

This Week @Fort Hare



University of Fort Hare
Together in Excellence

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Getting To Know... Dr Ellen Rungani

“I believe the university has the potential to create an atmosphere that fights for equal social, political, and economic rights for men and women.”

Born in Zimbabwe to parents who are war veterans, Dr Ellen Rungani has certainly earned her UFH stripes in academia. She joined the university as a student in 2004 but now serves as the acting Deputy Dean for Teaching, Learning and Community Engagement in the Faculty of Management and Commerce. She was appointed to this position in February this year, after serving as Senior Lecturer as well as Head of the Business Management department for six years.

During her 12-year career at UFH she has held several leadership positions including an appointment in 2020 as the Chairperson of the institution's first-ever Gender-Based Violence Task Team.

She has a BCom, Honours and Master of Commerce Degrees from UFH and a PhD in Business Management from the North-West University.

ThisWeek@FortHare spoke to the “bubbly academic” – as her students and peers describe her.

>> Dr Ellen Rungani



Who is Ellen Rungani?

I was born in a place called Nyika at the heart of Masvingo province in Zimbabwe. I have spent most of my life using my personal and career experiences to help students redefine their destiny through education and knowledge creation.

As a daughter of two war veterans who met in exile in Mozambique (retired General VTC Rungani and Honorable Anna Rungani), I am affectionately known as

the ‘General’. This is due to my militaristic approach when dealing with difficult issues.

My greatest strength is my bubbly personality with a pinch of craziness. When in this state, I am known as “MaEllie or Dr E.”

I am an energetic, ambitious person who has developed a mature and responsible approach to any task I undertake, or situation that I am presented with. I strive for Excellence!

UFH Journey

I joined the university in 2004 as a BCom Degree student. I was subsequently appointed as a Junior Lecturer in January 2009 and was promoted to Lecturer in January 2010 after completing my Masters. Eight years later when I obtained my PhD, I was promoted to Senior Lecturer.

Over the years, I have held several leadership positions in the Business Management department. From 2013 to 2014 I served as its Deputy Head of Department (HoD) and from January 2015 until February 2021 served as the HoD.

In 2019 (during my tenure as the HoD) I also acted as the Deputy Dean of the Faculty of Management and Commerce where I was responsible for the Faculty's Teaching and Learning and community engagement portfolio. I have since vacated the HoD role and now serve as the Acting Deputy Dean for Teaching, Learning and Community Engagement.

Tell us more about your projects or engagements outside the classroom or the office?

Outside the classroom and office I have been involved in a national community engagement project through Enactus South Africa. In this project I have received several accolades including being named as the Faculty Advisor of the Year - an award that is given to the best mentor amongst participants from the 26 SA public universities.

In 2015 the university also recognised my work when I awarded the VC's Award in Community Engagement in honour of my contribution in the scholarship of Community Engagement.

In 2019 I was selected as a fellow in the first cohort of the Future Professor Programme, a Department of Higher Education and Training initiative which provides mentorship and support to future professorial candidates.

I have been a member of all faculty committees in Management and Commerce and several university committees where I represent my faculty. In May 2020, the UFH Management Executive Committee entrusted me with the role of leading the GBV Task Team.

For those who do not know, could you spell out your role as the GBV task team chair?

According to the terms of reference of my appointment, the Chairperson's key focus areas are:

- To lead the process of establishing of a fully-fledged GBV unit
- Lead the process of identification and harmonisation of related UFH policies with the GBV policy
- Ensure the development and delivery of GBV educational, training and sensitivity programmes until the policy is fully-fledged

- Facilitate the provision of GBV lectures which are meant to unpack the policy of the university to all stakeholders
- Facilitate developing GBV awareness advocacy campaigns through relevant university structures
- Ensure the provision of a safe place for all victims by the university
- Ensure the provision of training to all university employees who handle GBV issues

The country has been battling the scourge of GBV, to an extent that it has been coined as a “second pandemic” by President Cyril Ramaphosa. What is your stance on GBV?

In order to eradicate GBV and femicide, we need to uproot gender inequality. We (including men) need to address toxic masculinity. I believe that the time to act against any form of GBV is now. It is up to you and me to be change agents by being part of a generation that ends gender inequality and gender-based violence by saying enough is enough!

As GBV Task Team Chair, which areas have you identified as progressive and which ones require strengthening in order to completely do away with GBV on campus?

Commendable achievements:

- Development and implementation of the UFH GBV policy
- Adopting a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of GBV
- Taking action against students or staff members who have been found guilty of sexual or gender-based violence.

However we need to strengthen the following areas:

- Development and delivery of GBV educational, training and sensitivity programmes until the policy is fully-fledged
- Developing GBV awareness advocacy campaigns
- Provision of a safe place for all victims
- Provision of training to all university employees who handle GBV issues
- Increasing security within student residencies and around campus

What are your broad aspirations for the University of Fort Hare?

For the university to have a secure, caring and nurturing institutional environment where everyone is able to pursue their studies, careers, duties and other activities free from all forms of GBV.

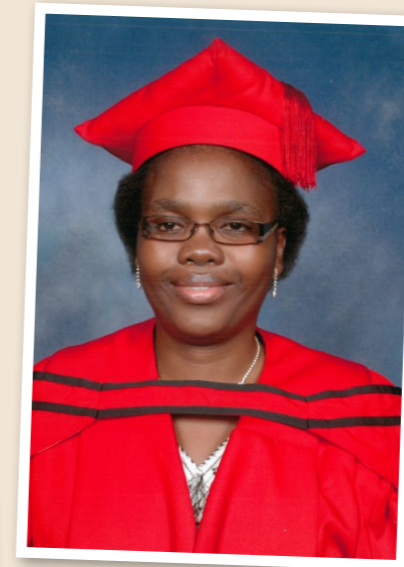
As such, we all need to curb gender-based violence and ensure that the university provides a safe environment for both staff and students. I believe the university has the potential to create an atmosphere that fights for equal social, political, and economic rights for men and women.



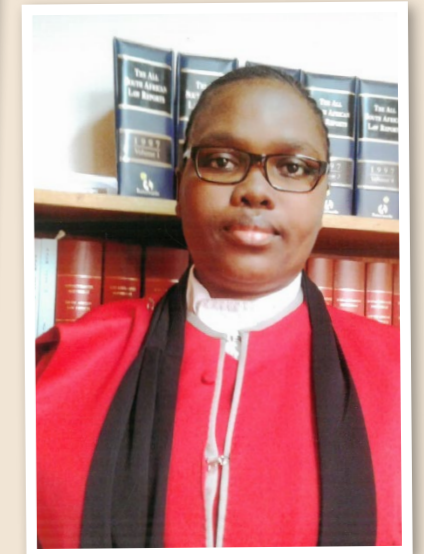
>> UFH netball star, Thandi Ntlama



>> Intensive training for the best seven defenders in Brisbane, Australia



>> Prof Nomthandazo Ntlama



>> Acting Judge Nomthandazo Ntlama

Professor Thandi Ntlama Appointed as Chair of NSA Disciplinary Committee of Appeals

Effective March 2021, Netball South Africa (NSA) has appointed law professor, Nomthandazo Ntlama-Makhanya, as Chairperson of its Disciplinary Committee of Appeals.

Prof Ntlama is the acting Head of the Fort Hare UNESCO Oliver Tambo Chair of Human Rights within the Nelson R Mandela School of Law.

She is a UFH alumna, former student leader and a sporting giant in her own right. Affectionately known as Thandi, the a rural girl from Qaga village, King Williams Town, is the first Black National Netball player in the Eastern Cape and one of the first four Black Players of Border Netball in 1994 after the integration of black and white federations.

She bowed out of national sporting duties after participating and representing NSA during the Commonwealth Games in Manchester in 2002. She had to give up competitive netball due to work commitments, which saw her climbing the academic ladder to become the first South African black woman to be a Professor of Law in the university's Law Faculty.

Ntlama's appointment to the NSA role means a lot as the offer could have been given to a practicing senior advocate. However, her experience as an acting Judge

as well as her netball background counted in her favour. She knows how netball rules should be transmitted into the general framework of the law.

According to her, the uniqueness of the position is derived from her being a former player, an official at local level and being aware of netball rules and particularly a need to align the vision and mission of NSA with the country's law framework.

"As an appeals chairperson it is not a matter of finding someone guilty, but rather more of an educational role. It is through NSA officials and senior managers and everybody else that is involved in the sport, that netball can become a beacon of hope in ensuring that legal processes are carried out with due diligence", she said. Ntlama would like to continue playing a role as a resource to the current UFH netball team.

In 2016 Prof Ntlama was appointed Acting Judge of the Eastern Cape division based in Bhisho. Her next appointment was based in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal division. As Acting Judge she dealt with criminal and civil matters. One of the high profile cases she presided over and attracted a huge media attention was an appeal judgement of a kidnapped child from Mdantsane who landed in Mozambique. She dismissed the appeal in 2016.

Finding a Balance Between Student Leadership and Sport

In 1999/2000 as a UFH student, she served as the Academic Officer in the SRC under the presidency of the current Eastern Cape Premier, Oscar Mabuyane. She remembers that year as having to balance her academic work, student leadership and her netballing career. Of the latter, she recalls, "I was highly involved in netball and frequently travelled between Alice and Port Elizabeth, hitch hiked using my own money and had to balance all my roles to make sure I did not fail. Sometimes I would stay in the SRC office till very late at night".

Illustrious Netball Career

- From a young age, she excelled in school sports and played for the then Ciskei Soldiers' Netball Club.
- She was then spotted by Reginald Sharp, one of the best provincial coaches at the time.
- Ntlama started wearing the green and gold national colors at South African Students Sports Union level.
- She went on to represent SA Universities in Zimbabwe as the first National netball player from UFH.
- Later on, she received an invitation to trial in the senior National Netball Team (now Proteas). Her stay in the national team was also decorated by the invitation into an intensive training session in Brisbane, Australia, as one of the top six defenders in the country.

- Sadly, a brain tumor operation in 2004 led to her resignation from competitive netball after having played for Border, Boland, Eastern Province, Eastern Cape Comets, and Western Cape and travelling many countries in Africa and the world.

Other Sports Leadership Roles

Ntlama also served as Secretary of Kwavelukukhanya Sports Council. "We would organize tournaments with a particular focus of transmitting national information at local level. The aim was to empower players particularly in the new democracy because there are values and principles that have to be infused through sport as a uniting tool".

Another accolade is a recent appointment as Deputy President of King William's Town Central District Rugby Union.

She is also part of a group that is organizing a heritage tournament in honour of a rugby player who sustained a serious injury that led to a disability. Scheduled for September 2021, the group wants to use the tournament as a platform to raise awareness about disability and inclusion.

Prof Ntlama specialises in Constitutional Law and Human Rights and has recently contributed a chapter in the book "South African Constitutional Law in Context".

// by Mawande Mrashula



ANNOUNCEMENT: UFH STUDENT VILLAGE NAMING COMPETITION

ATTENTION ALL REGISTERED STUDENTS

The UFH Student Village on the Alice campus will be launched during the month of May and the university needs you - **our students** - to help find a suitable name for our new residences.

The Institutional Advancement department has launched a naming competition. All registered students are invited to take part in this exciting opportunity to name this magnificent landmark and major milestone for the University of Fort Hare.

The winning entry will be unveiled at the launch event and the winner will walk away with a prize valued at R3500. The date of the launch will be announced shortly.

ABOUT THE STUDENT VILLAGE

Thus far, the project is the biggest student housing development to be undertaken by the Department of Higher Education and Training's (DHET) Student Housing Infrastructure Programme (SHIP).

It aims to significantly improve the number of beds and quality of student housing - boasting 2047 student beds - an addition to the 4800 beds that the university currently provides to students.

Key features include a state-of-the-art student centre and a dedicated postgraduate accommodation block.



COMPETITION RULES

- Eligibility is **limited to UFH registered students** (entries from staff or former students will not be accepted)
- The competition will run from **26 April to 10 May**
- The proposed name should endeavour to **reflect the history, culture and tradition** of the university
- The name should **not be offensive**
- Shortlisted names will be presented to **the Management Executive Committee (MEC)** for final selection
- The winner will be **announced during the launch event**

THE PRIZE

The winner will walk away with a UFH merchandise pack consisting of a tracksuit, cap, bag and a winter jacket. Upon graduating, the winner will also receive a UFH Alumni Blazer and a tie. The total prize is valued at R3500.

HOW TO ENTER

Send your proposed name and a short motivation (not more than 250 words) to:

Ms Aretha Linden at alinden@ufh.ac.za

Please include your name, student number and contact number.

UFH MAKES IT TO THE SEMIFINALS OF THE PUBLIC INTEREST LAW MOOT COURT COMPETITION

The Nelson R Mandela School of Law is proud of the tenacity shown by its law students during the Public Interest Law Moot competition which was organised by the Student Litigation Society in collaboration with the Centre for Applied Legal Studies at the University of Witwatersrand. The team reached the semi-final stage of the competition.

This year, 162 teams from universities all over South Africa submitted entries. UFH was represented by the following Law students:

- Tendai Mikioni
- Benvolio. M. Tshuma
- Zilungile Mbali

The first round of selections was based on the submission of heads of argument and UFH made the cut and progressed to the Top 16. Directives were issued at this stage instructing the teams to submit supplementary heads of argument relating to a further application for further evidence to be heard. Based on their submission, the UFH team was selected to compete in the semi-final round.

The semi-finals and the final round consisted of *ex parte* submissions at Constitutional Hill and the Constitutional Court. The University of Johannesburg won the competition.

An Incredible Learning Experience

All three UFH representatives described the competition as an incredible learning experience where the competitor's research ability, presentation skills, confidence and critical thinking were tested.



>> UFH Mooting Team

Going into and during the competition, the trio had received guidance and training from respected attorneys and advocates on a virtual platform created by the competition organizers. The UFH team was also supported in their preparations by Prof van Coller, Dr Ndlovu and Adv Seti from the Law Faculty.

// Source: Law Faculty



>> UFH Mooting Team with Semi Justices

DISCUSSING LAND MATTERS: FORT HARE FRIDAY SEMINAR SERIES

Three years after Nasrec: What is to be done about land expropriation?



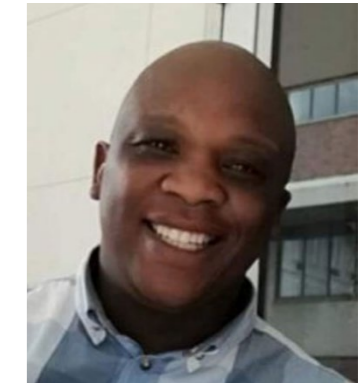
>> Prof Sonwabile Mnwana



>> Ms Zenande Boo



>> Prof Ruth Hall



>> Mr Bonani Loliwe

This is a pertinent question that speakers sought to answer during a recent Fort Hare Friday Seminar Series held on 26 March and moderated by Professor Sonwabile Mnwana.

The Friday Seminar series of webinars commenced in 2020. The virtual sessions are hosted by the UFH Department of Sociology and Anthropology in partnership with Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung South Africa (FES-SA).

To lead deliberations on this topic were the following speakers:

Ms Zenande Boo: Legal expert who heads projects on land at the Land Accountability Research Centre (LARC), University of Cape Town.

Prof Ruth Hall: SARChI Chair and Professor of Politics at the Institute for Poverty, Land and Agrarian Studies, University of the Western Cape, South Africa.

Mr Bonani Loliwe: Land activist in the Eastern Cape Province and Director of Vulamasango Singene.

The dialogue was anchored on the following questions:

- Where is South Africa's process of land expropriation heading?
- Is there still any remaining hope among the landless poor in the ongoing process of policy shift towards expropriation of land without compensation?
- Is the land issue currently at risk of becoming a potent weapon in the hands of populist politicians?
- And what is to be done about land expropriation?

Opening the floor, Prof Mnwana said while the issue of expropriation of land without compensation had been very topical and much debated in the past, those talks have since dwindled. According to him, three decades post democracy, there has been a significant decline in hoping that the state still has the capacity to drive radical land reform.

"In 2017, during its 53rd National Conference in Nasrec, the ruling party (African National Congress) took a resolution to pursue expropriation of land without compensation in order to expedite radical redistribution of land in favour of South Africa's landless black majority population. Subsequently, in December 2018, the National Assembly voted in favour of the Constitutional Review report, which recommended an amendment of Section 25 of the Constitution to allow for expropriation of land without compensation. However, more than three years after the Nasrec Conference, millions of black South Africans remain landless and poor. There is not much of the land debate left in the political landscape," stated Mnwana.

He further highlighted the importance of the land debate amid other burning issues that the country is faced with, such as the Covid-19 pandemic and student protests.

"Land is the basis of inequality in our country, hence we raise the question: What is to be done about land expropriation without compensation?"

First to speak was **Ms Boo**. She jumped straight into one of the vital questions: Whether there was still hope remaining among the landless and poor people on the process of land expropriation without compensation. "Bluntly put, I do not think there is any hope," said Boo.

According to her, the idea of expropriation of land without compensation was incorrectly sold as a silver bullet to deal with complex obstacles that face the achievement of land reform. "Throughout the process of considering the merits -or not- of expropriation without compensation, the elephant in the room is that the people who continue having their land taken away from them are poor black people, particularly those in the former homelands." Boo advanced several arguments in support of her stance.

"...More than three years after the Nasrec Conference, millions of black South Africans remain landless and poor. There is not much of the land debate left in the political landscape"

Next-up was **Prof Hall**. She brought to the fore the proposal of a third perspective on land expropriation and expropriation of land without compensation. "In South Africa's debate around land expropriation, specifically land expropriation without compensation, we have seen a polarization of two opposing sides to an extent which expropriation without compensation has become a shorthand - more broadly, for Radical Economic Transformation - for dealing with the compromises and limitations of the political settlement of the 1990's. Expropriation as a debate has become a proxy issue for far wider issues of power and economic transformation."

Based on her view, Prof Hall said one of the difficulties when dealing with expropriation is recognising that on the one hand, people who are landless and poor look to the state to provide them with access to land, in a context where much of the land in SA has been privatized. "Citizens look to the state to confront private property owners but we are seeking this power from a state that routinely uses its existing powers to reinforce the privilege and rights of property owners over the rights of the dispossessed."

Prof Hall described the session as "one of the most thoughtfully designed events around land expropriation."

The final speaker, **Mr Loliwe** took it back to 1948 when apartheid started in South Africa. "We are here and having this discussion because in 1948 when the National Party took over powers in South Africa

they cut off the powers of traditional leaders and implemented their agenda to divide the tribes of SA to start the process of dispossession." He made reference to research that indicates that 3.5 million South Africans were dispossessed between the 1960 and 1982.

"One would assume that after 1994 (when the country obtained its democracy) in terms of restitution those numbers would be covered but at the moment the backlog stands at around 8 000. The key question to ask is: Do we have a state that is capable and willing to confront what apartheid has created?"

He briefly expanded on how traditional leadership has been "moulded" and used as tools by the state over the years in regards to the land issue.

Loliwe then moved his address to post 1994. "If you look at the period of Nelson Mandela, this was the time when we thought that a process of making legislation to realise Section 25 provisions and to address injustices of the past would commence." However according to Loliwe, almost three decades after, the democratic government has failed to address injustices of the past and return the land to the hands of the people.

Click here for the recording of the session: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ivMeQnm7uHKSR2N-ZqxMnMOVI6-O_zYb/view?ts=6065a7a7

// by Aretha Linden

ANIMAL SCIENCE WEBINAR CONNECTS EC AGRI STUDENTS, LOCAL FARMERS AND INDUSTRY EXPERTS

According to Mr Maliviwe Mpayipheli, UFH Livestock and Pasture Science Lecturer, over the past few years the livestock has experienced significant changes that are mainly influenced by political and economic reforms, growing consumer demands for safe and quality livestock products and climate change.

He was addressing stakeholders during a webinar hosted on 19 April by the Faculty of Science and Agriculture in a bid to keep Animal Science students abreast with developments in the sector.

Facilitated by Mpayipheli, the webinar was attended by over 200 participants, including representatives from the Eastern Cape Department of Rural Development and Agrarian Reform (DRDAR) and the private sector.

The session presented a rare platform for students from different agricultural schools in the Eastern Cape (UFH, Fort Cox College of Agriculture and Forestry, Lovedale and King Hintsa TVET college), local farmers and industry experts to interact virtually.

The following experts addressed the audience:

Mr. Xolisa Bomela: Local communal wool sheep farmer who has successfully implemented the estrous synchronization technique under communal production systems. Bomela spoke about the control of the lambing period. He gave advice on how to curb the mortality of lambs due to cold and hunger during the winter and autumn lambing period and how to increase the weaning percentage to 95%.

Mr. Mhlobo Mbane: Director and founder of (Vegetable Agric Development Organization) VEGADO. He is also the Chairperson of the Eastern Cape Farmers Poultry Association (ECFPA). In his presentation, Mbane gave an overview of the poultry industry and how it uses projects from the ECFPA as case studies. He also spoke about the opportunities that exist in the poultry industry.

Prof. Michiel M. Scholtz: Specialist Researcher at the Agricultural Research Council – Animal Production Institute. He is an editor of the book: *Beef Breeding in South Africa*. His presentation titled *Livestock Production in South Africa With a Focus on Large Ruminants* provided insightful information on the value of the livestock industry. He also shared the effects of climate change in ruminant production.

Mpayipheli said discussions on the general structure of the industry are usually debated at platforms that may not necessarily include the majority of young Animal Science students and local small-scale livestock farmers. According to him, this session sought to afford that rare opportunity.

“These students are potential employees and employers and this kind of session is to prepare them for the industry. As for small-scale farmers, we constantly urge them to grow their production but the details on how to achieve this is, are seldom made available to them”.

The Animal Science Department plans to host more sessions in the near future.

// by Aretha Linden



>> Mr Maliviwe Mpayipheli



>> Mr Xolisa Bomela



>> Mr Mhlobo Mbane



>> Prof Michiel M. Scholtz

2021 EDHE ENTREPRENEURIAL INTERVARSITY COMPETITION:

UFH Studentpreneurs Set Their Sights on Winning the Grand Prize



>> Dr Tendai Chimucheka

Entries for the Entrepreneurship Development in Higher Education (EDHE) Entrepreneurial Intersivity 2021 competition are now open. So far, 17 UFH Studentpreneurs are eyeing the R100 000 grand prize and have already submitted entries.

In its third year running, the competition is an initiative of the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) and Universities South Africa (USAf). It aims to identify top student entrepreneurs at South African universities, recognise and showcase their businesses and invite potential investors.

UFH EDHE competition coordinator, Dr Tendai Chimucheka said compared to previous years, there is an increase in the number of entries from the university. The majority of entrants are in the ideas category and others are in categories for existing businesses. More students are expected to enter as the closing date approaches. The closing date for entries is 30 April.

UFH has been participating in the competition since its inception in 2019. In the first year, two students: Tinashe Mutema with his idea of 'The App' and Siyasanga Ntsokotha with his idea of 'Clean my City' participated in the innovative ideas category. The pair went up to the regional level of the competition where they competed with students from other Eastern Cape Universities. That year, the Eastern Cape regional competition was hosted by Nelson Mandela University.

In 2020, UFH had three entrants also participating at regional level. They were: Siphamandla Nyambo with her idea of 'Africa Print and Home Accessories', Sibulele Ngozi competed with his existing business 'Hlomubomi Pty Ltd' and Sivuyisiwe Tyelbooi competed with his existing business 'Heyla Group'. The 2020 regional competition was hosted virtually by Rhodes University

Dr Chimucheka is optimistic that this year, will be the year that UFH students would make it to the national round of the competition. "2021 is promising and we may have our own competing at the national level," he proclaimed.

Competition rules and procedures

The EDHE Entrepreneurship Intersivity is open to university students from all of the 26 South African public universities

who currently registered undergraduate and postgraduates across all disciplines. Full-time and part-time students are also welcome to participate.

It runs in four stages, beginning with registration and confirmation of accepted entries. The second stage entails competitions at institutional level, followed by regional rounds (at Provincial level), all culminating in the national finals earmarked for October 2021.

Categories:

Category 1: Business Ideas

Category 2: Existing Business – Tech

Category 3: Existing Business – Social Impact

Category 4: Existing Business – General

Opportunities and Prizes:

Successful entrants stand to gain the following:

- Training and mentoring from experts which will prepare them for the future world of business. There are also networking opportunities with business leaders and fellow studentpreneurs.
- There are monetary prizes for each category. **The overall winner will receive R100 000 and winners for each category will scoop R20 000 each.**
- There is also a monetary prize for the winning university

According to Dr Chimucheka whose passion for his studentpreneurs and the competition is palpable, the environment created by EDHE in these competitions inspires students to pursue entrepreneurship as a career. "Participating students will have an opportunity to see what others are doing in their universities in terms of pursuing their own entrepreneurial goals."

Sharing some advice for aspiring entrants, he emphasised the importance of proper preparation. "To those entering the competition, it is important to prepare. It is advisable to familiarise yourself with business pitch competitions of this nature, and also to seek advice from academics who are able to assist. This is an opportunity not to miss. It's an opportunity to shine", he said.

// by Aretha Linden

UFH POSTDOC FELLOW AND MEAT SCIENTIST STARTS OWN AGRIBUSINESS

“I want to open an abattoir where I will be able to create more sustainable jobs. I also want to instil the culture of creating self-employment to young graduates out there, especially in the agriculture sector.”

Determined not to be an unemployment statistic, Dr Zimkitha Soji-Mbongo, currently a UFH postdoctoral fellow and experienced meat scientist, has used her skills and knowledge to start her own agribusiness. She is attached to the Livestock and Pasture department within the Faculty of Science and Agriculture.

The 29-year old has a PhD - Animal Science degree from the University of Fort Hare. She is the founder of a mixed small-scale farm called SM Agri (PTY) LTD. Based in Mount Coke, outside King William's Town, the business currently farms with poultry and vegetables and will soon add piggery and egg layer farming.

She started poultry farming in 2016 when she was doing her Masters. The business was officially registered early April this year.

Speaking to *ThisWeek@FortHare*, Dr Soji-Mbongo said she is left with only one month till she exits her Research Foundation (NRF) funded postdoctoral fellowship and is not willing to just sit on her qualification and expertise.

“After completing my PhD I could not find a job. Similar to the struggles of other graduates, I had first-hand experience of not being able to enter the job market. This time around I refuse to go back to being unemployed”.

Soji-Mbongo's started her fellowship in 2019. During this time, she published two papers focusing on beef production. She used her last

salary from her fellowship to register and expand the business. “I bought more chickens, expanded the vegetable garden and registered my business. I am currently building a piggery and will soon acquire egg layers.”

In addition to creating employment for herself, the business has also created part-time employment for unemployed locals. “When it's harvesting or slaughtering time, I hire people from my area for a couple of days.”

She says the intent is to grow the business and eventually go into meat processing, which is her specialty. “I want to open an abattoir where I will be able to create more sustainable jobs. I also want to instil the culture of creating self-employment to young graduates out there, especially in the agriculture sector. We need to stop relying on government to create jobs for us, with our skills and knowledge, we can become the job creators.”

Dr Soji-Mbongo plans to impart her knowledge and train young agriculture TVET college graduates on the trades of the industry. “I strongly believe that there can never be enough food. There will always be a need to be food secure. We need to equip each other in this industry and grow more food, together.”

// by Aretha Linden



>> Dr Zimkitha Soji-Mbongo

STUDENT WARS ARE LABOUR WARS: A FUNDAMENTAL CONNECTION BETWEEN PARENT AND CHILD

Linking International Workers Day to the role of students at higher education institutions such as the University of Fort Hare.

Opinion Piece by Mr Lufefe Sopazi - final year MA-Sociology student at the University of Fort Hare. He writes in his personal capacity.

I dedicate this opinion piece to the working class of women and men, black people and children who grew up in poverty and have been doing their best to survive. The piece comes at a critical time in the country and internationally, during a pandemic that has affected families adversely, undermined and destabilised the livelihood strategies of most working people all over the world. It comes at a time when the "after effects" of the Covid-19 pandemic economically are showing on the lives and conditions of workers. It also comes at a time when the children of poor people are scattered and not because they do not know any better, but because the realities of life inform this disorganization.

Over the past six months I have been obsessed with this question: What is the responsibility of young academics and professionals who are children of working class parents?

I am reminded of the following line in a song by famous gospel artist Rebecca Malope: "My mother was a kitchen girl, my father was a garden boy, that's why Ngibong' Ujesu ngalamandla angiphe wona noma bekunzima."

The song narrates the complications of life in poverty, where black parents are expected to travel to affluent communities, leaving their children behind to take care of the entire household, including siblings and other members of the extended family. However, Mama Malope thanks the Lord for the strength provided to her in order to change her circumstances and be where she is today. It also narrates the loyalty of Mama Malope to her values and parents. She never gave up because she knew she had a responsibility to honour.

This is the life of all (or the majority of) students in the Eastern Cape. They come from rural homes to realise dreams of rescuing their families from life-long poverty. They seek to build a new life for themselves, a life that is not defined by poverty.

It should be said from the onset that education has played a huge role in uplifting the lives of poor people. On a larger scale, and because poverty is socially engineered, education is a tool for reimagining and restructuring society in order to ensure equality, social justice and fairness.

Education (including informal education) then becomes an important tool in the hands of the working class, in particular, the children of the working class who have a duty to ensure that all systems that do not represent aspirations of the masses are challenged.

The University of Fort Hare which I am a product of, and has played an impeccable role in nurturing the person I am, in and outside the corridors of learning, has a rich history of contribution to resistance, intellectualism and the culture of revolution. This is what academics who speak about the history of the institution refer to as the "heritage of the university". It is important to ask what the movements of yesterday teach us about class unity. The generation of the working masses must learn from the intellectuals of yesterday that all systems that oppress and exclude have to be challenged. For this to happen, it will require the ideas, visions and foresights of young thinkers, academics and activists.

As stated above, Fort Hare has a history of great contributions to the revolutionary agenda in Africa. It is on this basis that I am triggered to write this piece

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>> Mr Lufefe Sopazi

to remind ourselves that we have a responsibility. We are the University's offspring and have to be loyal and possess the consciousness of the working people of Africa, like those that came before us. That is how the "heritage" will not fade away or become merely a part of history.

Fort Hare produces great minds, great teachers, great lawyers, great nurses - all of whom are children of working people. The question remains, what have we achieved for the black people? This should not be viewed negatively, but a challenge to specialists and us young academics to organise in order to ensure material change. The house of the working class is burning and we are inside. Our dreams must be anchored in the idea of freedom and justice. My leader Pastor Xola Skosana says we must all be led by "conviction and not ambition", because "conviction is selfless and ambition is selfish".

The whole notion that student wars are labour wars is based solely on the fundamental connection between a parent and a child. The connection is a matter of principle in that parents work to support their children who are students. The loyalty then of the children must be collectively seen in the efforts to free their parents from the exploitation, victimisation and the precarious labour system that exists in our society. Students remain the hope of their families, students remain the hope of the masses of poor black people.

Rather than offend, the piece aims to touch our hearts and minds for the greater purpose and responsibility of ensuring that *abazali bethu babona utshintso eMzantsi Afrika*. We live in times where instead job

creation, our brothers, sisters, mothers and fathers are being retrenched, the victimisation in the labour space is beyond imagination, the bodies of our kin are disposable, our parents live in constant fear of losing their livelihoods while they are ill-treated and undervalued.

Ali Mazrui states that the very "labour of intellectuals is to construct thought". Institutions of Higher Learning must be spaces of radical intellectualism and conditions for such a culture have to emerge. As students, we have to construct thought which aims to rescue our brothers and sisters, mothers and fathers from the scourge of victimisation. The responsibility lies in the hands of the children of the working class to reconstruct and eradicate conditions that give rise to the vulnerability of workers.

I wish to invoke the words of Professor Mangaliso Sobukwe who states that education is an "identification" of ourselves with the masses and further states that to us, education means "service to Afrika". Mazrui and Sobukwe point us the children of working class to a responsibility of ensuring that the voices of the voiceless are carried on our shoulders.

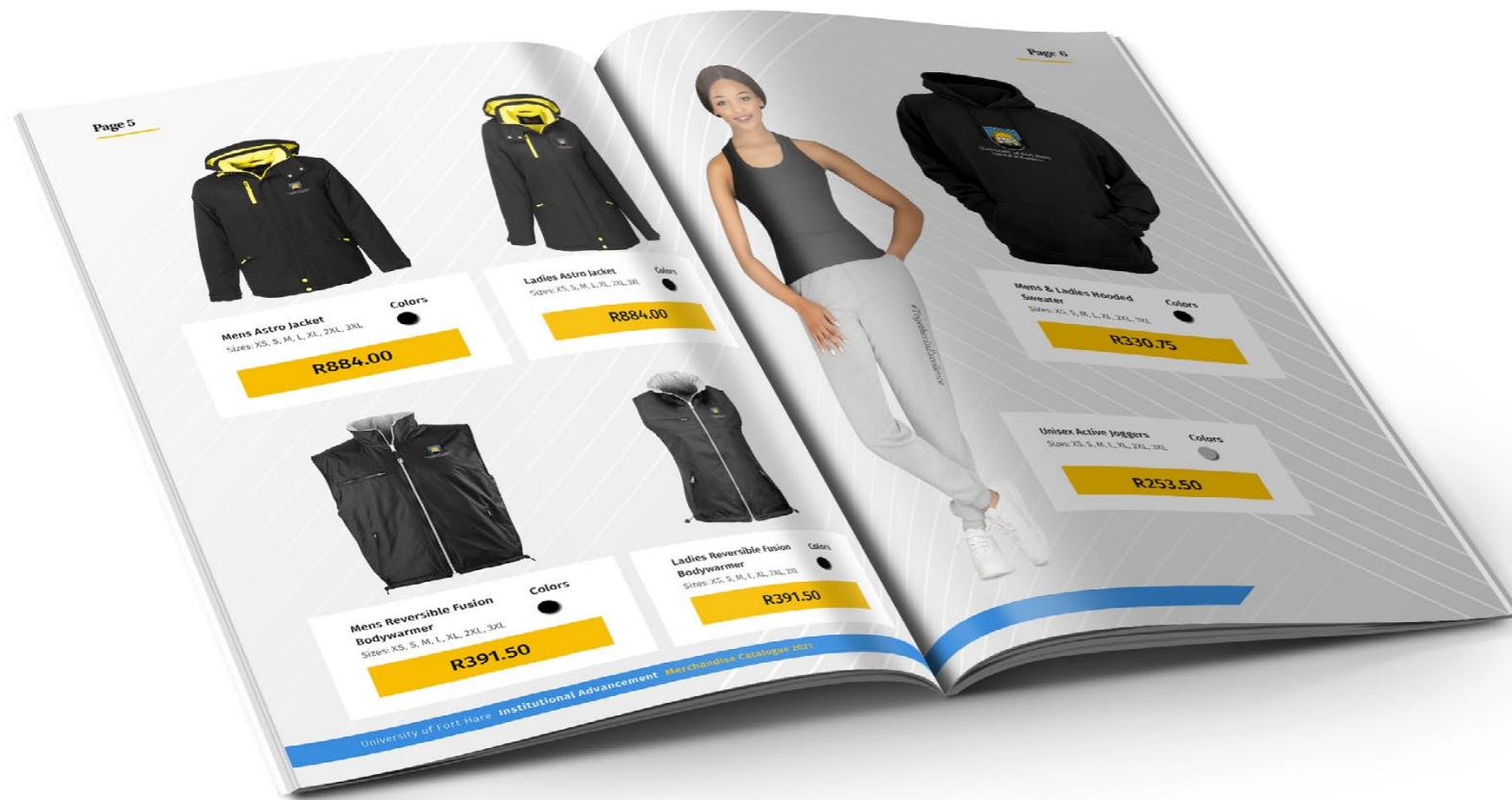
We must live up to the bar that has been set by those who came before us and lead in the creation of solutions.

Masithabathe ngoko izkhali esizinikwe nguloNokholeji silungise indlela zokuphila zabantu abangathathintweni, sinoxanduva yaye sinaso isakhono sokwenza oku. Sithwesiwe izidanga singabanye, singabanye sinalo ulwazi yaye ilizwe lilinde thina nolwazi lwethu, masibeyimbumba sakhe ilizwe elitsha kuthuthu lwelizwe elidala.

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