

ALUMNI connect

Cape Peninsula University of Technology

EDITION 1 2016

Warmest greetings to our alumni and a hearty welcome to the 7 000-plus graduates who have swelled the ranks of our Alumni Association following April Graduation 2016.

All the best to you, our newly-minted alumni – we hope CPUT will be your university of choice if you decide to study further.

We'd like to assure you that the

Alumni office is here for you even though you may have formally "left" CPUT. We help you obtain copies of your certificates and academic records, reconnect you with former classmates and assist with facilitating class reunions.

Should you want to pay it forward by doing motivational talks or be considered as a guest speaker at graduation ceremonies, then let us know.

In this newsletter we tell the story

of two alumni who did just that.

We also shine the spotlight on outstanding CPUT alumni who're making waves across the world, with a particular focus on women in honour of Women's Month.

Most excitingly, in this newsletter we share details of some fantastic exclusive benefits and discounts for our alumni. You'll also stand a chance to win one of three copies of a beautiful cookbook written by alumna Cariema Isaacs.

Please be sure to give us your **updated contact details** so we can invite you to alumni/university events. Happy reading and stay in touch.

Val and Francois



STUNNING 20% DISCOUNT



FOR CPUT STAFF AND ALUMNI AT EXCLUSIVE VENUES IN CAPE TOWN AND STELLENBOSCH

Here's an awesome opportunity for our alumni across South Africa and the globe to revisit the Mother City and Stellenbosch – and for our staff and alumni who live here, these are wonderful spaces to relax, enjoy a meal or use for conferences.

Staff and alumni now enjoy:

- A whopping 20% off accommodation and conferencing when visiting **Best Western Cape Suites Hotel**. The hotel is nestled beneath Table Mountain, just opposite the Cape Town campus and with easy access to the city centre, V&A Waterfront and major attractions in and around Cape Town.
- 20% discount on accommodation at the **Stellenbosch Hotel, Coopmanhuijs Boutique Hotel & Spa and Rivierbos Guesthouse**.
- 15% discount on conference facilities at Stellenbosch Hotel and Coopmanhuijs Boutique Hotel & Spa
- The discount applies to all staff and graduates of CPUT.

Simply contact the hotels and guesthouses concerned via the links above.



GRAD WRAP

In our Autumn Graduation week, the highlight of our year, CPUT hosted 15 graduation ceremonies with a total of 6 807 qualifications being conferred. 74 of these were Masters and 12 were Doctoral qualifications.

In a historic first, this graduation week saw the awarding of the Caro Wiese award, an initiative of Dr Christo Wiese, who holds an honorary doctorate from CPUT.

Named after his wife, the R70 000 award is offered annually to a CPUT student who has succeeded in overcoming extremely difficult

circumstances and achieved full academic potential.

The inaugural award was conferred on Matthew Benjamin, an Information Technology graduate. Originally from Sudan, Matthew arrived in Cape Town in 2011, speaking very little English and with only R200 in his back pocket.

Determined to study, he taught himself English using YouTube videos and eventually enrolled for a Masters course in IT. We've profiled this exceptional young man in this newsletter if you'd like to find out more about his inspiring journey.

Dr Wiese has also pledged a second annual award to CPUT

in future, one for a male and a second for a female student. The awards will be granted annually.

Our annual **Grad Mag**, highlighting the achievements of our graduates is a must-read – you'll be amazed at the movers and shakers our university produces. One of these, Dr Marthinus Jordaan, spoke at the grad ceremony of the Education Faculty. Dr Jordaan, a graduate of the former Cape Technikon, is a busy man. He runs his own three-star rated guest house, has published eight books and is now busy writing a further three. He shared his moving academic history spanning over five decades, his zeal and endurance seeing him finally obtaining his PhD from the

Central University of Technology.

His doctoral thesis looked at genealogy, heritage and tourism. Anyone finding themselves in Bloem will be well-looked after at **Dr Jordaan's guesthouse**.

This year's graduation also marked the end of an era for CPUT, as the University's first Chancellor, Trevor Manuel officiated at his final graduation ceremony. Dr Manuel has been Chancellor for the past 9 years and although his term has now ended, CPUT will continue to work closely with him in future.

We thank him for the enormous contribution he has made to our university.

ALUMNI Profiles

Q&A WITH CAROLYN GAD

Surface Design alumna

Carolyn works at huge bio-medical research university in the Czech Republic as an artist-in-residence with a difference.

She has a unique and ground-breaking job at the only university in the world that employs an artist in their medical research program. Carolyn is tasked with creating illustrations for talks about medical research given by the universities' professors as they speak to the public and at conferences. She is also working on a project illustrating 15 children's stories written by celebrities; the project is in its third year.

Carolyn completed her Diploma in 2004 (at the former Cape Tech) and her BTEch in Surface Design in 2005 at the newly-merged CPUT.

"I learned a wide range of skills from silkscreen printing, fabric painting, illustration, 2D animation and even welding during my BTEch year. In my fourth year, I was supervised by lecturers Julia

Brewis and Aletia Chisin, who both had a profound impact on my life. I would not be where I am today without their support."

After a few years of travel abroad, Carolyn returned to SA and was asked to illustrate a series of children's stories written by celebrities for a leading Czech non-profit, who raise funds for cancer research. One thing lead to another and just over a year ago, she was asked by the Institute of Molecular & Translational Medicine, at Palacký University in Czechoslovakia, to work as their artist-in-residence.

"My job is to help the Director of the Institute in his talks and lectures by illustrating concepts in an understandable way to the medical community and public. In a nutshell, I present the Director's ideas visually in a fun

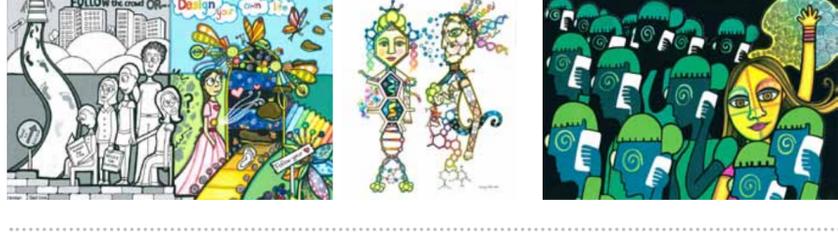
and humorous way. This makes it easier for the public to connect and comprehend."

Carolyn says she loves the freedom to work from her imagination and that her drawings and hand-painted work are appreciated by scientists. She also enjoys working with people from all over the world.

Her advice to new graduates – spend less time immersed in technology and preserve your imagination. "It's difficult to be original these days, but always be yourself. Don't be intimidated or discouraged by the enormous pool of talent out there when you graduate. Someone may be better than you on a technical level, but there is only one you. Nobody can express your story as creatively as you can, so go out there and tell your story."



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CINDY WAXA

Photographer

And on to another outstanding artistic talent from CPUT – as we celebrate Women's Month, we thought these incredible pictures from alumna Cindy Waxa will help educate many about women in isiXhosa culture. Cindy graduated with a National Diploma in Photography in 2005.

She currently works for Independent Newspapers covering all kinds of news stories. She's also held several successful photographic exhibitions.

"Ritual Entry to Womanhood, are some of her favourites.

"This came about when I was in Qunu covering Madiba's funeral.

This is a ritual that prepares young women to learn about the social responsibilities that comes with womanhood. It's one of the important rituals for all Xhosa girls. I was a finalist in the 2014 Standard Bank Sikuvile Awards for this work. In 2014 I was also a finalist of the 20 Years of Democracy exhibition that was held at Artscape.

Besides photographing the Jazz festival for 10 years I have been documenting the Sangomas in Khayelitsha. It was a very interesting project for me because there were things that I was not aware of but learnt while spending time with them. For example - one doesn't choose to become a sangoma, one is chosen by the ancestors."

The selection of pics below, from Cindy's exhibition, Ritual Entry to Womanhood, are some of her favourites.

"Once a girl reaches puberty she spends a month in a hut behind a thatched mat so that no one except her aunts and girls assisting them sees her. The girl learns about respecting her body, how to carry



herself as a female child in her family, respecting other women and about the traditions and rituals Xhosas should practice."

"Live the life you have imagined and make a success of it. I'm a huge believer in hard work and determination – with these two qualities, anything is possible."



MATTHEW BENJAMIN

IT Guru and inaugural Caro Wiese Award winner

As mentioned in our Grad wrap above, a graduate that SA business tycoon Dr Christo Wiese made to CPUT came to fruition this April. It has forever changed the life of one special MTEch IT graduate, Matthew Benjamin.

Wiese attended the Informatics and Design graduation personally to congratulate the inaugural recipient of the Caro Wiese

award. Named after his wife, the award is offered annually to a CPUT student who has succeeded in overcoming extremely difficult circumstances and achieved full academic potential.

The recipient Matthew Benjamin is originally from Sudan and arrived in Cape Town in 2011, speaking very little English and with only R200 to his name. He knew that education would be his lifeline and began teaching himself English using YouTube videos. Matthew eventually enrolled for a Masters course in IT. Using the amenities on offer to CPUT students, like the IT labs and E-Learning Centre, Matthew successfully graduated last year and has plans to continue his studies thanks to the Wiese family's generosity.

"Thank you to everyone who helped me along the way including my CPUT lecturers and Dr Christo Wiese," says Matthew.

He's planning to study his doctorate in due course, but for now, new and exciting horizons beckon. We wish this courageous and dedicated alumna every success as he broadens his worldview in Australia.



CARIEMA ISAACS

Project manager – Shell Middle East, author and mentor to CPUT's students plus Winter Warmer Book Giveaway

Alumnus Cariema is an effervescent and articulate dynamo. Not only is she a proud wife and mom and full-time employee of Shell in the Middle East, but the author of a very special cookbook.

In it, you'll find both home-grown delicious recipes and a warm and loving story of Cape Malay culture.

Cariema gave a hugely successful motivational talk to our Marketing students recently. She spoke of her life struggles, her time at CPUT, her beloved family and her motivations in writing her beautifully-illustrated cookbook, *Cooking for my Father in My Cape Malay Kitchen*. Two years ago, shortly after her father's death, she sat down to document family recipes. But the writing process drew forth another story too – that of the wonderful relationship she had with her dad, Moegamad Isaacs.

So it's not just a cookbook, but includes anecdotes about her family and how cooking has been an essential part of their lives for generations. Cariema believes firmly in giving back and thus her talk was not just a one-off. She chose four lucky



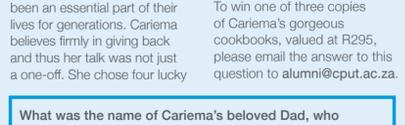
and enthusiastic students in the audience to be the recipients of her marketing and branding work. She'll be skipping with each of them every quarter, gently guiding and mentoring the students as they face the challenges of academia.

To win one of three copies of Cariema's gorgeous cookbooks, valued at R295, please email the answer to this question to alumni@cput.ac.za.

What was the name of Cariema's beloved Dad, who inspired the writing of this cookbook?

The first three correct answers received will be the winners. Be sure to include your cell phone

or landline number and postal address. Good Luck!



ALUMNI BURSARY FUND

A saviour for CPUT's deserving students

We conclude with a massive thank you, to you, our alumni, who have contributed so generously to our Bursary Fund. This has resulted in 6 academically-deserving students being awarded funding to help towards payment of their fees – a lifeline for all of these bright but cash-strapped young movers and shakers.

The students were chosen from a range of departments and faculties, from Mechanical Engineering, Marketing, Radiography and Dental technology, amongst others, and have all consistently achieved excellent results.

challenges I too faced as a student. Through your academic achievements, you've shown great promise and will no doubt one day be successful in your chosen fields. And when this day comes, I urge you to look back with gratitude to those who helped you on your way.

Alumni Association outgoing chairperson, Jeff Daniels, was present at the official bursary fund handover and encouraged the students to make the most of this opportunity.

As graduates, we have a responsibility to contribute to our society, to give back to the next generation in whatever small or large way we can. Donating to CPUT's Bursary Fund is a simple and life-changing way to do so."

"As I sit with you all today, I remember the

If you'd like to donate to our Bursary Fund, SIMPLY CLICK HERE for more information.

It's a quick, easy and secure way to give back to those who need it most.