

This Week @Fort Hare



University of Fort Hare
Together in Excellence

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Getting To Know Prof Liezel Cilliers

Acting Dean - Faculty of Management and Commerce

In her 10th year at the University of Fort Hare, Prof Liezel Cilliers has been entrusted with a new role of Acting Dean of the Management and Commerce faculty – a position left vacant after the departure of Dr Ntombovuyo Wayi on 30 June.

Prof Cilliers has had quite an illustrious career since joining the institution a decade ago as a Lecturer in the Department of Information Systems. Two years later, after obtaining a PhD in Information Systems (UFH), she was promoted to Senior Lecturer.

From 2017 to 2018 she held the position of Head of the Information Systems department and in 2019 was promoted to Associate Professor. In June this year she was appointed to the role of Deputy Dean for Research and Internationalization in the Faculty of Management and Commerce, and from 1st July 2021 she has been serving as the Acting Faculty Dean. This is in addition to her substantive role which includes lecturing and supervising students.

Speaking to the *ThisWeek@FortHare*, Prof Cilliers shared her plans about her new role. She also gave a glimpse into her personal life and being a mother to her adorable son, Quinn.



>> Prof Liezel Cilliers and her son, Quinn

“I believe that one must approach positions of leadership with integrity, empathy and honesty. I always endeavour to actively listen to the point of view of other people and have an open-door policy for students and staff to approach me with their problems”

Please share a bit about your professional and personal background?

Professional background

Prior to joining the university, I was the Head of Department: Physiotherapy at both Frere and Cecilia Makiwane Hospitals. I qualified as a physiotherapist from the University of Stellenbosch in 2002. Thereafter, I continued my studies and obtained the following degrees:

1. Masters in Public Health, (2006), University of the Western Cape
2. BCom Honours (Information Systems), (2010), University of Fort Hare
3. MCom (Information Systems), (2011), University of Fort Hare
4. DPhil (Information Systems), (2014), University of Fort Hare
5. Post Graduate Diploma in Higher Education – Cum Laude, (2016), University of Fort Hare
6. Masters in Education (2019), University of Fort Hare

I have taught at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels during my 10 years at the university. Currently, I am responsible for two courses at undergraduate level and one at honours level. I have supervised at honours, masters and doctoral levels in the Department of Information Systems. To date, I have graduated 23 honours students, 12 masters and two doctoral students.

I have also hosted a postdoctoral fellow, Dr STakavarasha Jnr, in the Department of Information Systems in 2017. I review for several international and national journals as well as conferences. I have also had the privilege to examine extensively for various universities in South Africa.

Research Interest

My research interest includes mobile health with specific reference to electronic and mobile health records. In the past three years, I have also started to investigate how social media can be used to search for health-related information and if South African users have the e-health literacy to understand such information.

My study interests were further refined during the COVID-19 pandemic where ‘infodemics’ became relevant as the volume of health information that is published on social media can overwhelm the user and make it extremely difficult to distinguish between fake and real news. I have a particular interest in how Twitter is used to disseminate health information during health pandemics and this will be my research focus going forward into my professorship.

I have published at a steady pace over the past nine years as my CV and Google H-index of 12 testifies. To date, I have published six book chapters, 35 journal articles and 61 conference papers with colleagues and postgraduate students. During 2020 I served as a Guest Editor of a special issue titled ‘*Mobile technology within the 4IR era – Africa answering the call*,’ with Prof Willie Chinyamurindi (Head of UFH Business Management Department) in the Journal for Transdisciplinary Research in Southern Africa.

Research Funding

As far as funding is concerned, I have successfully applied for three research grants to support my research activities:

- Firstly, a R3 million research grant (which started in 2017) from the South African Medical Research Council in conjunction with an international research partner at the Karolinska Institute in Sweden. The study focused on how to best implement electronic health records in South Africa. During this time, I supervised five Masters students to completion while a further two PhD students are expected to complete at the end of the 2022 academic year. From this study I published 15 papers at conferences and five articles in Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) accredited journals.
- The second grant was a three-year National Research Funding (NRF) Research grant to study how to encourage individuals to make use of health applications and wearable devices to monitor their health care. During this project, I supervised three masters students to completion.
- The final grant is a R3 million research grant from DHET to study social media student sentiment among TVET students. I am the co-principal investigator on this project with Prof K Viljoen from the Department of Business Management. The project is expected to finish in December 2021 and two masters students will graduate from this project.

Personal Life, Hobbies and Other Interest

I am mother to a three-year-old boy, Quinn Cilliers. For the past 10 years I have been a member of Rotary International. I also volunteer my time at a local rugby club as a physiotherapist, when time allows.

I enjoy travelling - at the moment that is mostly in the Eastern Cape and our beautiful country - as we wait for the borders to open again to allow for international travel.

Continued on next page...

What are the key focus areas of your portfolio?

- **Leadership** regarding the Faculty's teaching and research activities and rendering of a professional service to the community.
- **Promotion** of co-operation between staff inside and outside the faculty, as well as between staff and students.
- **Meaningful compilation**, coordination and integration of faculty regulations, courses and the application thereof.
- **Financial Management.**
- **Handling** and attendance of meetings.

What is your approach to executing your key responsibilities in your new role?

I believe that one must approach positions of leadership with integrity, empathy and honesty. I always endeavour to actively listen to the point of view of other people and have an open-door policy for students and staff to approach me with their problems, as it is important for them to know that there is someone that will listen and assist.

Do not be afraid to say 'I don't know, but will find out', and then follow through on those actions.

So far, as the Acting Dean which areas have you identified as pockets of excellence and which ones require strengthening in your Faculty?

Pockets of Excellence

- There is a culture of research in our faculty with several senior academics that are working on various projects. These include community engagement elements, which means that we can serve the community as well.
- New and current curriculums in various programmes offered in the faculty

Challenges

- Mentorship of junior staff.
- Lack of teaching venues and office space for our staff.
- Manual processes in the university that frustrate staff and cause duplicate work.

Lastly, what are your aspirations for the university as it sets off on its journey of a decade of renewal (2020 to 2030)? What is your advice on how to reach the envisaged destination?

My aspiration is for the university to be part of the journey of the departments in the faculty of Management and Commerce as they re-invent themselves during this period to become more efficient and effective at what they offer students.

My vision is also to attract excellent researchers and scholars to partner with the faculty as we offer unique insights and contributions to the community of the Eastern Cape and beyond, including the continent.

Go get your job and minimize the impact of Covid-19

Dear Staff and Students

While data and research shared by scientists and virologists suggests that Covid-19 is not going away any time soon, being vaccinated gives us a better chance to beat the virus.

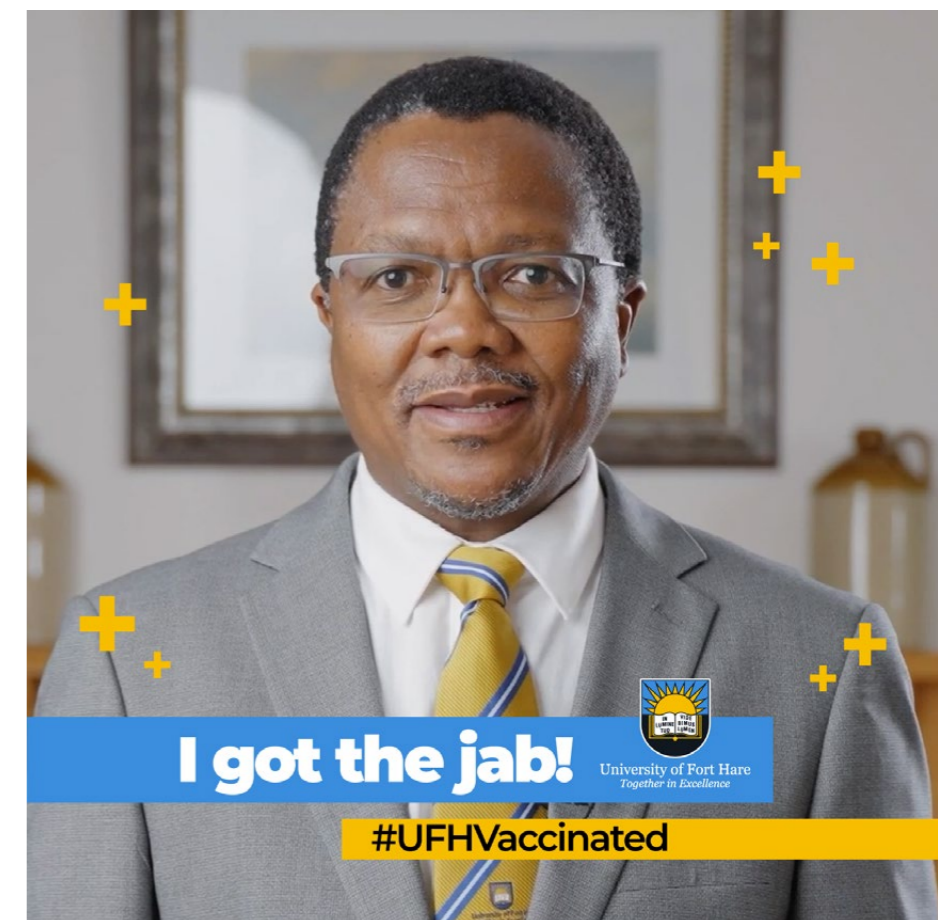
To date, Covid-19 has claimed the lives of more than 82 000 people countrywide and nine of those who succumbed to the virus are staff and students from our university - may their souls continue to rest in eternal peace.

At the time of writing, over 12-million South Africans have been vaccinated and I am amongst the herd that got the jab. I have taken the Pfizer vaccine which consist of two doses and I am proud to say, I am fully vaccinated.

The vaccination programme is open to everyone above the age of 18 years. Government is aiming to vaccinate at least 70% of the 40 million adults by December 2021. And I would like to urge you to get your shot - it saves lives!

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Covid-19 vaccines are safe and effective in the following manner:

- They reduce a person's risk of contracting the virus that cause Covid-19, including the Delta- Variant.



>> Prof Sakhela Buhlungu

- Vaccines continue to be highly effective at preventing hospitalization and death should you get infected.
- Fully vaccinated people with breakthrough infections from the Delta Variant appear to be infectious for a shorter period.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/vaccine-benefits.html>

After getting your jab, I encourage you to update your Facebook profile picture with the #UFHVaccinated picture frame. Simply go to your profile picture, select "Add Frame" and search for the frame.

Remember, always mask-up in public spaces, sanitise and keep a social distance.

Regards

Professor Sakhela Buhlungu
Vice-Chancellor and Principal



>> Prof Philani Moyo

FHISER partners with Provincial Government to host an Immigration Research Capacity Building and Research Skills Transfer Workshop

During August 2021, The Fort Hare Institute of Social and Economic Research (FHISER) held a joint migration research capacity building and skills transfer workshop with the Office of the Premier (OTP) and the Provincial Department of Social Development.

The OTP is a long term research funder and partner of FHISER.

The engagement took place at the Blue Lagoon Conference Centre in East London. Participants included UFH postgraduate students, government officials from the OTP, Department of Social Development and a senior academic from the University of the Free State.

FHISER Director, Prof Philani Moyo led discussions and presentations. The UFH postgraduate students who attended the workshop now form the core group of Research Assistants in a provincial research project, funded by the OTP and titled: 'An Assessment of Migration Patterns in the Eastern Cape Province'.

The primary aim of the research project is to:

- Build a knowledge and policy evidence base about the drivers of internal and external migration in the province
- Profile migration patterns and trends
- Assess the social and economic impact of migration, and
- Find solutions to curb the migration challenge.

Objectives:

- To assess the migration trends and patterns in the province of the Eastern Cape.
- To investigate the drivers of intra-provincial and inter-provincial migration in the province of the Eastern Cape.
- To ascertain the nature and extent of remittances sent to the origin homes of intra and interprovincial migrants of the Eastern Cape.
- To assess the extent of brain-drain and brain-gain in the Eastern Cape Province.
- To generate policy recommendations on migration
Primary data collection for this research project commenced on 10 August 2021 in Buffalo City Metropolitan Municipality.

In the coming months, the research team will collect data in the following five district municipalities: Amathole, Chris Hani, Joe Gqabi, Alfred Nzo and Nelson Mandela Metropolitan.

Source: FHISER

FHISER Climate Futures Seminar Hosts Dr Gabriel Botchwey from University of Winneba, Ghana

Last month (August) the Fort Hare Institute of Social and Economic Research (FHISER) hosted Dr Gabriel Botchwey from the University of Winneba (Ghana) as a presenter during the Institution's virtual Climate Futures Seminar Series.

About Dr Botchwey

Dr Botchwey is a senior lecturer at the Department of Political Science. He is also a Vice Dean of the Centre for International Programmes. Previously, he served as the Head of Department of Political Science at the same university.

He holds a PhD in Politics and International Studies from the University of Leeds (UK), a Masters Degree in Development Studies from Erasmus University Rotterdam (Institute of Social Studies, The Hague, Netherlands), and a BA (Hons) in Religions and Sociology from the University of Ghana.

He has also held the following positions:

- Lecturer at the University for Development Studies in Ghana,
- Socio-Economic Development Officer, Project Consultant and Project Officer for various organisations from 2000 to 2013.

Dr Botchwey's current research focus is on natural resource extraction and environment, social policy and education, informal sector, income security, governance, rule of law and accountability, politics, international and development studies.

During the seminar, Dr Botchwey shared a presentation on his research paper titled: *Mechanised small-scale mining, climate change and the environment in Ghana.*



>> Dr Gabriel Botchwey

Below is an abstract from his research paper:

The environment and livelihoods have come under severe strain in mineral-rich areas with the emergence of mechanized small-scale equipment which generate more than five-fold increase in gold production. This paper discusses the combined impact of mechanised small-scale mining and climate change on the environment and livelihoods of peasant farmers in Ghana, vis-à-vis observance of fundamental environmental obligations of the State. The findings show over seventy percent loss of water, severely degraded land and forests, with detrimental effects on livelihoods in the areas studied. The paper concludes that the consequences of mechanized mining and climate change on the environment have been very detrimental in the face of well-established environmental protection principles. The paper recommends a return to the observance of sound environmental principles and ideals by the State in order to ensure sustainable livelihoods for people living in close proximity to mineral-rich areas.



>> Prof Sakhela Buhlungu



>> Prof Renuka Vithal



>> Dr Ellen Rungani



>> Mr Lufuno Tshikundo



>> Mr Mhanyiseli Nomana



>> Mr Sipiw Ngcenge

University of Fort Hare Inaugurates New SRC

“The SRC is a statutory body of the university at the same level of importance as Council and Senate and the Management Executive Committee, and this comes with obligations.”

On 17 August the University of Fort Hare inaugurated its new Students Representative Council (SRC) and at the same time bade farewell to the previous incumbents.

The three-segment inauguration event included the official migration of the Student Affairs division to the Office of the Vice-Chancellor as well as the welcoming of the new Dean of Students, Mr Lufuno Tshikhudo.

In his speech, Tshikhudo thanked the former interim Dean of Students, Prof Pricilla Monyai for ensuring student governance and development is kept intact as well as for the smooth transition. He called on the SRC to serve students with honesty and diligence and not deviate from the principles of ethical leadership to avoid being judged harshly by students.

“With the Student Affairs portfolio reporting directly to the highest office in the university, student issues will now go straight to the VC and this will enable a quicker response”, said Professor Renuka Vithal - Deputy Vice

Chancellor for Teaching and Learning, to whom Student Affairs previously reported.

Prof Vithal further emphasised the importance of the SRC and Management working together to solve problems according to the policies and rules of the university.

Vice Chancellor Prof Sakhela Buhlungu said, “The SRC is a statutory body of the university at the same level of importance as Council and Senate and the Management Executive Committee, and this comes with obligations. The SRC needs to lead in a way that is compassionate but firm and not defend the indefensible. The Dean of Students must organize training for student leadership so that they walk out of the institution knowing how to conduct themselves as good leaders. We want future leaders from UFH SRC members,” he said.

Addressing the outgoing SRC, the VC said: “The one achievement that stood out from the outgoing SRC was when they worked together with the Vice Chancellor to make sure laptops were distributed. The SRC President would call me to check on the status of the delivery of laptops. Thank you for the foresight and leadership. Thank you to the outgoing SRC”.

The VC acknowledged students leadership initiatives in building other students and working with communities.

“Starting this year, we will have VC Student Leadership Awards where a set of criteria is developed, and at the end of the year we will have a signature event to honour the winners. This will be done from the Vice Chancellor’s budget”, he promised.

Sipiw Ngcenge, the outgoing SRC President reflected on his team’s term in office. “When we took office the institution was on the edge of closing due to a very long strike that almost took the whole first semester. We knew we had to plan and navigate the academic year due to the pandemic as we were on total shutdown. We

had to ensure stability and make sure that the academic year was completed. We derived new strategies and systems to adapt to the new normal brought about by the pandemic”.

He cited the following as some of their achievements:

- Being instrumental in making sure laptops were delivered to students
- Providing students with institutional support such as adding more psychologists, nurses and doctors, and
- Giving the best university experience to 2020/21 first year students.

Addressing the new SRC, Ngcenge said: “Comrades, we have played our part in rebuilding the university and improving the lives of students. Now the ball is in your hands”.

Delivering his inaugural speech, the incoming President, Mkhanyiseli Nomana said:

“ There were times when we feared that the institution would not complete the academic year, but the previous structure made sure that this did not happen. The university is going through a renewal process of making sure that there is no corruption within the institution. The SRC compliments the good work that is being done by the management of the university. Where student services are delivered at a slow pace, the SRC will apply pressure to management to ensure that this does not happen. We will make sure that students are represented in decision-making at all times.”

By Asaduma Baloyi

>> SRC 2021-2022



TLC 2021 VIRTUAL COLLOQUIUM ZOOMS INTO HIGHER EDUCATION TEACHING AND LEARNING IN 4IR ERA

“We hope that all of the papers presented here will make their way to accredited journals and book chapters”



>> Dr Shafeeka Yusuf Dockrat



>> Prof Tshidlidzi Marwala



>> Prof Daniela Gachago

The Teaching & Learning Centre (TLC) hosted yet another successful annual colloquium.

The 2020 event was cancelled due to challenges imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic. The 2021 instalment was held online on 17 and 18 August.

Scholars from higher learning institutions around the country and some parts of Southern Africa converged on the virtual platform to share their expertise and research papers on the theme: *Enhancing Higher Education Teaching and Learning in the era of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR)*.

The discussion also carried the following five sub-themes:

- Enhancing Student Learning Experience
- Institutional Leadership and Management
- Curriculum and Learning Experience Design
- Artificial Intelligence (AI) and enhancement of T&L
- Rurality and Employability of graduates in the 4IR

The main purpose of this colloquium was to explore the possibilities, complexities and affordance of 4IR in Higher Education Teaching and Learning.

Participants were welcomed by Prof Renuka Vithal – Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Teaching and Learning.

The programme was officially opened with a keynote address delivered by the Vice Chancellor, Prof Sakhela Buhlungu. He said: “This colloquium has always given me the pleasure that it is not just us (UFH) talking to one another but it is us sharing intellectual knowledge with colleagues from around the country, continent and the world.”

The VC also addressed the context that this year’s event was taking place under. “This colloquium is taking place under a very different backdrop. It is a tragic time. I don’t think anyone will ever experience anything of this magnitude during our lifetime. What Covid-19 has done to humanity is something that will be remembered for centuries to come. Its impact on higher education teaching and learning is immeasurable.”

The VC also paid tribute to staff and students for soldiering on during this difficult time. He conveyed words of appreciation to TLC staff and academics for making the colloquium a success.

Over 30 scholars presented research papers during the two-day session. Keynote speakers included:

- **Dr Shafeeka Yusuf Dockrat** – Director of Student Development and Support at Tshwane University of Technology (TUT)
- **Prof Tshidlidzi Marwala** – Vice-Chancellor and Principal of the University of Johannesburg (UJ)
- **Prof Daniela Gachago** – Associate Professor at the Centre for Innovation for Learning and Teaching at the University of Cape

Professor Vuyisile Nkonki, TLC Director said: “The presentations are deliberate acts by academics who have problematized their teaching and the systems that produce students. They have conducted research that has been subjected to rigorous review processes that are presented in scholarly publics”.

“This colloquium is one of scholarly publics that aim to share Teaching and Learning practices in regards to 4IR. We hope that all of the papers presented here will make their way to accredited journals and book chapters”, he said.

By Aretha Linden



>> Ms Thandi Magqeleba



>> Ms Nolitha Fakude



>> Ms Thobeka Msengana



>> Ms Nondumiso Ngonyama

EASTERN CAPE ALUMNI CHAPTER CELEBRATES WOMEN’S MONTH

“Knowing what you stand for, that your principles and values are not worth sacrificing. Your most valuable currency is your reputation.”

On 21 August the Eastern Cape alumni chapter celebrated women’s month with a webinar.

The event featured women from different backgrounds, namely:

- **Ms Nolitha Fakude** - Guest Speaker and President: Minerals Council South Africa and Director and Chairperson of Anglo American South Africa.
- **Ms Thobeka Msengana** - UFH Counselling Psychologist and Acting Head, Student Counselling Unit
- **Mrs Nondumiso Ngonyama** - Regent Senior Traditional Leader at King Sabata Dalindyebo,

Guest Speaker and UFH alumna Nolitha Fakude, spoke about her journey and advocacy for women in the corporate sector.

“I have always wanted to be part of decision-makers that can make a difference in people’s lives. I knew that with that kind of economic power, having learned from my mother who was a businesswoman and owner of a general dealer, I knew that I had choices. Every career choice I have made was influenced by that desire.”

“My inherent belief in the goodness of people has been reinforced because my 30-year career has been filled with goodwill and support from mentors and coaches along the way, as well as the employment regulatory framework. My career was shaped and continues to benefit from the broader South African employment equity legislative framework”, she said.

Fakude shared lessons from her memoir titled, *Boardroom Dancing*. The book traces her journey as a business leader and advocate of transformation in corporate South Africa.

“Over the years I have learnt lessons that have helped me to be consistent and grounded, and more importantly, to help change the rules inside the boardroom”. She shared the following tips.

1. Seeking to understand and be understood, even when people agree or disagree with you. It is always good to know where they are coming from.
2. Knowing what you stand for, that your principles and values are not worth sacrificing. Your most valuable currency is your reputation.
3. Choosing your battles to win the war is very important.
4. Listening is important, we must not fail to listen to the absent voices.
5. Appreciating the mandate that you carry as a woman and as a black person.
6. Lastly, social solidarity with women and the value of Ubuntu are the golden rules. You’ve got to do to others as you want them to do unto you.

The virtual dialogue also featured three female fine arts students (**Vuyo Mzamo, Violetta Mtwazi and Siyakholwa Xengxe**) who exhibited artwork which expressed what it means to be a woman in South Africa.

A recording of the event may be accessed on the UFH YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YJb4-R1UFjU&t=2154>

By Asaduma Baloyi

LINDIWE NGCOBO (UFH PhD Candidate) CELEBRATES WOMEN'S MONTH WITH AN *Act of Kindness*

"I felt that I needed to go somewhere outside my familiar surroundings and help a stranger. I wrote to a local supermarket and requested sponsorship for toiletry packs, which included daily essentials such as toothpaste, toothbrushes, bath soaps and sanitary towels for girls."

In commemoration of Women's Month in August, Ms Lindiwe Ngcobo, a UFH PhD Agricultural Economics candidate and a Mandela Washington 2021 Fellow, distributed toiletry packs to 100 learners at a rural school in North West.

The 31-year-old from Ludeke village in Mbizana said she decided to challenge herself this Women's Month by doing an act of kindness for people she has never met before. She chose learners from Kgosi Shope Secondary School located in the North West.

"I felt that I needed to go somewhere outside my familiar surroundings and help a stranger. I wrote to a local supermarket and requested sponsorship for toiletry packs, which included daily essentials such as toothpaste, toothbrushes, bath soaps and sanitary towels for girls."

On 20 August, Ngcobo travelled from the Eastern Cape to North West to hand over the packs.

"After reading several articles online, I discovered that despite spirited efforts by government to promote secondary education and enhance opportunities, the number of school dropouts in disadvantaged schools and rural areas is alarming. Children who lack essential toiletries are more likely to miss school and perform poorly in school. This definitely hinders progress towards transforming our society in a meaningful and sustained manner."

"Intervening at that level to make a small contribution through something as seemingly inconsequential as providing toiletries to learners may be key in improving their school attendance," she said.

Her passion to improve the lives of rural people is further evidenced by her doctoral research which is a study on how rural people utilize locally available resources for energy production in the most profitable and feasible manner, without degrading the environment.

"I believe the results of my study will influence decision-makers at the highest policy levels with respect to rural development. Ultimately, I hope our leaders will gain insight to formulate more forward-looking policies to achieve sustainable development."

Her vision is to establish a foundation that promotes job creation, empowerment of women and children and also promote oral hygiene in the rural communities of the Eastern Cape.

By Aretha Linden



>> Ms Lindiwe Ngcobo



FLOYD ELS (PhD Information Systems Candidate) JOINS THE 6th BRICS YOUNG SCIENTIST FORUM

“I was ecstatic, and no doubt, so was Prof Cilliers. The BRICS forum allows for an international dialogue amongst researchers. The only downside is that due to Covid, the forum becomes a virtual conference.”



>> Floyd Els

Floyd Els, a PhD -Information Systems candidate (UFH Faculty of Management and Commerce) has been invited to participate in the 2021 BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) Young Scientist Forum (YSF).

This year's conference will be hosted by India and will include the following themes:

- Healthcare;
- Climate Change
- Energy Solutions
- Artificial Intelligence
- Space and Connectivity

Due to Covid-19 protocols, the event will take place virtually between 13 and 16 September 2021.

Els' selection comes after responding to a call by the Forum's nominating partners: the Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAf)

and Department of Science and Innovation (DSI), for applicants to submit abstracts.

“It was towards the end of July when a call for abstracts from the BRICS Young Scientist Forum caught the attention of my supervisor (Prof Liezel Cilliers). She encouraged me to apply, and I did.”

Els submitted his research project titled: “An Access-Utilization Framework to Improve Academia-Industry Collaboration: A Case Study of the National Integrated Cyber-Infrastructure System in South Africa.”

It was selected under the sub-theme: Cyber Physical systems (CPS).

The exciting news of his selection was announced by ASSAf and DSI in an invitation letter sent on 27 August.

“I was ecstatic, and no doubt, so was Prof Cilliers. The BRICS forum allows for an international dialogue amongst researchers. The only downside is that due to Covid, the forum becomes a virtual conference.”

Conference Goals

According to conference organizers, the main goals of the 6th BRICS YSF are:

- To ensure that BRICS Young Scientists have collaborative and networking opportunities that will help harness their

knowledge to resolve common societal challenges through research and innovation.

- To strengthen the advancement of skills and research competencies of youth, primarily below the age of 35 years drawn from Science, Engineering, and other allied disciplines.
- To build BRICS leadership in science, technology, and innovation through creative youth with capacity and capability to accelerate, change individually and collectively through the BRICS Youth Alumni.
- To reinforce BRICS nations' and regional STI policies, youth policies, skill development and entrepreneurship policies.

Asked what he hopes to take away from this experience, Els said: “I believe my role will be that of an open-minded student, willing to gain knowledge and expertise from other well-established researchers.

Our main goal is to create an information network between students across the globe, being able to share ideas and assist others in various research fields. We also hope to gather new ideas and input on the subject matter,” he said.

Congratulations Floyd!!

By Aretha Linden

DR BATANDWA SISWANA DELIVERS AN INSIGHTFUL KEYNOTE ADDRESS AT THE 4th ARCHBISHOP THABO MAKGOBA ANNUAL LECTURE

On 19 August, the Faculty of Management and Commerce held its 4th Archbishop Thabo Makgoba Annual Lecture. The session is a joint venture between the Faculty, The Archbishop Thabo Makgoba Development Trust and the University of Fort Hare.

Due to Covid-19 protocols, the lecture was held online.

Dr Batandwa Siswana, founder and Executive Director of the African Institute of public, was the guest speaker. As a reputable public finance specialist, strategist, consultant, policy advisor and experienced administrator, Dr Siswana delivered an insightful and powerful keynote address on this year's theme: Leadership in Local Economic Development.

The session was officially opened by the Archbishop, he said: “It is an honour and a privilege to be associated with the University of Fort Hare. We are grateful for this important relationship”.

In case you were unable to attend or would like to re-watch the lecture at your leisure, the recording can be viewed on YouTube <https://youtu.be/n6WACNUMNhs>.

No one magic formula for SA's soaring unemployment rate

Opinion Piece by Willie Chinyamurindi, Professor and head of the Department of Business Management at the University of Fort Hare. He writes in his personal capacity.

Published in the DispatchLIVE on 29 August 2021
<https://www.dispatchlive.co.za/news/opinion/2021...>



>> Prof Willie Chinyamurindi

SA's unemployment rate has risen to a staggering 34.4%. This figure accounts for the expanded definition of unemployment.

Included here are those individuals who are now discouraged in seeking employment.

All this accentuates into bad news, laying bare the peculiarity of our situation.

An estimated 7.8 million people are classified as unemployed.

The released second-quarter figures by Stats SA show an increase of 1.8% from the first-quarter figure of 32.6%.

To worsen the situation, forecasts on the horizon all point to a negative GDP outlook.

Uncertainty created by the Covid-19 pandemic does not help the situation either.

The most-affected vital economic clusters include mining, manufacturing, the service industry and tourism.

As a result of lockdown restrictions there have been lots of job losses as uncertainty about the future grows.

Our concentric focus of economic development often makes us fall short.

Development efforts are often centred in the urban areas. This does not go far enough in addressing unemployment.

With a high rural to urban migration rate, the plight of rural communities in the unemployment challenge is magnified.

Challenges around service delivery and local economic development in rural communities evidently stall progress in addressing the soaring unemployment rate.

All this puts in the throes, the toil and toll of our unemployment situation.

On one end, response to the unemployment figures is likely to result in a surge of distrust and misinformation.

A superficial glance at social media comments in leading news outlets appears to attest to this.

For instance, questions often arise as comparison. The issue being how are we to trust the government in managing runaway unemployment when there is an already existing challenge of the vaccine rollout.

Added to this, there is the issue of growing levels of vaccine hesitancy, including the low vaccination numbers, especially among males.

All this not only questions the efficacy of government response but frames it as lackadaisical.

The government again is caught between a rock and a hard place.

Criticism is mounting in some quarters as to how current responses to the Covid-19 pandemic have turned us into a welfare state.

Conversely, others view the R350 Covid-19 relief grant as meaningful even though an inadequate response to the devastation before us.

For those still in employment, the struggle also continues. A significant level of uncertainty potentially exists on the ground.

How many of those now employed would rate their experience as fitting decent work conditions?

Borrowing from the classification by Duffy and colleagues, the emphasis would be on experiences of work that promote five essential elements.

These include: a) safe working conditions; b) access to healthcare; c) adequate compensation; d) time and rest, and e) complementary values between actors within the employment sphere.

The current situation for those in employment is likely to tear and rip into these minimum expected work conditions.

So you are employed but not benefiting to the fullest from this experience of employment.

Then there is the case of the most affected in society. Attribution would be to young people, between the 15-34 age cohorts.

In the current research we are conducting, we are tracking the experiences of unemployed youths trying to find work during pandemic times.

A familiar narration among our participants is their sordid experiences, an indictment of the rigid labour market. These include, in some cases, requests for upfront payment to guarantee an interview.

Others cite challenges around resource constraints as limitations to full participation in this challenging labour market.

Then there is the internship opportunity, a masquerade where early career entrants to the labour market are often exploited in the name of getting work experience.

There is no one magic formula in seeking a solution to the toil and toll of our unemployment situation.

A starting point could be the necessary work to critique the current policies and role of created structures as a response to the unemployment challenge.

A typical admission by analysts appears to point to a rethink of policy direction, including the need for more government certainty regarding the unemployment challenge.

This clarion call covers not just national government but also provincial efforts on the ground.

Compounding the situation are the perceived rifts and often public factional contestations within the ANC, as the governing party.

These have often created more confusion to this earlier request for policy direction and certainty.

A second focal point would be to channel investment into the areas where the money is.

The prediction by some here is the need to pay attention to the township and informal economy.

An estimated 30% of economic activity as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic will likely be concentrated in the township and informal economy.

Investment efforts are needed in such focal areas. A precursor to this is the need for a well-ordered and capable township and informal economy.

Priority should centre on improving dynamic capabilities that encourage local economic development in such areas.

There is also a need to address the reasons behind businesses failing to absorb more employees.

This can be in the form of creating incentives for business efforts.

First, reward businesses that stimulate employment creation at a large scale rather than in pockets.

Second, award incentives to businesses that encourage an inclusive economy with priority being given to those most affected by the scourge of unemployment of youths and women.

Third, more private and public sector platforms of collaboration and engagement to [address] the unemployment challenge are needed.

This can include bringing higher education on board. The urgency here being placed on the creation of partnerships and collaborations that promote the skills and trades of a revitalised economy.

Much work needs to be done. There is no room for slacking.



UFH MALE NETBALL COACH OFFICIATES AT NATIONAL VARSITY NETBALL TOURNAMENT



>> Mr Gabriel Simion, on the right

“I want to see my netball career at international level one day, and I am working hard to see myself at Africa championships as well as the world cup one day.”

Mr Gabriel Simion – A UFH netball coach from the East London campus, has broken new ground. He officiated as one of the umpires in the National Varsity Netball Tournament that took place in Stellenbosch recently.

Simion is humbled by his appointment to play a lead role in a female dominated sport code. He made the cut to be among the Best Eight umpires to officiate for the Best Eight netballing universities.

His love and passion for the game started during his high school years when he used to watch girls playing.

“As a man in female dominated sport, at first it was weird. Fortunately, Netball South Africa introduced male netball so I grabbed the opportunity to play the game”, said Simion, who at the same time, has endured much criticism for choosing netball over soccer.

He is confident that umpiring at the tournament is an achievement that will bolster his coaching career because “it is always good to be at the top”.

Simion joined the University of Fort Hare in 2018 when the team was plying its trade in the B-section of the East London league. By 2019 the team had progressed to the A-section and was placed among the best five in the top flight.

Accomplishments

In addition to the UFH coaching responsibility, Simion is course presenter as well as the Director of Umpires in the Buffalo City Metro. For three years in a row, he has served as umpire in the prestigious TELKOM league. In 2019, he received an Africa A-award in both coaching and umpiring.

Simion has big dreams too. “I want to see my netball career at international level one day, and I am working hard to see myself at Africa championships as well as the world cup one day. That’s my target, but a lot has to be done for me to get there. It’s not easy, I have to work very hard and I am doing that right now”, he said.

By Mawande Mrashula



>> Mr Greg Hayes

TWENTY NOT OUT. BIG INNINGS FOR MR GREG HAYES!

talent is given exposure. The academy also entails a joint venture between the university, Border Cricket and Cricket South Africa (CSA), in order to create a clear pipeline for talented rural cricketers.

According to Mr Loyiso Lange, UFH Head of Sports: “There has always been a dire need to groom and develop young talent from remote rural areas with the aim of exposing the players to the rest of the world”.

The academy is open to all cricketers around the country and aims to transform them into professional cricketers. Mr Hayes was responsible for that transformation process.

The Krish Markeduj Cricket Complex was erected in 2004. However, for a while it was a white elephant – sitting unutilised, until the arrival of CSA and Hayes. Then through funding sourced from the Lotto, it was refurbished into a top class centre with the nets and the pitch as seen today, two junior cricket fields, sight screens and a storage area, as well as a digital scoreboard which was sponsored by Momentum.

Ever since his arrival, Hayes has been responsible for identifying

amazing talent that includes:

- **Mfuneko Ngam** who, for a longest time served as a coach in the academy;
- a much talked about **Jerry Ngqolo**,
- **Ayabonga Khaka**,
- **Zintle Mali**, and
- **Nobulumko Banethi**

All of them have won National Colours.

UFH Cricket has been dominating the scene for a number of years. The team won USSA cricket in 2011 and for four (4) consecutive years (2016-2019), were the reigning Border Premier League champions.

A women’s cricket side has since been established and the The Krish Markeduj Cricket Complex will continue to groom talent and produce stars.

The UFH is grateful to Mr Hayes for his transformation efforts over two decades. His dedication towards rural talent development has paid off – for Fort Hare Cricket, Border Cricket, CSA and the individual players.

By Mawande Mrashula

#JusticeForNosicelo



Within 24 hours after the dismembered remains of Nosicelo Mtebeni were discovered on 19 August 2021, the #JusticeForNosicelo campaign was launched and trended on all social media platforms.

First to take action was our very own, Dr Rianna Oelofsen – Head of the Psychology Department and founder of *Stand As One* against gender-based violence (GBV). Dr Oelofsen also serves as a member of the UFH GBV Task Team.

On 20 August, Dr Oelofsen, together with a small group of students and members of *Stand As One* marched from the crime scene to the East London Magistrate Court. Their message was clear: “NO BAIL” for the suspect.

Along the way, the call became even louder as activists from various civil organisation groups, students and UFH staff joined the action to show their support and stance on the matter.

Addressing the marchers and members of the media outside the East London Court, Dr Oelofsen said: “This case must take priority to ensure that at least in her death, we give Nosicelo the respect she deserves and

restore her dignity which was terribly taken away from her.”

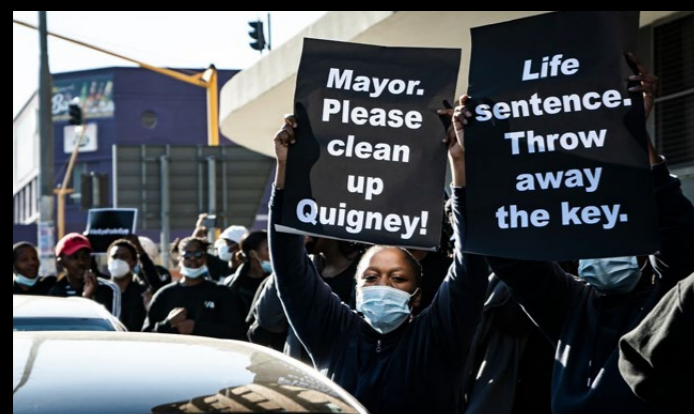
Ms Penny Jaffray, UFH Senior Lecturer in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology created an online petition calling for no bail for the accused ahead of his first court appearance on 23 August. To date, over 10 000 people have signed the petition.

On the day of the court appearance, students supported by various activists, members from civil organisations, SA Council of Churches, UFH Council and staff staged another march which also started at the scene heading to court.

Clad in black, the students marched in solidarity and brought the East London CBD to a standstill. They held placards with messages condemning the brutal killing of Nosicelo and pleading for justice. They also called on the Buffalo City Metro “To clean-up” Quigney - the area where Nosicelo’s remains were recovered and where most of our leased student residences are situated.

Since her death, several night vigils had been held at the scene and on campus.

By Aretha Linden



A day of mourning to Remember Nosicelo Mtebeni

“The UFH and the country at large have been robbed of a future Constitutional Judge.” – Dr Nombulelo Lubisi, UFH Dean of Law.

Wednesday, 25 August 2021 was declared a Day of Mourning as the University of Fort Hare came to a standstill to pay tribute to the late Nosicelo Mtebeni.

In her honour, all university operations were suspended and the day was dedicated to a hybrid (virtual and contact) memorial service held to mourn her loss.

The 23-year-old final-year Law student was brutally murdered on 17 August. She would have been the first graduate in her family. A 25-year-old male suspect is currently in custody for her murder.

Due to Covid-19 precautionary measures, a handful of staff, students, alumni, friends and family converged at the Miriam Makeba Arts Centre on the East London Campus to pay tribute to a life lost. The rest of the nation was able to join proceedings in realtime as the programme was streamed on the UFH YouTube channel as well as national television and radio news channels.

The moving and dignified sermon was opened with a devotion by Canon Professor Lulama Ntshingwa.

Inside the beautifully decorated venue, pictures of Nosicelo smiling and being full life were displayed - a contrast to the sombre mood.

The list of Speakers included dignitaries from the clergy, three spheres of government, UFH Council, the UFH student body, UFH management, UFH Convocation and UFH gender-based violence (GBV) activists. All speakers conveyed messages of condolences to the Mtebeni family and the university at large. Every speaker condemned acts of gender-based violence (GBV) and expressed shock, anger and sadness over the way Nosicelo's life was cut short.

Mr Buti Manamela, Deputy Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation shared a message of condolence on behalf of the Ministry and National Government.

“Your loss is our loss. The story of Nosicelo is the story of many South African women who are attacked

anywhere at any time.”

In another moving tribute, Ms Fezeka Nkomonye (Eastern Cape MEC for Sports, Recreation, Arts and Culture) said: “we are heartbroken and angry. We share the pain of Nosicelo's family.”

Dr Siphokazi Koyana, Deputy Chairperson of the UFH Council made a call for people to intensify the fight against GBV. “Nosicelo's death should not be in vain. We encourage the university management to collaborate with SAPS, Buffalo City Metro (BCM) and civil society organizations to tackle the urban decay and overall concerns regarding safety in East London,” she said.

The collaboration has already been initiated through a meeting between Dr Oscar van Heerden – Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Institutional Support, who met with BCM officials earlier in the week.

Addressing mourners, Professor Buhlungu (Vice-Chancellor) said GBV was a social and societal problem. “No amount of insults could solve this issue. It is beyond one person and a policy, no matter how perfect it can be. Let us come together and fight it jointly.”

Since her passing, messages of condolence coming from all corners of the country were read out during the ceremony. These included Universities South Africa, Minister Blade Nzimande, Archbishop Thabo Makgoba, Justice Mandisa Maya and many others.

Speaking on behalf of the family, Ms Nomvula Gugushe thanked the university, SAPS, Buffalo City Municipality, East London community and South Africa at large for their support during the family's darkest hour.

Nosicelo will be laid to rest tomorrow at her home village, Khauoe, in Matatiele.

At the service, National Government will be represented by Dr Blade Nzimande, Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation. Mr Lufuno Tshikhudo will attend on behalf of the University of Fort Hare.

By Aretha Linden





Fort Hare continues to celebrate the Life of Nosicelo Mtebeni

The University of Fort Hare continues to celebrate the life of Nosicelo Mtebeni, a 4th year LLB student whose life was cut short in a cold blooded murder a few days ago. This time around, students from the Fine Arts department added her mural amongst those of three distinguished women alumni of the University of Fort Hare.

The three names were drawn from a quick social media poll. When the news of Nosicelo's tragic demise broke out, the university felt compelled to also add her face to list of murals.

Gertrude Ntlabati is the first black woman to graduate from the University of Fort Hare and has a female residence named after her (the residence is popularly known as Kuwait).

Dr Phyllis Ntantala is wife to known writer, AC Jordan and mother to another known politician and former cabinet minister, Pallo Jordan. The University of Fort Hare, WSU and UNISA established a collaborative library in east London and named it after Phyllis Ntantala.

Nolitha Fakude is a pioneer and giant in the corporate world.

The four women were also celebrated during a dedicated Visionary Women concert held on 26th August at the Miriam Makeba Hall, East London campus of the University of Fort Hare.

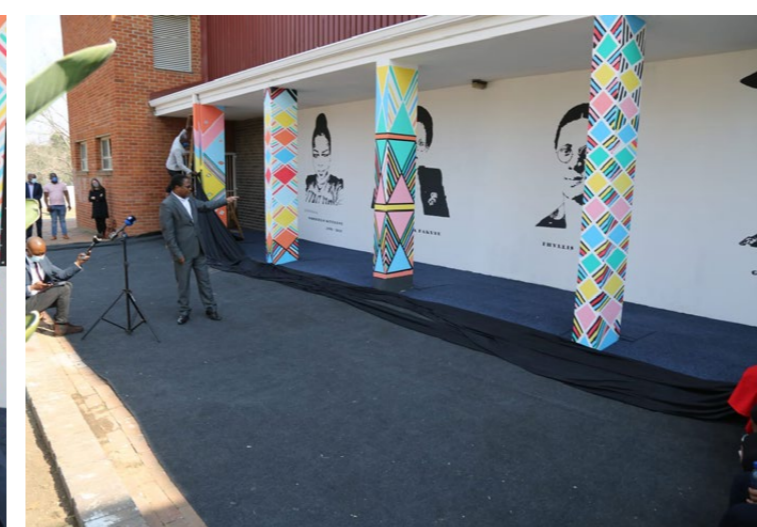
ThisWeek@FortHare spoke to the two students responsible for the murals:

Telejane Kineo, 2nd year fine arts student said: "When we started it was not easy, especially when we were told to add Nosicelo's mural. I felt the pain of her passing and wanted to give up but now I am very proud and relieved that our work has been unveiled in front of her family".

Part of this contribution was to demonstrate that "Not all men are animals and I am very proud that I participated in this emotional project", said. **Qaqambile Mjakuja, a 3rd year fine arts student.**

Kineo and Qaqambile's names appear on the pillars that houses the murals in the Fine Arts building at the main campus in Alice.

By Mawande Mrashula



“The spirit of Nosicelo shall never die while we live”



>> Adv Andile Mini

UFH Convocation EXCO Donates R150 000 to Mtebeni Family

“For the duration of our term in the next four years, we want to adopt Nosicelo’s family and support their needs.”

This is a pledge made by Advocate Andile Mini, President of the UFH Convocation on behalf of all convocation chapters including those in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region.

So far, the executive members have dug deep into their pockets and contributed R150 000 to the family. They have also established a fundraising initiative that will be done through the Fort Hare Foundation.

He announced this kind gesture during Nosicelo Mtebeni’s memorial service on 25 August.

Adv Mini said the decision to rally support for the family of the slain student was taken during a meeting preceding the memorial service. “We have appointed individuals to oversee the fundraising initiative to ensure it is done with dignity”, he said.

The fundraisers are all UFH Alumni:

- **Dr Jongi Klaas** – UFH Council member and member of the Gauteng Alumni chapter.
- **Dr Nompumelelo Mawisa** – Additional Member of the Executive Committee of the Eastern Cape Alumni chapter
- **Mr Mthetheleli “Mtheza” Buya** – UFH Alumnus
- **Mishack Mugabe** – UFH Alumnus

“We want to raise enough money to support the family’s needs which will be determined through a needs analysis and in consultation with the family.”

He also announced their plan to approach the university in regards to establishing a legacy project that will be named after Nosicelo.

“The spirit of Nosicelo shall never die while we live,” said Mini.

By Aretha Linden

‘Enough is enough,’ says VC after student’s murder

By Professor Sakhela Buhlungu, 27 August 2021

<https://www.universityworldnews.com/post.php?...>



>> Prof Sakhela Buhlungu

The brutal and horrific death of one of our students, Nosicelo Mtebeni, on 19 August was a dark day in the history of the University of Fort Hare.

Nosicelo was a fourth- and final-year student from the town of Matatiele, about 450km from East London, where she studied, where she was killed and where her remains were found on the streets of the city. The university is in utter shock. We are in mourning.

As an institution, we have never experienced anything of this kind. The staff of the university, the senior management and the students, are condemning the brutality of Nosicelo’s death. Nobody deserves to die in such a horrific manner. There is something so wrong about our South African society.

We not going to finger point or apportion blame. But we pledge to uphold the memory of the student by fighting gender-based violence in all its forms.

This we will do through partnerships, by working together as students and staff, and as the community of Fort Hare. We will join hands with the municipality, provincial authorities and national authorities to address gender-based violence.

It is for this reason that we appeal to the authorities to work with us to look at the Quigney area of East London because of the students who live there.

Students are exposed, on a daily basis, to the horrors of violence, drunks, or murder. Everything that is wrong happens on the Quigney. And we say to the authorities, enough is enough. Let’s do something now. We are willing to work with anyone with ideas.

Gender-based violence

Exactly two years ago to the month, in 2019, we came together as a university community, stopping all activities for half a day in East London and Alice, where the University of Fort Hare’s campuses are, to launch and publicly make a statement of our position on

gender- based violence. We adopted at that point the anti gender-based violence policy of the university.

And we’re very proud that, since then, we have made progress. But what has happened is that some of the incidents of gender-based violence take place outside of our control, outside of our campuses, outside of our residences.

And so it was in Nosicelo’s case. She lived in private accommodation in East London, which is not under the control of the university. This confirms that we need to expand the residential arrangements in East London that are owned by the university so that we have full control of them.

Nosicelo’s death is very personal to the university. We feel very deeply about what happened. It happened during August when South Africans observe Women’s Month. At the start of this month, we declared that this time for us is about honouring and celebrating visionary women.

We have done that and we have highlighted the achievements of these women, and we were excited, only for that to be sullied by this ghastly act. We remain in mourning.

We will honour Nosicelo’s memory with a memorial at the university. For the moment, we say: “Rest in peace, Nosicelo. We are saddened by your death. Our hearts are bleeding. Rest in peace.”

*Sakhela Buhlungu is the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Fort Hare (UFH), South Africa. In this commentary, he reflects on the murder of a 23-year-old student, allegedly by her boyfriend. UFH held a **memorial service** for her on 25 August.*



❖ IN MEMORIAM ❖
Anovuyo Siyahhluma Sinuka

Born: 05-02-1997– Died: 21-08-2021



The UFH Faculty of Law and the university community at large is saddened by the passing of Anovuyo Siyahhluma Sinuka, a final year BCom Law student. He died tragically on 21 August and was laid to rest on 27 August 2021, at his home village in Mt Coke Mission (near Qonce).

The UFH community is grateful to the Law Faculty for providing transport to a small group of students to attend Mr Sinuka's funeral service.

The university extends heartfelt condolences to the Sinuka family, his friends, fellow students, support and academic staff who knew him personally. Our thoughts and prayers are with them during this time of loss.

May Anovuyo's soul rest in eternal peace.

Counselling Services

by Dean of Students: Mr Lufuno Tshikhudo



>> Mr Lufuno Tshikhudo

The University is providing counselling services to both staff and students through its Student Counselling Unit and the Wellness Unit in the Human Resources department. The University also has received a specialised team of experts comprising of Psychologists, Social Workers, Clinicians and Counsellors from Higher Health to support the University during this traumatic and difficult period.

Counselling services can be reached as follows:

1. Student Counselling Unit

SCU East London: 043 704 7017

SCU Alice: 040 6022 681

UFH Email: tmsengana@ufh.ac.za

Facebook Page: SCU Student Counselling

2. Higher Health

Toll-free – 24-hour crisis helpline 0800 36 36 36. We emphasize that this service is totally free and available day and night.

SMS: 43-33-6

The Higher health team is also accessible through our Student Counselling Unit

3. SADAG

The South African Depression and Anxiety Group also offers counselling services through a toll-free number: 0800 121 314

4. Wellness Service for staff members

Contact Ms Mandisa Tyanti through email at mtyanti@ufh.ac.za



University of Fort Hare
Together in Excellence

ThisWeek@FortHare

your fortnightly newsletter

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