

# This Week @Fort Hare



University of Fort Hare  
*Together in Excellence*

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# Getting To Know Prof Neil Roos

## Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities



>> Prof Neil Roos

On 1 July 2021 the University of Fort Hare welcomed Professor Neil Roos as the new Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities.

Before joining UFH, Roos was a History Professor at the University of the Free State. He is a co-implementer of the Department of Higher Education and Training's national collaborative Future Professors Programme.

Professor Roos - a member of the Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAf) - is an NRF rated researcher who writes on social histories of race and racism. He is the author of a monograph *Ordinary Springboks: White Servicemen and Social Justice in South Africa 1939-1961* (Ashgate Publishing).

His recent research has focused on the historical, moral and political dimensions of white everyday life in apartheid South Africa. From this body of work, he has published essays in *Social History*, the *Journal of Social History*, *The Historical Journal* and *International Review of Social History*, and has a book forthcoming with Indiana University Press, *Ordinary Whites in Apartheid Society*.

For Professor Roos, teaching and curriculum design have long been central features of his identity as a professional historian, and for over twenty years he has accumulated a wealth of experience in undergraduate and postgraduate education. In recent years however, his focus has expanded to include academic career development and the tasks associated with cultivating a next-generation, South African professoriate. Successes in this domain culminated in his secondment as one of the lead implementers of the national Future Professors Programme.

Professor Roos was a Fulbright Fellow in anthropology at the University of Chicago and has also enjoyed fellowships at the following universities:

- Notre Dame, Maryland
- University of Technology, Sydney, and
- Harvard University.

He is editor of the *Southern Journal of Contemporary History*.

*ThisWeek@FortHare* asked the usual questions:

### Please share a bit about your personal and academic background?

I come from a working-class family in Durban where I was the first one to get to matric. After completing my high school studies I enrolled at the University of Natal to train to become a teacher. Fundamentally, I still see myself as a teacher

Initially, I had no intention of studying beyond my teaching qualification, however being a student was one way of avoiding being drafted into the apartheid military. So I completed my Masters and become a teacher. I then joined the University of Bophuthatswana (North-West University) where I worked for a decade and completed my PhD.

Academically, I work on extremely unfashionable topics. My interest is on histories of race and racism. I write on white everyday life under apartheid where I look at how ordinary white people were complicit during apartheid.

### Hobbies and other Interests

I am a marathon swimmer. My favourite are the Cape swims around Robben Island. I also like to draw, I find it calming and therapeutic.

### What motivated you to come to the University of Fort Hare?

My response is very simple. If you look at the African Higher Education system, Fort Hare is a continental treasure. This university is the heart of black higher education. I am also motivated by the VC's commitment to go beyond just administering the institution but to grow its intellectual project. I think under the VC's leadership there is a very clear set of messages that should, and can shape our own trajectories of research excellence, based on our history, our geography and based on our positioning in the African Higher Education space.

### What are the key focus areas of your portfolio?

- My main focus is to conduct a marginal curriculum review. In some instances the curriculum became quite outdated.
- There is a lot of practical things that need to be done to stream out, avoid repetition and make our curriculum more economical. This is an academic task and also a technical task. It is process that is foundationally important.
- Then tied to this process, I would like to see us conduct more community engagements as it is part of our mission as a university. I also think that as we reset the curriculum, the knowledge that goes into the courses needs to be shaped by what we learn from community engagements in order to develop decolonized knowledge.
- Drawing from my experience as an initiator of the Future Professors Programme, I would like to accelerate and strengthen research cultures. In my Faculty, I would

like to systematically increase the number of rated researchers and also the number of staff with PhDs.

- I am also interested in what we can do to streamline our pipeline of research development. An essential part to achieve this is to nurture the development of postgrad students' intellectual culture. The idea is to host seminars and establish partnerships with other universities on exchange programmes for postgraduates.

### What is your approach to executing key responsibilities?

When tasked with making big decisions, I like to listen to people and not just academic staff. There is a general problem at universities that suggests that a decision can only be taken by Professors. But what about the Administration and Directors of offices? We need to take academic and non-academic staff into our confidence.

My approach is to weigh options, canvass opinion and agree on steps to be taken.

### Thus far in your portfolio, which areas have you identified as pockets of excellence and which ones require strengthening?

#### Pockets of Excellence

There is a tremendous sense of goodwill and it is very pleasing to see there is commitment to get things done. This is a fabulous resource and I feel privileged to have it in our Faculty.

#### Challenges

A general challenge is the migration to online teaching and learning. Some people are still finding their feet in the "new norm". Sometimes this can cause some misunderstandings. As we collectively try to figure out a way forward, we have to take every dose of patience, tolerance and kindness.

### Lastly, what are your aspirations for the university as it sets off on its journey of a Decade of Renewal (2020 to 2030)?

My biggest ambition is for the University of Fort Hare to be able to attract good quality students, researchers and professional scholars, by offering something very distinctive. Associated with that, I would like to see the faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences becoming an alternate home in Humanities for black scholars across the region.

### What is your advice on how to reach the envisaged destination?

I would like the university community to remember that ambition is good, but it must be feasible and have timelines on it.

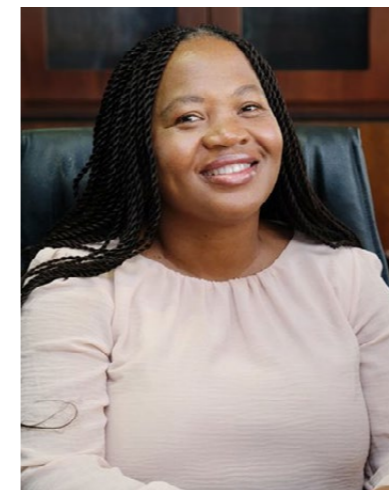
Using this route, I believe we can achieve our goal of becoming a distinctive, unique and rich university that fulfils the institution's rich legacy.



>> Prof Sakhela Buhlungu



>> Dr Nthabiseng Moleko



>> Dr Thandi Mgwebi



>> Prof Thidziambe Phendla



>> Mr George Mvalo

# PROFESSOR BUHLUNGU PARTICIPATES IN WEBINAR ON GENDER TRANSFORMATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

*“Sometimes the instruments to take the fight forward are not immediately visible. But once you complain you get into that dynamic where you cannot find or fashion instruments to push forward.”*

On 12 August, the UFH Vice-Chancellor, Prof Sakhela Buhlungu participated in a robust discussion on Gender Transformation in Higher Education.

The webinar was hosted by HERS-SA, a non-profit organization dedicated to the advancement and leadership development of women in the higher education sector in conjunction with the Universities South Africa (USAf) Transformation Managers Forum (TMF).

Themed: *Gender Transformation in Higher Education - Should We Be Asking New Questions?* - this was the first of three webinars to be hosted by HERS-SA in commemoration of Women’s Month.

The discussion was moderated by Ms Brightness Mangolotho, Director of HERS-SA and the speaker list comprised:

- Dr Nthabiseng Moleko, Deputy Chairperson, Commission for Gender Equality.
- Dr Thandi Mgwebi, DVC: Research and Engagement at Nelson Mandela University
- Prof Thidziambe Phendla *From Higher Education Transformation Network*
- Mr George Mvalo from the USAf Transformation Managers Forum

The VC was invited as a respondent.

All four speakers shared a wealth of information from their experiences. Dr Moleke gave a broad presentation on the intervention and findings by the Commission on this matter in the past five years. “Statistics show there has been very slow progress in this regard when we look at universities individually,” she stated.

Dr Mgwebi reflected on the Ministerial Task Team on Recruitment, Retention and Progression on black South African academics, a study commissioned by the Minister of Higher Education and Training, Dr Blade Nzimande.

Prof Phendla spoke about the current challenges that women still face, 70 years after the 1956 march for the emancipation of women.

Mr Mvalo’s presentation focused on the persistence of gender imbalances research output worldwide and what needed to be done. “Gender manifests itself. There is an ongoing perpetuation of masculine identities that position women in marginalized ways,” he stated.

Responding to the presentations, the VC made a strong call for people to get out of complaining mode.

“Sometimes the instruments to take the fight forward are not immediately visible. But once you complain you get into that dynamic where you cannot find or fashion instruments to push forward.”

Speaking on the issue of non-compliance, the VC said: “None of the universities comply when it comes to transformation. No action is taken for non-compliance and for as long as that is the case, we will go nowhere. One of the instruments we need to push for now, working together, is that non-compliances must result in some pain for institutions. That is the only way we can enforce compliance.”

The VC also posed some intriguing questions for panel members and participants to mull over. The discussion was followed by an equally robust question and answer session.

*by Aretha Linden*



>> Dr Luvuyo Dondolo

# DR LUVUYO DONDOLO SECURES US EMBASSY FUNDING FOR PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN FORT HARE and KENT STATE UNIVERSITY

A student exchange programme between the University of Fort Hare (UFH) and the Kent State University (KSU) has received a grant of approximately R1.5 million from the United States Embassy.

The Heritage Ubuntu Research Programme was facilitated by the UFH Centre for Transdisciplinary Studies. Centre Director, Dr Luvuyo Dondolo who secured the grant shared programme details with *ThisWeek@FortHare*.

## Kindly share more details about the programme and related projects

The Heritage Ubuntu Research Programme between South Africa and the United States intends to provide a transatlantic platform for conversations on the difficult histories and contemporary issues that connect South Africa and the United States. Further, it promotes democratic discourse and 'understanding of US values, perspectives, policies, and relationship building between Americans and South Africans. The programme includes advocating for cross-pollination of ideas, experiences, values, academic and personal exchange between UFH and KSU for the better global citizenry, inclusivity and social cohesion.

The Programme consists of three focus areas:

### 1. Ubuntu Student Fellowship:

The student scholarship activity is made up of two key activities:

#### Student Exchange Programme:

Ten students from KSU will spend a month at UFH. During this period they will be exposed to both formal and informal learning and teaching in an African university setting. Under informal learning they will visit a range of cultural heritage sites within the Eastern Cape Province, be hosted by local families, observe cultural and social activities, and also participate in some local social and historical activities.

In terms of formal learning and teaching, they will attend some classes and participate in a small group discussion with students from the Faculty of Social Sciences and

Humanities. These activities will give them an opportunity to get to know further about South Africa while also sharing their experiences, cultures and values with their counterparts and facilitators. Thereafter, ten students from UFH will visit Kent State University in the U.S. for reciprocal engagements.

### Students Virtual Discussion Forum

Under this activity we intend to have interval virtual discussions for twenty students from each university. The discussions will include a range of aspects of social, spatial and epistemic justice, democracy, active citizenry, global citizenry, equality, identity, African diaspora and national social cohesion. The discussions are envisaged to be a cross-pollination of ideas and experiences as informed by the different backgrounds and students from both countries who will be engaged in the programme.

### 2. Heritage Ubuntu Faculty Visits

Through the Heritage Ubuntu Faculty Visits activity, two academic staff will spend a month at each institution facilitating seminars, teaching and delivering university-wide lectures linked to the objective of the programme.

### 3. Heritage Ubuntu Collaborative Research and Conference

The two universities will undertake a collaborative research project and its outcomes will be published in a co-authored book. The output will be in the form of students' dialogues of virtual discussion forums and exchange programmes between South Africa (SA) and the United States (US) students, sharing of experiences, perspectives and practices between the US and SA academics.

As part of research and development we will have a collaborative research project focusing on Ubuntu, university public spaces (memorial, statues, heritage sites and naming of buildings), spatial/social and epistemic justice, and African heritage studies. The results of the research will be co-published.

This activity will also constitute a public scholarship. This will entail periodic intellectual engagements with the established scholars from the two countries on



thematic areas of justice, decolonisation/Africanisation of higher education, university public space (memorials, monuments, statues and naming of university buildings), identity, to mention but a few. All contributions will then be published in an edited book volume, with the funder's logo on the publication and all other project-related promotional materials.

Further, as part of this activity, UFH will work with partners at KSU to convene a special virtual and/or in-person one-day colloquium (50 attendees) in South Africa, on the goal of promoting increased understanding of US values, perspectives, policies, and relationship building between Americans and South, as well as the histories and contemporary issues that connect South Africa and the United States.

Other important areas of focus of the colloquium will include critical issues of social and justice, university public spaces (memorials, heritage sites and debates on the decolonization of curricula). The UFH will also organize/convene a major public university lecture by a prominent public intellectual with expertise on shared histories and relations between South Africa and the United States.

The impact of the project is multifold: educational, social and historical.

### Programme Outcomes

Two books will be published:

- One of the books (edited book) will be from the proceedings of the conference to be convened in South Africa.
- The other book to be published (monograph) will be the research paper that will be presented at the university lecture by a prominent public intellectual.

### Virtual Discussion Forum

Discussions will focus on a range of aspects of social, spatial/epistemic justice, democracy, active citizenry, global citizenry, equality, identity, African diaspora, and national social cohesion. The discussions are envisaged to be a cross-pollination of ideas and experiences as

informed by the different backgrounds and students from both countries who will be engaged in the program.

### How did the funding come about?

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT: Through a Memorandum of Understanding between the Transdisciplinary Studies Centre and Stellenbosch University, I was awarded a Fellowship of Ubuntu Dialogues Seminar hosted by Stellenbosch University and Michigan State University. The Seminar Exchange Fellowship involves scholars and heritage professionals from partner institutions in South Africa and the United States in a seminar and educational programme that interrogates and problematizes the concept of Ubuntu in terms of themes like decolonization, institutional transformation, institutional histories, and the place of South Africa in Africa and the United States in the Americas. As part of the Fellowship, I participated in a joint seminar held in 2020 and contributed two chapters on Ubuntu for an envisaged edited book.

In May 2021, my colleague from Stellenbosch University approached me to put together a proposal for our joint programme - which we did together with Michigan State University. I then also made a separate submission for the awarded Heritage Ubuntu Research Programme to be jointly implemented with Kent State University in the United States.

### In your opinion, what value do collaborations generate for rural universities like ours?

This particular collaboration is significant and has value for our university in that twenty students from our institution through the virtual discussion forum will get an opportunity to engage and exchange ideas and experiences with their counterparts from KSU. The exchange programme for students will add value, not only to our university but also to the students' academic life. Equally, faculty visits and the collaborative research project will generate lots of value for Fort Hare.

## Making it Possible Through Science:

# UFH FOSST DISCOVERY CENTRE DOMINATES AT NATIONAL SCIENCE WEEK 2021

The UFH flag was raised quite high during the South African National Science Week (NSW) 2021 held on 1-7 August.

Team UFH comprised academics and students attached to the Forté School of Science and Technology (FOSST) Discovery Centre and the Remote and Virtual Education Laboratory (ReVEL).

Led by the unit's Director, Mr Phumezo Kwinana, the team gave close to 10 (live and pre-recorded) presentations and participated in live discussions.

The NSW is an initiative of the Department of Science and Innovation (DSI). It is held annually to celebrate science, engineering and technology. Normally, the event attracts thousands of learners and members of the public who converge at venues throughout the country to participate and attend workshops, science shows and lectures. This year however, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the event was held online for the very first time.

The theme of the event was: *Making it Possible through Science*. Notwithstanding the challenge imposed by the pandemic, the event upheld its reputation of being a Science Spectacular! Countless webinars, live engagements, virtual exhibitions and even poetry was featured in the week-long programme.

Kwinana said: "Team UFH did well in the event. Over 2500 people visited our website and have shared our activities."

Presentations included a pre-recorded video on UFH's first-ever Aeroponics Project (*for more details see article in this edition*). Another session showcased the positive impact of the ReVEL technology on physical science

by Aretha Linden

learners from local schools. The team also gave live presentations on ReVEL physics, online robotics coding and Chemistry experiments. They also participated in a robust discussion on Dismantling Covid-19 5G Myths.

Kwinana thanked his team and his colleagues from the Faculty of Science & Agriculture for their active participation in the event and for assisting in developing and hosting the sessions.

Below are links to the presentations and discussions:

### LIVE SESSIONS

- Dismantling COVID-19 5g myths [LINK](#)
- ReVEL Physics Experiments [LINK](#)
- ReVEL Arduino Robotics [LINK](#)
- ReVEL Chemistry Experiments [LINK](#)
- Lego Robotics [LINK](#)

### PRE-RECORDED

- Revel Ultra Concurrent Experiments (Grade 10 Physics) [LINK](#)
- Arduino robot coding in Collaboration with international platform [www.labsland.com](http://www.labsland.com) [LINK](#)
- Revel Ultra Concurrent experiments (grade 10 Chemistry). [LINK](#)
- FOSST DC Lego Robotics. [LINK](#)
- Aeroponics [LINK](#)

## UFH FACULTY OF SCIENCE AND AGRICULTURE FOSST DISCOVERY CENTRE



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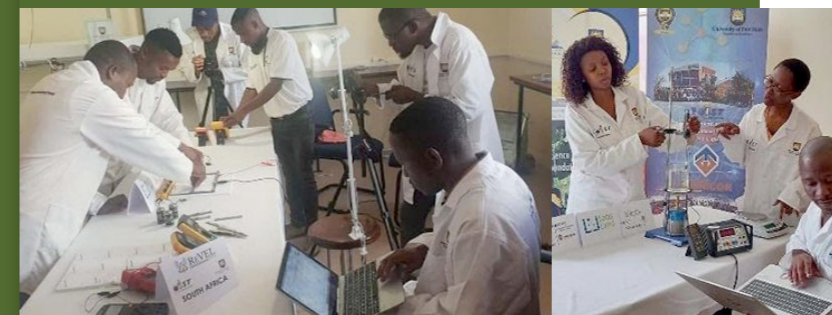
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## The Fosst Discovery Centre is a research centre of the Faculty of Science and Agriculture

The Fosst Discovery Centre inspires youth to follow careers in Science, Engineering and Technology and to sensitize the community to the benefits of science. The centre aims to provide an environment that enables the youth and community at large to pursue their interests in science.

## Let us unlock your potential



We have recognised the potential of online laboratories in promoting science education. Remote laboratories were introduced to UFH's physics department in October 2019. ReVEL enables students and researchers to interact with peers from over 20 universities around the world on experiments in the STEM field. Learners from local rural schools are able to perform all their syllabus-based experiments online.

## We are innovation

Visit: <https://www.ufh.ac.za/centres/fosst/>

# GROWING FOOD ON AIR!

## Fort Hare's First-ever Aeroponics Project

*“It is an innovative, sustainable technology to produce food using air and water without the use of soil.”*

A team of scholars and postgraduate interns at the Forté School of Science and Technology (FOSST) Discovery Centre has just harvested its first produce from the university's first-ever Aeroponics Project.

Aeroponics is the process of growing plants in an air or mist environment without the use of soil or an aggregate medium. The project is located on the university's Alice campus.

The farming system is the brain child of four FOSST Discovery Centre postgraduate interns funded by the South African Agency for Science and Technology Advancement (SAASTA), under the National Research Foundation. They are:

- Ms Chuma Majova (leader of the project)
- Ms Sinawo Jali,
- Ms Nomgcobo Mnqumevu and;
- Mr Ayabulela Mrubata

According to Mr Phumezo Kwinana the FOSST Discovery Centre purchased 10 Aeroponics kit systems, and in three weeks harvested its first produce.

“We are excited to report that in just three weeks, the team has already harvested lettuce! The FOSST Discovery Centre Aeroponics team is very enthusiastic about growing other products and expanding the project.” Current crops include lettuce, spinach and peppers.

Kwinana said the aeroponics project fulfils one of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals to ensure food security with minimal negative impact on the environment.

“It is an innovative, sustainable technology to produce food using air and water without the use of soil. Climate change and global warming are known phenomenon with effects such as prolonged drought periods, land degradation and low water levels. Even with that being said the world population is rapidly increasing. The production of food needs to at least increase by 50% by 2050 to feed 10 billion people.”

He further states that the system has quite a number of benefits such as:

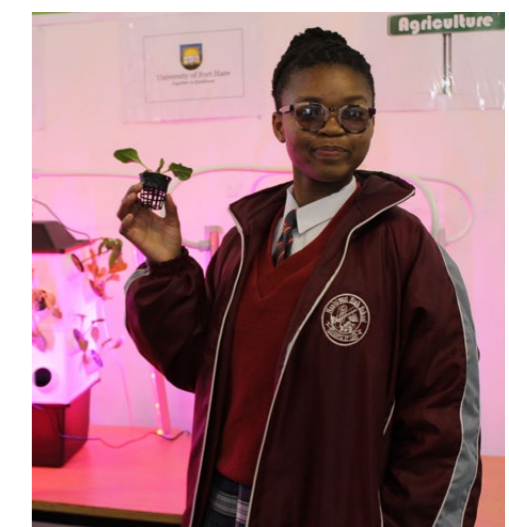
- Enabling a diverse range of food availability all year round
- Uses 95% less water;
- No chemical use;
- takes up less space per square meter and;
- Requires shorter growing days and no weeding, among others.

The disadvantage is that it is currently not suitable to grow root crops. Thus, maintenance requires electricity to drive an electrical pump for each system.

Mr Kwinana said, through this project, the team intends to ignite passion and interest in the Alice community at large, especially learners, to pursue careers in Agricultural Sciences. “We are currently monitoring and evaluating the system and writing a research paper on it for teaching and learning purposes. This will benefit the FOSST Discovery Centre's focus schools and the UFH Faculty of Agriculture Crop Science Department.”

The Centre's managers, Ms Yolanda Jali and Mr Mncedi Rani thanked the SAASTA interns for their commitment in realising the project at UFH.

For more details on this project and other 4IR projects initiated by the centre please visit: [www.ufh.ac.za/centres/fosst](http://www.ufh.ac.za/centres/fosst)



UFH FACULTY OF  
SCIENCE AND AGRICULTURE  
INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY



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The Fort Hare Institute of Technology is a research centre for postgraduate research in the Faculty of Science and Agriculture

The Fort Hare Institute of Technology (FHIT) promotes innovation and research excellence through interdisciplinary collaboration, in relation to energy production and use. Over the years, FHIT has worked closely with several stakeholders to produce and implement world-class groundbreaking research. These include Eskom, Vodacom, Engen, National Research Fund (NRF), Department of Science and Innovation (DSI), Department of Rural Development and Agrarian Reform (DRDAR), Water Research Commission (WRC), Agricultural Research Council, and the Technology Innovation.



We are innovation



**The FHIT focuses on four key areas:** Solar Energy, Bio energy, Smart Energy and; Sustainable Development Studies using Chemistry, Microbiology, Physics, Applied Maths and Computer Science as base subjects.



Through its strategic research endeavours, FHIT has, between 2008 and 2020, facilitated the research of more than 75 Postdoctoral Fellowships, PhD and MSc graduates, with more than 300 associated research articles, conference proceedings and technical reports.

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## THE AFRICA WE WANT: REALISATION OF WOMEN'S HUMAN RIGHTS TO ACCESS JUSTICE: UFH Senior Law Academics Publish Joint Paper on AU Agenda 2063



>> Prof Nomthandazo Ntlama-Makhanya



>> Dr Nombulelo Lubisi-Bizani

*“The purpose of the article is grounded by many of the challenges faced by women of Africa in the enjoyment and fulfilment of their rights”*

Prof Nomthandazo Ntlama-Makhanya (Professor of Public Law and Acting Head: UNESCO 'Oliver Tambo' Chair of Human Rights, Nelson R Mandela School of Law) and Dr Nombulelo Lubisi-Bizani (Dean of the Nelson R Mandela School of Law) have co-authored and published a research paper on the African Union's Agenda on women's human rights access to justice.

The paper titled: *The 'Africa we want' in the African Union's Agenda 2063 on the realisation of women's human rights to access justice*, has been published in the African Human Right Law Journal.

According to the pair: The article examines the envisioned design of the 'Africa we want' through the lens and intersection of the principles of the rule of law and access to justice in the elimination of barriers that compromise the promotion of the rights of women in contemporary Africa, as envisaged in Agenda 2063.

The objective is to affirm the language of rights as an enabling environment that will advance the promotion of the rights of women in the regulation of state authority.

*“The purpose of the article is grounded by many of the challenges faced by women of Africa in the enjoyment and fulfilment of their rights,”* they state.

The article raises questions on the improvement of access to justice by women, capacitation of the enforcement agencies and their contribution to socio-legal change. These questions are limited to the rights of women within the interrelationship that exists between the rule of law and access to justice.

The paper starts by setting the tone on the intersection of the two principles and their potential to advance the rights of women in Africa. It then focuses on the significance of the people-centred approach within the framework of the two principles in the advancement of the rights of women of Africa as envisaged in Agenda 2063.

Read full article here: <https://www.ahrlj.up.ac.za/ntlama-makhanya-n-lubisi-bizani-n>



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THE ARCHBISHOP THABO MAKGOBA  
DEVELOPMENT TRUST



HOST



KEYNOTE SPEAKER

The Vice-Chancellor  
Prof Sakhela Buhlungu invites you to the

# 4th ARCHBISHOP THABO MAKGOBA ANNUAL LECTURE

Host: Prof Sakhela Buhlungu  
Keynote Speaker: Dr Batandwa Siswana

*Theme: Leadership in Local  
Economic Development*

**Date:** 19<sup>th</sup> August 2021

**Venue:** Microsoft Teams  
[CLICK HERE](#)

**Time:** 14h00

For more information contact: Prof Forget Kapingura - [fkapingura@ufh.ac.za](mailto:fkapingura@ufh.ac.za)

# 2021



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## VIRTUAL TEACHING & LEARNING COLLOQUIUM

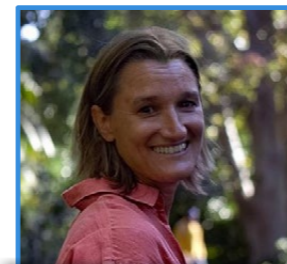
### Main Theme: Enhancing Higher Education Teaching and Learning in the era of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR)

The main purpose of the colloquium is to explore possibilities, complexities, and affordances of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) in Higher Education in so far as they relate to teaching and learning. This will be achieved through the interrogation of practices and experiences with respect to enablement, enhancement and support of programmes and arrangements, as well as students' and lecturers' practices and experiences.

**Official event dates:**  
17th and 18th  
August 2021

You do not want to miss out!

Meet our Distinguished Keynote Speakers. Click on the link below to register.



**Prof Daniela Gachago**  
Associate Professor: Centre for  
Innovation for Learning and Teaching  
(CILT) at University of Cape Town (UCT)

[Prof Daniela Gachago's short biography](#)

Daniela is an Associate Professor at the Centre for Innovation for Learning and Teaching (CILT) at the University of Cape Town. Her research focuses on academic staff development on the use of emerging technologies to transform teaching and learning in higher education, with a particular focus on socially just pedagogies such as digital storytelling. She is also interested in innovative course and curriculum design drawing from co-creative approaches such as design thinking. She completed a Masters in Adult Education at the University of Botswana and received a PHD from the School of Education at the University of Cape Town. She has published more than 50 peer-reviewed articles and book chapters. She is also the managing editor of CriSTaL, the journal for critical studies in teaching and learning in higher education.



**Prof Tshilidzi Marwala**  
Vice Chancellor and Principal of the  
University of Johannesburg (UJ)

[Prof Tshilidzi Marwala's short biography:](#)

Professor Marwala is an accomplished scholar with multi-disciplinary research interests that include the theory and application of artificial intelligence to engineering, computer science, finance, social science and medicine. He has an extensive track record in human capacity development and has published 23 books in artificial intelligence. Professor Marwala is the Vice Chancellor and Principal of the University of Johannesburg and prior to this he was the Deputy Vice Chancellor for Research and Internationalisation and Executive Dean of Engineering and the Built Environment both at the University of Johannesburg. He also served as the Deputy Chairperson of the Presidential Commission on 4IR.



**Dr Shafeeka Dockrat**  
Director of Student Development and  
Support at Tshwane University of  
Technology (TUT)

[Dr Shafeeka Dockrat's short biography:](#)

Dr Shafeeka Dockrat is the Director of Student Development and Support at the Tshwane University of Technology. She is registered with the HPCSA as a research psychologist and psychometrist. She has a master's degree in the field of Sport Psychology, a master's in Research Psychology, and an MBA. She obtained a PhD degree at the University of Pretoria. Her research foci include the fields of student success, psychometrics and digital adoption. Dr Dockrat has been the chairperson of the Psychological Society of South Africa's Division for Research and Methodology since 2019.

[PLEASE CLICK HERE TO REGISTER ONLINE](#)

FOR ENQUIRIES CONTACT:  
Ms N. Mayaphi: [nmayaphi@ufh.ac.za](mailto:nmayaphi@ufh.ac.za)

[www.ufh.ac.za/tlc](http://www.ufh.ac.za/tlc)

[TLC at UFH](#)

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# PROUDLY FORTARIAN COVID-19 AWARENESS CAMPAIGN



*“When everyone plays their part, all of us have a fair chance of achieving our best. We want to avoid any disruptions to the academic calendar.”*

On 6 August, the University of Fort Hare’s Covid-19 Task Team (CTT) launched an awareness campaign termed “Proudly Fortarian” to encourage returning students and staff on campus to abide by the Covid-19 health and safety protocols.

The campaign seeks to change the behaviour of the university community by reminding and reinforcing a change of habits through education. The campaign was prompted by several displays of pandemic fatigue and non-compliance with Covid-19 health and safety protocols.

To give energise the campaign, the CTT has collaborated with UFH Peer Educators, the Student Representative Council (SRC) and security personnel.

Speaking to *ThisWeek@FortHare*, Bamanye Tunywashe (SRC Residence Officer) said: “We are hoping that this campaign will help educate students of the University of Fort Hare on how to prevent infection and/or slow transmission of the coronavirus. Students and staff need to take Covid-19 seriously. As the SRC we are looking forward to working together with Peer Educators and the CTT to help spread awareness. When everyone plays

their part, all of us have a fair chance of achieving our best. We want to avoid any disruptions to the academic calendar.”

Aphiwe Mphopo, Peer Educator and member of the university’s CTT also expressed confidence in the success of the campaign.

“Staff and students must comply with the protocols to avoid the spread of the virus. COVID-19 is a reality that we all need to deal with. As peer educators, there is a lot that we can achieve by working together with the SRC and CTT because we come from different backgrounds in the university community”, he said.

The campaign will include the distribution of 10 000 masks to students and staff on all three campuses as well as a station on each campus for daily screening purposes. The campaign will continue until end August.

For more information regarding the protocols, the University of Fort Hare community can visit <https://www.ufh.ac.za/covid19/>

*by Asaduma Baloyi*



## UFH FINE ARTS AND MUSIC FORM INTER-DEPARTMENTAL COLLABORATION

*“Our goal is to cultivate important cultural partners on campus and in the community.”*

Two University of Fort Hare departmental heads are planning to merge their units to establish a new school of Fine Arts, Music and Performing Arts within the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities.

The initiative and collaboration is evidenced by a mural painted by second year Fine Arts students on the walls of the John Knox Bokwe house on the Alice campus – shared by the two departments

The collaboration is a symbol of restoration and reclaiming the pride and renewal of the University of Fort Hare that has not only produced political leaders, but artists as well.

“Our goal is to cultivate important cultural partners on campus and in the community. To accomplish this, we will be guided by the university’s mission and value of excellence, while promoting a new agenda for creativity and innovation. Both departments have a long history of artists and scholars that have contributed towards teaching, learning and creating works that inspire”, said Dr Siphe Potelwa, head of the Fine Arts department.

“Displaying the faces of departmental heads Nduduzo Makhathini (Music) and Siphe Potelwa (Fine Arts) on the walls of the building will represent restoration and unity among African countries”, said Potelwa.

*by Mawande Mrashula*



### Recent achievements and activities in the Fine Arts Department

- The Department of Fine Arts has secured funding for student bursaries to purchase art material,
- Recently, the department organised a collaborative print workshop with Rhodes and Walter Sisulu universities, and
- An exhibition at the Steve Biko Centre
- Fine Arts students have been producing murals within and off-campus to celebrate historical figures such as Nelson Mandela, Robert Mangaliso Sobukwe, pioneers of black modern art and art critics within and outside South Africa, as well as inspirational women figures who continue to fight for the rights of women.
- At the end of September 2021, Mr Hlanganisani George (3rd year Ceramics) will represent the UFH at a premier event in Johannesburg - the Turbine Art Fair Student Graduate Show.



>> Dr Rianna Oelofsen

# Women's Month: Confronting the causes of Violence against women

Opinion Piece by Dr Rianna Oelofsen, UFH Philosophy Department's Head and Chairwoman of Stand As One movement

Published in the Daily Dispatch and Heraldive

***“If there is a relationship between joblessness, alcohol, mental health, and GBV, we should investigate what this might mean in terms of addressing GBV in our own country.”***

During women's month, we should ask how we can make our society a more equal one in terms of gender. The fight against gender-based violence (GBV) is a critical one which needs to be won if there is any chance of gender equality in our future. South Africa is one of the countries with the highest rates of GBV in the world. During the COVID-19 lockdown, violence against women and girls skyrocketed even further. There has also been a tremendous rise in mental health issues globally during this time. Is there a causal connection between the mental health challenges that our society has experienced, and the rise in GBV during lockdown?

A recent article in the *Global Mental Health Journal*, explores the links between common mental health problems, substance abuse and intimate partner violence (IPV) in Kenya. It was found that unemployment, lack of financial security, and alcohol/substance abuse, are some of the most important concerns facing men. The article's authors, Shafer and Koyiet, claim that joblessness, alcohol and crime, mental health and GBV feed into each other, and that mental health support for men could be a preventative measure against GBV.

Can these findings in Kenya be applied to our own context? If there is a relationship between joblessness,

alcohol, mental health, and GBV, we should investigate what this might mean in terms of addressing GBV in our own country.

This insight into the link between these different issues could supply us with the framework for a novel, multi-faceted solution to the problem of GBV, which focuses on financial insecurity, alcohol, and mental health. If these factors are all related, then what does that mean in terms of the change and transformation that needs to take place to create a more inclusive society and economy in South Africa?

Firstly there needs to be more financial security within communities in order to combat GBV.

Khanya Ndlovu, a postdoctoral fellow at the University of Fort Hare, conducted research in South African townships that has shown that men who are unable to put food on the table often resort to joining gangs as a means of providing for their families. Gangs treat women as spoils of war, or punish opposing gangs by raping “their” women.

Another way in which financial insecurity affects GBV, is that women who do not have the means to support themselves financially, are subjected to the whims of those who provide for them. Women in such a situation cannot easily leave an abusive relationship.

These are just two ways in which an improved financial situation for everyone would improve the lives of women in our country. However, job creation is a long term and difficult task. In the interim, we might turn to another solution: the universal basic income (UBI) grant. Rolling out this grant would immediately alleviate financial insecurity.

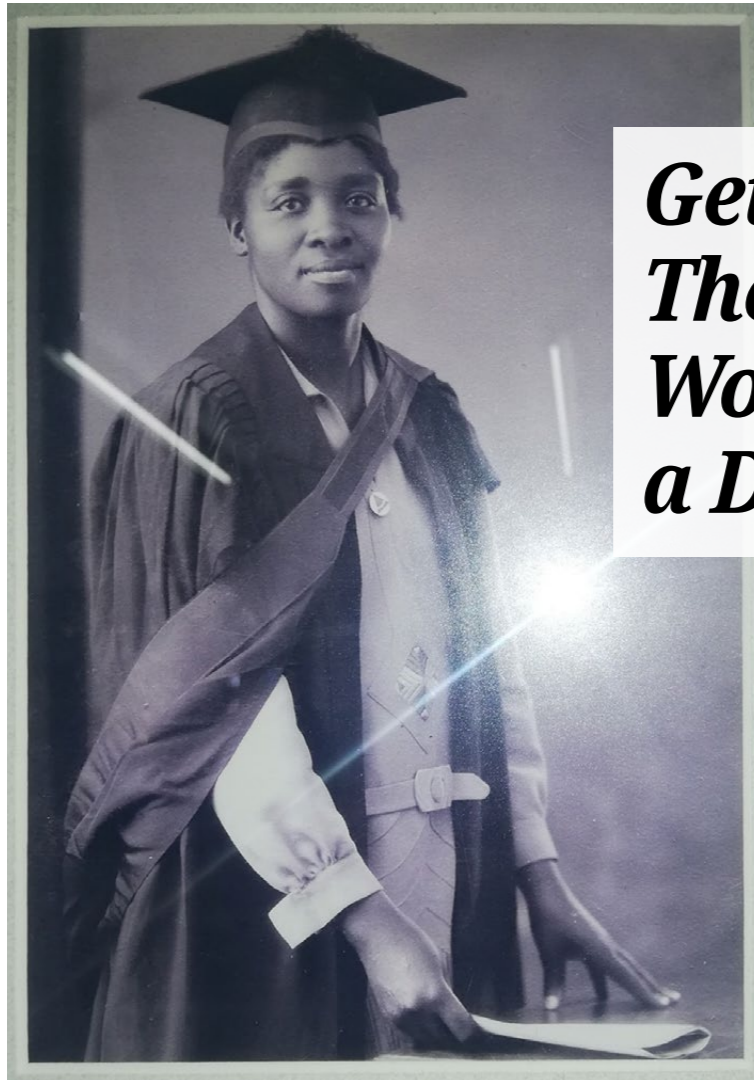
Secondly, based on the abovementioned article's findings, there are direct links between alcohol abuse and GBV. A solution based on these insights would therefore be to start addressing alcohol abuse. We live in a country where much of our economy depends on alcohol – this was starkly highlighted during alcohol restrictions in lockdown. The very fact that so much of our economy depends on alcohol should already be cause for concern, due to direct links between alcohol, crime and GBV. However, while COVID-19 highlighted the fact of the extreme drinking culture in South Africa, it has similarly shown us that alcohol restrictions are possible. We should ask why these restrictions are deemed appropriate during the pandemic, and yet it has not been considered as a possible way to bring down GBV in our country. We should at least start considering what the effects of not selling alcohol on weekends would have on rates of GBV.

The third part of a solution is to place more emphasis on men's mental health. Men are a high risk category group for suicide, and this alone should cause us concern. However, if it is true that poor mental health worsens GBV, we have even more reason to start working on ways in which we can and ought to support men's (and women's!) mental health.

Why is it that men are at high risk of mental health issues? Could it be that the ways in which men are taught they need to be ‘real’ men are in fact harming men, as well as women? There are many ways in which our current norms of masculinity make it more difficult for men to ask for help when they face mental health challenges. In our society, men are expected to never show weakness. Men are not supposed to show their emotions. Men are not supposed to share their feelings. Remember “Boys don't cry”.

Asking for help, showing oneself to be vulnerable, and admitting your emotions and feelings to others, are all ways to improve mental health. Yet men are denied these avenues due to our current societal understandings of what it means to be a ‘real’ man. Without mental health support, men could turn to alcohol, showing the interrelatedness of these elements. We should start the dialogue on how it is possible to start changing these ideas of what it means to be a ‘real’ man. This will require an honest and deep reflection on our values as a society.

COVID-19 has seen our world making massive changes to how we do things. If it is possible to make drastic changes in order to deal with this pandemic, we should insist that it is possible to also make drastic changes in order to deal with the pandemic of GBV. We need to face that the awareness and educational campaigns in order to prevent GBV are not enough, and that more drastic measures need to be taken to make South Africa safer for its women and girls.



## Getrude Ntlabati, The First African Woman to obtain a Degree from UFH

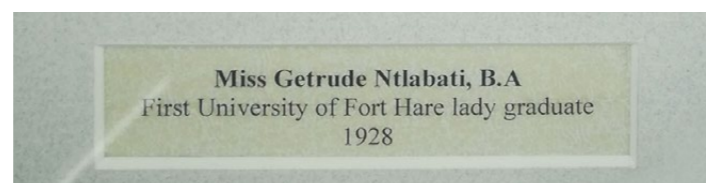
She then returned to UFH to register for a Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree. In 1928, she once again became a pioneering achiever as the very first African woman to graduate with a BA at this great institution.

From 1929, Ntlabati taught at a number of famous schools that included the Inanda Seminary for Girls in Natal, then briefly at the Wilberforce Institute in Evaton and the Clarkebury Methodist School in Engcobo. It was in that latter school where she excelled in the teaching of the English language in the junior secondary classes.

Amongst the many famous pupils she taught was a young Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela, during the early to mid-1930s. In fact, Ntlabati is on record in Mandela's autobiography as one of his best teachers at Clarkebury.

In 2017 she was awarded The Order of the Baobab in Silver (Posthumous) for her excellent contribution to the empowerment of women through education.

Source: <http://www.thepresidency.gov.za>



>> Getrude Ntlabati

Meet Getrude Ntlabati, the first African woman to obtain a degree (Bachelor of Arts) from the University of Fort Hare.

She was born in 1901 in the Hewu district of Komani (Queenstown) in the Eastern Cape.

At age 17, she became one of the first women to qualify for an entry to matric at the South African Native College (SANC), which later became the University of Fort Hare. She was enrolled for a Lower Primary Teacher's Course (LPTC) training.

In 1922 she upgraded her LPTC to a Teachers' Diploma and thereafter taught at the Buchanan Mission School in Middledrift until 1925.

## UFH ALUMNA, THANDO MOHLAMME NAMED *Woman on the move*



>> Thando Mohlamme

Congratulations to UFH alumna Thando Mohlamme who has been featured in WOMEN on the MOVE in partnership with Vodacom.

Thando is the Group Human Resource HR Manager at Central Media Group, which owns OFM – a commercial radio station with a broadcast footprint across the Free State, Northern Cape, southern Gauteng and North West.

She matriculated in the Eastern Cape and completed her first degree, a BComm, at the

University of Fort Hare. She then moved to Bloemfontein and completed her BComm Honours in Industrial Psychology at the University of the Free State.

She has extensive experience in human resources from different industries, namely telecommunications, financial services, retail, the private health sector, and currently finds herself in media.

She is also accredited as a Coach by Thoughtsmiths Coach School. She is involved in performance management, talent management, employee relations, training and development and employee wellness. What she loves most about her job is relationship management between employee and employer and contributing to a conducive work environment for all.

She prides herself on having a sound support system to help juggle business and family.

"I have also come to embrace my different hats: wife, mother, daughter, sibling, friend and corporate being. I believe in showing up and being present whenever it's time for any of the roles."

An outing with girlfriends or a long drive out of town always gives her time to do some introspection and recharge.

Thando advises young women in business to "follow your passion and you will never work a day in your life. She says you should always be true to yourself and never try to imitate anyone, "The world needs you, not the replica of someone else".

Original article and photo appeared in *Get It* (Bloemfontein) on 1 August 2021.

<https://getitmagazine.co.za/bloemfontein/blog/2021/08/01/women-on-the-mo...>

# UFH ALUMNA NOMSO KANA BREAKS BARRIERS IN THE SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY INDUSTRY

UFH honours graduate, Ms Nomso Kana, has certainly found her space and cemented herself as a powerhouse in the Science and Technology industry.

Kana, who hails from *Ngxwalane* Village (Outside Qonce former King Williams' Town) is a Nuclear Scientist and an entrepreneur in the ICT and broadband infrastructure sector. She obtained a Bachelor of Science (Hons) from the University of Fort Hare in 2006 majoring in Computer Science and Chemistry.

She is the founder of Sun n Shield 84 Technologies, a broadband infrastructure solutions company that designs connectivity networks and distributes passive fibre optic products. She is also the founder of Blaze Away SA, a business strategy consulting firm.

Kana's list of achievements and strategic roles she plays in this (previously) male-dominated sector are as long an arm. However, she remains resolute in her quest to encourage young Africans - especially women - to become involved in Science, Technology, Engineering and Science (STEM).

In addition to running her business and being a member of several boards, Kana holds the following roles:

- commissioner in the Presidential Commission on the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR)
- governor in the Nuclear Energy Foundation Agency, and
- most recently, she was appointed as one of the members to serve on a part-time advisory panel to the Premier of the Eastern Cape.

## The Beginning

Speaking to *ThisWeek@FortHare*, Ms Kana said being born to parents who were teachers played a major role in her decision to get involved in STEM. "My parents saw education as an unlocker of opportunities. They recognized my talent whose strength lies in the fields of maths and science, harnessed and also supported it. I think recognising, harnessing and supporting a young person's talent is key to their success."

## Time at UFH

Reminiscing on the years (2002-2006) she spent at UFH as a young student on the Alice Campus, Kana said: "Those

were the good old days," before letting out a burst of joyful laughter.

She recalls the bond which was formed among the computer science students: "We have always been united and even today, we remain united." She also reminisced on days spent doing group assignments next to the student centre by the swimming pool.

## Notable Achievements

- In 2013 she was in the top 80 emerging leaders in science and technology in Africa and the Middle East and participated in TechWomen - an exchange programme for women in STEM fields, an initiative by the former Secretary of State in the US, Ms Hillary Clinton.
- In 2014 she was appointed as a South African Delegation leader for the World sustainability energy forum based in Vienna, Austria.
- In 2017 the kingdom of the Netherlands, through the SA embassy and CoCreateSA, named her as one of the top inspiring women in ICT.
- In 2020 she was profiled on the Mail & Guardian Powerful Women feature.

## Proudest Career Moment

According to her, Kana's proudest career moment was when she won an award from Stanford University in 2016, in recognition of her work in getting young girls in the SADC Region involved in STEM.

"I was just watching the news when it was announced that I had won an award from Stanford University. I had no idea there was someone who was watching the work that we do in the SADC Region and had nominated me for the award. That was very special," she said.

## Motivating Young Girls

As an advocate for young girls and women empowerment, Kana strongly believes self-empowerment is key to achieving bigger things. "Your background does not define you. What defines you is how you carry yourself and how much you know yourself. Be part of things that are bigger than you so that you are always challenged to achieve even bigger things," she said.

by Aretha Linden

*"Your background does not define you. What defines you is how you carry yourself and how much you know yourself. Be part of things that are bigger than you so that you are always challenged to achieve even bigger things"*

>> Ms Nomso Kana

#WomensMonth@UFH



## UFH Accounting Department and ABSA host Workshop

The UFH Nkuhlu Department of Accounting in partnership with ABSA Bank recently held a workshop to prepare and equip final-year students with skills required for the workplace, such as interview skills and CV writing. The workshop was held online. During the workshop, students were given various challenges where the winners were awarded prizes that were sponsored by ABSA.

We would like to thank ABSA Bank for their continued involvement in the accounting department and for sponsoring the prizes.

## FORT HARE KARATE KIDS RECEIVE BLACK BELT CERTIFICATES

On 2 August two UFH graduates, Siyabulela Faku and Masibulele Joyi received certificates of a different kind, all the way from Japan - an international certificate and a Karate black back card.

Faku is an education graduate and Joyi is a human rights PhD candidate.

The full contact Kyokushinkai-kan karate style will provide an opportunity for both to reach out and strengthen their experience with underprivileged kids. Their enthusiasm for the sport will be the driving force to continue running karate classes.

Mr Stephen Martin, the duo's instructor and Shihan hailed the University of Fort Hare for the opportunity to conduct Kyokushin on its premises.

*“Karate is much more than a sport. It is a life philosophy of wisdom, power and harmony with oneself and surrounding people.”*



>> Masibulele Joyi, Mr Stephen Martin & Siyabulela Faku

“It has been a long journey which started in 2010. Many students have come and gone but today I am proud to say these two were part of a successful journey”, he said.

When asked about the impact of karate in one's personal life, Martin said, “Karate is much more than a sport. It is a life philosophy of wisdom, power and harmony with oneself and surrounding people. It promotes discipline and allows people to find additional reserves. It is about character building. It is a hard and demanding system whose teaching of fighting techniques is underscored by a strong philosophical base of self-discipline, self-denial and victory over oneself before victory over others”.

According to Joyi, Fort Hare is a dream changer. “It is where I discovered myself in terms of strength, abilities and also my worth in the society. By providing the same skills, attitude and practice - karate will benefit Fort Hare students by becoming disciplined sports people”.

Joyi is well decorated and amongst his achievements is a fourth place in African Regional Tournament of the African Full Contact Karate Organisation (AFCKO) in 2019 and a 3rd Place in the SA National Tournament in 2019. He has also participated in the African Champ of Champs as well as in a number of local and provincial tournaments organised by University Sport South Africa (USSA).

by Mawande Mrashula



# FORT HARE TO HOST PROVINCIAL BASKETBALL TRIALS

During the month of August 2021 the UFH Sports Department will host provincial basketball trials at the Sports Complex, Alice campus.

In compliance with Covid-19 regulations, the games will be held in a strict bio bubble with only the participants allowed at the venue. In terms of the regulations, this is a single day event and does not necessarily require a bio bubble. However, the organisers have decided to leave no stone unturned in ensuring the safety of everyone involved. Non-pharmaceutical containment measures such as sanitisation, social distancing, wearing of masks and screening will be strictly adhered to. Anyone who does not meet the temperature requirement will be sent home.

The trials will be run by the Eastern Cape Windbreakers Basketball Club. The tournament will also serve as a talent search opportunity for potential players in the Alice and East London areas.

Speaking to *ThisWeek@FortHare*, Sports Officer Sibabalwe Feni lamented the impact of Covid-19 on UFH sports.

“The UFH basketball team’s last game was in March last year (2020). We only resumed playing in April and since then have only played three games. Due to Covid-19 restrictions, our athletes only started playing and training in April. Then again, the nation went back to level 4 where sport was not allowed. It is only now that we must start working hard to prepare for the University Sports South Africa (USSA) tournament which will be hosted by NMU at the end of September 2021.

In preparation for USSA, we are planning to participate in the provincial USSA league for the remaining weeks and play against NMU, RHODES and WSU. We will also schedule other friendly games”, he said confidently.

*by Mawande Mrashula*





University of Fort Hare  
*Together in Excellence*

# *ThisWeek@FortHare*

your fortnightly newsletter

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