

Warmest greetings to all CPUT Alumni!

2015 has been chock-full of activity – from graduation to convocation and much celebration as we mark ten years of ground breaking firsts, innovation and international acclaim.

In this newsletter, you'll find a recap of our epic April graduation week which saw 7 000 graduates capped in 15 ceremonies. This was the highest number of graduates we've seen at an Autumn Graduation and for the first time in our history, we bestowed honorary doctorates on two of South Africa's great achievers.

Renowned businessman Dr Christo Wiese was awarded a Doctorate in Technologia, Marketing for his immense contribution to industry.

Dr Brigalia Bam, the former Chairperson of the Independent Electoral Commission was awarded a Doctorate in Education for her outstanding work as an educator.

We also give you an update of the recent Special General Meeting of the Alumni Association at which an Alumni Constitution was adopted.

The meeting was followed directly

by a Convocation meeting, another first for CPUT which sets us on the path will as a fully-fledged institution.

In amongst the profiles of our high-flying alumni, you'll see how staff and students are making the most of our 10th birthday year.

There are some exciting events coming up in which you can join in the birthday celebrations – we'll be sure to keep you informed.

May the rest of your winter be filled with warmth and wellness!



Valerie and Francois

PS. Do have a look at our Special Edition 2015 GradMag. It's a must-read, profiling 10 alumni who graduated in the past decade. All are exceptional in their own way. We couldn't be prouder of these CPUT stars.



It was a graduation that will live on in memory, attended by captains of industry, the diplomatic corps and three former Vice-Chancellors - Prof Vuyisa Mazwi-Tanga, Prof Brian Fijagi and Dr Franklin Sonn.

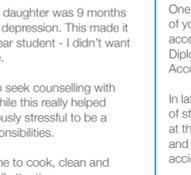
Our own Chairperson of the AA, Jeff Daniels, was in attendance too, pictured here with the VC and special guests.

Both honorary doctorates made two very special donations to the University.

Dr Brigalia Bam donated a collection of books on democracy to students and staff in the Faculty of Education, while Dr Christo Wiese announced that he will fund an annual prize which will be known as "The Vice Chancellor's Award for

Succeeding Against All Odds".

Details are still to be finalised, but we've heard many inspiring stories from alumni who have done just that. One of them is Yasheemah Williams from Mitchell's Plain, who began studying Chemical Engineering in 2011 at CPUT's Cape Town Campus.



DAVIN ABRAMSON

Amidst the joy of graduation, there were some poignant moments too.

One of them came when the father of young graduate, Davin Abramson, accepted his son's National Diploma in Hospitality Management Accommodation.

In late 2014, Davin was in his third year of studies, completing in-service training at the African Pride Crystal Towers Hotel and Spa when he was killed in a car accident on his way to work.

Head of Department at the Cape Town Hotel School, Rianne Voigt, says that from his first year of study, Davin was exceptionally well-liked.

"Davin was an eager participant in classes who always had questions and observations, popular amongst his peers and always part of the team. His fellow class mates were stricken to hear of his loss. It was an incredibly sad moment when Davin was awarded his Diploma.

His mother and sister were present as his father accepted his diploma. Although we were sorrowful, it was also important for all of us at the Hotel School to celebrate his life and achievements on this day.

As his fellow classmate and girlfriend from year one, Bianca Hey, said, "This makes the three years worthwhile, and not all for nothing." "

CPUT and the Alumni Office send our condolences to the Abramson family on Davin's passing. May he rest in peace.

Yasheemah, pictured here with her daughter, tells us more...



YASHEEMAH WILLIAMS

I matriculated in 2009, but I fell pregnant in that year and decided to take a gap year as I was giving birth in 2010.

When I began my studies at CPUT, my daughter was 9 months old and I was suffering from post-natal depression. This made it isolating and difficult for me as a first year student - I didn't want to make friends or interact with anyone.

After struggling for a while, I decided to seek counselling with the student counsellors on campus. While this really helped improve my outlook, it was still enormously stressful to be a young teen mother juggling many responsibilities.

I studied during the day and came home to cook, clean and tend to my little one who needed my full attention.

While I passed my first semester, my marks were just average. I knew I was capable of achieving more and decided to give it my all in the second semester.

My daughter was now over a year old and attending crèche and I made sure I was in class every day. Once she fell asleep at night I would burn the midnight oil, sitting with my assignments that were due in the week. I would also travel to campus on a Saturday to revise and study.

It was here that I could work best, free of interruptions and the busy pace of home, where friends and family would distract me.

It was very hard spending less time with my daughter and my social life was almost non-existent. I knew, however, that these sacrifices were essential for me to get ahead. After many a late night and most weekends spent studying on campus, I passed all my 1st and second year subjects and began in-service training at Chevron Refinery.

In 2013, I finally made it through, graduating with a National Diploma in Chemical Engineering.

I'm proud of myself for juggling my studies, motherhood and depression to make it all happen. I'm currently studying for a BTech in Chemical Engineering and will be graduating, proudly and against all odds, in September 2015.

AA AGM and Convocation

Epic strides were made in early June when the Alumni Association adopted a constitution, and threw its weight behind CPUT's first-ever Convocation.

is an initiative of the office of the Registrar, Mr Nikile Ntsababa.

Speaking at the event, Mr Ntsababa says he's delighted that this statutory body is now up and running as it is one of the key markers of a fully-functioning university.

A steering committee has been elected to shepherd the fledgling Convocation to its first official AGM later in the year, when a draft constitution will be formally adopted. The Vice Chancellor, Dr Prens Ntshutalu, is the acting chair of this body and will remain so until a new chair is elected at the AGM.

Have a look at pictures of the AA AGM and Convocation events.

An alliance of the Vice-Chancellor, Deputy Vice-Chancellors, the Registrar, permanent academic staff, professor emeriti and alumni, Convocation plays an important guardianship role for the University.

The constituting of Convocation is yet another first for the university as it celebrates its tenth birthday.

Stemming from the Latin word, convocare, meaning to call and come together, the Convocation

EPIC SPORTS

CPUT took center-stage when one of the world's most prestigious cycling events, the Absa Cape Epic, was held in mid-March.

The Epic gives our local economy a R300 million annual injection, and is guaranteed to thrill mountain biking enthusiasts. Local and international riders cycle for a demanding eight days, covering over 700km, finishing at a wine estate in Durbanville.

Staff member, alumnus and participant, Etienne Joubert, a lecturer in the School of Sport, Events, Tourism and Hospitality raced in CPUT colours this year.

Along with his race partner, Leanne Brown-Watson, he spent months training for the event, putting in up to 30 hours a week and clocking up 4 000 km in the process.



Here Etienne persuades the VC to get his heart-rate pumping in a 2-minute challenge!

CPUT's beautiful Wellington campus was featured prominently on local and global media as the host of one of the stages of the Epic.

The global media exposure for Cape Town and CPUT was phenomenal, with more than 1,1 million YouTube views and 25 000 hours of global television coverage in 175 countries.

In total, 600 teams representing 80 nations participated in the Epic, with thousands of locals lining the route to cheer on participants.



EUGENE ADAMS

Endurance seems to be the name of the game when it comes to our alumni.

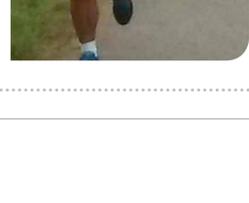
Teacher's Diploma (Commerce) in 1982 and in 1991 completed a Further Technicians Diploma (Commerce) at the former Peninsula Technikon. He was an avid sportsman even then, winning the Players Award for Soccer in '82, SA College Colours '83, WP College Colours in '83 while also representing PenTech in Athletics 400m.

In April of this year, Eugene ran the Paris Marathon on the 12th, The Boston Marathon on the 20th, and The London Marathon on the 26th April. Oh – did we forget to mention? Ahead of his record-breaking stint in three of the world's greatest cities, he began April by warming up with the Two Oceans Half Marathon in Cape Town.

Eugene prepared for the marathons by training at the gym early in the morning before his teaching duties began at school. In the afternoons he would walk for two hours every day. He says he's enormously thankful to his family for their love and support, and that having his wife cheering him on at the finish line was wonderful.

The energetic educator completed his

Respect, Eugene!



ALUMNI Profiles



MICHELE RHODA

With no art background at school, or any family members in the design industry, Michele Rhoda is now enjoying phenomenal success as one of the partners in internationally-acclaimed, award winning design practice, Antoni Associates.

The Cape Town based firm is renowned for creating some of the most exclusive interiors in South Africa and around the world.

Michele completed her studies in 2005 and has a National Diploma in Interior Design.

"I had a lot of catching up to do in first year," she says. "I persevered through the all-nighters and learnt everything I could from my lecturers and my talented classmates and graduated with a merit award in 2005. Those classmates are today some of my closest friends and I feel privileged to have been able to learn and grow alongside them for 3 years."

Since graduating, Michele, (who is the niece of CPUT's very own Deputy Vice Chancellor, Academic, Prof Nancy Staack), had a meteoric rise to success.

After a 3 week internship at Antoni

Associates in 2005, she was offered a job as a junior interior designer. Since then, she says, Antoni Associates has grown exponentially from a few people to over 35 staff members and she has been promoted to a partner at the company.

"My day at the office is jam-packed with team meetings, client meetings, jumping between various projects' deadlines and brain-storming sessions; and plenty of prioritising and project programming! I work all the time – my heart and mind is constantly tuned in to being inspired by beautiful things, whether at the movies, listening to good music or "Pinterest-ing" in a queue at the shops!"

"Working in a high-pressure, dead-line driven environment pushes you to be better in many different ways – professionally and personally. You need to roll with

the punches while keeping your cool. A good sense of humour and making time for reflection to see the big picture helps. You also need to be humble and patient enough to learn from your contemporaries. Technology is constantly changing and you need to stay on top of the latest drawing and presentation programs, social media platforms and the latest blogs to stay current with global design evolution."

Michele's advice to young up-and-coming designers is to be the eternal student and never stop learning.

"Open your mind: Travel (anywhere and everywhere, as often as you possibly can); visit art galleries. Question things. Develop your own opinion about the world, art and design. Choose a company to work at that has a design philosophy that resonates with your values. Most importantly - work hard and be nice to people."

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As Executive Director, he's responsible for determining the company's strategic objectives and policies, monitoring progress towards these policies, appointing senior management and accounting for the company's activities to shareholders.

Masithuthuke has trained over 3 thousand beneficiaries within the Skills Development field so far, focussing on literacy training while supporting Social Investment Initiatives.

This high-flying human resources guru graduated from CPUT in 2000 with a B.Tech in Human Resources Management and describes his time as a student as "awesome!"

"My experience of CPUT was amazing. During this time I established CATS Models in 1998 (Cape Technikon Student Model). This was for all students (any size and shape) who wanted to be models."

Liyanda is a big believer in life-long learning. He's also completed an MBA and is currently studying for his PhD in Business Administration (DBA) at the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal. In addition to his role as Executive Director, he's also a board member for Altvex ESDA and deputy chairperson for the Association of Private Providers of Training and Development (APPTD) AET committee. He also serves as a moderator with various Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs).

Liyanda believes the best thing for young students and graduates to do is to go confidently in the direction of their dreams.

"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."

LOTTA MAYANA

From taxi-driver to top scientist leading the fight against climate change?

Lotta is the story of alumnus Lotta Mayana, who completed a ND: Analytical Chemistry in 2006, B.Tech Chemistry in 2007, and B.Tech Business Administration in 2010 at CPUT.

Despite his qualifications, he found it immensely difficult to find a job and ended up washing and driving mini-buses to make a living.

He is now Chief Technical: South African Air Quality Information at the South African Weather Service.

His inspiring tale of success against all odds was broadcast on eNews channel Africa recently and is well worth the watch. In addition to focussing on his passion for atmospheric science, Lotta is also giving back by helping students at university as a career coach.

Congratulations Lotta, CPUT is proud to count you amongst its brand ambassadors.

Watch this amazing tale of taxi-driver to top technician here!



LIYANDA HANDULA

Alumnus Liyanda Handula is the Founder and an Executive Director of training company, Masithuthuke Learning Institution (Pty) Ltd.

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MAHLATSE GALLENS

The Alumni office recently had the great pleasure of hosting one of SA's top broadcasters at a motivational talk for Journalism students on the Cape campus.

Mahl Kinshasa to Rakamas, Ms Mahlatse Gallens is known for her insightful and hard-hitting reporting. She is currently the Deputy Political Editor of the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC).

Hundreds of students filled the lecture theatre to hear the renowned reporter and editor at a talk organised by the Vice-Chancellor's office and the Alumni office.

Her advice to students? "Take the initiative, be forward, contribute to daily diary discussions and nominate yourself for assignments."

Gallens placed particular

emphasis on how interns should put their best foot forward when arriving at a new workplace.

"Don't sit back and expect to be spoon-fed," she says. "Instead, join in the discussions about finding new angles and ideas when researching a story. As the lifeblood of journalism is staying current and up-to-the-minute, always meet your deadlines and always arrive on time."

Gallens also spoke of how she is a proud alumnus. Her two day visit to CPUT, where she met with Journalism Department lecturers and CPUT's Marketing and Communications Department was her way of giving back to the

"Take the initiative, be forward, contribute to daily diary discussions and nominate yourself for assignments."

institution that moulded her.

Alumni Officer Francois Jooste says, "By connecting a high-flying alumnus like Ms Gallens with current students, they learn more about what it takes to make it in the working world. These talks also motivate students to "stay the course", excel academically and graduate within the required time."



YOLANDA MAKANANDA

Yolanda, 25, is a third year student in Office Management and Technology.

She is a very grateful recipient of a bursary, without which this smart, hard-working young woman would, quite literally, be almost destitute. Yolanda and her 2 younger sisters whom she takes care of Lisakhanya (11) and Lelethu (17) faced unimaginable hardship after losing both parents, one after the other. But Yolanda persevered and through her hard work managed to secure funding to uplift herself out of her predicament.

"I am enjoying my studies and am almost done. It was terribly difficult after losing both my parents but I told myself I really want to do this and I will hold on until I finish what I have started. In 5 years' time, I see myself working for a big company, having my own home and car and helping my sisters to achieve what they want in life. Receiving this bursary helped me so much – I literally owe mine and my sisters' futures to this great blessing. I really appreciate what you guys did for me. Thank you!"

If you contribute to CPUT's Bursary Fund, no matter how little the amount, please know that you are doing one of the greatest services you can ever do for another person.



Bursary recipient, Yolanda Makananda (left) with Advancement Director, Calvin Maseko



Any alumni who would like to give a motivational talk to students are welcome to contact Francois or Valerie at the Alumni Office on 021 460 3786



TO DONATE QUICKLY, EASILY AND SAFELY ONLINE, PLEASE CLICK HERE.

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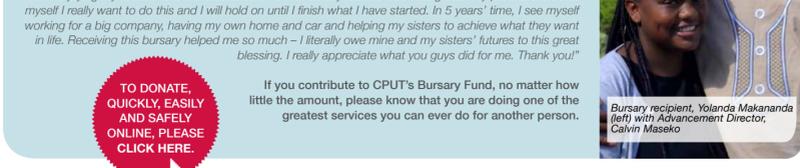
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CPUT'S 10th BIRTHDAY Celebrations

We end this bumper newsletter on a celebratory note – we are ten years old after all!

Alumni are invited to join us in our various social responsibility drives in support of our birthday campaign. Please have a look at our Birthday party pics and stay tuned for our Bursary Drive coming up in September – alumni are key to driving this campaign!

Big thanks to those alumni who have already joined in some of our drives to give back.

Here's Janene Mostert and Dominic Alonso, alumni of the Education faculty, who helped us with our school shoe collection drive.

You guys ROCK!

With pride, gratitude and high hopes for the future – here's to the next decade of CPUT!

Valerie, Francois, and all staff of the Advancement Department



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