UJ SHOOTS INTO THE TOP 4% OF GLOBAL UNIVERSITIES

INTRODUCING THE UJ POSTGRADUATE ASSOCIATION

UJ WOMEN CROWNED INAUGURAL VARSITY CHAMPS

SPI NATIONAL PORTRAIT AWARD EXHIBITION AT UJ ART GALLERY
LEGENDS ARE NOT BORN—THEY ARE MADE. LEGENDS ARE MADE BY THE TELLING OF STORIES WHICH ARE PASSED FROM GENERATION TO GENERATION. THESE STORIES ARE OF PEOPLE WHO ARE WORTHY OF INSPIRING SUCH A STORY. NOW WE NEED YOU TO TELL US ABOUT THE LEGENDARY UJ STAFF THAT YOU WORK WITH. HELP US TO SHARE UJ LEGENDS!

THE LEGEND OF

THE BLUE CRANE:
ETHICAL FOUNDATION

It’s said that the blue crane only has one soul mate in its lifetime. Legend has it that when the first male blue crane saw the first female, he was so overcome with love for her beauty, he promised that if she chose him as her mate, he would never love another. She told him, he first had to prove himself worthy of a lifetime of love. So, he began to dance and jump and fly in an exhausting courtship display that lasted two days. He finally collapsed with exhaustion and thought he had failed to win her over. But she told him he was the bravest, most magnificent crane and promised herself to him forever. That is why, even today, the blue crane mates for life. Even after one dies the surviving crane will never have another partner.
The University, this year, introduced the new Values Charter which will drive the strategic direction of UJ in the years to come. Guiding the principles contained in the charter are the University’s Strategic Thursts. These thrusts represent a commitment of where UJ wants to position itself within the next decade.

One of the University’s goals is build a reputation of a university that is globally recognised for its excellence in teaching and learning, and innovative and ground-breaking research. This is why the fourth strategic thrust of the University is to achieve “an international profile of employees, students, scholarly output and institutional reputation”.

This thrust goes hand-in-hand with the aim to enrich the core vision of the University within academia, as “an international University of choice, anchored in Africa, dynamically shaping the future” – a vision statement embedded within the heart of the institution. UJ is an institution that attracts and retains the best domestic and international scholars and talent, and that forms part of becoming that international University of choice; an international and respected Pan-Africa epicentre of critical engagement, reflection and scholarship.

Until the next edition, Tumi

EDUCATION TEAM

Editor: Tumelo Tladi
Contributors: Herman Esterhuizen, An-Li Theron, Mpho Selahle, Michelle Leiba, Phemelo Dibodu, Collen Maepa, Faculty Marketing Coordinators

Proof reader: Esmé Grobler
Design and layout: aisle_B_

EDITORIAL OFFICE

Strategic Communication
Institutional Advancement
Doonfontein Campus
University of Johannesburg
Tel: 011 559 6619
Email: tumelot@uj.ac.za

Submissions for UJ Advance are welcome. Contact tumelot@uj.ac.za or 011 559 6619 to request information on issue themes, deadlines and article guidelines. Photographs must be supplied in 300dpi jpeg or larger.
Just eight years after being established UJ has been ranked in the top 4% of universities in the world, making UJ one of the top 650 universities in the world for the 2013/14 Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) World University Rankings. Being a university that is less than a decade old, one cannot deny that being ranked among the top 4% universities in the world is an outstanding achievement. It is absolutely extraordinary that the University has been able to achieve this and we couldn’t be more proud. I am particularly pleased because UJ is the only comprehensive university without a medical school in South Africa to have received a QS ranking. It is also gratifying that we have been ranked so highly with regard to employer reputation, which means that we are producing sought-after graduates. Our performance in the category of international faculty means that our internationalisation strategy is spot-on and it is already beginning to bear fruit. Similarly, our strong showing in the subject area of Arts and Humanities, confirms the correctness of our research strategy over the past few years. In many respects, this ranking makes us the youngest university to have moved into the global top 4%. The news of our QS ranking couldn’t have come at a better time for us - to uplift us, to inspire us and to signal that our efforts over the last eight years - to cultivate an institution that combines a pursuit of global excellence and stature with inclusion and diversity – were not futile. And that is the wonderful story that must be told about the University of Johannesburg.

So the focus now is turning, in particular, to how we can move up the rankings into the top 3% of global universities, and so a lot of effort is going to focus on improving the University’s academic reputation in order to achieve an even better ranking. The University, this year, was also the first and only African university to be accepted as a member of Universitas 21, a prestigious consortium of top research universities around the world. We also continue to expand, significantly, our research collaborations and partnerships with institutions in other countries, such as Nigeria, Hong Kong, Singapore, Kenya and Ghana, among others. Overall, 2013 has been a very fruitful and remarkable year for the University, and we are continuing to build momentum and to achieve exceptional results. Both the high QS ranking and the membership of Universitas 21 are significant endorsements of the growing international reputation of UJ, and credit of this endorsement and that growing momentum goes to the UJ community – it has to do with the dynamism, the energy and the commitment of our staff, students, alumni and all our partners – both here at home and internationally.

Without your efforts we would not be able to realise our goal to be “an international university of choice, anchored in Africa, dynamically shaping the future”; to be an institution of global excellence and stature; a university that continues to be accessible, inclusive and diverse.
The University has gained a wealth of knowledge and expertise in the field of engineering sciences with the appointment of Professor Saurabh Sinha as the new Executive Dean Of Faculty Of Engineering and the Built Environment (FEBE).

As of 1 October 2013, Prof Sinha took over the reins from Dr Kim Battle (Vice Dean), who was acting Executive Dean of the Faculty following Prof Tshilidzi Marwala’s appointment earlier this year as Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Research, Postgraduate Studies and the Library.

Prof Sinha, a qualified electrical engineer, researcher, and educator, was previously an Associate Professor at the University of Pretoria (UP) where he lectured on a full-time basis. In his capacity at UP, he was also the Director of the Carl and Emily Fuchs Institute for Microelectronics (CEFIM), where he was leading the Electronics and Microelectronics Group. Together with his group, he conducted teaching at undergraduate and postgraduate levels, research and associated management tasks. Prof Sinha holds a B.Eng degree in Electronic Engineering with distinction, an M.Eng (Microelectronic Engineering), also with distinction and a Ph.D (Electronic Engineering) from UP. He has been with the Faculty of Engineering, Built Environment and IT at UP since 2002.

Prof Sinha’s research has been supported by the South African National Research Foundation (NRF), Armscor, the Armaments Corporation of South Africa SOC Ltd, Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, Eskom, SKA as well as private industry. His current research interests and over 65 peer-reviewed journal and conference publications involve mm-Wave integrated circuit (IC) design, and more generally, analogue and mixed-signal ICs.

Beyond his academic contributions, Prof Sinha is a registered professional engineer; serves as an industrial consultant for Business Enterprises at University of Pretoria (Pty) Ltd. He is also engaged with a number of large-scale regional and international research projects; among which is a national energy harvesting project.

In 2007 he received the South African Institute of Electrical Engineers’ (SAIEE) Engineer of the Year Award, and co-recipient of the 2012 Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) – the world’s largest professional association for advancing technological innovation and excellence – Educational Activities Meritorious Service Award. He is the managing editor only locally accredited journal of electrical engineering in South Africa, the SAIEE Research Journal.

Mr Milcho Damianov, newly appointed Executive Director: Advancement, reported for duty on Monday, 2 September 2013 at UJ.

The appointment of Mr Damianov comes at an opportune time to complement the strategic direction of the institution which has positioned itself as an important player in the higher education arena, both locally and internationally.

“In Damianov, we have someone with the experience and the talent to facilitate the strengthening of crucial partnerships between UJ, our alumni, sister institutions, government and industry,” says Professor Tinyiko Maluleke the University’s Deputy Vice-Chancellor of Internationalisation, Advancement and Student Affairs.

Daminov, who is one of the first South Africans to graduate from the prestigious International Fundraising School at Indiana University in the United States, previously served as Director of Advancement at Cape Peninsula University of Technology, Director of Marketing, International Affairs and Development at City University, USA, at the Bulgaria Campus, General Manager Marketing and Corporate Affairs at The Playhouse Company in Durban, Director of Marketing and Development at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Executive Director of the Walter Sisulu Foundation and Chief Executive Officer of University of Swaziland Foundation.

In addition to his Master’s degree, Damianov also holds a postgraduate qualification in Marketing Management from the Institute of Marketing Management, South Africa. He has a vast knowledge of fundraising, marketing, project management, public and alumni relations as well as corporate communications. Damianov has extensive work experience at tertiary institutions in Europe and Southern Africa, and his skills have proven fundamental to the success of several universities and organisations.

In UJ, Damianov has found a caring, passionate and ambitious university that is eager to take its place in the deployment of research, science and technology in the quest to find solutions for humanity’s most pressing challenges.

Mr Milcho Damianov gets appointed as UJ’s new Executive Director: Advancement

Mr Kerry Swift and Tinyiko Maluleke welcome Mr Milcho Damianov to the University of Johannesburg.
UJ welcomes its newest illustrious alumnus – Dr Barack Obama

It is my delight and pleasure to announce to you, on behalf of the entire community of UJ, that Dr Barack Obama accepted an honorary doctorate of laws from UJ, making him our newest illustrious alumnus, and that all matters relating to the award were concluded according to the relevant policies and charters of the university.

President Obama’s focus on youth leadership falls squarely in line with our own values of Conversation, Imagination, Regeneration, and Ethical Foundation. By accepting the Honorary Doctorate, President Barack Obama elevates the global stature of our university. Our mutual focus on youth development makes UJ and President Barack Obama ideal partners in the quest for the development of leadership skills among the youth of the world. As a university, we appreciate particularly his conversational stance towards the youth as it suggests openness to being challenged and willingness to challenge in turn.

Our aspiration, as you will no doubt be aware, is to become an international and respected Pan-African epicentre of critical engagement, reflection and scholarship, and we stand ready to engage leaders, scholars, activists and students from all over the world in pursuit of advancing human dignity and human rights.

Importantly, and on the basis of his compelling vision for world peace, and his potential to achieve it, Dr Barack Obama was awarded the Noble Peace Prize during his first term of office as President of the USA, a rare achievement among serving presidents. Dr Barack Obama meets all our criteria for outstanding leadership that contributes to human development and public scholarship, and it is in line with the UJ vision, mission and values.

I’m sure that you will join me in welcoming Dr Barack Obama as a University of Johannesburg alumnus.

Writer: Professor Ihron Rensburg, Vice-Chancellor and Principal
Photos: Jan Potgieter
“Coming together is a beginning, keeping together is progress, working together is success”. These are the famous words of Henry Ford which came to life during the 3rd QS-MAPLE (Middle East and Africa Professional Leaders in Education) Conference. The Conference made its way to Africa's economic hub, Johannesburg, at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Rosebank on 7 and 8 May 2013.

The University co-hosted the conference with Nanyang Technological University (NTU), a rare collaboration between Africa and Asia. Nanyang is described by many as the fastest-rising university among Asia, the Middle East experiencing such growth in their higher education, said Mok. The QS-MAPLE Conference has a mission, which is to help build world-class universities in Africa and Asia. Representatives from universities in Asia, the Middle East and Africa gathered to make a contribution towards remedying the deficiencies facing institutions of higher education and sharing ideas on how to improve the learning environment at their institutions. Prof Ihron Rensburg, Vice-Chancellor and Principal of the University of Johannesburg delivered an inspiring keynote speech to delegates at the official opening. He stressed that higher education could help countries jump stages of economic development.

The opening plenary also included an amazing performance by the A Cappella Music Society of UJ welcoming the delegates with warm celebratory African songs which created an African feel and set the mood for the Conference.

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The delegates then commenced with the parallel sessions where session presenters were given a platform to present their case studies of internationalisation and also share their experiences. The Conference was organised around seven tracks:

- Quality Assurance and Accreditation
- Learning and Teaching
- Internationalising the Student Experience Transnational Education and International Partnership
- Branding, Marketing and Recruitment
- University Governance and Management
- Research and Research Training
- Higher Education, Internationalisation in Education and Internationalisation in Higher Education

These tracks allowed for exciting debates as delegates agreed and disagreed on various issues. The sessions continued on Day 2 (8 May), with just as much enthusiasm. The delegates shared interesting statistics on how postgraduate studies affect a country's economy. The conference concluded with the exclusive screening of ‘Elelwani’, the award-winning film directed by UJ's Ntshaveni wa Luruli. The film is due to be released in South Africa in August.

This was the second QS-MAPLE Conference held in South Africa, with the first one being held in Durban in 2012. This year the QS-MAPLE Conference has surpassed all expectations as it attracted university leaders from over 100 institutions in 42 countries including Afghanistan, Australia, Canada, Egypt, Hong Kong, Iran, Nigeria, Philippines, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Thailand, UK and US as well as a large number of UJ partners. Besides the hospitable nature of South Africa, this also indicated a growing interest among nations to work together in improving the quality of education around the world.

The 2014 QS-MAPLE Conference will be held in Abu Dhabi.

The Conference made its way to Africa's economic hub, Johannesburg, at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Rosebank on 7 and 8 May 2013.
Solving the world’s grand challenges through global research collaboration

Vice-Chancellor and Principal of UJ, Professor Ihron Rensburg speaks at The Times Higher Education (THE) World Academic Summit.

The Times Higher Education (THE) World Academic Summit, the first of its kind, took place in October 2013 in Singapore, where it was co-hosted by the world’s fastest rising university in the world, Nanyang Technological University (NTU).

Ranked 76th in the world in the latest THE world rankings which were launched this morning here in Singapore, NTU is a key partner of the University of Johannesburg. As such, the Vice-Chancellor and Principal of UJ, Professor Ihron Rensburg was pleased to be sharing the podium with notable global university leaders at this important gathering, and to speak specifically to the possibilities offered by global research collaboration in the pursuit of solving the world’s grand challenges.

In his delivery, entitled ‘Multiple Perspectives, Global Solutions, Better Together’ Prof Rensburg points to energy, water, environment, urbanisation, poverty, global governance and ethics as key among the world’s current grand challenges.

Prof Ihron Rensburg addresses notable global university leaders at the Times Higher Education (THE) World Academic Summit at Nanyang Technological University.

The VC also pointed to the shift, by 2040, of the central position Africa will hold in youth and student population growth and the importance therefore, for the world and for higher education institutions to be well-prepared for this phenomenon. This, as he pointed out, called for considerable step change in global research collaboration, because solutions are best forged together in the research and scholarly community.

The only voice from Africa on the third day of summit, featuring high powered speakers and global academic leaders, Prof Rensburg argued strongly for the establishment of third Generation Cross North-East-South Institutes of Advanced Studies towards genuine global dialogue and mutual learning.

Prof Rensburg announced plans for UJ and NTU to establish a joint Asia-Africa Institute for Advanced Studies, which will be the first of its kind, and the latest in a set of collaborative initiatives between UJ and NTU. Other collaborations include joint hosting of the 2013 QS MAPLE conference, UJ Student Placements in NTU Singapore-based industry partners, and joint hosting of the 2016 QS World Class conference in Singapore.

Ranked among the top 650 global institutions for the 2013/14 season by Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) World University Rankings released on 10 September, UJ is one of seven ranked universities in South Africa (SA) and one of 13 ranked universities in Africa. Remarkably, eight-year-old UJ is the youngest of all ranked universities in SA and in Africa. With the exception of UKZN which is less than 50 years old, all other SA universities which are ranked are more than a hundred years old. Similarly of the six other ranked universities in Africa (all of which are Egyptian), only the University of Apu (a South Korean University with a presence in Egypt) is less than fifty years old. All other ranked universities on the continent are more than 50 years old. The age of a university is a critical factor in all QS ranking indicators, especially for academic reputation and citations per faculty. The older the institution, the longer it has had to establish an academic reputation, and the longer it has had to build up the number of citations per staff member.

Therefore, the longer the period considered for the purposes of ranking, the better the prospects for the university. In this regard, the performance of UJ over an eight-year period is simply exceptional.

Moreover, UJ is the only comprehensive university which has no medical school to be ranked in SA. Medical schools are globally recognised as great fountains of research output production. Notably, except for Rhodes University, which is ranked a ‘very high research’ university, UJ is ranked a ‘high research’ university alongside the rest of the five other ranked South African universities.

Continently, only Apu and Cairo universities are ranked ‘very high research’ universities, the rest of the ranked universities on the continent are either equal to or lower than UJ. Traditionally, considered a non-research intensive university in South Africa, (certainly in comparison to all ranked universities in SA) UJ has, through its QS ranking redefined its place among national and global universities.

The outstanding showing of UJ is further underscored by exceptional performances in several QS sub-categories. In the subject area of Arts and Humanities, UJ holds position number 392 globally. For the category of employer reputation – which speaks to the employability of its students - UJ holds the admirable position 392, while for international faculty it is positioned at 376. These are terrific returns for SA’s youngest ranked university.

Says Professor Ihron Rensburg, Principal and Vice-Chancellor of UJ, “I am particularly pleased that UJ is the only comprehensive university without a medical school in South Africa to have received a QS ranking. It is also gratifying that we have been ranked so highly with regard to employer reputation which means that we are producing sought-after graduates. Our performance in the category of international faculty means that our internationalisation strategy is spot-on and it is already beginning to bear fruit.

Similarly, our strong showing in the subject area of Arts and Humanities confirms the correctness of our research strategy over the past few years.”

UJ’s ranking among the top 4% of universities globally comes on the heels of UJ’s recent inclusion as the first and only African university to be accepted into Universitas 21*, a consortium of top research world universities. Its membership of this prestigious consortium and now its QS ranking are seen by the University leadership as an important endorsement of the growing international stature of UJ.

UJ shoots into top 4% of global universities

Just eight years after being established, the University of Johannesburg (UJ), has moved into the top 4% of universities in the world.
The University of Johannesburg’s (UJ) goal to become the Pan-African epicentre for critical intellectual inquiry took an important step following the recent high-level visit to three Nigerian universities in and around Lagos and Ibadan from 21 to 27 September 2013.

LAGOS

Nothing underscored the importance of this visit by UJ more than the fact that the UJ delegation – which comprised all nine executive deans, the executive director for Internationalisation and two Deputy Vice-Chancellors, (Professors Maluleke and Parekh) – was led by none other than the Vice-Chancellor and Principal himself, Professor Ihron Rensburg. The Nigerian visit is an outcome of earlier visits to East and West Africa in 2012, where selected universities were visited in Tanzania, Senegal and Ghana. There are great opportunities of mutual benefit for our countries and for the enhancement of higher education on the continent through the forging of partnerships that will facilitate staff, postdoctoral fellows and student exchange, as well as collaboration in research.

On 23 September, the UJ delegation visited the University of Lagos – by far the most sought-after university in Nigeria. Established in 1962, the University of Lagos has an enrolment of over 40,000 distributed across twelve faculties, a college of medicine and a distance learning institute. The second university visited on 24 September was Covenant University, located in Ota outside Lagos, a private university. Although the administrative model followed by this university – being private – is different from that followed by UJ, the University delegation thought it important to get an idea of the environment in which Nigerian private universities operate. The last university visited by the UJ delegation was the oldest and one of the most illustrious of Nigerian universities - the University of Ibadan where the delegation was very warmly received. Remarkably, Ibadan has a healthy 50:50 split between undergraduate and postgraduate students amongst its 22,000 formal programme students.

SINGAPORE

The second visit was to Singapore, from 30 September to 5 November, where Prof Rensburg was the only speaker from Africa, at the Times Higher Education (World University Rankings) Academic Summit held at the Nanyang Technology University, Singapore. If what sets Nigeria apart from its sister countries in Africa is that it is the most populous on the continent, Singapore distinguishes itself through consistently single-mindedly focusing and investing in education, science and technology over a period of five decades. The results are striking and they show in three top public universities with world class facilities and programmes, ranked among the world’s top fifty institutions.

The ultimate main aim for the UJ delegation was to give substance to its Africa focus, a continuation of its earlier visits in 2012 and also to explore areas of mutual interest and possible collaboration. To this end UJ presented to its hosts, its five main areas of research focus, namely, a) water and nanotechnology, b) megacities and sustainability, c) African philosophy and political thought d) process automation and artificial intelligence as well as e) earth and geo-sciences. On each visit, UJ executive deans held extensive discussions with their counterparts and heads of departments as they explored possible areas of collaboration and exchange. Although there were many synergies and possible areas of collaboration discussed by the deans with their counterparts, the one area that seemed to dominate was the area of research on megacities and sustainability. This may not be surprising as all three cities – Johannesburg, Lagos and Ibadan – face very similar challenges around such areas as human settlement, transport and energy.

UJ welcomed into elite international group of universities

The University was announced as the first and only African university to join the Universitas 21, the most prestigious and innovative university consortia in the world, the Universities 21, along with the University of Maryland and Ohio State University.

UJ joined the network on 10 May 2013 during the U21 Annual General Meeting, hosted by the University of British Columbia in Canada. The aim of the group is to facilitate partnerships between the members, creating opportunities on a scale that none of them would be able to achieve while operating independently. Member universities collaborate on areas such as research-inspired teaching and learning, and provide wider advocacy for internationalisation. Universitas 21 now incorporates a total of 27 members, and UJ’s addition serves to establish new international links in South Africa. The network, which will now have an even greater geographic spread over 17 countries, will benefit greatly from the inclusion of these three important universities, and the opportunities that these partnerships will create, both for new and existing members, are eagerly anticipated.
The current South African politics do not reflect the legacy of the struggle against apartheid. This was Ronnie Kasrils’ reflection of the evolution of politics in South Africa at his book launch on Wednesday, 16 October 2013 UJ.

Kasrils is a former Minister for Intelligence Services of South Africa and former member of the National Executive Committee of the ANC. The book, Armed and Dangerous - From Undercover Struggle to Freedom, provides a reflection of the various experiences of Kasrils’s life during the political struggle prior to and post 1994. Kasrils lived in various camps in Russia, Britain, and parts of Africa when he served in the ANC’s Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK).

Although Kasrils agrees that the struggle against apartheid was worthwhile, he believes the government could have done better with policies around foreign investments in the country to ensure ordinary South Africans benefit more.

Prof Edward Webster, Professor of Sociology and Research at Wits, and Dr Arianna Lissoni, Postdoctoral Fellow at UJ’s Faculty of Humanities, gave a definitive analysis of the book during the launch, sharing their views on the meanings of Kasrils’s experiences while he was in government. “The book allows South African government officials to relook at where they have gone wrong as leaders. It is a unique important piece in that it has four editions which cover various stages of the South African political landscape,” said Dr Lissoni at the launch.

According to Prof Webster, the book reflects the failures and points out importantly the stages where the party in charge of running the government, the ANC, lost track to good governance.

### Amina Cachalia dedicated her autobiography to her grandchildren

Amina Cachalia dedicated her autobiography to her grandchildren.

The late activist and African National Congress (ANC) veteran Amina Cachalia wrote her autobiography to share her legacy with her grandchildren. Her son Ghaleb and daughter Coco told the UJ community at the launch of her autobiography When Hope and History Rhyme, on Wednesday, 12 June 2013.

During the book discussion on the UJ Kingsway Campus, Ghaleb and Coco described their mother as a feminist who fought relentlessly for women’s emancipation. Intrinsically, I think my mom was a real feminist. She was critical of the things women experienced during the apartheid times. She learned that from our grandmother (Amina’s mother) who took on the police and other oppressing forces – she was a very strong woman,” said Coco.

In the book, Amina Cachalia tells a tale of her real life experiences and how she was involved in the struggle for liberation. The book features her personal life, draws on some experiences she shared with former state president Nelson Mandela (who, according to Coco and Ghaleb, was very fond of their mother), and her view of the ANC Women’s League.

The two expressed their satisfaction at the way the book is written. Although the book features some controversial state of affairs, Coco and Ghaleb said they have never received any confrontation from the public. However, some of their close families were skeptical about it.

Ghaleb said there were many of his mother’s pictures that were not included in the book. He said they were looking into compiling them into an exhibition to share with the nation.

Among the people who attended the launch at the University was Ms Zanele Mbeki, wife of former South African President Thabo Mbeki.
Author and journalist McIntosh Polela engaged with staff and students at UJ about his book *My Father, My Monster*, on 17 and 19 September, marking the end of the UJ Library and Information Centre’s UJ Reads reading project for 2013.

The event took place on all four campuses, and consisted of discussions held in each of the libraries. The UJ Reads initiative is aimed at motivating students and staff to read for fun and relaxation, as well as to expand their horizons on various important subjects of life.

Polela obtained his master’s degree from the London School of Economics in the United Kingdom in 2006. He has ten years of journalistic experience under his belt, including five years with eTV. He was the spokesperson for the Special Investigation Unit, better known as the Hawks. His book *My Father, My Monster*, was shortlisted for the Alan Paton Literary Award in 2011.

In his book, Polela writes about his painful past without sounding sentimental, and it is the authenticity of the book that connects well with students and staff. At every discussion and workshop, across the four campuses, students had not only read the book but, where eager to ask questions. The book also challenges social issues such as abuse, poverty, neglect and dealing with the past through forgiveness.

Polela believes that: “It is the responsibility of society to love young people.”

UJ Reads has proven to be an exciting initiative designed to grow our knowledge, promote a culture of reading and create dialogue around issues that face our current generation.
Meal Assistance Programme beneficial for students

Internal research conducted by UJ found that many of our students were attending classes hungry and this prompted the start of a formal Meal Assistance Programme in 2010.

Three years later, the programme feeds 2100 students daily at a cost of R10 million for the 2013 academic year and is having a positive impact on academic performance.

Godfrey Helani, Director: Student Life and Governance at UJ says the Meal Assistance Programme includes breakfast and supper on weekdays and breakfast, lunch and supper on weekends greatly benefiting students across the four UJ campuses. “The aim of the programme is to provide needy students with a modest food allowance that gives them daily access to a balanced meal. “We can already see positive indications that the Meal Assistance Programme is ultimately enabling these students to obtain their higher education qualification.”

Commenting on the benefits of the programme, many of the enrolled students confirmed that the programme has contributed positively not only to their academic performance but also to their general outlook on life and positive integration with other students.

“We have noticed a remarkable improvement in the self-esteem of these students,” confirms Helani, “and this has translated into improved academic performance. Since they have been on the programme some of the students are now passing with an average of 65% compared to a previous fail or 50% pass.”

The Programme is widely supported throughout the University and the latest contribution to the programme comes from the Vice-Chancellor and Principal of the University of Johannesburg (UJ), Prof Thoren Rensburg, who has donated R200 000 from his annual remuneration. In addition, Rensburg has made an additional contribution of R160 000 to nurture and grow postgraduate enrolment. The contribution will go towards the cost of a Post-Doctoral Fellowship in Higher Education Policy and Leadership.

“My personal contribution is just a drop in the ocean. I believe it is important to foster ideas that nurture students both academically and holistically and it also supports the guiding principles of the University – to cultivate a rich living and learning community in which students develop a commitment to personal and intellectual growth, leadership and service,” concludes Prof Rensburg.

Many graduates, after completing their studies, are often faced with the dilemma of finding a job because they do not have the required experience. UJ’s Resolution Circle is turning the tables by offering this essential experience to UJ students.

Resolution Circle launched the Resolution Circle Nano, a newly-built structure on the Kingsway Campus situated next to the Human Resource offices on the A-block parking. The Nano building is equipped with high-tech equipment used to count and monitor huge crowds and spaces, offering a massive innovation in the research and development industries.

On Wednesday, 17 July 2013, top technology industry experts gathered in the building to witness the University’s milestone in bridging the gap between student and entry-level employee, in the manufacturing engineering and science fields. The programmes offered at the Resolution Circle Nano are part of the Work Integrated Learning (WIL) requirements for a National Diploma in Engineering Technology, and are effectively a prerequisite for graduation. These students spend two years studying theory in class, and thereafter are required to spend a third year working in the industry to gain experiential learning.

“Knowledge is power, but knowing that their hands are as well-prepared as their heads are,” said Prof Willem Clarke, CEO: Resolution Circle.

A rift between industry and universities has existed for a long time,” said Prof Roy Marcus, Chairperson: UJ Council, who echoed outstanding support to the birth of this multi-million rand project. “Tonight is absolutely a benchmark of something extraordinary in South Africa. The University makes the commitment to meet the needs of the nation and this is one of the projects that show our commitment to build a better society,” said Prof Marcus at the launch.

UJ’s innovative Resolution Circle opens doors for students to gain experience

UJ’s Resolution Circle is turning the tables by offering that essential experience to UJ students.
Construction is under way for two new lecture venues on the University of Johannesburg’s Kingsway Campus. The two venues, which will be situated adjacent to the existing A-Ring, will each provide space for 750 students.

The new lecture facility has been designed to accommodate two mirrored 750 seat venues around a circular courtyard and an ablution block located between the new and old buildings.

The additional 1 500 seats will greatly alleviate the serious shortage of teaching and learning space currently being experienced at APK.

The building in plan is similar to the existing B-Les lecture facility, however, slight modifications have been made to the pure fan shape, thereby providing the new facility with an iconic design with greater seating capacity and study space.
He addressed the *State of the Social Economy of South Africa* colloquium, hosted UJ’s Centre for Social Entrepreneurship and Social Economy (CSESE), on Wednesday, 4 September 2013. Trevor Manuel led an in-depth conversation around how the social economy is aligned with the objectives of the National Development Plan (NDP).

The Minister focused on how the sector should work together towards aligning the social economy with the objectives of the NDP. Minister Trevor Manuel said, “Asia’s largest agent of change is its people, and this is also its biggest investment”. He went on, “South Africa should follow suit and turn its resources into productive assets, although we are on the back foot with unskilled people and slow technological development.”

Trevor Manuel also outlined the objectives of the NDP and how it aims to enable everyone to have a decent standard of living. He mentioned that 11 million jobs need to be created by 2030, in order to help alleviate the youth from their poverty traps and boost the economy. He said, “There are two key facts that are affecting our economy, the history of the country and the monopolistic distribution of resources during the apartheid era together with price fixing and the delivery of inadequate facilities by companies.”

He went on to stress the importance of proactiveness, saying “Decisions can’t be deferred to 2030, as young people will be running the institutions”. The Minister took a few questions from the audience, one was with regards to civilians being dependent on social grants. His response was to stress that the dependency culture needs to be outgrown, “The youth need to be mobilised and social grants need to be seen in a different light.”

Dr Mamphela Ramphele calls for end to gender-based violence

On Wednesday 7 August 2013, UJ was joined by a panel of esteemed medical experts and female icons at the Country Club Johannesburg for the annual Women’s Day celebratory event.

This year the event was hosted by the UJ Library and Information Services Dr Rookaya Bawa, and featured a keynote address by world-renowned medical doctor, academic, former political activist and co-founder of the Black Consciousness Movement, and now the leader of the newly-formed Agang, Dr Mamphela Ramphele.

The conversation, titled “Beauty is Skin Deep”, included panelists Dr Reza Mia, Aesthetic Doctor and an expert on Botox, Dermal Fillers and Chemical Peels, Dr Ridwan Mia, well-known Plastic & Reconstructive Surgeon responsible for the skin transplant performed on three-year-old Isabella “Pippie” Kruger; Dr Carol Benn, a special surgeon and head of the Helen Joseph Breast Unit and the Netcare Breast Care Centre of Excellence in Johannesburg; Professor Harry Seftel, well-known healthcare practitioner, author and radio personality, as well as former Miss South Africa and UJ alumnus, Bokang Montjane. The panel discussion was facilitated by South African radio and television personality and businesswoman, Michelle Constant.

Dialogue focused on women, outer beauty and the beauty within, with Dr Ridwan Mia emphasising that reconstructive surgery “is as much about inner beauty as it is about outer beauty.”

The panel also addressed the issue of women, femininity and power, and if the three can co-exist – whether women become harder on themselves as they become more powerful, or if the world becomes harder on them. “You can be a beautiful, feminine woman and still be powerful,” was Dr Ridwan’s response.

Following the panel discussion, Dr Ramphele shared her experiences of being a woman both during the struggle and now, when women still fight for equality, human rights, freedom and dignity in many aspects of their life. “South Africa has more women in parliament that any other country in Africa, with the exception of Rwanda, and more women in cabinet than any other country in the world, again except Rwanda and Scandinavia. Yet we have a pandemic of gender-based violence in this country. Why? Because we didn’t do the work that enabled me to live with strong women, and for strong women to bring up strong men; for women to stand up,” Dr Ramphele told the guests.

Speaking on the difficulties South Africans, and mostly women face in today’s democracy, Dr Ramphele encouraged women to stand up. “We are at risk of losing our moral high ground and our moral integrity because we have not lived the values that are embedded in our democracy. Beautiful people are people who act out the values that they hold. It is in the energy of mobilisation that we will become the real idols; the real boulders our grandmothers and mothers were in 1966,” she added. Also in attendance at the event was former first lady of South Africa, Zanele Mbeki and Vice-Chancellor Prof Intron Rensburg.
“Poverty is not one dimensional” – says Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, Prof Muhammad Yunus

Poverty is not a one dimensional thing – if you interact with poor people, you will understand their unique problems.

This was Prof Muhammad Yunus’s words as he addressed the University of Johannesburg (UJ) community at a public lecture on Thursday, 03 October 2013.

Organised by the Faculty of Economic and Financial Sciences and the Faculty of Management, in collaboration with the Library and Information Centre, the lecture aimed at encouraging South Africans to seek new ways to fight unemployment.

Prof Yunus, a Bangladeshi banker, economist and Nobel Peace Prize recipient who founded the Grameen Bank in 1983, says business should be based on selflessness. He believes that contributing to people’s lives and making them happy is a super-incentive, an incentive that is bigger than just making profit “because social business money is endless.”

Amid the many things Prof Yunus did in the past, he has had phenomenal success helping people lift themselves out of poverty in rural Bangladesh by providing them with credit without requiring collateral. Prof Yunus developed his revolutionary micro-credit system with the belief that it would be a cost effective and scalable weapon to fight poverty – a breakthrough for rural Bangladesh.

“Hiding poverty will not solve the problem of our people; it makes their lives even worse. Humans have the creative power to do things; they just need to employ that in their mind-sets. The capitalist system is punishing people, while in actual fact it should be the people punishing the system to solve the problem of unemployment,” said Prof Yunus.

Prof Yunus emphasised that people should develop an entrepreneurial mind-set in order to fight unemployment and stop the cycle of poverty. He said people should stop viewing themselves as job seekers, but see themselves job givers. “We have to create an environment where no one lives on state charity,” he added.

The Faculty of Management is one of UJ’s innovative and society-oriented mechanisms that promote entrepreneurship and skills development for small business owners. One of the Faculty’s well established centres is the Centre for Social Entrepreneurship and Social Economy (CSESE). Relating to Prof Yunus’ philosophy for business, the CSESE’s strategic intents are to be an internationally recognised centre of excellence in researching, educating, finding, supporting and developing social entrepreneurial projects within the social economy and promote scholarship in the emerging field of enquiry. The Centre also aims to deliver outcomes that form part of an increase in social entrepreneurial innovations and social enterprises aimed at achieving the Millennium Development Goals, and the eradication of poverty and social challenges facing our young democracy and the continent.

Universities must be forces of change, says Blade Nzimande

Universities should eliminate discrimination and promote social cohesion in tackling the triple challenges – overcoming inequalities, eliminating poverty and addressing unemployment facing South Africa.

This was the message from Minister of Higher Education and Training, Dr Blade Nzimande at the annual Solomon Mahlangu lecture held at UJ.

Minister Nzimande addressed university staff, students and government employees on the role the state should play in enhancing social cohesion and building a better future for South Africans. “Universities have a particularly crucial role to play in building our societies. They must be innovative and creative thinkers of transformation. Transformation can only be achieved through looking at the challenges of the entire university system and not just individual university,” he said.

The Minister deliberately slammed the illegal public protests of people marching to his office for services. “The government has become an easy target for such behaviour. Some of the protests are counter-revolutionary because people destroy public property – destroying a clinic to while demanding a library does not make any sense at all. This is not what Solomon Mahlangu stood for,” Minister Nzimande emphasised.

He also criticised corrupt individuals who do fraudulent activities in universities to benefit themselves. He explained that placing universities under administration was not an option; people must be appointed formally and be held accountable. The Minister highlighted that his department has made huge progress in many areas and it is learning from other countries, such as Ghana, on how to develop its informal economies.
This was the strong message given by the keynote speakers at the first Entrepreneurship Affinity Group event, hosted by the UJ Alumni Network at the School of Tourism and Hospitality (STH), on the Blunting Road Campus.

Political environment and the entrepreneur by Mr Zizi Kodwa, Advisor to the Premier of Gauteng, Nomvula Mokonyane; and

Economic overview and prospects for 2013 and beyond by Mr Johannes Khosa, Economist at Nedbank.

Dr Zodwa Magwaza, of the UJ Alumni Network, welcomed the group of senior alumni entrepreneurs and said the global environment demands us to consider their roles as entrepreneurs and how they can make an impact in the lives of young entrepreneurs at UJ and also the development of the institution. “Stay connected to stay ahead,” she said, as she urged new delegates to become members of the UJ Alumni Network.

“We have to create an entrepreneurial mind-set in students, as this is in addition to the economic development of our countries. We have to develop students to become entrepreneurs who will contribute to sustainable development in Southern Africa,” she added.

POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT AND THE ENTREPRENEUR

Mr Zizi Kodwa, former spokesperson for the ANC Youth League, talked about the political environment before 1994 when multi-national corporations lobbied to disinvest in South Africa, and post-apartheid lobbed against investment in the country. He said a lack of will to mobilise the GEAR Strategy (Growth, Employment and Redistribution – a macro-economic strategy) that was laid out in 1996.

“The challenge is that the economy is almost double-sided: we have the poor and the very developed and we have to look at how to close the gap. The government brought in policies and institutions like Affirmative Action (A/A), Broad-based Black Economic Empowerment (BBBEE), the National Youth Development Fund and the National Youth Development Agency, because of the disadvantage of previously oppressed groups. This was done to speed up redistribution; however, corruption undermines the intention of these institutions and legislation.”

He mentioned that China has overtaken Germany and Japan as the largest economy due to entrepreneurship and Nigenia’s economy is rising due to that. “We have to look at the opportunities on our continent, like Namibia and Lesotho, not only in South Africa.” Kodwa said the government is committed to small and medium enterprises and that the transferal of skills must take place. That is why mentorship is so important for those young entrepreneurs. “We only create enabling environment and entrepreneurs have to start with the basics and understand that it will take them a couple of years to become successful,” he said.

He reiterated that we have to learn from China and that the base of the economy is entrepreneurship so we have to change our mind-sets.

THE NEED TO MAKE A PARADIGM SHIFT

Mr Madoda Dinbanyana, M.C. chairperson of the Entrepreneurship Affinity Group followed by saying that change of mind-set is a paradigm shift we have to make. “It is a different world now and we have to learn, engage and share experiences with each other.”

He told of his experience starting a joint venture with a R40 billion-strong French company and the support provided to him by the National Empowerment Fund (NEF). Why this partnership he could stand shoulder to shoulder with such a big company. “We have to realise that we are not living in a restricted environment any more. Our neighbours are booming in terms of infrastructure and we can take advantage of that. We are living in a global environment”.

“Entrepreneurship is key for our economic growth.

We need to change our mind-sets and make the paradigm shift to becoming entrepreneurs as entrepreneurship and small business is the key to economic growth and development in South Africa.

Entrepreneurship is key for economic growth

We have to create an entrepreneurial mind-set in students.

“The spirit of entrepreneurship is resilience, and passion is what drives you.” Madoda said before introducing Mr Johannes Khosa who discussed the current financial climate.

ECONOMIC OVERVIEW AND PROSPECTS FOR 2013 AND BEYOND

“The hangover from 2008 is still with us.” Mr Johannes Khosa painted a bleak economic picture and said global growth is still struggling, especially advanced economies. South Africa is not operating in a vacuum and this impacts our economy, placing domestic exports under pressure and households on a variety of fronts. Domestic expenditure is weak, both business and consumer confidence is weak and fragile, and economic growth is struggling.

Recent macroeconomic data shows that global economic activity continued to improve this year, however, our fiscal consolidation is partly dampening activity in South Africa. Indicators in most of the key countries are satisfactory, pointing to a gradual recovery under aggressive stimulus supporting the Japanese economy.

Underlying conditions remain weak though, with China losing momentum with a slowdown in capital expenditure and worries about debt. Global trade volumes remains weak and commodity prices have fallen.

A VULNERABLE ECONOMY

South Africa is vulnerable because our exports are affected - slower demand from the Eurozone and demand to China peaking. The mining and manufacturing sectors are affected by this.

About 47% of mining and 20% of manufactured goods export to Asia; and 20% of mining and 23% of manufactured goods export to Europe.

Added to this, the local operational environment is challenging due to unit labour cost that doubled in the past decade resulting in producers struggling to produce at full capacity, adding further strain on exports. Strike actions, high electricity prices, regulations and policy and political uncertainty, as well as other logistical constraints add to this challenge.

Consequently, the current account deficit widened further as exports continue to lag behind imports.

Khosa predicted that the economic growth will remain below 5% influencing the private sector to probably remain hesitant to expand capacity aggressively. Therefore the economy will struggle to create jobs whilst structural issues need to be resolved, e.g. education, infrastructure, power supply and labour market policy reforms. In the meantime entrepreneurship is considered part of the solution.

ENTREPRENEURS IN SOUTH AFRICA

The National Youth Development Fund (NYDF) by the University of Cape Town Graduate School of Business shows that SA achieves the lowest score of most developing countries in entrepreneurship.

However, there are challenges facing entrepreneurs in South Africa:

- Access to finance for new businesses. Banks are risk cautious as most new businesses tend to fail within the first year;
- Credit records of applicants and collateral; and
- Cash flows, with delayed payments to small businesses top on the list.

Khosa said that banks are criticised for not doing enough to support SME’s and pointed out how Nedbank supports entrepreneurs:

- Nedbank has more than 200 000 SME clients and approved more than 90% credit applications;
- It is the first large corporation to sign the Prompt Payment Code (paid within 30 days after the receipt of a valid invoice);
- It procures products from about 3 000 SME’s - stationary, recruitment, catering, etc.
- It supports the Small Business Friday;
- It produces the ‘My Biz’ TV programme on ETV every Friday; and
- Has launched the small business index;
- Small Enterprise Development Agency (SEDA) provides business development and support services for small enterprises. Read more on www.seda.org.za
- The NEF’s role is to support Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (BBBEE) and read more at www.nefcorp.co.za.

To read more about the UJ Alumni Network and all the opportunities offered, go to www.ujalumni.co.za.
UJ Architecture students breathe a creative spark to Slovo Park

UJ’s Department of Architecture’s students take part in an innovative community outreach initiative.

An army of 50 students of UJ’s Department of Architecture together with an organisation called “1:1” (one to one) Agency of Engagement were out in full force in Slovo Park as part of an innovative community outreach initiative – Slovo Park Project 2013 – to provide the community’s children a safe playground and escape from the harsh reality of their informal settlement.

The students spent five days building a 150 square metre, concrete, sustainable, eco-friendly playground for the children of Slovo Park, an informal settlement bordering Eldorado Park and Soweto. The students visited the settlement where a highly organised community forum allocated the space for the park. It was clear from the mapping that the children of the settlement have no place to call their own and play safely in this dusty and hot precinct.

The students are getting real-world experience by designing concepts that addresses a specific need...
The students were able to learn what play elements children like, when they played, how often, and what aspects they could incorporate when they build a playground. The information was influential in developing designs for a playground. Based on their visit, the students identified the obvious benefit of building the playground in a location that is accessible for the whole community and easily visible, promoting supervision.

The Faculty of Art, Design and Architecture students were prompted to use their design skills to seed ideas for improving safety for the children and better use of space. The students took their action research back to UJ’s design studios for a facilitated creative response to the needs and issues witnessed by them at Slovo Park.

The students’ research and ideas were presented to the community and other stakeholders. The panel considered ways to make these ideas a reality as part of a community outreach initiative and the panel selected three designs. These designs were incorporated into one design. The playground uses an existing broken truck as the design generator and is complimented by a tyre mound and concrete “hop-scotch” element, two-tiered seating for informal soccer and some landscaping to soften the environment and create shade from the pelting sun.

“It’s pretty amazing,” says Mr Denver Hendricks, project leader and UJ Architecture lecturer. “It goes up quickly when you have so many volunteers in place, but it really takes some time for planning. We are a teaching institution, so our main objective is to provide a hands-on teaching component for our students. But, as in most professions, there is also the necessity to serve a public need. This initiative, however small, is doing exactly that. The students are getting real-world experience by assessing, evaluating and designing concepts that addresses a specific need. They learn about their future profession and in the process make value contributions to our surrounding communities,” he says.

LEFT | FADA students had to get their hands dirty to build the playground for the children of Slovo Park

RIGHT | Two of Slovo Park’s children who enjoyed playing on the newly-built playground

PHOTOS | FADA

ABOVE | A cement mixer had to be used to prepare the concrete for the playground

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ABOVE | A cement mixer had to be used to prepare the concrete for the playground
Cairncrossite

the new mineral species named after UJ’s Geology professor

Professor Bruce Cairncross, Head of Department: Geology at the University of Johannesburg (UJ), was recently honoured by the International Mineralogical Association (IMA) by having a new mineral species named after him, Cairncrossite.

The mineral, a strontium–calcium-silicate-hydrate is similar to minerals of the gyrolite and reyerite groups. It originates from the Wessels mine in the Kalahari manganese field and was discovered by the well-known collector, Dr Ludi von Bzing. Prof Cairncross is a sedimentologist and stratigrapher, specialising in terrestrial clastic depositional systems and the origin and formation of southern African coal deposits. Together with his graduate students, he has worked in the Witbank, Highveld and Waterberg coalfields, unravelling the origin and formation of the coal seams and associated coalified methane and applies this expertise to the exploitation of this valuable energy resource.

His other area of interest is researching the geological heritage of southern Africa and the regions and mineral and gemstone deposits; he has published five books on this subject. In this regard, he has been an invited speaker at the International Tucson Gem & Mineral Show in the USA (in 1998, 2002 and 2004), the Rochester Gem & Mineral Show in the USA (in 1998, 2002 and 2004), the International Mineralogical Association (IMGA). She recently also delivered a very interesting public lecture at UJ entitled Medical Geology. An interdisciplinary emerging field of science.

“This is a return to my childhood dream of being involved in both medical and natural sciences. These fields have been seen as separate for many years but new advances in some of the technologies show that the geology on the composition of the minerals in the soil, water and air. These naturally occurring chemical elements or minerals can have a positive or negative impact on the health of people, animals and plants living in a particular environment.

“At an example of health problems caused by naturally occurring geological problems around the world is health consequences by trace elements such as vanadium, selenium, zinc, iodine and cadmium associated with volcanic eruptions.”

Nothing but a love for rocks

UJ boasts a pioneering and passionate researcher in Medical Geology

Her love for rocks led Professor Hassina Mouri on a journey from Algeria to France and Finland, then to the USA and finally to South Africa. Today she is an associate professor at the UJ’s Department of Geology, where she is developing and leading an emerging field of science known as Medical Geology.

Mouri was born in a mountainous region called Bejaia in Algeria but she has lived in South Africa for the past 13 years. She has an interesting passion – metamorphic rocks. Mouri grew up in an area which was surrounded by mountains and rocks. She has always been fascinated by these surroundings and longed to understand the geology of the world around me. As a student I had to choose between medical sciences and natural sciences. My fear of blood convinced me to choose natural sciences, specifically geology.

Mouri studied at the University of Algiers and graduated cum laude. As an outstanding student of the year, she was awarded a Franco-Algerian Fellowship to continue her postgraduate studies in France. There she completed her Masters and PhD in metamorphic geology.

“I am interested in all kinds of rocks, but metamorphic rocks enchant and challenge me most. They are very complex rocks, which have gone through a process of change over time. One has to undertake a journey that can be some billion years into the past to understand them – at least 3.3 billion years in the case of the Limpopo belt where I am undertaking my research.”

After five years in Paris, Prof Mouri first joined the University of Helsinki, then the Geological Survey of Finland as a research associate. “It was a massive cultural and climatic shock. Finland was very cold and dark in winter and it took me time to adapt because I had to learn English and Finnish (she also speaks French, Arabic and Hebrew, one of the North African languages) to communicate. It was a very challenging experience at that time, but now I see it as a very positive and valuable learning experience.”

When she had the chance to swap Finland for the USA, she grabbed it with both hands. “I was an invited speaker at the International Medical Geology Association conference in Spain when I was approached by one Professor who asked if I would be interested in moving to the US to join the University of Minnesota for a research position. Of course, I said ‘yes’ to another exciting experience.”

However, Minnesota’s weather was not much of an improvement on Helsinki. “Well, Minnesota is in the northern part of the USA, temperatures in the summer easily reach 40°C with high humidity and -40°C in the winter. It was definitely not a place I wanted to spend the rest of my life. As a child of Africa, I felt I needed to return back to my continent.”

Prof Mouri’s wish was to return to Africa to contribute to the Research Development in Geosciences and Earth Science Education. In 2000 she accepted a tenured senior lecturership in the Department of Geology at the University of Pretoria as the first female academic geologist in that Department. In 2008, she was promoted to an Associate Professor in Metamorphic Geology. Hassina Mouri’s wish was to return to Africa to contribute to the Research Development in Geosciences and Earth Science Education.

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complex geology and climate conditions. She is currently supervising two postgraduate students in the field of medical geology. In August this year she was elected Councillor for the International Medical Geology Association (IMGA). The IMGA aims to provide a network and a forum to bring together the combined expertise of geologists and earth scientists, environmental scientists, toxicologists, epidemiologists, medical specialists and biochemists in order to characterise the properties of geological processes and agents, the dispersal of geological materials and their effects on the human population. In August 2012, Prof Mouri was elected Councillor for the International Union of Geological Science (IUGS). Together with her election for IMGA, it shows the interest that Prof Mouri is giving to the two fields of Science (Geology and Health).

Prof Mouri wishes to make a difference by working together with the medical community so that people can be warned if they live in areas where the natural environment can be hazardous to their health.

“There are currently no experts in medical geology and in Africa especially it is a new discipline of science. I am currently organising the first international symposium on medical geology in Africa, to be held in March 2014. It is so stimulating and encouraging that UJ and my colleagues at the Department are supporting me in this endeavour. I hope that all the departments from the faculty of Science as well as other faculties at UJ will join and work together in order to develop Medical Geology, because I believe this is the only way to make a difference and to contribute to the well being of our society.”

Senior Lecturer in the Faculty of Art, Design and Architecture (FADA), Mr Ken Stucke is the winner of this year’s Eco-Innovation award at the Enviropedia Eco-Logic Awards, held at the Cradle of Humankind.

The Eco-Innovation award, sponsored by Standard Bank, was awarded for Mr Stuke’s design of House Jones in Hurlingham – a low-energy “Island Home” that is well integrated into its environment and able to provide for its own servicing needs.

The Eco-Logic Awards also recognise and reward those individuals, communities and Municipalities who are making a significant contribution toward creating an eco-logically sustainable society and environment.

Born in South Africa, Mr Stucke grew up in Malaysia, England and France, and studied at the University of the Witwatersrand. He has practiced as an architect in Botswana, England and South Africa, and runs a small boutique architectural practice that has specialised in “Green” or environmentally responsive design since 2001. He has been teaching “Green Architecture” and complex construction technologies to architecture students for more than a decade.

FINALISTS IN THE CATEGORY INCLUDED:
- Coca-Cola
- Hemporium
- Wildlife & Environmental Society of South Africa
- Five Star Stoves
- Eco-Health
- Biotrans Pole Sleeve
- Eco-Atlas
- GreenAble Projects
- GreenPop
- EcoPack

The University is once again on the forefront of innovation and technology with “Green Architecture”
Leading UJ Social Researcher: Social grants solve more problems than they may create

So says Professor Leila Patel, the Director of the Centre for Social Development in Africa (CSDA), a research centre based at UJ.

Patel was speaking at the annual Helen Joseph Memorial Lecture held by the University.

During her lecture, Patel revealed findings from a study that the CSDA conducted in June this year. The CSDA study investigated the voting behaviour of grant beneficiaries in Dookoop (Stowells) and Riviera, both poor urban areas with a high grant uptake, which was conducted partly in response to the current popular discourse regarding the effect of social grants in South Africa.

“Social grants, it is argued, create perverse incentives, such as buying votes, increasing teenage pregnancies, discouraging work seeking and a reluctance to take Antiretroviral medication in order to access the disability grants,” explains Patel.

However, says Patel, none of these assertions are true. “Teenage pregnancies started declining in the first half of the 1990s and this trend was already under way when the grant was introduced, and researchers have found that grant beneficiaries who were without work were extremely motivated to get work and... place a high value on paid employment.”

Further, Patel identifies concerns people have about the negative impact social grants have on the economy. “Social grants have increased from 3 million beneficiaries in 1996 to over 16 million today covering almost a third of the population,” she says, “and in the debate on fiscal issues, a trade-off is presented as a choice between grants and jobs.”

“Although the share of taxes going to grants increased from 11% to 13% since 1996, social assistance as a percentage of GDP is at around 3.3%. It seems then that the grants system does not present a significant sustainability problem.”

In fact, explains Patel, the costs to the economy in terms of poverty and inequality would be much higher without the grants. “There is now compelling evidence that the social grants system reduces poverty irrespective of which poverty lines are used.”

One of the biggest recent issues of contention with regards to grant receipt, argues Patel, concerns “the use of state money and human resources for electioneering purposes and the electoral power of grant beneficiaries and their role in securing electoral support for the ANC. Since grant beneficiaries make up a significant percentage of voters, many perceive it to be a vote buying mechanism that is used by the ruling party to win support from poor voters.”

The CSDA revealed that in their preliminary findings, there is no evidence to support the claim that grant receipt gave the ANC an electoral edge over other parties.

“While some individual beneficiaries might change their behaviour to access a grant that might benefit them financially, this does not describe the average behaviour of beneficiaries. Respondents also did not think that grants were a form of bribery. But, two thirds of all respondents held the view that the handing out of food parcels before an election amounted to vote buying.”

Patel laments the current discourse surrounding grant beneficiaries and their voting patterns, which she says “represents [grant beneficiaries] as wrongdoers who are easily swayed by politicians for their own ends.” Beneficiaries are not credited with rational decision making powers and an ability to make rational choices about their lives. These representations of grant beneficiaries quite unknowingly amount to an attack on beneficiaries and poor people, blaming them for their misfortune.”

The CSDA study, a research centre based at UJ, investigated the voting behaviour of grant beneficiaries in Dookoop (Stowells) and Riviera, both poor urban areas with a high grant uptake, which was conducted partly in response to the current popular discourse regarding the effect of social grants in South Africa.

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However, says Patel, none of these assertions are true. “Teenage pregnancies started declining in the first half of the 1990s and this trend was already under way when the grant was introduced, and researchers have found that grant beneficiaries who were without work were extremely motivated to get work and... place a high value on paid employment.”

Further, Patel identifies concerns people have about the negative impact social grants have on the economy. “Social grants have increased from 3 million beneficiaries in 1996 to over 16 million today covering almost a third of the population,” she says, “and in the debate on fiscal issues, a trade-off is presented as a choice between grants and jobs.”

“Although the share of taxes going to grants increased from 11% to 13% since 1996, social assistance as a percentage of GDP is at around 3.3%. It seems then that the grants system does not present a significant sustainability problem.”

In fact, explains Patel, the costs to the economy in terms of poverty and inequality would be much higher without the grants. “There is now compelling evidence that the social grants system reduces poverty irrespective of which poverty lines are used.”

One of the biggest recent issues of contention with regards to grant receipt, argues Patel, concerns “the use of state money and human resources for electioneering purposes and the electoral power of grant beneficiaries and their role in securing electoral support for the ANC. Since grant beneficiaries make up a significant percentage of voters, many perceive it to be a vote buying mechanism that is used by the ruling party to win support from poor voters.”

The CSDA revealed that in their preliminary findings, there is no evidence to support the claim that grant receipt gave the ANC an electoral edge over other parties.

“While some individual beneficiaries might change their behaviour to access a grant that might benefit them financially, this does not describe the average behaviour of beneficiaries. Respondents also did not think that grants were a form of bribery. But, two thirds of all respondents held the view that the handing out of food parcels before an election amounted to vote buying.”

Patel laments the current discourse surrounding grant beneficiaries and their voting patterns, which she says “represents [grant beneficiaries] as wrongdoers who are easily swayed by politicians for their own ends.” Beneficiaries are not credited with rational decision making powers and an ability to make rational choices about their lives. These representations of grant beneficiaries quite unknowingly amount to an attack on beneficiaries and poor people, blaming them for their misfortune.”

The CSDA study, a research centre based at UJ, investigated the voting behaviour of grant beneficiaries in Dookoop (Stowells) and Riviera, both poor urban areas with a high grant uptake, which was conducted partly in response to the current popular discourse regarding the effect of social grants in South Africa.

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to ensure that the University’s graduates are fully equipped to join industry, locally and internationally. The Academy forti ed its commitment to social responsibility and highlights the significant role education plays in leading change in emergent markets which was prioritised in the New Growth Path driven by Economic Development Minister, Ebrahim Patel. This initiative is a strong launch-pad for student businesses which could have brilliant potential for funding or technical skills that include software, law, intellectual property or business concepts that include market access to finance, pitching company and product. They can overcome hurdles such as the lack of understanding and face future hurdles. These hurdles could be anything from the lack of understanding business concepts that include intellectual property or company and product law, access to finance, pitching for funding or technical skills that include software development and marketing. One could say we are de-risking people who already have ideas worth millions.”

The Vice-Chancellor’s Innovative Business Idea Awards, an initiative offering students with promising business ideas an opportunity to transform their ideas into business enterprises, was launched at the Soweto Campus of the University this year. In October UJ’s Centre for Small Business Development (CSBD), in partnership with National Youth Development Agency (NYDA), announced the top ten VC’s Innovative Business Awards at an award ceremony.

“Students who face a future without prospects of formal employment stand a chance to benefit from this new student entrepreneurial initiative that forms part of the University’s Centre for Small Business Development (CSBD),” says Molotsi Motpone, the Director of the CSBD.

The initiative focuses on developing fledgling student business start-up ideas and nurturing business skills and life skills in equal measure among UJ students between the ages of 18 and 35, thus growing future-fit entrepreneurs. Annually, the University will be investing more than R100 000 towards the Awards in order to help students ignite the growth of their business ideas, which were reviewed by a panel of judges that included representatives from the University’s Vice-Chancellor’s office, business partners and industry. The student with the best business was awarded the R100 000 cash-prize sponsored by the NYDA, and second and third place will each receive R50 000 and R30 000 respectively. Furthermore, the seven entrants in the top ten each received R20 000. The prize money awarded to all entrants must be used for business set-up costs.

Yershen Pillay, NYDA Executive Chairperson, says supporting initiatives that seek to increase South Africa’s entrepreneurship culture is part of the NYDA’s activities. “Too often self-employment is seen as the last option when there is another avenue to find a job. It’s encouraging to see UJ embarking on such an initiative at tertiary education level and we hope that other tertiary institutions will follow suit,” Pillay indicates.

“The purpose of the University in entrepreneurship is to nurture young minds and talent that must lead our enterprises, communities and state. It is to make it possible for self-made and accomplish great things,” said UJ Vice-Chancellor Professor Rensburg, while delivering his speech at the award ceremony.

The ultimate grand prize of R100 000 went to 22-year-old Ifunmilayo Lengana for his business idea Farmers Footprint, a vegetable garden idea that aims to harvest scarce vegetables and crops and manufacture vegetables that aren’t in season. “Fortune is when opportunity meets preparedness,” said Ifunmilayo.

“Students who face a future without prospects of formal employment stand a chance to benefit from this new student entrepreneurial initiative that forms part of the University’s Centre for Small Business Development (CSBD),” says Prof Basie von Solms, head of the BCS with Prof Manuel,” says Professor Elize Ehlers, ACSSE’s department head. Currently, UJ is one of two universities, in South Africa, with BCS, The Chartered Institute for IT accreditation. Other international universities accredited include the University of Oxford and the University of Cambridge.

The accreditation means that UJ students who successfully complete this degree, can join the BCS as professional members and later achieve the international Chartered Information Technology Professional (CITP) status.

Says Professor Ehlers on how students can obtain professional status: “Students should complete either the BSc Information Technology or the BSc Computer Science and Informatics degree at UJ to obtain entrance to the BCS Honours Information Technology degree.”

Currently more than 80% of the staff at the Academy are professional members of the BCS with Prof Basie von Solms, head of UJ and the International Telecommunications Union (ITU)’s Centre of Excellence in Cyber Security (CoECS), being a CITP and Fellow of the BCS. The ITU UJ Centre of Excellence in Cyber Security is a dedicated centre that acts as a central point for all aspects related to cyber security and critical information infrastructure protection in Southern Africa.

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"I see Uhuru Peak" – climbing Kilimanjaro for breast cancer awareness

"You are never too old or too unfit to do something exciting – I believe life isn’t meant to be boring!" This statement sums up what Amanda Louw, a lecturer in radiography and mammography at the University of Johannesburg (UJ), is all about.

Amanda climbed Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania in October this year to raise awareness and funds for breast cancer treatment.

Her work, training future mammographers at the University since 2008, had put her in touch with the Breast Health Foundation (BHF). This foundation is a Section 21 not-for-profit company that was established in April 2002 with the goals of educating the public regarding breast health issues and raising funds to finance educational projects.

Amanda and 14 other ladies with different links to BHF formed part of the foundation’s latest campaign – Pink Peaks. They climbed the highest mountain in Africa to show that with the correct preparation, mental toughness and the will to go on, any mountain can be conquered. Kilimanjaro was chosen because a challenge was needed that could (partly) be compared to the difficulties that someone faces when he/she is diagnosed with breast cancer.

I first heard about Pink Peaks in February this year. I always invite the ladies from Bosom Buddies (a project of BHF) to come and speak to my students and give a human face to mammography. I overheard one of the ladies, Rebecca Musi, saying that she had to get fit this year to climb Kilimanjaro. This is something I have always wanted to do and I felt someone from mammography had to be present on this climb. I wrote a motivation letter and luckily I became part of Pink Peaks.

After much mental, physical and emotional preparation, the ladies began their climb on 8 October and successfully summited Kilimanjaro on the morning of 15 October.

"I was very excited as I have never travelled in Africa before. In fact, I have only travelled outside the country once. I think that is also the biggest challenge for me – the strangeness of a foreign country and a big mountain. And the temperature fluctuations, we are starting in a tropical rainforest with average temperatures of 40 °C and ending on a mountain peak at -30 °C!"

Amanda is full of praise for the support she has received from UJ. "I spoke to Professor Wim Holander at UJ Sport and Movement Sciences and he was very enthusiastic about helping with my physical preparation for the climb. He arranged for an assessment and subsequent sessions with a coach, Leandri de Beer, at the High Performance Center of UJ. I also followed my usual routine of running, mountain biking and sessions with my personal trainer, Khumo, at a private gym in Melville.

In preparation, she also took part in the mountain bike race at the Krynica Oyster Festival and she jogged regularly at the UJ stadium close to her home in Westdene. UJ has also helped Amanda's cause financially. "Prof Andre Swart, executive Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences, approved a substantial donation towards the cause with the understanding that the UJ logo must reach the summit. This is obviously a big reason why I had to succeed." The 2013 mammography students at UJ has also donated more than R2 000.

"Most people with access to the media take it for granted that everyone knows about the danger of breast cancer and the importance of breast self-examinations and getting early treatment. However, the reality is that a lot of people are uninformed and do not have access to information. BHF uses their resources to inform, empower and support women who want to qualify as mammographers. It is a good career choice for women. There is a constant demand for mammographers and it is a good career choice for women. However, women who want to qualify as mammographers must be professional, have empathy and be a good communicator because mammography is such an intimate and often emotional procedure."

A few interesting breast cancer facts

- 1% of breast cancers are diagnosed in men.
- General statistics show that one in eight women will be diagnosed with breast cancer during her lifetime. However, some say that one in 26 women will be diagnosed but this can be due to the fact that women in poorer, rural areas may not have access to medical facilities and thus they may not be diagnosed and treated.
- It is important that all women of 40+ should get regular mammograms. Young women must do breast self examination when they reach puberty. This examination must be done on the same day each month. This way abnormalities can be detected soon and treatment can be minimally invasive.
- Since 2008 220 mammographers have qualified at UJ.
- Radiography is classified as a scarce skill by the Department of Health and the Department of Labour (mammography falls under radiography, but it is even more specialized). There is a constant demand for mammographers and it is a good career choice for women. However, women who want to qualify as mammographers must be professional, have empathy and be a good communicator because mammography is such an intimate and often emotional procedure.

"I was a single mother for 18 years and I wanted to show my daughter Iłorika, who turns 21 this year, that I have the time and energy to challenge myself with new adventures. I am also dreaming of climbing the Great Wall of China, walking Santiago de Compostela in Spain and exploring Peru."
Introducing the 2013 UJ Postgraduate Association (PGA)

The PGA was formally recognised by the University’s registrar, Professor Marie Muller, as a body that would represent postgraduate students at the UJ Senate. Since its establishment, the association was composed of three postgraduates from the Faculties of Science, Health Science and Humanities who were funded by the prestigious Next Generation Scholars programme.

This year the UJ Postgraduate Association (UJ PGA) grew into a seven member committee that aims to connect all UJ postgraduate students. Three of these members will sit at the UJ Senate, the body responsible for managing the university’s academic and strategic matters such as how to increase the number of postgraduate students registered at the university.

The vision for the 2013 PGA Executive Committee as outlined by the Chairperson, Mr. Vincent Makhubela, is to grow the PGA in 2013 by extensive advertising that will introduce it to all postgraduate students. In this way postgraduate students will understand that the PGA is a platform for them to express their grievances, share their achievements, promote peer learning, and encourage inter-disciplinary research.

As part of the marketing of the PGA, we are going to host inter-campus roadshows and two social networking events. These social networking events will allow all postgraduates students, especially those from other universities the opportunity to make friends and relieve their academic stress. The PGA will, in future, also be an important presence at several Postgraduate Centre (PGC) events such as the Postgraduate Awareness Week and the Postgraduate Symposium. During the Postgraduate Awareness Week, the PGA Executive Committee members will act as mentors who share their experiences of being a postgraduate student with interested UJ undergraduate students; while at the Postgraduate Symposium the PGA will present its objectives and activities to the postgraduate student community. The PGA Executive Committee would like to thank the PGC staff, especially Ms Laura Arnold and Mr Simon Machogo-Sekoto, for significant developments within the PGA.

The UJ Postgraduate Association (PGA) was established in 2010 as a non-political structure which aims to support postgraduates scholastically and socially.
In 2012, the university recorded an improved first-year success rate of 80%, up from 76.6% in 2011. High first-year attrition is a serious problem faced by most universities across South Africa. Stats from The Council on Higher Education reveal that between 2005 and 2010, 46% of students enrolled in 3-5 year degrees at South African universities left their educational institution without graduating.

Far from being a South African problem however, first-year drop-out is an international concern. UJ academic, Soraya Motsabi, explains that student populations at universities worldwide are increasingly diversified, coming from a range of cultures and an assortment of educational backgrounds with irregular standards.

“Universally students are often victims of poor articulation between secondary and tertiary education, suffer a lack of preparedness for university life and are poorly informed on university programmes,” she comments. Viewing tertiary study in the main as a means to a job, they often select courses inappropriate to their abilities.

While academic failure is a significant cause of first-year dropout, in South Africa financial difficulties loom large in the minds of new students. UJ’s own statistics show that students on grants regularly outperform those who are non-funded; the gap in success rates is now over 5%. It is of major concern to local universities that bodies such as the National Student Financial Aid Scheme are needing to support an increasing number of university entrants.

As in all multicultural communities, socio-cultural issues also come into play. South African universities have experienced a sea-change in demographics in the last decade—UJ’s student body is now 75% black, with some 60%-65% being first generation university scholars under enormous pressure to succeed. Tertiary institutions also faced considerable adjustment with the introduction of the National Senior Certificate (NSC) matriculation in 2006, when student numbers spiked dramatically as a result of more learners than anticipated qualifying for a university entrance.

Recognising the need for a multi-pronged approach, UJ’s response has been holistic, a part-academic, part-psychosocial programme with an accent on students mentoring fellow students. Called the First Year Experience (FYE) programme, it was introduced in 2010. “Its elements are not new, but have been re-energised with intensified staff focus and greater student awareness,” states Motsabi.

FYE offers academic skills reinforcement through an Academic Development Centre and psycho-social assistance through the university’s Centre for Psychological Services and Career Development (PsyCaD). In addition the university’s Management Executive Committee has recently approved substantial strategic funding to further develop the tutor programme.

Essentially teaching assistants, the 1 285 tutors are an interface between students and teaching staff. Selected from third-year year level programme with an accent on students mentoring fellow students. Called the First Year Experience (FYE) programme, it was introduced in 2010. “Its elements are not new, but have been re-energised with intensified staff focus and greater student awareness,” states Motsabi.

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UJ Researchers Shine at NRF’s 28th Annual Awards

Four top-notch University of Johannesburg (UJ) researchers received the highest honours the National Research Foundation (NRF) can bestow in its highly prestigious rating system for researchers. Professors Hendrik Ferreira from the Faculty of Engineering and the Built Environment, John Maina from the Faculty of Science, and Thaddeus Metz from the Faculty of Humanities each received A2 ratings, while Prof Alex Broadbent was P-rated.

The NRF defines an A-rated researcher as a researcher who is unequivocally recognised by their peers as a leading international scholar in their field for the high quality and impact of their recent research outputs. Similarly, a P rating is awarded to a young researcher who, on the basis of exceptional potential demonstrated in their published doctoral work and research outputs in their early post-doctoral career, is considered likely to become a future international leader in his or her field.

These brilliant colleagues make us proud as they blaze a trail for fellow UJ researchers to follow. The University has put in place all the elements that make UJ the premier space for research and innovation – world-class laboratories, a top-class library, research funding, a vibrant community of postgraduate fellows and visiting scholars from across the globe, to mention but a few.

and up, they do well academically, are good communicators and able to identify students needing help. They receive intensive training and professional supervision, in turn gaining a set of skills that hone their potential as future academic staff.

In similar vein, UJ introduced academic advisors in university residences and approved off-campus accommodation facilities. Under the Academic Excellence Programme, 250 student advisors are serving 2,000 students, needing help. They receive intensive training and supervision, in turn gaining a set of skills that hone their potential as future academic staff.

Executive Director: Academic Development, the University is further restructured, with the introduction of a self-guided workbook to assist in setting at high school level. One step is the definition of the National Benchmark Tests, undertaken by matriculants. Benchmark Tests, undertaken by matriculants, has also been improved in some Faculties by careful consideration of the National Benchmark Tests, undertaken by matriculants.

“The tests, commissioned by Higher Education South Africa (HESA), can be a good indicator of students likely to require first year support, and suggestive of field of study placement,” she said. “An ongoing challenge,” she says, “is getting student to register, not only for the appropriate qualification but also at the right level ie mainstream or extended curriculum.”

Bridging measures have also been put into place at high school level. One step is the introduction of a self-guided workbook to assist school leavers in registering for appropriate qualifications, while outreach programmes at the university’s Soweto campus have seen Grade 11 learners trained in career advice, offering beneficial information to their peers.

Most local universities have support programmes, but they are poorly funded and students often do not know where to find them.

In the face of increasing demand for tertiary education (UJ’s applications for 2014 already count 10,000 more than last year), the pressure to overturn first-year drop-out will amplify.

Thousands of students at UJ who have embraced the fruits of their academic labour, descended upon Kingsway Campus in Auckland Park, with their gowns during the last series of graduation ceremonies of the University during the last term.

This last series of graduation ceremonies saw some of UJ’s academic staff also being conferred with their degrees for having completed their masters and doctoral studies. This is, in part, the results of the Staff Qualification Programme (SQP), which was implemented in late 2009, to encourage academic staff without masters’ and doctoral degrees to study further. The SQP is split into two programmes: one for academic staff with honours qualifications to study toward a masters’ degree (SQP-M) and the other offered to those with a masters’ to study for a doctoral qualification (SQP-D).

The final series of graduation ceremonies is one which sees fewer graduates getting capped, with the majority of students having been conferred during the Autumn ceremonies. More than 1,160 students were rewarded for the successful completion of their studies. Of the graduates who received recognition for their academic achievements during this series of graduation ceremonies, 679 were undergraduates and 283 were at postgraduate level. Apart from the 25 doctoral degrees awarded, 112 honours degrees and 146 masters’ degrees were also conferred.

The high number of masters’ and doctoral students who graduated proves that by establishing the programme UJ is moving in the right direction in encouraging both staff and students to pursue even higher qualifications following their undergraduate studies.

From 2010 to 2013 a total of 51 academic staff, enrolled in the SQP-M within the various faculties, completed their studies and graduated. A total number of 22 academic staff, enrolled in the SQP-D also within the various faculties, completed their doctoral degree and graduated in 2012 and 2013. This highlights the programme’s success in encouraging postgraduate and research studies at the University, which will ultimately result in improved teaching and learning, higher research output and a postgraduate student complement that produces concrete results, further entrenching UJ’s position as a competitive and accessible institution of global excellence and stature.
Visser and McCann scoop top honours at UJ Sports Awards

South African long-jump champion Zarck Visser and international rowing gold medallist Kirsten McCann were named Sportsman and Sportswoman of the Year at this year’s UJ’s gala sports awards ceremony.
Visser, who won the IAAF Diamond League meeting in Switzerland in August, was the institution’s standout male performer. His season’s best jump of 8.32m, achieved at that meeting, saw the 24-year-old move into fifth spot on the IAAF rankings. Aside from defending his national title, the third-year transport management student also jumped his way to gold for UJ in the inaugural Varsity Athletics series earlier this year.

In the women’s category, McCann was awarded the university’s top accolade for a second year in a row. The third-year Bachelor of Science student secured the honours with her lightweight single sculls victory at the world student championships in Kazan, Russia, in July. McCann, 25, followed this up with an eighth place at the senior world championships. Another big winner on the night was Student-Athlete of the Year Marco Becker, who delivered UJ’s best combination of academic and sporting achievements. The biokinetics honours student scored a 76 per cent average with 28 distinctions over his four years of study. He also captained the Namibian men’s squash team and is ranked as Namibia’s number one senior player.

Another big winner on the night was Student-Athlete of the Year Marco Becker, who delivered UJ’s best combination of academic and sporting achievements. The biokinetics honours student scored a 76 per cent average with 28 distinctions over his four years of study. He also captained the Namibian men’s squash team and is ranked as Namibia’s number one senior player.

In the club category, for non-students, wheelchair tennis player Lucas Sithole was named Sportsperson of the Year. In August, Sithole became the first African to win the US Open singles title after taking the British Open title the previous month. He also reached the finals of the Daegu and Swiss Open championships this year.

The UJ women put in a commanding performance to claim a 6-0 victory over tournament favourites Tshwane University of Technology (TUT).

The current USSA national club champions, TUT, were caught off-guard by a strong midfield attack, which was spearheaded by UJ’s national players Amanda Dlamini, Presocious Matabologa and Maphuti Manamela.

According to UJ football manager Joel Kgokong, the home team had underestimated his side, which has won the Gauteng student league for the past five seasons.

“Our game plan was to control the midfield, eliminate the wingers and play two strikers in the middle, who could easily penetrate the flat four defenders,” said Kgokong.

UJ overcame a sluggish UP-Tuks side 2-0, while TUT trounced the University of the Limpopo 4-0 in their march to the finals.

UJ ladies football team overcome a lacklustre early season to claim the inaugural championship title in the Varsity Football series in Pretoria on Monday night.
“Through giving young people opportunities to learn, create and participate in music making, the Johannesburg Youth Orchestra builds young people’s internal capacity to reach their potential.”

It is extraordinary and extremely encouraging that a company like the PGC recognises the value of investing in JYOC which ultimately creates the space for us to continue changing lives. The JYOC wishes to express its deepest gratitude to PGC and to UJ for their respective, generous and significant contributions to this exciting development.”

The Johannesburg Youth Orchestra Company (JYOC) is a resident company of the University of Johannesburg (UJ) following the recent signing of a three-way agreement between the University, JYOC and the POPCRU Group of Companies (PGC).
This award initiated by Sanlam Private Investments in collaboration with the Rust-en-Vrede Gallery in Durbanville in 2012 attracted an unanticipated 1783 entries by 1200 artists for the final adjudication earlier in 2013.

A prize of R 100,000.00 was awarded to Heather Gourlay-Conyngham. Born in Durban in 1956, Gourlay-Conyngham now lives in Hilton in the midlands of KwaZulu-Natal. She has worked as an art teacher and painter since graduating with a BA Fine Arts from the University of Natal in 1978 and a Higher Education Diploma in 1980 from the University of South Africa. Her paintings focus primarily on the human form.

Modeled on the London based National Portrait Gallery, BP Portrait Award, the competition invited entries in any medium with the exclusion of lens based media such as photography, television and film.

There has been enough common understanding of the principle of what a “portrait” entails that made for an exciting and animated process of selecting the 40 works for exhibition and to adjudicate which work was worthy of the award.

The independent panel of three adjudicators consisted of Hayden Proud, curator for Historical Painting and Sculptures at the Iziko SA National Gallery in Cape Town, Vulindlela Nyoni, a lecturer in printmaking at the University of Stellenbosch, and artist and art teacher Susanne du Toit. Du Toit recently scooped the prestigious 2013 BP Portrait Award in the United Kingdom. All the adjudicators have had extensive experience in making art, teaching and serving as adjudicators on other competitions. This, combined with their personal experiences and current active practice provided for a suitable combination of insights that undoubtedly contributed to the selection of a deserving award winner.

The convener of the panel, Stefan Hundt, curator of the Sanlam Art Collection and Head: Sanlam Private Investments Art Advisory Service commended the judges for their “exceptional dedication in making a very difficult decision, given the large number of entries received.”

The national touring exhibition can was showcased at the UJ Art Gallery from 23 October to 13 November, and can still be seen at Stephan Welz & Co at the Alphen Estate in Constantia, Cape Town, from 26 November to 10 January 2014. It will be hosted by the KwaZulu-Natal Society of Arts during April 2014.
ABOVE | Mamphela Ramphele
Photo | Tamlin Blake

RIGHT | Face of Xhosa – My Forefathers
Photo | Anathi Tywose
arts & culture

LEFT | Lullaby
PHOTO | Anita Sent

RIGHT | A Young Man
PHOTO | Heather Gourlay-Conyngham
arts & culture

RIGHT: Ms. Tshegofatso Phage Seated
PHOTO: Nicholas Allen

BELOW: Mom Sleeping
PHOTO: Heather Goulty-Corningham
A handful of members of the University of Johannesburg (UJ) senate have started to publicly comment selectively and untruthfully on confidential discussions which recently took place in that important body regarding a proposal to confer an honorary doctorate on US President Barack Obama.

They are not only violating the rules of the senate and the university, but through their unfounded allegations, they are in fact casting aspersions on important university processes. These colleagues are displaying a shocking disdain for their institution. Their allegations include suggestions, insinuations and innuendo to the effect that there has been no consultation, and that there is widespread dissent, deep divisions and even the “rigging” of voting processes.

My intention in this piece is not to dignify these spurious allegations with a response. Rather, as a member of the senate, I wish to defend not just the integrity of the senate and its members, but all relevant UJ institutions and processes relating to honorary degrees. I wish to state unequivocally that my respect for the senate, legitimate UJ processes, the UJ leadership and council is solid and intact. To this end I wish to briefly outline and highlight key aspects of UJ policies, processes and procedures when it comes to deciding whether or not to award an honorary degree.

The awarding of honorary degrees at UJ is tightly regulated, ethically founded, process-driven and governed by a strict and meticulous set of policy guidelines. All nominations for honorary degrees are submitted to a joint Council and Senate.

Awarding an honorary doctorate to a person by an institution of higher learning is a prestigious symbol which honours the person for their contribution to a particular academic field or, more generally, for their work and accomplishment in one or more areas relating to the world and humanity. It is also a reflection on the institution awarding the honour. Those honoured reflect the values of the institution, its moral compass and its ability to ensure that it honours and aligns itself with those who support justice, equality, freedom and a just peace.

But the UJ senate and council decision to award Obama an honorary degree is both deeply disappointing and insulting to the rich tradition of struggle for justice, equality and freedom in South Africa.

It sullies the reputation that the university earned when, in 2010, it became the first one in the world to break off ties with an Israeli university because of the latter’s support for Israeli apartheid and the occupation of Palestinian land. The argument made by some of its academics that the award was made to Obama and not to the US regime was absurd. It can be compared to honouring FW de Klerk because he was a much nicer man than PW Botha and that De Klerk, rather than his apartheid regime, was being honoured. Under Obama, the number of US-drone attacks and extrajudicial killings in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Yemen and Somalia has risen dramatically, in clear violation of the international law prohibiting extrajudicial killings.

The University of Johannesburg (UJ) has just dealt a significant blow to its reputation among human rights activists and progressive academics by deciding to award Barack Obama an honorary doctorate in law.

Should UJ confer an honorary degree on Obama?
Honorary Degrees Committee (HDC) – a committee consisting of, among others, elected representatives of the senate, the chair or co-chair of the principal and vice-chancellor, three deputy vice-chancellors, the registrar, executive deans and at least three members of council. Only candidates who receive unanimous support in the HDC will be referred to the next set of structures for further consultation and indication of support or disapproval.

We all must learn to live with legitimate democratic outcomes. Those who have failed to make persuasive arguments should not only accept but also defend the final outcomes.

The support of the senate, for example, only considered to be sufficient if at least two-thirds of the senate members are in agreement. For this reason, the senate vote (by means of a secret ballot) is in favour of a candidate. Note that the senate, which comprises primary senior academics, also includes SRC and council representatives.

Furthermore, the UJ council will only consider the possible approval of the conferment of an honorary degree if at least 80 percent of its members present in a quorate meeting vote in favour. It must also be noted that students are represented in the council. The council, although primarily comprising external experts, includes representatives from the senate, academic staff who are not full professors, non-academic staff as well as the SRC.

The processes described above apply strictly to all nominees for honorary degrees at UJ. Barack Obama included. The relevant UJ policy stipulates specific criteria for candidates deemed worthy of consideration for honorary degrees. Briefly stated, these criteria include outstanding intellectual contributions and outstanding contributions in public life aligned to the UJ vision, as well as distinctive social achievement. From the processes and policy guidelines outlined, it becomes clear that those alleging lack of consultation are either wildly off the mark or they lack knowledge.

It has also been alleged by one or two members of the senate that the proposal for the possible awarding of an honorary doctorate to Obama was either deliberately brought late into the agenda of the senate or forced on to it.

Without seeking to violate the integrity and confidentiality of the senate’s discussions, it must be said that these allegations are completely unfounded. Anybody familiar with normal (university) committee processes will be familiar with the notion of supplementary agenda items – urgent and important items which due to various reasons are brought late into the agenda of a meeting.

It is conceivable that the proposal to offer Obama an honorary degree may have been one of the supplementary agenda items. The late inclusion of supplementary agenda items is standard and accepted practice.

In any case, when a supplementary agenda item is of unusual or great significance, members will discuss and deliberate – sometimes even vote – on whether it should be included or not before adding or removing it from the agenda.

This would have been the route followed at the senate in deciding on the inclusion or exclusion of a supplementary agenda item such as the proposal to offer an honorary doctorate to Obama.

It seems that having ‘predicted’ that the university would be split by the mere discussion of the candidacy of Obama for an honorary doctorate in relevant university structures and in accordance with due processes, this handful of colleagues (as reported in some media) have had to ‘take up the matter of process’ by engaging in all manner of activities aimed at sowing and sowing (or at least projecting) the divisions they ‘predicted’. This appears, therefore, to have been a self-fulfilling prophecy.

The right thing for all of us to do is to await the finalisation of that process and to respect the final outcome.

We all must learn to live with legitimate democratic outcomes, even though they go against our wishes. Those who have failed to make persuasive arguments and to thereby garner the necessary support inside legitimate structures are alleged simply because but also defend the final outcomes. It cannot be right for colleagues who are privileged members of authoritative university structures to risk bringing the university into disrepute, by going outside of the legitimate structures with unfounded allegations simply because they did not get their way.

Prof Chris Landsberg is the incumbent of the SARChI Chair African Diplomacy and Foreign Policy, Faculty of Humanities; and Senior Associate, UJ School of Leadership.

He has perfected the art of reducing war to mechanical acts of murder by computer games.

The administration has also employed drones in increasingly repugnant ways including in ‘signature strikes’, which choose targets based on computer-detected patterns of behaviour rather than specific, corroborated information. The vast majority of the more than 4 000 people who have been killed in these drone attacks are innocent civilians and the others are alleged ‘terrorists’ or ‘irritants’.

Democracies which affirm the rule of law always allow to ‘alleged’ criminals until they are judged otherwise in a court of law.

And yet here, Obama has set himself up as an accuser, detector, protector, judge and executioner of a country that maintains military bases in 60 countries.

And now he is being honoured because he is the first coloured man to get into the position.

Moreover, the Obama administration has employed misleading techniques for counting drone fatalities – seemingly in order to obscure the actual collateral damage inflicted by these ostensibly ‘surgical’ strikes.

The administration has automatically defined males of a certain age as “enemy combatants” for purposes of death toll tallying.

Before his May 2013 announcement on new policies supposedly limiting presidential use of drone attacks, many drone strikes appear to have been either directly co-ordinated by the CIA – effectively rendering it a paramilitary group outside of direct congressional oversight – or a secretive military unit known as Joint Special Operations Command, which itself appears to co-ordinate strikes with the CIA.

Despite paying regular lip service to his desire to close the Guantanamo Bay prison facility, Obama’s administration has, in fact, continued the practice of indefinite detention.

The Guantanamo prison currently holds more than 150 detainees, most of whom have never been formally charged with a crime. Some of them entered there when they were 13 years old and the oldest prisoner was incarcerated in his 70s.

That was 12 years ago – how can anyone with a pretence to the values of freedom and democracy hold anyone in detention without access to a fair trial for so long?

What a justly deserved outcry apart from South Africa received when in the name of security it introduced detention without trial for periods of up to 90 days.

In recent months, as a number of those imprisoned in Guantanamo Bay have initiated a hunger strike to protest against their detention, the Obama administration has approved repeated force-feeding, in violation of the Geneva Conventions.

In June 2013, the Obama administration revealed for the first time that there are 46 detainees it plans to hold indefinitely without trial at a military tribunal at Guantanamo Bay, only seven convictions have been handed down and five of those have been overturned on appeal in federal district courts. None has been upheld on appeal.

Obama’s Justice Department has charged six individuals with leaking “classified information” under the Espionage Act of 1917, a law enacted shortly after the US entry into World War I to prevent the government interfering in military operations, and later used to threaten labour leaders during the Red Scare – and, over the years since, imprison several other “enemies” of the government.

All previous US presidents combined had only charged three individuals under the provisions of this law.

But of the six individuals charged by Obama’s Justice Department, one revealed information regarding potential financial mismanagement at the National Security Agency, two revealed information on potentially illegal abuses of civilians in Iraq and Afghanistan by the US military and two revealed information they believed might help prevent a US invasion of Iran.

Now, UJ, an institution that appears to have forged a new path of progress, equality and justice from its racist and oppressive foundations, has opted to confer an honour on a person who does not personify any of these noble ideals.

Now, UJ, an institution that appears to have forged a new path of progress, equality and justice from its racist and oppressive foundations, has opted to confer an honour on a person who does not personify any of these noble ideals.

The UJ community and all those who value justice must rise against this retrogressive move.
THE LEGEND OF

THE HOOPOE:
CONVERSATION

According to legend, a displaced tribal chief was fleeing through the hot African desert. There was no shade in sight, and just as he feared he would die, a flock of hoopoes appeared over him. They started to discuss their predicament amongst themselves and collectively decided they would try and save the chief. They flew close together, providing shade and a cool breeze for the chief. The chief never forgot how the flock of hoopoes saved his life. When he was reunited with his tribe, he declared that the hoopoe should wear a golden crown on its head, and every time its characteristic call of hoop-hoop-hoop was heard, his tribe remembered the bird’s kindness and wisdom.