

# This Week @Fort Hare



University of Fort Hare  
*Together in Excellence*

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# RENEWAL IN PROGRESS

*“The VC has made significant changes in the university and we have no doubt he will do it again in his second term.”*

In his keynote address during the official opening of campus in 2020, the Vice-Chancellor Prof Sakhela Buhlungu declared the years 2020 – 2030 as the Decade of Renewal for the university.

One of the visions for the 10-year period is to provide access to a dignified and improved student life experience for all students. In a bid to realise that vision, the university is currently upgrading and refurbishing 85 classroom venues and facilities across all three campuses.

Last week the DVC: Institutional Support Dr. Oscar van Heerden gave a progress tour to the VC and UFH Council Chair Bishop Ivan Abrahams of the refurbishments.

The Council Chair and Deputy Chair, Dr Siphokazi Koyana also met with members of the Student Representative Council and the Institutional Student Parliament secretariat to share Council’s plans for student development.

During the closed session held on the East London campus last Friday, the students outlined some of their challenges and aspirations which the council members promised to attend to.

“It was a fruitful engagement, it was mature and constructive,” said Bishop Abrahams.

SRC President, Mkhanyiseli Nomana echoed the Bishop’s sentiment about the engagement saying, it was progressive.

Prof Buhlungu and Mr Lufuno Tshikhudo (Student Affairs Dean) joined the meeting after the closed session.

Nomana also took the opportunity to congratulate Prof Sakhela Buhlungu on his reappointment as Vice-Chancellor.

“The VC has made significant changes in the university and we have no doubt he will do it again in his second term.”





**PROF JOSEPH SHABALALA  
MEMORIAL LECTURE**  
 Founder of multi-Grammy-award  
 winning Isicathamiya Music Group -  
 Ladysmith Black Mambazo

On 11 December, the Ladysmith Black Mambazo Mobile Academy in partnership with the University of Fort Hare will host a memorial lecture in honour and celebration of the life and times of Professor Joseph Shabalala – founder of multi-Grammy-award winning Isicathamiya Music Group.

The lecture will be delivered by Dr Sipho Sithole, renowned award-winning Music Producer, and Cultural Practitioner.

Prof Shabalala passed away on 11 February 2020 at age 79. The lecture forms part of several programmes planned by the Academy in honour of his memory.

Recently, on the 18th of November 2021, Professor Shabalala was honoured by His Excellency President Cyril Ramaphosa with the Order of Ikhamanga in Gold for excelling in the fields of arts, culture and music. A week later, on the 27th of November, the Kwa-Zulu Natal Government's Executive Council unveiled a monument at the Ladysmith Cemetery in tribute of the legendary musician.

The group's Manager and Academy Director, Mr Xolani Majazi said Ladysmith Black Mambazo chose the University of Fort Hare to host the memorial lecture based on the fact that the university is part of South Africa's rich history. "UFH has produced many great academics and political leaders who have changed the landscape of our socio-political history to what it is today. Just like the legendary group, Ladysmith Black Mambazo which has over the years flown the country's flag to nations of the world, University of Fort Hare epitomizes how great our country is to the nations of the world," said Majazi.

The VC, Prof Sakhela Buhlungu said the university is honoured to be the host of the inaugural memorial lecture

of a great African and exceptional musician. "Ladysmith Black Mambazo has inspired generations of music lovers at home and abroad. Their music has put South Africa on the world map. We are particularly proud to have been identified by the band to host this lecture."

"I am also delighted to announce that we are in discussions with Black Mambazo about the archive of the band since its formation 61 years ago. We are hoping to make an announcement on the day of the lecture. All these interactions constitute a vote of confidence in our university and its Music Department led by global award-winning jazz maestro, Nduduzo Makhathini and staffed by a phenomenal team of Lecturers."

The lecture will be held at the Miriam Makeba Arts Centre on the East London Campus. In light of the Covid-19 pandemic, the organizers have opted for a hybrid (Live + Virtual) event. Thus, only guests who have received personal invitations would be allowed inside the venue.

Guests will include dignitaries from the National and Provincial government, group members, Shabalala's family and representatives from the university.

A link to join the virtual event will be made available soon. There will also be live broadcasts on several national television channels.



>> Dr Sipho Sithole

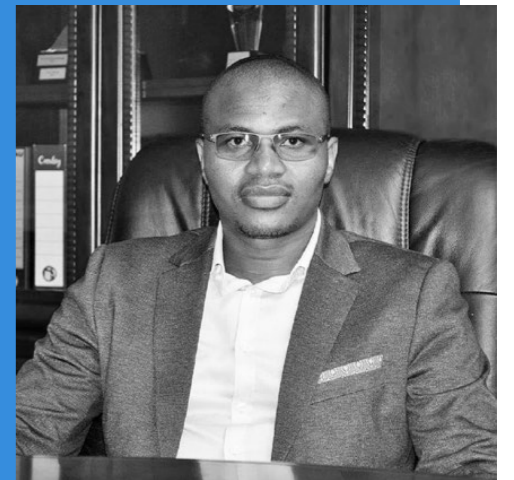
# New Appointments

**Professor Mzukisi Njotini** is the new Dean of the Faculty of Law, he officially assumes his new role today (1December)

Professor Njotini's academic career includes post-doctoral research at Oxford University and key leadership positions at both rural and urban universities in South Africa.

Previously, he was Vice-Dean: Teaching and Learning of the Faculty of Law at the University of Johannesburg (UJ). In this role, Professor Njotini devised and introduced teaching and learning frameworks that support 'education for sustainable development'.

Full profile: [Click here](#)



**Professor Graeme Bradley** has been appointed as the new Dean of the Faculty of Science and Agriculture, he also assumes duties today.

Professor Bradley holds a BSc, BSc Hons, MSc and PhD from the University of Port Elizabeth (now Nelson Mandela University). His career path included industrial, clinical and academic experience.

Professor Bradley's career began at UFH in 2007 when was appointed the position of Professor of Biochemistry and Head of Department of Biochemistry and Microbiology. During the last 15 years, he has served as the Director of the School of Biological and Environmental Sciences, Deputy Dean: Research and Internationalization, acting Dean: Faculty of Science and Agriculture, Senate representative on Council, and acting Director of Planning and Quality Assurance. He has also been chairperson or member of numerous Faculty and Senate committees.

Full profile: [Click here](#)



**Dr Aceme Nyika** has appointed as the Director: Research and Innovation – a new position in the University created to strengthen the University's research management capabilities and the profile of the Division. He will commence duties on 1 January 2022.

Dr Nyika holds a BSc Honours degree in Biosciences from the University of Zimbabwe, a Master's in Public Health from the University of Pretoria and a PhD in Veterinary Medical Sciences from the University of Florida. Dr Nyika is currently the Head of Graduate Support, in the Research and Innovation Department at the University of Pretoria.

Full profile: [Click here](#)



# VC REWARDS EXCELLENCE AND LAUNCHES FIRST-EVER RESEARCH REPORT



[CLICK HERE TO VIEW YOUR COPY](#)

On 18 November, the University of Fort Hare's Govan Mbeki Research and Development Centre (GMRDC) hosted the Vice-Chancellors Research Awards. The university also launched its first-ever Research Report during the event held on the Alice Campus.

Held annually, the celebration is in honour and recognition of academics who have achieved excellence in research.

The awards ceremony was the crowning event of the UFH Research Excellence Week (15-18 November) themed: **Prioritising Meaningful Research with Impact in The Decade Of Renewal.**

The VC's Research Awards are awarded in two categories:

*Emerging Researcher*, awarded to a staff member who has demonstrated sustained research and scholarly achievements that reflect exceptional quality and

excellence. The selection of the winner was done by a panel that assessed the portfolios based on national and international recognition, the impact of research, mentorship and demonstration of research leadership

*Emerging Researcher* award is made annually by the Vice-Chancellor to a staff member who demonstrates potential to become a researcher of excellence. The winner was assessed by a panel after being nominated on recognition by all reviewers as having the potential to establish himself or herself as a researcher of excellence and with the potential to become a future leader in research.

The awards also recognize academics from the university faculties who have distinguished themselves in research with a Faculty Award.

In addition, the university also recognized and lauded its National Research Foundation (NRF) Rated Researchers.

## Meet the recipients:

### SENIOR Researcher Award - Prof Willie Chinyamurindi, Faculty of Management and Commerce

Prof Willie is an NRF Rated Researcher (Y2). He is Professor and Head of the Department of Business Management. He considers himself as a pan-Africanist and a scholar with the intent of promoting African scholarship and more Africa-Africa collaborations.

As a research theme, his interest is along aspects related to understanding dynamic capabilities with a focus of their impact on development themes amongst individuals but also business (and society). This focus has seen Prof Chinyamurindi publish in local and international journals. This also includes his work being featured in local and African media outlets.

Prof Chinyamurindi has professional memberships with the:

- South African Board for People Practices;
- Health Professions Council of South Africa;
- Psychological Society of South Africa;
- South African Career Development Association and the
- Southern African Institute for Management.

He has secured funding for several research projects. Notably, the National Research Foundation, the South African Medical Research Council, the National Institute for



the Humanities and Social Sciences and the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research.



### EMERGING Researcher Award: Dr Ahmed Mukalazi Kalumba, Faculty of Science and Agriculture

Geography (Environmental Science/ Management), Environmental Remote Sensing, Industrial Sustainability, Change Detection Analysis, Climate Change Risk and Adaptation, Urban and Coastal Studies, and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) geared towards offering solutions to the current environmental meltdown.

To this end, he has established the 'Geospatial Application, Climate Change and Environmental Sustainability Laboratory — GACCES' in the DGES to pursue multidisciplinary research and train postgraduate students. Therefore, national and international topical issues such as Covid-19 pandemic effects, SDGs, and the coastal and

ocean economy now form part of his current research focus areas to ensure a positive contribution to ongoing debates and knowledge creation in this field of specialization.

Moreover, his goal is to engage in impactful research premised on transformative and co-production approaches to contribute to offering sustainable environmental solutions and sustainable development.

Dr Kalumba has strong academic engagements and collaborations at both local and international levels through the NRF and SAMRC BRICS funded projects, reviewing for accredited journals, and having membership with various national and international professional bodies among others.

# Faculty Awards

## Dr Mzukisi Howard Kepe, Faculty of Education

Dr Kepe, holds PhD with a focus on reading, writing and literacy pedagogy in Language Education. He has 23 years of High School Teaching experience in developmental English language context gained across the education platform and three years of teaching experience in higher education. He has published collaboratively and is also involved in related teaching and intensive action-based research projects.

His work revolves around the following topics: Reading and Writing practices, Literacy Pedagogy, and English language teaching with genre-based approach, developmental

English context and functional English grammar and usage, visual literacy and video games, bilingualism and translanguaging.

Dr Kepe has established an enviable and robust research track linking theory and practice through the analysis of issues rooted in the South African education system. He has also presented papers at various international conferences.

He is a member and reviewer of the English Scholarship Beyond Borders and Journal of Education and Educational Development of Pakistan.



## Dr Eleanor Alvira Hendricks, Faculty of Social Science and Humanities

Her two main research interests are health risks associated with adolescent pregnancy and combatting school violence. Dr Hendricks has published 15 journal articles in DHET accredited journals. Some of Dr Hendricks' work was distributed to secondary schools across the Western Cape in 2019 and 2020 in collaboration with colleagues from other universities locally and abroad as well as the South African Military Base in Tshwane.

The research in both areas has proved to be significant in the Cacadu District Municipality and Raymond Mhlaba Local Municipality where Dr Hendricks hosts quarterly seminars with scholars on the risks associated with adolescent pregnancies and the negative impact of pregnancy can

have on a young woman's life. These seminars seem to be effective as the figures in adolescent pregnancies in schools in the Cacadu region have decreased since 2017. Furthermore, interactive workshops are hosted upon request by educators to discuss methods of reducing school violence and methods of dealing with aggressive behaviour in scholars.

In 2022/3 DR Hendricks aims to work with the Department of Basic Education to distribute a leaflet with guidelines on combatting school violence to schools in the Cacadu District Municipality.



Dr Hendricks is a Lecturer in the Social Work Department. She holds a Bachelor of Social Work from the University of Pretoria, Masters and a PhD in Social Work from the University of Fort Hare.

## Dr Dumisani Hompashe, Faculty of Management and Commerce

Dr Hompashe is a Lecturer and Postgraduate Coordinator in the Department of Economics. Before joining the University, he worked as a Teacher and head of department at numerous Eastern Cape high schools for several years.

During that time he played a leading role in teacher development activities both at the local and national level.

Currently, he is a member of the Council for Economics Education in the Eastern Cape Province, a body that is constituted by Department of Basic Education officials and economics university lecturers, whose aim is to provide professional development workshops among economics teachers and subject advisers. He

also serves on the African Finance and Economic Association's (AFEA) Standing Committee on social media and Communication. Dr Hompashe serves as an Honorary Research Associate at the Institute of Social and Economic Research (ISER) at Rhodes University.

His PhD considered topics related to the quality of education and healthcare at primary facility level in South Africa. The highlight of his research work was noticeable when he presented his work at reputable international conferences. With funding from the Africa Oxford Initiative to attend the Centre for the Study of African Economies conference at the University of Oxford in March 2019.



Dr Hompashe is specifically interested in areas related to development economics such as health economics and economics of education.



## Professor Sonwabile Mwana, Faculty of Social Science and Humanities

Researcher at SWOP. He is the principal investigator in a number of research projects. Between 2016 and 2017, he served as the President of the South African Sociological Association (SASA), the largest association of sociologists in Africa.

He is a recipient of several research prestigious fellowships and awards, including a 2019 fellowship at Stellenbosch's Institute for Advanced Studies (STIAS), and in 2020 another fellowship at the Institute for Advanced Studies in the Humanities (IASH), University of Edinburgh (UK), Wits Exceptional Research (2016), and the Vice-Chancellors Award for Research Excellence – UFH (2019).

His current research focuses on large-scale resource extraction, land and distributional struggles in Rural South Africa. For more than 15 years, he has led a number of studies in South Africa's former 'homeland' areas. In

addition to commissioned papers, he has published widely in reputable peer-reviewed international journals such as the *Review of African Political Economy*, *The Extractive Industries and Society*, *Labour, Capital and Society*, *Resource Policy* and has published a number of book chapters with reputable scholarly publishers including Routledge and Wits University Press.

He is also a public intellectual whose research makes a notable contribution to social justice causes. Through my research, he has contributed to several advocacy issues, particularly on mining expansion, land rights and rural communities. In 2016, he was invited to participate as one of the leading experts in the Land Working Groups of the High-Level Panel on Land Policy in South Africa (2016-2017) chaired by Former State President Kgalema Motlanthe.



>> Dr Nthabi Taole-Mjimba



>> Prof Munacinga Simatele



>> Dr Ellen Rungani





## UFH AND BLACK LAWYERS ASSOCIATION FORMALIZE RELATIONS

*“This commitment and partnership will have a great impact on our students. It will not only shape their future but shape a future that is different.”*

On 17 November, the University of Fort Hare’s Faculty of Law and the Black Lawyers Association – Legal Education Centre (BLA- LEC) solidified their long-standing relationship with the signing of a memorandum of understanding (MOU).

The MOU entails the provisioning of training to final-year LLB students in trial advocacy, case analysis and how to lead evidence in the simplest manner. The training will be provided by BLA- LEC facilitators which comprise of Judges, Advocates and Attorneys.

The signing ceremony held on the Alice Campus reaffirms the Faculty’s and BLA’s commitment to continue working together to skill and produce all-rounded Law graduates.

In attendance were representatives from the Faculty led by Dr Nombulelo Lubisi (former Dean), the Vice-Chancellor Prof Sakhela Buhlungu, Senior Counsel and Chairperson of the BLA-LEC board of trustees,

Advocate McCaps Motimele SC and retired Judge Willie Seriti.

Moving from W.E.B. Du Bois’ quote: “The first duty of a free slave is to free another slave”, Advocate Motimele said this means that the little the BLA- LEC has, has to be shared with others. “This becomes the basis for the signing of this understanding. The rich that the association has throughout the country will be made available to the university’s Nelson R Mandela School of Law.”

According to Advocate Motimele, the training programme is accredited by the Legal Council of South Africa and it will give the final years an edge in the employment cue.

He further acknowledged the hard work put in by Dr Lubisi. “I hope to continue working with her.”

The VC appreciated the support and the commitment from the BLA. “This commitment and partnership will have a great impact on our students. It will not only shape their future but shape a future that is different. This is a major contribution and it is not going into a bottomless bucket, it is filling something that has already been filling. The Faculty is willing to grab every opportunity with both hands.” he said.



# FORT HARE DAIRY TRUST WINS BIG AT 2021 AMADLELO AGRI AWARDS

The Fort Hare Dairy Trust has once again proven to be the cream of the crop!

On 13 November the Trust won 10 of 16 awards that were presented at the AmadleloAgri Annual Awards Ceremony held in East London.

The 210 hectares (ha) picturesque farm nests on land owned by the University of Fort Hare's Alice campus. It produces over 4 million litres of milk each year.

Amadlelo Agri is a 72% black-owned company that intends to provide support services to emerging black farmers and communities who want to build prosperous agribusinesses. The awards ceremony is aimed at rewarding and recognising the achievements of the five community dairy farms operated by Amadlelo Agri in partnership with surrounding communities. The dairy farms are located in Alice, Middledrift, Shiloh, Keiskammahoek, and Ncora.

Speaking at the event, Mr Simphiwe Somdyala, CEO of Amadlelo Agri said: "The five Eastern Cape community-based dairy farms persevered through a tough operating environment to produce 28 million litres of milk this year from five thousand milking cows. The communities and the farmworkers worked diligently throughout the year. It is important to pause and recognise the hard work and encourage them to continually seek even better results.

Amadlelo Agri's Chairperson, Mr Bulelani Ngcuka, praised the farmers and communities for not allowing the challenging operating climate to make them despondent. Farming on communal land has unique challenges. Added to this there is drought, Covid-19 pandemic and other socio-economic challenges like crime.

"But against all these odds, you managed to achieve the set targets. That's worth celebrating as this feeds families, creates jobs and facilitates economic development," said Mr. Ngcuka.

Delivering a message of support on behalf of the university, Prof Renuka Vithal, DVC for Teaching and Learning said: "As the university, we want to contribute to the growth and development of the

Dairy Industry in the province. Currently, we are looking into the possibility of introducing a Dairy Science Programme," she said.

The MEC for Rural Development and Agrarian Reform, Ms Nonkqubela Pieter, delivered a keynote address.

The Fort Hare Dairy Trust bagged the following awards:

- **Most Grass Eaten;**
- **Lowest Mortality;**
- **Highest Profit per hectare;**
- **Least nitrogen per hectare;**
- **Highest Production per cow;**
- **Highest Profit per hectare;**
- **Best Admin and Training;**
- **Most Improved Farm;**
- **Best Performing Farm and;**

**Farm Manager, Ms. Jeanette Rikhotso, won the newly-introduced CEO's Award for her efforts in improving For Hare Dairy Trust's overall performance.**

Explaining how the farm managed to perform so well, the beaming Rikhotso, who joined Amadlelo Agri as an intern in 2008, put it down to a collaborative approach to work by her team of 21 workers. The team produces four million litres of milk annually.

"Each one of us knows exactly what is required of us. We take pride in our work and we ensure that we meet our daily key performance indicators," she added.

Other award winners were:

- Middledrift Dairy (Pty) Ltd for **Lowest Percentage Feed Bought**
- Shiloh Dairy Trust for **Best Fertility and Conception Figures**
- Ncora Dairy Trust for **Best Milk Quality**
- Seven Stars Trust for **Lowest Cost Producer**
- Mrs Lumka Maso and Mr Alfred Masi for **Stewardship & Community Champion**
- Mr Tukela Jantjies for **Project Chairperson of the Year**



*"As the university, we want to contribute to the growth and development of the Dairy Industry in the province. Currently, we are looking into the possibility of introducing a Dairy Science Programme"*





- FACULTY OF EDUCATION PROGRAMME
- FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES PROGRAMME
- FACULTY OF LAW PROGRAMME
- FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT AND COMMERCE PROGRAMME
- FACULTY OF SCIENCE AND AGRICULTURE PROGRAMME
- FACULTY OF HEALTH SCIENCES PROGRAMME



## 2021 Virtual Spring Graduation

On 12 November, the university held a Virtual Spring Graduation to mark and celebrate the milestone of the students who were graduating.

This was the university's fourth graduation ceremony held under restricted conditions imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic. Just under 400 doctoral, masters, honours and undergraduate qualifications were awarded during the ceremony. In addition to the formal proceedings, the programme also featured pre-recorded performances, such as Imbongi (praise singer) and the UFH Marimba Band to make the day extra special.

The ceremony was on all UFH social media platforms from 1 pm.

Follow the links above to watch the graduation video and view the faculty programmes.



>> UFH Marimba Band



>> Prof S. Buhlungu



>> Prof R. Vithal



>> Prof O. van Heerder



>> Dr N. Taole-Mjimba



>> Mr N. Zuma



>> Prof E. Adu



>> Prof M. Aliber



>> Dr N. Lubisi



>> Dr N. Roos



>> Prof M. van Gent



>> Dr L. Cilliers



>> Imbongi - Xolani Sabani

## Pamela Blignaut Honours Her Late Mother's Wish

***"There is no other inheritance I can offer you my child, except education".***

As Pamela Blignaut counted down the days leading to her graduation, she was reminded of her late mother's last words to her: "There is no other inheritance I can offer you my child, except education".

On 12 November, she claimed that inheritance and became the first graduate in her family when she was conferred with a Bachelor of Laws Degree during the university's 2021 Spring Virtual Graduation ceremony.

The 24-year-old from Jeffrey's Bay lost her mother to Covid-19 complications in December last year. "That was the darkest time in my life. She was my pillar of strength. I remember crying myself to sleep day and night, asking myself what I am going to be, without her in my life and how was I going to get through everything," she recalls.

As she shares her story, it is evident that the virus robbed her of her greatest supporter, it also robbed a mother of witnessing her prayers being answered.

Ms Blignaut first applied to study at UFH in 2016, unfortunately, her application never made it to the university. That did not deter her, instead, she applied again and was accepted the following year. "I got a call from the Faculty of Law on 6 February 2017 and was told to come and register. My parents were so proud that finally, their baby was going to study law and that the situation at home would change for the better."

With joy in her heart, a bag full of clothes and nowhere to stay, Blignaut hopped on a bus and travelled the 360 km journey to the East London campus. "I was so excited about the prospect of changing my family's life and nothing else mattered."

Her first year of study was the toughest as she was unable to secure funding for the year. "Being unfunded, coupled with examination pressure, was very stressful. Fortunately, I used to work for the Department of Education as an Examination Assistant during the matric final exams. During mid-year holidays I worked as a Call Centre agent and a Cashier. With some financial



>> Pamela Blignaut

assistance from my mother, I was able to save enough money from my part-time jobs to rent a room to stay."

Blignaut persevered through the obstacles and found strength in her mother's teachings - "Through tough times, kneel down and pray. God will make a way."

"There were times of failure when I did not even qualify for a supplementary. But each and every time I came back stronger with my head held up high. My mother motivated me not to give up and reminded me of the reason why I was here - in pursuit of a better life."

"When she died I remember asking myself who was going to motivate and pray with me. I guess God had other plans for her."

Blignaut says she finds comfort in having fulfilled her mother's wish for her to get an education. "Although she is no longer around to celebrate this day with me, I know she is smiling down at me, with pride."

## Mdantsane Petrol Attendant Graduates With Law Degree

Source: DispatchLIVE

Siphenkosi Nqoro, 29, who works as a petrol attendant at a Shell garage in Mdantsane, has completed his LLB at the University of Fort Hare. He graduated on 12 November, opening his way to become a lawyer, a dream he has had since high school.

Nqoro, who is from Qonce, has inspired his family, being the first of five children to graduate.

He describes his journey of both working and studying as challenging.

While he wanted to study to be a lawyer, he knew that his family circumstances meant he could not stop earning.

"Law is something I have always wanted to do, and I promised myself that despite the odds, I'd always pursue my ambition."

After finishing matric, he needed to find paid work to help his unemployed parents.

"I started working as a petrol attendant because I knew my parents were struggling and I felt compelled to care for them.

"But as time passed, I remembered the pledge I had made to myself that one day I would study law."

In 2016, Nqoro was admitted as a student at Fort Hare.

"I knew I would have to juggle my studies and work, so I had to talk to my work supervisor.

"He was glad to learn that I would be attending university full-time, and he gave me permission to pursue the degree.

"I used to work the night shift, bathe and prepare for school, and then be expected to go to work again, but the garage staff was quite flexible.

"Sometimes I would approach my superiors and ask them to adapt my schedule, and they would do it gracefully."

Nqoro had to complete 14 modules during his final year, several of which he failed previously due to his multitasking.

"In their final years, students are required to register for five modules; however, I had to register for 14 since I had to add all of those I had failed. The year was tough for me, but I managed."



>> Siphenkosi Nqoro

***"I came to university with one blanket and saw my peers receiving financial help from home, but it was different for me - I had to be the provider."***

In 2017, like many other students, Nqoro ran into difficulties with NSFAS and received no finance, leaving him with a debt to the university he is now repaying so his degree certificate can be released.

He thanked his family and the Shell garage crew for their unwavering support.

And his advice to others, who may fear to chase their dreams, is to start as soon as they can, despite the odds.

"I came to university with one blanket and saw my peers receiving financial help from home, but it was different for me - I had to be the provider."

Nqoro now wants to do his articles.

Nqoro's aunt Pumla Jabavu said they were proud of him.

"I saw how Siphenkosi fought at varsity but overcame all difficulties because of his dutiful nature and dedication; we don't have much as a family, but this is a great start for us."

Nzimeni Fanta, Nqoro's supervisor, said Nqoro had always been focused on work, even though he was balancing a job and academia.

"He was a down-to-earth employee who was committed to his job. We are inspired by him and his ambition - working for 12 hours and then returning to school is no easy task."



## UFH Accounting Graduates achieve 91% pass rate in SAICA ITC Test

Graduates from the Fort Hare Nkuhlu Department of Accounting attained a 91% pass rate for the second sitting of the 2021 South African Institute of Chartered Accountants (SAICA) Initial Test of Competence (ITC). The test is the first of two examinations that Accounting graduates have to pass to become Chartered Accountants (CA's).

In addition to outperforming the national pass rate average of 59% by a landslide, UFH achieved the second highest pass rate in the country after the University of the Free State (UFS). In July this year, UFH obtained an overall pass rate of 81% in the first sitting of the ITC exam. This placed the institution in 7<sup>th</sup> position nationally, a position shared with Nelson Mandela University (NMU).

"This achievement is extraordinary given the unprecedented circumstances under which the 2020 academic year had to be concluded," said Professor Renuka Vithal, DVC: Teaching and Learning at UFH. "It is further testimony to outstanding work ethic and dedication of both our Accounting Department and our accounting student graduates. We wish to extend a note of appreciation to the Department and its students for the stellar achievements during the first and second sitting of the ITC exams in 2021," she said.

The ITC test is administered to evaluate the technical competence and critical thinking abilities of graduates after completion of a three year undergraduate programme and the postgraduate programme. The marks were released by SAICA earlier this month.

Recently, *Mail and Guardian* noted UFH's accounting graduates often outperform many other leading South African universities in an article that examined the creation of high-calibre chartered accounting graduates in historically disadvantaged universities.

UFH's Nkuhlu Department of Accounting is accredited by various professional bodies, including: the South African Institute of Chartered Accountants (SAICA), Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA) and South African Institute of Professional Accountants (SAIPA). The accreditation by these professional bodies enhances the value of our qualifications and ensures that our graduates are sought after by employers in the market.

The Department's programmes include the Bachelor of Commerce (Accounting), the Advanced Diploma in Accounting (ADA), Post Graduate Diploma in Accounting (PGDA), Bachelor of Commerce (General Accounting), and the Bachelor of Commerce (Honours – Taxation).

## Seven UFH Economics students progress to semi-finals in 2021 BUDGET SPEECH COMPETITION



Out of 30 undergraduate and postgraduate students from the country's universities who made the cut into the semi-finals of the Nedbank & Old Mutual Budget Speech Competition, seven are from the University of Fort Hare.

The semi-finalists were selected from hundreds of entries through a rigorous judging process by a panel of adjudicators led by economists from both Nedbank and Old Mutual.

The University of Fort Hare is also the only Eastern Cape University represented at this stage of the competition.

The UFH group comprises:

### POSTGRADUATE CATEGORY

- **Ms Inga Nomandla** (Honours in Economics)
- **Ms Enathi Athabile** (Honours in Economics)
- **Ms Asemahle Simanga** (Honours in Economics)

### UNDERGRADUATE CATEGORY

- **Mr Garai Macdonald** (3<sup>rd</sup> year Agricultural Economics)
- **Mr Stanley Ndlovu** (3<sup>rd</sup> Bcom Business Management)
- **Mr Kumbirai Takawira** (3<sup>rd</sup> year Agricultural Economics)
- **Mr Musosa Walter Tawanda** (3<sup>rd</sup> year Bcom Business Management)

First held in 1972, the competition is open to both undergraduate and postgraduate economics and finance students from South African tertiary institutions. The students are required to submit essays responding to current socio-economic challenges. According to the

competition's website, contestants are required to put themselves in the shoes of the Finance Minister by addressing challenging demands and attempting to find a balanced view to tackle the issues of the day.

In the undergraduate category, students had to discuss South Africa's focus on the public sector wage bill as an expenditure control measure. Postgraduates had to weigh in on the debt default risk in South Africa and its potential fallout, making use of international experience.

UFH has had representations in this competition since 2006 and showcased great success in the past three consecutive years. In 2018, Mongi Tshaka was a finalist in the postgraduate category. In 2019, Bekithemba Qeqe took home the top prize accompanied by fellow finalists Cwayita Mkrola in the postgraduate category and Manyoni Ndambenhle in the undergraduate category. In 2020, Luyanda Matomane was placed third in the postgraduate category.

"The chances that we can win again are high," said Prof Forget Kapingura, UFH Economics Associate Prof who also mentors the UFH contestants. Prof Kapingura added that being selected for such a prestigious competition is testament that UFH students are able to compete with their peers from other universities and emerge as winners.

The announcement of the Top Three winners in each category will be made next year by the Minister of Finance at the gala dinner of the 2022 National Budget Speech.

# UFH SARChI Chair in Sexualities, Gender and Queer Studies spearheads inclusion and diversity projects on campus

*“We are embracing diversity in sexualities and genders and headed in the right direction as the university.”*

Eight months after joining the university, Prof Zethu Matebeni, SA's first recipient of the South African Research Chairs Initiative (SARChI) Chair in Sexualities, Genders and Queer Studies, has initiated several projects that seek to promote the inclusion, diversity and visibility of students with diverse sexual identities and sexual orientation on campus.

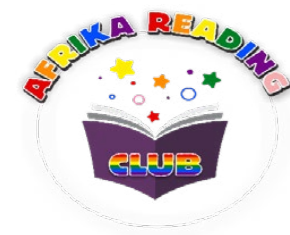
The inspiration for this new Chair was prompted by the lack or limited research on queer studies that focus on localized knowledge that speaks to different areas and contexts within the African continent. As part of its objectives, the Chair develops three pillars of knowledge creation through methodological approaches, theoretical approaches and activist-scholarship.

These projects include the **Queer Ambassadors** which hosted the university's first-ever Pride March, **The Afrika Reading Club (ARC)** and **Words That Heal** and have been developed in conjunction with the Researchers from the Chair's office, Dr Bellita Banda (Researcher) and Mx Wenzile Khumalo (Assistant Researcher).

The Chair also has collaborative ventures with the SARChI Chair in African Feminist Imaginations and the Centre for Women and Gender Studies at the Nelson Mandela University.

Dr Banda expanded on the projects:

## The Afrika Reading Club (ARC)



This is a monthly interdisciplinary reading group. The project seeks to familiarize and introduce people to some of the concepts and existing works in the field of Sexualities, Gender and Queer Studies. The monthly reading group ensures that there is an ongoing space of engagement and lively debates around some of the challenging issues around sexuality and gender in the continent.

Currently, the club members are reading *Female Fear Factory* by Prof. Pumla Dineo Gqola (MF Books, 2021) Other titles lined up include *The Social and Political Thought of Archie Mafeje* by Dr Bongani Nyoka (Wits Press 2020), Prof Kopano Ratele's *The World Looks Like This From Here* (Wits Press, 2019).

## Words That Heal



This initiative is unique and a first for the university. Every week, the office comes up with a word, translated in different African languages and accompanied by a befitting quote. For example:

- Kuporesa/ Ukuphilisa/ Iwosa;
- Ubuntu – humanness/ Umunthu/ Utu/ Gimuntu; and
- Love Love/ uthando/ lerato/ upendo.

The 'Words that Heal', seek to address some of the most pressing educational and social issues facing UFH students today. It also seeks to highlight the importance of resisting sexism, homophobia, transphobia, biphobia and patriarchy, and all other forms of oppression by showing Ubuntu and loving one another.

## Queer Ambassadors



Queer Ambassadors are a group of postgraduate and undergraduate students with diverse sexual identities and sexual orientations as well as their allies. The Queer Ambassadors meet at least once a month.

The group focuses on developing positive personal relationships and improving the campus climate and safe spaces for LGBTQ students. For the first time, the Queer Ambassadors celebrated Pride Day on the 29<sup>th</sup> of October 2021.



>> Participant at the UFH Pride March, 29 October 2021



>> Marchers at the UFH Pride March, 29 October 2021



>> Health Day UFH on 28 October 2021



>> UFH Pride March on 29 October 2021



>> Queer Ambassadors and SARChI Chair Team on a retreat from 15-17 October 2021

According to Dr Banda, one of the Chair's major research project title: **“Supporting LGBTQ students in Rural Universities in South Africa: Towards promotion of diversity, inclusion and visibility”** is currently going through ethical clearance. “The idea came about when we did our ground research and saw that rarely do universities make mention or recognise sexual orientation or gender identities of LGBTQ students especially in rural universities. While South Africa has made huge strides in its protection of the rights of LGBTQ persons, within the university spheres the promotion and protection of their human rights as sexual minority persons continue to be compromised due to prevailing heterosexist systems.”

“Given the myriad concerns raised on how LGBTQ students remain segregated in rural university contexts, particularly in the Eastern Cape Province, where issues of traditional beliefs, culture, and religion are deeply engrained; this project aims to unravel the untold stories of LGBTQ students with the aim of working towards the

promotion of diversity, inclusion and visibility within university spaces,” explained Dr Banda.

Prof Zethu thanked the various university departments for their relentless support, especially the Postgraduate Office and Institutional Advancement. “It has only been a few months at the university, but we have managed to cover a lot of ground and started making way towards an inclusive environment for LGBTQ students and staff,” she said.

Khumalo said: “A puzzle cannot be complete if there is a missing piece. The Chair was the missing piece at Fort Hare and it has brought with it a sense of belonging for the LGBTQI students while creating ways and means of educating the university community that life as we know it is not restricted to just binary genders – male and female. We are embracing diversity in sexualities and genders and headed in the right direction as the university.”

# PEER FACILITATORS

## – Taking Teaching & Learning beyond the lecture halls

As we wrap up the Academic Year, we would like to honour our 2021 Peer Facilitators who went above and beyond to ensure their mentees achieve academic excellence.

The group comprises senior students who are specifically recruited due to their exceptional academic performance. Their role is to provide support and guidance to individual students and groups to improve their ability to study, take notes, write properly and gain analytical skills.

The programme is a collaborative learning support system facilitated by the Teaching & Learning Centre (TLC) under the leadership of Ms Thandi Mayaphi who is a TLC Consultant. They consist of the following:

- Language and Writing Consultants (LWC);
- Supplemental Instruction Leaders (SI);
- Extended Learning Environment Programme (ELEP) Facilitators and;
- 'Rez Buddies'

We interviewed some of the 2021 Peer Facilitators (PF's) to find what motivated them to join the programme.

**Ms Bridget Billion**  
Advanced Diploma  
Accounting Student, SI  
Leader (East London Campus)



When Bridget arrived at UFH as a first-year Economics student, she was intimidated by her studies. "I used to view Economics as a very difficult module and I was afraid to ask questions during lectures so I joined the SI sessions. Soon after joining, I felt less intimidated and got a better understanding of my studies."

In her second year, Bridget decided to become an SI leader to offer the same assistance that was offered to her in her first year.

"I wanted to return the knowledge acquired to other first-years. My passion to assist others and hunger for professional advancement drove me to become an SI Leader" she said.

Her role includes setting up meetings to identify enablers and trouble-shooting constraints and assist with formulating strategies to mitigate some of the challenges faced by students in their studies, especially when it comes to online learning. She also mentors new PFs.

Ms Billion says the greatest reward of being an SI Leader is the ability to gain work experience while assisting others.

**Nqaba Tyali**  
Bachelor of Social Science  
in Human Settlements  
(Final-year), SI Leader (Alice  
Campus)



For Nqaba, becoming an SI Leader was inspired by his passion for helping others and knowledge sharing. "As a former mentee of this programme, I was also inspired by the positive impact that it has on the progress of students."

His role includes mentoring students in modules that are considered to be high risk. "I organize classroom material that is relevant to their module and try to simplify the material by using real-life scenarios that they can relate to. I also develop effective study strategies for and with my students and offer group or one-on-one consultations. To test the effectiveness of my strategies, I do informal quizzes with my students."

Like many others, to mitigate the challenges imposed by Covid-19 in higher education, Nqaba turned to technology to continue servicing his mentees.

"At first it was a challenge as most students could not attend virtual classes and those who had data struggled with weak network connections. To ensure that my mentees were kept abreast with their studies, I made recordings of myself and sent them on a WhatsApp group

that I created."

Nqaba says he is proud to be part of a group that makes a difference. "To be able to inspire, share knowledge and witness your mentees succeed in their studies is the most rewarding feeling."

His motto is "Even if you can't, just do it".

**Lihle Ngedle**  
BSc Honours in Microbiology,  
Language and Writing  
Consultant (Alice)



"I became a Peer Facilitator to ensure no other students, especially first-years, experience the academic difficulties that I experienced in my first year."

As an LWC, Ngedle's mission is to sharpen his mentees' academic writing skills, this includes research, referencing, assignments and essays. He offers these services through workshops, one-on-one, or group consultations. "Engaging with a large number of students can prove difficult during online workshops. My secret is to break the students into smaller groups, I find this keeps the lesson more focused and everyone can engage."

Nqaba says being an LWC was his way of contributing the university's goal of achieving academic excellence.

"As a student academic developer, it is gratifying to see students (mentees) improve in

their academics and knowing that I contributed to that improvement."

**Tawanda Gonzi**  
Bachelor of Laws (Final-  
year), Language and Writing  
Consultant (East London)



As an Academic in waiting, Tawanda decided to become an LWC in preparation for his future career.

He is a beneficiary of the Canon Collins Leigh Day and Rick Turner Scholarships. His areas of interest include tax law and human rights law with a focus on socio-economic rights. He has written a paper titled: *The Chilonga eviction Scandal - A violation of the right to Administrative Justice: Reflecting on the Administrative Justice Act and the 2013 Constitution* published in the Young Lawyers Association Journal-2021 May Issue.

"What propelled me to become an LWC was the career I intend to take, being an Academic involves a lot of writing and research. I also benefited from the programme as a former mentee, hence I decided to become a mentor. If it changed me then, through me, I believe it can change other person's writing skills," he said.

Tawanda's main responsibility is to review other students' assignments and conduct workshops on academic writing.

"Being part of the TLC programme has been a learning experience. The most satisfactory reward is the impact of the sessions I had on my peers."

**Maxman Gomo**  
BSc Agric Animal Science  
(Final-year), Rez Buddy



'Rez Buddies' literally take teaching and learning beyond the lecture halls and into student residences. The mentoring largely takes place after hours and on weekends.

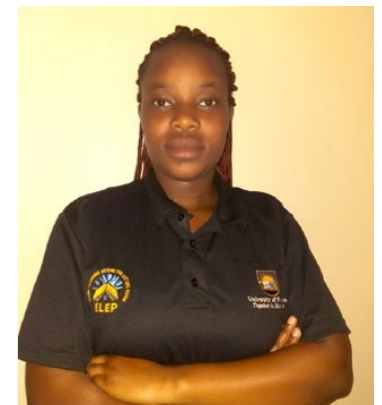
Maxman became a 'Rez Buddy' in 2019 when the programme was introduced. "I joined with no mentoring experience but the department trusted me and they allowed me to learn, unlearn and re-learn. Through a series of training and team buildings, I was educated on how best I can work with students to make education fashionable in the comfort of students' residences."

As a Rez buddy, Maxman says he works hand-in-hand with the Lecturers and the tutors to ensure that students develop confidence in their academic studies, especially in risk modules. "I facilitate learning through interactive learning processes that seek to provoke critical thinking and maximum participation. I also assist by bringing in ways that simplify learning for instance use of games, YouTube videos,

flashcards and all these are meant to promote student development. The effectiveness of my services is ensured by full student participation both in sessions and consultations as well as the feedback from students and lecturers."

"The feeling of being part of the programme that seeks to assist the university community to eradicate students' fear of risk modules, is priceless"

**Nyasha Bikwa**  
LLB (Final-year), ELEP Rez  
Buddy Facilitator



"I am fond of helping others and the ELEP Rez Buddy programme has allowed me to do so," says Nyasha.

She tutors first-year students who are doing Juridical Interpretation. "I help them understand the concept in the module. I also offer guidance for their assignment instruction to make them understand what is required from them. Also, I assist students with prepping for upcoming tests or an exam and give them study tips and techniques when answering questions."

Nyasha says, for her, the most rewarding aspect of being a Rez Buddy was the experience, the confidence boost and most importantly, the wealth of knowledge that comes with the interaction.



University of Fort Hare  
*Together in Excellence*

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF CONVOCATION

### CONGRATULATORY MESSAGE ON RE-APPOINTMENT OF PROFESSOR SAKHELA BUHLUNGU AS UNIVERSITY OF FORT HARE VICE-CHANCELLOR

We note with profound appreciation the decision of the University of Fort Hare Council to confirm the re-appointment of Prof Sakhela Buhlungu as Vice-Chancellor of the University.

This decision marks yet another milestone for the University and affords the Vice Chancellor another opportunity to pilot the affairs of the institution for a new five-year term.

We wish to congratulate Prof Buhlungu and look forward to the institution's growth and rejuvenation under his guidance.

As the Convocation, we wish him well in his second term as he continues to pursue his vision and to steer the University to greater heights.

**Advocate Andile Mini**  
**Convocation President**  
**26 November 2021**

## UFH ALUMNAE, LINDA MAQOMA AND VUYISEKA KANI DISPLAY EXCELLENCE IN THEIR CAREERS

During the month of November, the university celebrated two of its alumna: Vuyiseka Kani and Linda Maqoma for reaching greater heights in their respective careers and being lauded for excellence.



>> Linda Maqoma

**Ms Maqoma** was announced as President-Elect of the Association for the Advancement of Black Accountants of Southern Africa (ABASA) with effect from 2 December 2021.

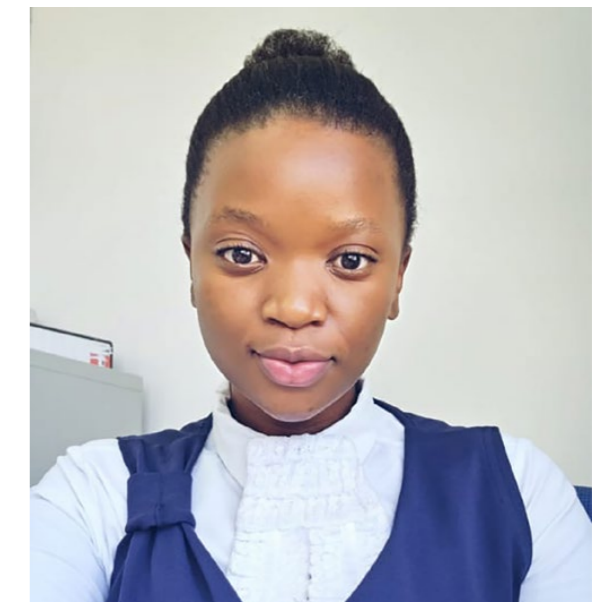
Born and raised in Fort Beaufort, Eastern Cape, Ms Maqoma holds a BComm Accounting Honours Degree from UFH (2016).

Her ABASA leadership journey spans over eight years having joined the association as a student. She has served on various structures of the association on the following levels: student leadership, advisory board member for the Student Chapter at Fort Hare, provincial executive committee, provincial chairperson and currently serves as Director and Chairperson.

**Vuyiseka Kani** was named Lawyer of the Year: District Court category in the Legal Aid South Africa Eastern Cape Achiever Awards.

Held annually, the awards seek to recognize and celebrate legal minds that have done exceptionally well in their work performance, made a tremendous contribution to the justice system and are committed to service excellence.

Kani who holds a Bachelor of Laws from UFH is currently an Attorney at Legal Aid SA East London Local Office.



>> Vuyiseka Kani

Congratulations ladies, UFH is proud of your achievements!

# Baby Blues players selected for Springbok Women's Rugby European Tour

*“Most importantly I am grateful for people like Prof Maya van Gent (HMS HOD) who have helped me find and maintain a balance between studying and playing professional rugby.”*

Five players from the Springbok Women's Squad that toured Europe in November are former and current UFH Baby Blues players.

They are:

- Nolusindiso Boozi (C)**
- Zintle Mpupha**
- Unam Tose (currently playing for Baby Blues)**
- Chumisa Qawe and**
- Lusanda Dumke**

*ThisWeek@FortHare* interviewed Tose ahead of the team's first game which was against France. The 3<sup>rd</sup> year Human Movement Science student hails from Tsholomnqa, outside East London.

The 21-year-old who plays the position of a scrum half was introduced to rugby at age 11. Her first game was against a team of boys, as a result when she was selected to play for the Border under-13 team, talent scouts mistook her for a boy. “After selecting me they realized I was a girl, unfortunately, I could not play for the team. However, they were kind enough to find a girls' team that I could play for.”

As the years progressed, so did her rugby career. From 2013- 2016, Tose played for Border under-16 and moved to the under-18 squad for two years.

Her big break came in 2019, when after a great season playing for Border First Team, she was called-up to the Springbok team and got her first cap against Spain. In addition to being called-up, Tose who was 19-years-old at the time was also made vice-captain in a match against Scotland.



>> Unam Tose

Commenting on her selection, she said: “There are many talented Rugby players in South Africa, being selected proves to me that I contribute to that talent. I am grateful to be part of this team.”

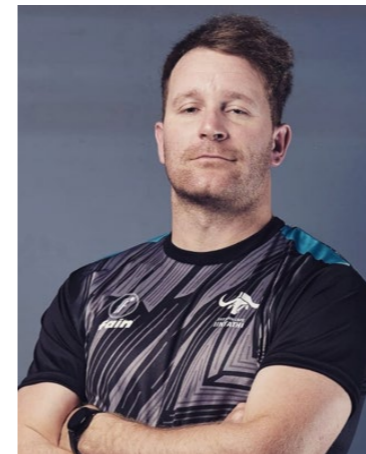
Tose thanked her family, friends and coaches for believing and supporting her. “Most importantly I am grateful for people like Prof Maya van Gent (HMS HOD) who have helped me find and maintain a balance between studying and playing professional rugby.”

# HMS Graduates appointed as Strength and Conditioning Coaches at four SA Cricket Franchises

Of the 15 cricket franchises in South Africa, four have entrusted their players' Strength and Conditioning in the hands of UFH Human Movement Science graduates.

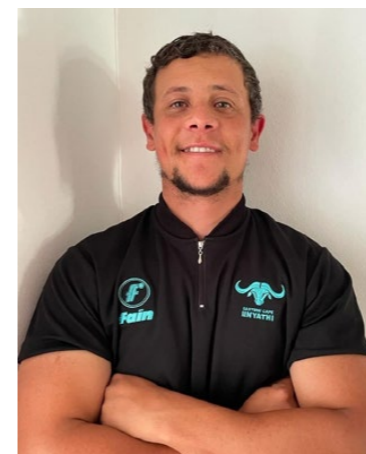
The Forterians are:

**Nandile Tyali - Head of Strength and Conditioning at Imperial Lion Cricket, and Powerade National Academy Squad.** Tyali graduated with a Bachelor of Health Sciences in Human Movement Science (Hon) in 2012. “I am living my dream. I feel good and valued. Much of the credit goes to the foundation I received from UFH. What I learned from the university as a student, is actually what is happening in the real world. Fort Hare prepared me for what I am today,” said Tyali.



**Shannon Musto - Strength and Conditioning coach at South Western Districts (SWD) Cricket.** Musto holds a Bachelor of Health Sciences in Human Movement Science obtained in 2013. Announcing Musto's appointment earlier this month, Mr Albertus Kennedy, SWD Chief Executive Officer said: “Shannon's credentials, skills and experience speaks for itself and together with his work professional work ethics he will be an asset for SWD Cricket.”

**Laden Gamiet - Strength and conditioning coach at Boland Cricket.** Gamiet graduated with a Bachelor of Health Sciences in Human Movement Science (2014) and is currently pursuing his Masters in Health Sciences at UFH. In an interview with ClubCricketSA, Gamiet said he aims to make a significant contribution at Boland.



**Shannon Graham - Strength and conditioning coach at EC Inyathi.** Graham obtained a Bachelor of Health Sciences in Human Movement Science from UFH in 2016. He said: “The degree from UFH and the Fort Hare Cricket Academy on the Alice Campus gave me the tools to carve my future in the cricket and sports industry. Today I am still involved in the academy as a professional. I am grateful and have great respect for Prof Maya van Gent for her passion to develop HMS students. She is a powerhouse.”



University of Fort Hare  
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# *ThisWeek@FortHare*

your fortnightly newsletter

## **EDITORIAL TEAM**

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*Submission deadline 5pm Tuesdays*