



University of Fort Hare
Together in Excellence

Institutional Advancement

This Week @FORT HARE

Vol 2, issue 18



28 August 2020

PROF ANTHONY OKOH

C-Rated NRF Researcher

APPOINTED TO SERVE ON NATIONAL WASTEWATER CORONAVIRUS SURVEILLANCE TEAM



// Prof Anthony Okoh

Yet another feather has been added to UFH's highly accomplished academic, Prof Anthony Okoh - Director of the SA Medical Research Council (SAMRC) Microbial Water Quality Monitoring Centre.

Recently, the university received news of his appointment to serve on the National Wastewater CoronaVirus Surveillance Team anchored by the SAMRC.

The objective of the surveillance project is to evaluate all municipal wastewater treatment plants in the country - especially those in hotspot areas, as reservoirs of the coronavirus in the environment, and through this, help to advise Government's Strategic Covid-19 Team as appropriate. The treatment plants will be monitored for presence of the coronavirus, using influent and effluent samples as targets.

The project is fully funded by the SAMRC.

Prof Okoh's group will monitor two municipalities namely, Amathole District Municipality and Buffalo City Metropolitan Municipality.

This is just one of several accolades that Prof Okoh has earned since joining the University of Fort Hare in 2006.

Participation on the project is of immense benefit to students, his faculty and university at large.

"Team members including students, develop skills in environmental virology and infectious diseases research - a scarce skill area. The faculty will benefit because the project will attract new and expensive infrastructure from national government. At the end of the project, the equipment will remain with the the faculty and the university," explained Prof Okoh.

The university will also benefit from subsidies that will be generated from publications and students graduating from the project.

"In addition, the university will benefit from the visibility of our work in the project and as well as national recognition of the university as a leader in microbial water quality research," he states.

Research Excellence

Prof Okoh is no stranger to research excellence. He is the Director of SAMRC Microbial Water Quality Monitoring Centre here at UFH.

The Centre was established in 2015 and conducts its research within the confines of Applied and Environment genomics on the following focal themes:

- Quality indices of water/wastewater milieus;

- Reservoirs of antimicrobial resistance;
- Emerging biological and chemical pollutants in the aquatic environment and;
- Bioactive compounds of health and biotechnological importance.

He is also the leader of the UFH's largest and highly reputable research group, the Applied and Environmental Microbiology Research Group (AEMREG) which he established in 2007. On average, in the last three years, the group has published over 40 articles per year in DHET accredited journals.

He has also been leading the UFH Water Research niche area since 2013 and served as Deputy Dean (Research and Internationalization) of the Faculty of Science and Agriculture between August 2016 and April 2020.

Record-breaking Achievements and Memberships

- Since joining the UFH in 2006, Prof Okoh has graduated 51 PhD and 66 MSc students (including 14 staff members).
- He has published over 370 articles in DHET accredited journals as well as a patent.
- He has generated over R70m in subsidy to the University of Fort Hare
- Prof Okoh is the university's only Fellow of the African Academy of Science
- He is a member of the South African Academy of Sciences
- A Fellow of the Biotechnology Society of Nigeria; and
- A Fellow of the Water Institute of Southern Africa.
- He has served as President of the South Africa Society for Microbiology (2011-2013).
- In 2017, Prof Okoh set a publication record (at Fort Hare) of 42 journal articles
- He broke his own record by setting a new one of 61 journal articles in DHET accredited journals with an average impact factor of over 3.0 in 2019.

Research Grants:

- Prof Okoh has attracted several national and international research grants to the university.
- He is a recipient of two UFH research awards: (a) The Emerging Researcher and the (b) Senior Researcher Awards - among other accolades.

Chairmanships and Panel Memberships

He also had the privilege of serving on several panels (including as Chairperson) for the NRF, SAMRC, WRC, UKZN (review of academic programmes at the University), the South Africa National Science and Technology Forum (NSTF) discussion forum on Water Management and Skills, as well as (in 2016) a member of the South Africa delegation to Oman on the Oman-South Africa bilateral cooperation Workshop on Water & Agri-biotechnology. It is upon such accomplishments that he was nominated as a member of the coronavirus surveillance team.

Team Milestones:

A summary of milestones achieved by the SAMRC Microbial Water Quality Monitoring Centre includes the following:

1. A Patent on Production of metal nanoparticles (Ref: Characterization and biomedical applications of green synthesized nanoparticles assisted by aqueous extract of Thuja). South Africa Patent #P84658ZA00 PJV/YDT, 27 May 2020.
2. The group developed an important resource entitled 'A manual for the monitoring of cholera and non-cholera causing vibrio pathogens in water, vegetables and aquatic animals', which is currently under consideration for inclusion in the National Water Resource Monitoring programme.
3. The team's report published in Chemical Engineering Journal, 401: 125562 with impact factor 10.652 entitled "Synthesis of CeO₂ as promising adsorbent for the management of free-DNA harboring antibiotic resistance genes from tap water" is a significant contribution to international efforts to find a solution to the removal of unpleasant genes in water.
4. The Centre is the first to model the role of environmental variables and anthropogenic gradients as ecological drivers of *Plesiomonas shigelloides* distribution and freshwaters quality, as well as the first to apply the pathogen as indicator of environmental pollution and health risk assessment of empirical treatment of infections. They are also the first to report on the detected carbapenem-resistant *Klebsiella* species in the Eastern Cape Province (ECP).
5. Their reports on campylobacteriosis agents were the first of their kind in the ECP.
6. The group was also the first to report on the application of green synthesis of AgNPs and antibacterial application from the plants *Salvia officinalis* and *Oedera genistifolia* in South Africa.
7. Our group was also the first to identify the presence of circulating Recombinant form of HIV (CRF02_AG) and a unique mosaic pattern of recombinant C/D through our study on HIV-1 drug resistance surveillance among parturient women on anti-retroviral therapy in the Eastern Cape, South Africa.
8. Also the first to molecularly characterize and determine the incidence of transmitted drug resistance among newly diagnosed treatment-naïve patients in rural Eastern Cape areas.



// Prof Anthony Okoh and his team

9. The Centre's studies on *Chlorella sorokiniana* and *Chlorella minutissima*, *Ecklonia maxima*, *Gelidium pristoides*, *Ulva rigida* and *Gracilaria gracilis* revealed that these algal species are a potential source of bioactive agents or nutraceuticals for the management of neurodegenerative diseases. This study has received generous funding from TIA (collaboration between UFH and UKZN) for escalation and further studies towards commercialization.
10. ALL graduates of the Centre are gainfully employed. This is Prof Okoh's greatest joy.

Current key research endeavors include:

1. Quality indices and genomics of water resources in and outside of the ECP and emerging challenges in the water sector.
2. Emerging chemical pollutants in the aquatic environment of the ECP and development of innovative nanomaterials for use in their removal from water/wastewater.
3. Valorization of wastes using microbial entities.
4. Antimicrobial resistance in the water-plant-food public health interface.
5. Bioactive compounds of health and biotechnology importance.
6. Wastewater coronavirus surveillance.

Acknowledgements

Prof Okoh attributes his achievements to the support provided by the Vice-Chancellor, Prof Sakhela Buhlungu and his Deputies.

He also acknowledges the support received from the Dean of the Faculty of Science and Agriculture, Prof Nomakhay Monde, the Govan Mbeki Research and Development Centre, drivers and managers with the university's Transport department.

"There are several men and women of honour in our great university who have assisted us in one way or another. We are indeed very grateful for their support over the years."

In conversation with Prof Willie Chinyamurindi

Y2-Rated NRF Researcher and Professor in the Department of Business Management, UFH.

Affectionately known to the university community as "Willie", Prof Chinyamurindi is a full professor in the Department of Business Management. He holds a Doctor of Philosophy specializing in Organisational Behaviour, from The Open University Business School (2012) in Milton Keynes (United Kingdom). He also holds a Master of Philosophy qualification on Strategy and Organisational Behaviour from Dublin Institute of Technology (2009) and a Masters in Industrial and Organisational Psychology from Nelson Mandela University (2007). In 2019, he graduated cum laude with a Master's Degree in Theology from UFH. His research, framed within the branch of Systematic Theology, explored the role of females as agents in a patriarchal system and the ensuing organizational dynamics that accompany not only issues of faith and religiosity but the exercise of voice in such systems.

In the past five years, he has worked as the Research Niche Area Leader for the Faculty of Management and Commerce. Under his leadership, the Faculty has managed to publish 25 articles in local and international journals and also managed to conduct a number of community engagement efforts.

His work has earned him several awards and recognition from leading professional bodies. In 2018 the Council on Higher Education (CHE) gave a national teaching commendation to Prof Chinyamurindi through his contribution to the country's Higher Education sector. <https://www.dispatchlive.co.za/news/2018-11-24-high-praise-for-top-fort-hare-academic/>

His outstanding research excellence and academic achievements have certainly earned him a seat at the table of academic stars and the university proudly counts him among its greatest ambassadors.

This Week @FortHare asked some questions to find out more about Prof Willie, his work, and the drive behind his academic career.



// Prof Willie Chinyamurindi

Who is Prof Willie?

I obtained my primary and high school education in Zimbabwe. I really enjoyed this upbringing especially my experience at Churchill Boys High School where I believe the love for academia was developed. It was an amazing school that produced international cricket stars, rugby players such as Beast Mtawarira and soccer stars such Tinashe Nengomasha who has played for Kaizer Chiefs. I often feel that maybe I am an academic star in view of these great names and their contribution. I was an average student but Churchill Boys High taught me the ethos of hard work. Much of my high school was a mixed experience for me and a ground in developing this early grounding in terms of my academics. I obviously loved reading and taking part in cultural activities such as debating and the school newspaper.

My formative higher education qualifications were obtained from the University of Port Elizabeth, now known as Nelson Mandela University. I owe my entrance into academia to two people. First, Prof Peter Cunningham who did a lot to develop my writing and critical thinking skills. The second person is Mrs Fayruz Abrahams who made me appreciate a lot around management sciences, particularly issues concerning Organisational Behaviour as a discipline. My international experience was gained in the United Kingdom and Ireland where I worked as an academic and also completed postgraduate studies. This experience helped to develop my writing skills. Over the years I have mentored a number of local and international students.

I have also learnt the importance of work-life balance. My pet projects these days outside academia are photography, playing club cricket, and also making mocktails and a growing Instagram following: @soberhararebartender. These hobbies bring a much-needed balance and escape from academia.

I thrive on challenging the status quo. Often, as a young academic you are not taken seriously and are reduced to an over-achiever who lacks experience. I also enjoy challenging stereotypes about the quality of academics that come from institutions such as the University of Fort Hare. I think I have been a great ambassador for the UFH.

Please share some information about your research field, including past and current projects:

As a broad theme, I research along aspects of human and organizational capabilities and how they contribute towards the theme of development. This entails aspects such as:

- a. **Human Resources Development** (HRD) and Organisational Psychology covering sub-themes such as careers, employability, decent work, technology in HRD.
- b. **Interpretivist research methods** within the management sciences.
- c. **Entrepreneurship and Strategic Management** especially the intersection of strategy in organisational behaviour.

Further, I am also interested in research that improves my teaching practice. The nexus between humans and organizational capabilities becomes important especially considering the role of technology and even socio-economic systems. In essence, the thread is around making the human experience better through harnessing and improving individual, organisational, and community capabilities.

What do you think are your most significant research accomplishments?

- A number of awards from professional bodies such as the South African Board for People Practices and the Psychological Society of South Africa.
- Serving as an executive member at the South African Young Academy of Science. Being a National Research Foundation rated researcher - Y2.
- Receiving funding from a number of local and regional bodies such as the National Research Foundation; Medical Research Council; Council for Scientific Industrial Research; National Institute of Humanities and Social Sciences to mention just a few.

- A National Commendation from the CHE for Excellence in Teaching in Higher Education South Africa
- Being a guest editor for local journals such as the South African Journal of Human Resources; South African Journal of Industrial Psychology, Transdisciplinary Research and Acta Commercii.
- Winner of the Zimbabwe Achievers-South Africa Academic Excellence Award 2019.
- Authorship of chapters in three nationally prescribed management textbooks.

How do you ensure your research is well communicated, digested and acted on?

I always follow up on my published research with media engagement. This entails newspaper articles published in most of the well-known South African and African newspaper platforms. Namely, the Daily Dispatch, Mail and Guardian, City Press, the Herald, and Forbes Africa.

Also, I am an avid participant on a number of Talk Radio platforms. This has helped me realise that I need to make sure my research speaks to people on the ground.

What has been the greatest impact of your work?

The recognition one gets is always some form of validation for the hours of work one puts in. I enjoy it when I get a call from media houses in Kenya and Nigeria wanting to use me as a guest based on my research. It is also pleasing when, based on my research, I receive calls from provincial and national government seeking my opinion on policy matters. Finally, being invited by researchers from across the world to work on international collaborative efforts is humbling and an acknowledgment of my contributions.

What advice would you give to Young Researchers out there?

Three things:

1. **Build** expansive networks with others. I work with at least one collaborator on six of the seven continents of the world (except Antarctica). This has been a useful platform for learning and improving myself as a teacher, researcher, and human being. It comes with cross-cultural challenges, which on its own is a useful learning experience.
2. **Seek** to make your work impactful. This means not only conducting good quality research but also making sure that this research makes its way to outlets such as policy and community efforts on the ground.
3. **Keep** trying to be a better version of yourself each day. The biggest room in the house is room for improvement.



UPDATE ON STUDENT LAPTOPS AND MODEMS

The second batch of student laptops is expected arrive today (28th August).

According to Dr Chris Johl, Chief Information Officer, the gadgets and modems are being packed for distribution. Delivery will commence during the first week of September.

Altogether, 6162 students are registered to receive laptops and 5405 requested modems. However, there may be problems with those who have submitted postal (PO Box) addresses.

"It will take some time for such students to be called to provide physical delivery addresses," he said.

The devices will be delivered by DHL courier service to students based in various cities including Bizana, Johannesburg, Mount Ayliff and Durban. Students also have an option to self-collect from the DHL East London and Mthatha depots. Prior arrangements are required for collection. Central collection points will be set up for those living in deep remote areas.

Only students who have received an SMS advising them of the arrival of the order are eligible to receive devices.

A team comprising Institutional Advancement and SRC members is on standby to assist with the delivery and collection process.

"The laptops come loaded with standard software that connects to Office 365. This means students do not need to download any software, they can immediately connect and access their emails and the Blackboard Learning Management System. Any other required downloads from the network, such as Word, will be zero-rated data", explained Dr Johl.

Students who wish to collect their devices can call Ms Kim Pritchard on WhatsApp or SMS on 084 897 5053 or via email at kim.pritchard@dhl.com to make the necessary arrangements.

Those who will collect from central points are urged to keep their cell phones on at all times for seamless arrangements.

Students will be required to produce their ID documents for positive identification.



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CALL FOR NOMINATIONS TO THE COUNCIL OF THE UNIVERSITY OF FORT HARE

The University of Fort Hare (hereinafter, "UFH" or "the University") seeks to appoint Council members in terms of section 27(6) and section 27(7)(e) of the Higher Education Act. The appointment is for a period of four (4) years, effective from 20 October 2020 to 19 September 2024. The reconstitution of Council is in accordance with Section 82 of the Statute the University. Council has a fiduciary, governance and policy-making duty and is ultimately responsible for determining the University's strategic direction.

Organisations, interest groups and individuals are hereby invited to nominate candidates to serve on the Council of the University of Fort Hare. Members shall be appointed by means of a process that is facilitated and supervised by the Registrar, Mr Njabulo Zuma.

The nominee should preferably have postgraduate tertiary qualifications and senior executive/board level experience and expertise, preferably in the higher education sector, in any of the areas below:

- Strategy and institutional planning;
- Budgets and financial statements;
- Audit and risk function;
- Legislative and regulatory environment and general legal processes within which universities operate;
- sound understanding of human resource and remuneration systems and processes;
- ICT governance;
- Facilities management and the broader built environment.

Written nominations, accompanied by a short curriculum vitae of the nominee, highlighting experience and qualifications. The nominee must provide written acceptance of the nomination and also express a willingness to serve on the Committees of Council in the event that he/she is appointed to Council.

PLEASE NOTE: All nominations will be subjected to a vetting process by the University and acceptance of a nomination constitutes consent to the vetting process. In addition, and acting in accordance with Section 16 (7) of the Statute, the University will provide members of Council, amongst others, with a formal induction programme on university governance.

Interested parties are welcome to contact the Registrar at nzuma@ufh.ac.za for more information. Nominations can be sent to the following email address: registrar@ufh.ac.za

The deadline for nominations is 9 September 2020.

THE COUNTDOWN HAS BEGUN FOR THE UNIVERSITY'S FIRST-EVER ANTI-GENDER BASED VIOLENCE VIRTUAL LECTURE

31 AUGUST 2020 @ 11 AM - 1 PM • Join via Microsoft Teams: <https://surl.ms/ur8>



University of Fort Hare
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ANTI GENDER BASED VIOLENCE VIRTUAL LECTURE

Theme: Unpacking the UFH GBV Policy & the Wayforward

DATE: 31 AUGUST 2020 • TIME: 11 AM - 1 PM

[CLICK HERE TO JOIN THE LECTURE](#)

SPEAKERS:



Aphwe is a Black Feminist, Sociology Researcher, writer and Freelancer. She holds a Masters Degree from the University of Fort Hare.



Madoda is a History and Philosophy graduate from the University of Fort Hare with an interest in ethics, political economy, African history and social theory. He is also chair of Stand as One, an Anti-Gender Based Violence forum that advocates for sound GBV policy at the University. Another occupation of his is that of sports coaching particularly in rural development. He is an avid sport enthusiast, and former captain of the UFH Blues rugby team and a current assistant coach.



Nwabisa is a social worker, social justice activist, Gender-based violence, femicide and reproductive health rights advocate. She is an intersectional feminist and educator who works for Masimanyane Women's Rights international.

#Vukani We must all wake up to the scourge of GBV and act against it now!!

DR NOMZAMO DUBE PUBLISHES A BOOK

Dr. Nomzamo Dube a Peer Facilitator at the UFH Centre for Transdisciplinary Studies has published a book titled *Milk, Bile, and Honey*. Dr. Dube is a University of Fort Hare alumna and holds a PhD in Media Studies from Nelson Mandela University.

The non-fiction biography follows the life journey of an old man who inspired Dr Dube to write the book before his passing. In the book she addresses issues of failed reconciliation processes after the liberation wars in most African countries. The book highlights some of the reasons for the early diaspora migration from Southern Rhodesia (present-day Zimbabwe) to South Africa. It delves into the political relationships of some SADC countries in the 1970s leading to Zimbabwe's independence.

The book reflects on the experiences and struggles of undocumented foreigners in South Africa and the racial divide in apartheid South Africa. It also addresses the impact of present yet absent parents to a boy child.

Dr Dube said the overwhelming support and comments received from individuals in her network has been quite inspirational.

"My aim for the book is for it to be used in the literature curriculum of schools and higher learning entities in African countries and beyond. I am hoping to write more African stories, especially those that are either missing in mainstream literature or have been misrepresented. I am currently leading a research project called 'First Year Student Experience' at the Centre for Transdisciplinary Studies", she said.

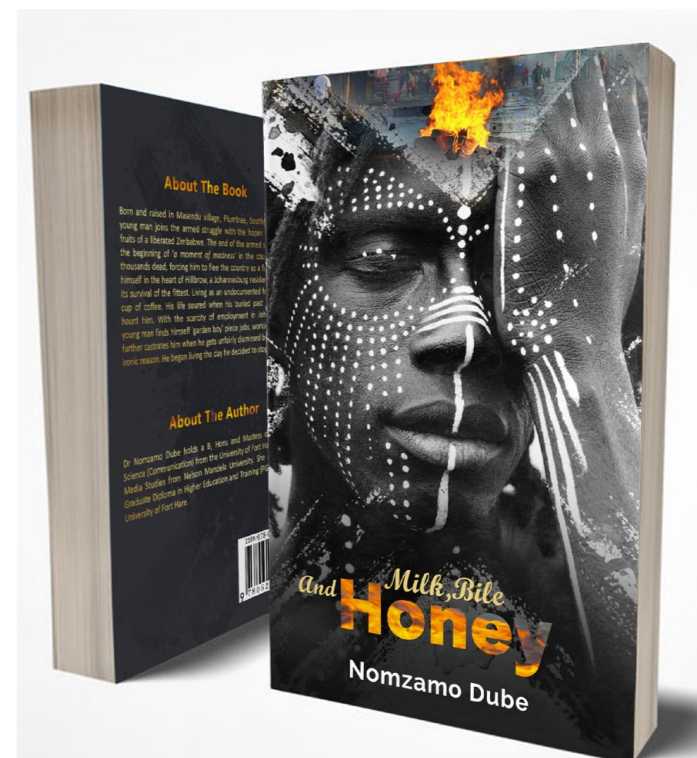
Due to unforeseen delays in printing, the official launch has not yet happened, but the book will be launched virtually next month (September 2020). Copies are available on the global platform Amazon, as an e-book and paperback.

by Asaduma Baloyi



// Dr Nomzamo Dube

"My aim for the book is for it to be used in the literature curriculum of schools and higher learning entities in African countries and beyond."



BEYOND THE POLICY ON SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE: Disrupting “Manhood” for a GBV-Free Learning and Working Environment

Unpublished Opinion piece by: Mr Lufefe Sopazi,
MA Candidate, Department of Sociology, Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities
Mr Sopazi writes in his personal capacity.

This piece is influenced by the University of Fort Hare's month-long commendable campaign which has ensured extensive publicity of significant extracts from the university's Sexual Harassment and Gender-Based Violence policy.

It is without question that (some) males within the university have committed GBV and/or sexual harassment acts, and because of this, I seek to examine the role (agency) of the male figure in the fight against GBV and sexual harassment.

The article argues that it is good and meaningful that the policy exists at the university, but there is need to look beyond the existence of the policy. Beyond the existence of the policy lies essential (always-rejected) conversations and actions of males to define themselves outside of patriarchal and hegemonic masculine definitions of being (or not being) men. The arguments seeks not to undermine or cast doubt on the effectiveness of the policy. Rather, the aim is to push the male figure to contradict his individual self against patriarchal foundations that serve as enablers of violence against women.

It would be inappropriate not to mention that the policy is a product of the work of women student activists whose sacrifices and those of other women before them, have ensured the existence of this policy. The students have centred conversations of women oppression and women's experiences at this institution.

It is thus historically correct to appreciate the role played by women student activists such as Nwabisa

Dlova, Yolokazi Mfuto, Isa Mdingi, Aphiwe Ntlemeza, Bomikazi Dlanjwa, Inga Macingwane, Zimbini Nyezi, Likhona Peter, Siwe Luwaca, Ahlomile Mafu, Onelisa Mgoqi, Sinazo Ngculu and many others. These activists have struggled, carried the pain of their fellow women and ensured that the next generation of students study in an institution that takes action against GBV and sexual harassment.

The question that follows then (the core objective of this article) is:

What kind of a male figure (staff and students) does the University of Fort Hare need in order for this policy to become effective?

The policy cannot be expected to work on its own. It sanctions acts which have already been performed, but does not condition people in such a way that their thinking and perceptions are altered. There is general agreement on the fact that patriarchy and hegemonic notions of masculinity are at the centre of the GBV scourge. However, there has not been in-depth debates around:

1. challenging and disrupting the "myth" of patriarchy (especially by the male) and,
2. opportunities for changing socially accepted definitions of "manhood" at the university.

Mounting a fight against patriarchy cannot, and should not lie on the shoulders of women alone. In order for this to be possible, the male figure must denounce his identification with "men", which according to Michael Awkward, is:

“Mounting a fight against patriarchy cannot, and should not lie on the shoulders of women alone. In order for this to be possible, the male figure must denounce his identification with men”



// Mr Lufefe Sopazi

- To define the individual self as an individual and not a man (meaning the "me" in Imeln).
- To be vocal about incidents of GBV and sexual harassment even in spaces of friends and colleagues
- To be bold and stand on principle and not be silent (or be silenced) as a male figure is
- To be in direct conflict with the organisation of "men" (the "guy code").
- To teach fellow male colleagues and male students to change their behavioural patterns, perceptions and beliefs,
- To be anti-patriarchy and its manifestations
- To be in contradiction with the defining elements of male privilege.

Taking up this duty would be the starting point of disrupting and challenging the fragile but unbreakable wall of (toxic) "manhood".

Toxic masculinity is maintained and perpetuated in everyday conversations of men in learning and working environments. It is part of the language men use to communicate and navigate themselves in social and workspaces. It expresses itself in such a way that no alternative masculine expressions that can be learned, communicated and practiced. It is a step in the right direction towards looking in the mirror and asking the question: *What am I, as an individual male, doing to enable, perpetuate and sustain the suffering of female colleagues and students?*

A formulation by George L. Lemons places at the centre that men must:

1. acknowledge (their violent masculine selves) and
2. begin to confront (themselves), to achieve a GBV-free learning and working environment.

"Men" must seek to lose the social benefit, the comfort, the acceptance that comes with enabling women suffering, commit "men suicide".

The policy demands males who view this time and this moment as a means to an end, while being conscious that the end lies in their hands.

The University has done exceptionally well by enacting the policy, and committing to establishing a GBV Unit at the University. The role of the GBV Unit should be stretched to include leading conversations of establishing a new male figure, an uncompromising male figure who does not just stand against GBV (because all men do). This new male figure must be ready speak out against one of his own in the fight against sexual harassment and GBV at student residences, offices, lecture halls and corridors.

The era of women carrying the labour of fighting a problem they did not create is outdated. The individual male(s) must problematize themselves constantly and fight to establish a new learning and working environment at the University of Fort Hare.

HUMAN RIGHTS: A PIPEDREAM FOR WOMEN?

Unpublished Opinion piece by: **Dr Bellita Banda**, UNESCO 'Oliver Tambo' Chair of Human Rights and **Mr Siyabulela Fobosi**, UNESCO 'Oliver Tambo' Chair of Human Rights Senior Researcher.



// Dr Bellita Banda



// Mr Siyabulela Fobosi

The nationwide celebrated Women's Day on 9 August each year, following the dawn of South Africa's democracy, is a commemoration of the 1956 Women's National Uprising against discriminatory laws that were central to the apartheid governance system.

Sixty-four years after the events of 1956, South Africa's National Women's Day continues to be a reflection of the bravery and determination of women but in a different context that is grounded on human rights. However, the struggle of 1956 continues to manifest itself as it has come in a different format of Gender Based Violence (GBV), which is acute against women in the new democratic dispensation.

South Africa is a signatory and has ratified many international and regional instruments including her own worldwide recognized progressive Constitution of 1996, which is grounded on human rights, especially equal rights for all; including legislation, that target the achievement of gender equality by 2030 is commendable. Thus, with these noble developments since 1994, the brutality faced and endured by women is of unlimited proportion. Women's experiences including the significance of the 9 August bears a question and an existing need for an immediate response to do an introspection whether the commitment to eliminate all forms of abuse remains a pipedream for South African women. There still exists a fissure towards redress around abuse of women and the female students in our universities have fallen prey due to conspiracy of silence.

Matters relating to GBV against women have been at the helm of a myriad of discussions for numerous decades. Policies and awareness programmes targeting both genders have been implemented, and stiffer sentences have been imposed. Nevertheless, it is the high levels of abuse towards women within our communities that speaks volumes. Unfortunately, this atrocious behaviour of GBV has staked its way in our universities and the current statistics paint a very gloomy picture with 380 rape cases being reported during 2019/2020 as recently highlighted by police Minister Bheki Cele. This has dampened the progress made in the achievement of equality by the State as well as universities towards attainment of human rights, particularly for women. GBV appears to have and continues to define our normal due to a multitude of violation of women's rights through rape, intimate partner violence, sexual harassment, gender discrimination, rape and femicide and sexually transmitted marks in return for good grades.

Though human rights are meant to shape an impartial society while curbing GBV, the conundrum is the patriarchal dividend that has proved difficult to break while a majority of the female students continue to be regarded as the appendages within the university halls. This is despite the fact that equality between men and women has been among the most basic guarantees of human rights since the founding of the United Nations. The fact that GBV against females in and out of the learning institutions remains endemic, questions the importance of human rights in promoting the sanctity to right to life, health, dignity, security of person and freedom.

It is imperative that we all unite and promote the fundamental human rights for all and say 'NO' to the conspiracy of silence towards GBV.

The situation is worsened by the new manifestations of discrimination against women, which are regularly emerging, an indication that the realization of human rights is nothing but lip service and a pipedream for a majority of women who have been denied the enjoyment of their rights as enshrined in the Constitution.

The year 2020 has seen the ugliest face of GBV in South Africa, with President Ramaphosa calling it the second pandemic after emergence of Covid-19. The fact that GBV has found its place within the South African society shows that it is critical that we dig deep and identify a holistic and successful paradigm shift regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, nationality, religion, health status, marital status, education, and socio-economic status.

We all need to join the contest for gender equality and the purge of GBV against women and girls. Men too, in the rebuilding of the country and the refashioning of strategies should not be left out in the cold in addressing the elimination of GBV, which is acute against women. The ship has long sailed for an introspection of our response to the immediate, short and long-term goals of advancing human rights for all. Women of South

Africa cannot continue to live under a pipedream of the universality of their rights as envisaged in the rights-oriented instruments without a meaningful impact in addressing their basic need to be 'free from all forms violence'.

The UNESCO 'Oliver Tambo' Chair of Human Rights recognizes that there is an urgent need to tackle the disproportionate amount of GBV and all other types of intransigence and prejudice against women and girls in and out of our institutions of learning in order for South Africa to be an equitable society.

Therefore, as we celebrate women's month, let us all support the #VUKANI know your UFH GBV Policy. It is the Chair's moral and rights obligation to promote awareness of the UFH GBV Policy. It is imperative that we all unite and promote the fundamental human rights for all and say 'NO' to the conspiracy of silence towards GBV.

Dr Kepe's Reading Research Project Features in International Journal

// Dr Mzukisi Howard

Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Dr Mzukisi Howard Kepe, is among a group of international scholars whose research projects have been published in the latest edition of the *English Scholarship Beyond Borders* (ESBB) journal.

The ESBB is a non-profit academic circle of international scholars. The title of Dr Kepe's research project is: *It Starts With a Story! Towards Extensive Reading Kepe and Weagle*, and was published on 7 August in Volume 6, Issue 1, 2020 of the journal: <http://www.englishscholarsbeyondborders.org/esbb-journal-publications/esbb-volume-6-issue-1-2020/>

This significant accomplishment comes six months after *This Week @FortHare* ran an article on Dr Kepe's research project that is inspired by his sheer determination to improve literacy levels of primary school learners.

Dr Kepe, also a member of the ESBB, is delighted about this milestone in his academic career.

"I find it quite inspiring and rewarding to receive international recognition. I am humbled to take pride of place in this edition. It signifies a brighter future for me as an upcoming scholar," he said.

About the project

Launched in October last year, the 12 month project forms part of Dr Kepe's research and has many supporters including the Eastern Cape Department of Sports, Recreation, Arts and Culture, Govan Mbeki Research and

Development Centre (UFH), Chris Weagle (American University of Sharjah) and several book donors.

Beneficiaries of this community initiative are intermediate phase (Grade 4-6) learners from Bulembu Primary School in King William's Town, Dr Kepe's old primary school. "I started the project after teachers at Bulembu informed me that learners were struggling with reading for meaning and sentence construction." His interest was further driven by the 2018 Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) report which revealed that 78% of Grade 4 South African learners were unable to read for meaning.

His study reports on the use of an enhanced extensive reading programmes that intends to improve learner literacy in terms of their reading and writing capabilities. According to him, the study is conducted through resource-auditing, pre-post case study interviews and the provision of plentiful opportunities to access reading materials that learners enjoy reading in a relaxed atmosphere. The material includes fairytales, novels, plays and poetry. It is also conducted through print, audio visual media journals.

"The study has generated video recordings, classroom corner libraries, translatability, book reports and a comprehensive extensive reading project report. It has also ensured continuous assessments and inspired long-term intrinsic motivation for reading," stated Dr Kepe.

by Aretha Linden

Doctor Mzukisi Howard Kepe is a Postdoctoral Research Fellow from the University of Fort Hare. He is a researcher and currently teaches English Methodology to third and fourth year students. His research focus is mainly on reading and writing pedagogies, identity, and culturally responsive pedagogy, Translanguaging, teaching English as a Lingua Franca, Language and Text-based approaches to language teaching and learning. He has published extensively and has given conference presentations in many different countries. He is a Member and Editor of *English Scholars beyond Borders*. He is also an Editor of the *Journal of Education and Educational Development of Pakistan* and a Member of the Eastern Cape English Educators Association

DR TENDAI CHIMUCHEKA SHORTLISTED FOR M&G TOP 200 YOUNG SOUTH AFRICANS AWARD

Dr Tendai Chimucheka's star of academic excellence continues to rise.

The Business Management Senior Lecturer and recipient of the 2019 Vice-Chancellors Research Excellence Award is among 30 000 young professionals shortlisted for the 2020 Mail & Guardian (M&G) Top 200 Young South Africans. He has been nominated under the Education category.

Born in 1986 in Alamein farm in Zimbabwe, Dr Chimucheka lost both his parents before the age of 14 and had to grow up in a child-headed family. Like a rose that grew through concrete, he overcame the adversities in his early life to be where he is today. After completing his primary and high school education, he was awarded the Prestigious Presidential Scholarship by the Government of Zimbabwe to study at the University of Fort Hare in 2007. Exactly 10 years later, he obtained his Doctorate from UFH.

Commenting on his nomination, Dr Chimucheka said: "It is an honour. It means my work is getting noticed and I should continue touching lives and developing others. It means I should continue contributing positively to the development of the country."

Judging from his profile and achievements, his nomination comes as no surprise. He is currently UFH's coordinator for the Entrepreneurship Development in Higher Education (EDHE), an initiative of the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) and Universities South Africa (USAf) to promote entrepreneurship in higher education institutions. He is actively involved in teaching, research and community engagement. He lectures Business Management courses at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels. Dr Chimucheka's research interests include Entrepreneurship and Small Business Management, Human Resources Management, Strategic Management and other Business Management areas.

At age 34, he has successfully supervised 8 Masters and 20 Honours students to completion. He has presented 20

"It is an honour. It means my work is getting noticed and I should continue touching lives and developing others. It means I should continue contributing positively to the development of the country."



// Dr Tendai Chimucheka

papers at both local and international conferences, most of which were subsequently published in accredited journals. To date, Dr Chimucheka has published 26 articles in peer reviewed and accredited journals and a book chapter.

In October 2017, He led discussions on the topic titled: *'Embedding entrepreneurial education programmes in the curriculum: Structural Impediments for Entrepreneurship Training'* during a Ministerial Roundtable on entrepreneurship training in Higher Education, which was organised by the Department of Small Business Development.

He is actively involved in activities and initiatives that promote entrepreneurship as a career.

Dr Chimucheka describes the ideal young South African as a person who is not limited by his or her background.

"This is a person who works hard to achieve his or her goals despite challenges they may face along the way, one who is willing to help or develop others realise their goals. While the nation is confronted by real challenges which in most cases affect young people, an ideal young South African seeks opportunities to solve these challenges and also create opportunities for others," he elaborates.

The winner of the 2020 M&G Top 200 Young South Africans will be revealed on 10 September.

by Aretha Linden



// Ms Zininzi Mpurwana

UFH AND BRITISH COUNCIL HONOUR EASTERN CAPE PHILANTROPIST

Recently, the UFH Faculty of Education collaborated with the *Teaching for All* Project and the British Council to honour Ms Zininzi Mpurwana, an Eastern Cape philanthropist and advocate for people living with disabilities.

Mpurwana is Programme Manager at the Eastern Cape Disability Economic Empowerment Trust.

This recognition comes less than a month after she delivered a keynote address during a webinar hosted by the Faculty of Education on 22 July 2020.

The webinar was titled: *COVID-19 Revealed Inequalities and Other Forms of Exclusion Within the Education Sector*. It sought to steer conversations around improvement of conditions and the inclusion of people living with disabilities in the transformation to online education.

Mpurwana gave her perspective as a person living with a disability.

Deputy Head of School and *Teaching for All* project coordinator, Dr Xolani Khalo said the award (a shield) was a symbol and reminder for future generations of Mpurwana's involvement and contribution in the webinar.

"During the session, she didn't only participate but advocated for the recognition of people living with disabilities," said Dr Khalo.

During her presentation, Mpurwana - a Human and Social Studies graduate - highlighted issues that prove South

Africa has not yet acted on the promise to deliver an inclusive education system for all.

She pointed out challenges such as poor understanding of disability, attitudes towards people living with disabilities, student experiences and barriers to education. She made suggestions on how to address these barriers. She also spoke about the experiences and expectations of people with disabilities, with regards to the ongoing transformation in the education sector.

She also praised the university's management for showing interest in issues facing those that live with disabilities.

"As the community of people living with disabilities we thank you for including the disability sector and other stakeholders in such projects and seminars. Such engagements help to expand knowledge so that we can live in a better South Africa. You [UFH] are on the right track and I am grateful for to the opportunity to be in your space and be a part of the webinar", she said.

"As the community of people living with disabilities we thank you for including the disability sector and other stakeholders in such projects and seminars"

UFH Students to Compete in Miss Varsity SA Plus Size Beauty Pageant

As Women's Month draws to a close, we celebrate two of our students who will be participating in the Miss Varsity SA Plus Size beauty pageant in October.

The students are:

Mihlali Mene, a 1st year Bachelor of Arts Music student, and

Aviwe Dlephu, a 1st year Law student (the reigning Miss UFH Thick Madame)

The pageant will take place on 1-2 October in Bloemfontein. Altogether, 12 contestants will compete for the title. According to the pageant's website, the competition aims to promote, elevate and celebrate the accomplishments and humanitarian services of women across the nations.

In recent years, plus-size models have completely quashed the ancient perception that in order to be eligible for beauty pageants, women have to be a certain shape or size. Plus-size women are now perceived as influencers and serve as role models. Above all, these competitions have refined beauty, and serve as motivation to all women to love their bodies - regardless of shape and size.

Ms Nombeko Makwela, Matron at Ezola Residence in Alice Campus and Founder of Miss UFH Thick Madame, has been

very instrumental in getting the students into the competition.

"When I started Thick Madame in 2006, I wanted to kill the societal stereotype that plus-size women are not attractive, intelligent and classy. I want plus-size women to be resilient and to believe in themselves. Most importantly, I want them to go out there and enjoy themselves," said Makwela.

After being crowned as Miss Thick Madame, Reigning queen Aviwe Dlephu entered Miss Varsity SA Plus Size to motivate women of all shapes and sizes to be confident about themselves and their bodies. "I am proud to be part of this pageant. I will be representing my institution and my community", she said.

Mihlali Mene is very excited after being announced as the winner of the Public Choice category with 13 499 during an online voting system.

"Winning the public's vote has made me realise how much I want to win the title. I believe it will open doors for me to compete internationally. This competition has assured me that I matter and I can change the world, regardless of my weight. I would love to motivate others not be ashamed of their bodies. You may be large in size but you are larger than life," said Mene.

By Asaduma Baloyi



// Mihlali Mene



// Aviwe Dlephu

FORMER BCM MAYOR MACLEAN HAILED AS A SELFLESS GENTLE GIANT

Source: Daily Dispatch, published by Asanda Nini on 28 August 2020. [Click here to view original article.](#)



// Dr Sindisile Maclean

Tributes poured in on Thursday after former Buffalo City Metro mayor Dr Sindisile Maclean died from Covid-19 complications.

Maclean, 62, a senior official at the co-operative governance and traditional affairs department, drew his last breath on Wednesday evening at Life St Dominic's hospital in East London. He had been fighting for his life in hospital for two weeks after being admitted with difficulty breathing.

Family spokesperson Phila Ngqumba said Maclean's family was "shattered". "We had been hoping and praying he would recover, but the news of his death has left all of us shattered as our gentle giant has fallen," Ngqumba said.

Maclean was secretary of the ANC in the Border region between 1993 and 1995. He joined the Bhisho legislature as an ANC MPL between 1994 and 2000. He was then deployed as BCM mayor until 2006.

In late 2006, he was appointed head of the department of co-operative governance in the province before joining the University of Fort Hare as a senior academic in 2009. Ngqumba said Maclean became the university's Africa educational trust project co-ordinator between 2009 and 2011.

He later joined Nelson Mandela University as head of the department of public management and leadership between 2013 and 2017.

Maclean obtained first his Masters and then his PhD degree in Public Administration at Fort Hare.

Co-operative governance MEC Xolile Nqatha on Thursday described Maclean as a selfless activist who was "quite helpful in the local government sphere".

"[This is] devastating news. He grew up in the ranks of the movement and participated in the campaign for non-racial sport in SA.

"Recently he contributed to stability in Amahlathi municipality, where we sent him as an administrator when things did not look good in that council. It's a great loss indeed," Nqatha said.

His friend and former Eastern Cape ANC provincial secretary Siphatho Handi said Maclean was "one of the sound, sober and astute leaders of our revolution".

Handi said during his tenure as BCM mayor, Maclean won Vuna Awards for three years in a row "beating all 180+ municipalities in the country on issues of service delivery, clean governance and best-run municipality".

"There was not a single cent that was lost through corruption and other related kinds of immoral crimes.

"Clean audits were what the institution was known for at the time.

"His leadership provided the ANC with a proper template of what a deployee must do when carrying out a revolutionary task," Handi said.

ANC provincial spokesperson Gift Ngqondi also spoke highly of Maclean.

"His name belongs to the galaxy of exceptional men and women who, through their dedication and discipline, rose from humble beginnings to make an indelible mark in our nation's collective consciousness and helped to shape our country's democratic destiny," Ngqondi said.

BCM mayor Xola Pakati agreed.

"Not only was he an academic with a passion for local and rural development, he was also a pragmatist who got himself involved in the task of administering development and ensuring prosperity for all."

Premier Oscar Mabuyane paid tribute to Maclean "for his service to the people of the Eastern Cape, which included brave political activism, intellectual and academic work, administrative responsibilities and political leadership work in various levels of government and in society".

Maclean will be buried at his King William's Town home on Thursday.

He is survived by his wife, children and siblings.

TRIBUTE TO NONZWAKAZI NGUNA

*UFH Alumna, Former IsiXhosa Lecturer and
Jazz Legend*



// Ms Nonzwakazi Nguna

It is with deep sadness that we announce the death of Ms Nonzwakazi Nomfundo Beauty Nguna, an esteemed alumna, former staff member and legendary jazz musician. She passed away on 19 August at age 66.

Born in Komani (former Queenstown), Ms Nguni was affectionately known as 'Sis Nzwakie'. She worked at UFH - first as an IsiXhosa Lecturer and later as Faculty Manager of Social Sciences and Humanities (then Faculty of Arts) - until her retirement.

She was also an accomplished educator, much admired and valued by generations of students. UFH colleagues remember her as a pleasant person who was always willing to assist. Her kindness and generosity was felt by everyone who knew her. In keeping with the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities tradition, she was deeply committed to social justice. She was an inspiration to her colleagues.

During her retirement, Ms Nguna continued to make an impact on her community through her love for jazz and sport. In 2019, she was among five Komani artists who were honoured during a prestigious Jazz festival: <https://www.netwerk24.com/ZA/Karoo-Express/retired-komani-jazz-legend-honoured-20191003>

The university extends heartfelt condolences to the Nguna family, friends and former colleagues.

A memorial service was held in Komani on Thursday, 27 August 2020. The funeral will take place on Saturday 29th August from 10am.

May Sis Nzwakie's soul rest in peace.

By Mr Phumezo Kwinana, Forté School of Science and Technology Director



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