said the re-union proved to be a great opportunity to introduce alumni attending the re-union to the CPUT brand and to get their buy-in into the programme. "The aim of the programme is to give alumni an opportunity to get involved in grooming and improving academic performance of current students as a means of giving to CPUT," Madadasana said. The programme, currently at its infancy stage is an initiative of the Advancement Department in collaboration with Fundani Centre for Higher Education Development.

CPUT alumni interested in becoming mentors can register their names and areas of expertise by e-mailing madadasanan@cput.ac.za or calling +27 21 460 3363.

CONTRIBUTE

We wish to thank alumni and friends of CPUT for continuous support. It is through your giving that CPUT provides talented students with responsive training which equips them with leadership and practical skills required in the working world. To make a contribution to any of our projects contact Dr Garth van Gensen on +27 21 460 3389 or +27 21 460 3785.

CONTACT DETAILS

To make contact call +27 21 460 3389 or e-mail alumni@cput.ac.za. For news items or to talk to us about a news item you would like to read about in the newsletter e-mail alumninews@cput.ac.za. Check out our alumni web portal on www.cput.ac.za

*This newsletter is produced by the CPUT Advancement Department.
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