

News & Updates

Spring Edition

Congratulations Christina, Lesley and Tilla



Teacher of the Year



Emerging Researcher of the Year



Researcher of the Year

On behalf of the Faculty, I would like to extend our proud congratulations to you on the awards you received as Researcher, Teacher and Emerging Researcher of the Year in the Faculty of Education at NMMU at the grand awards dinner event held recently.

Your excellent work in these important core areas of our work as academics lifts us all up, including the constituencies and communities we serve. We know and trust that you will continue making this significant contribution in the various aspects of our educational mission, and in the process serve to support and nurture both students and colleagues who wish to emulate your inspiring achievements. A collective applause from all of us! ~ Denise

South-North Cooperation

Dr. Ben Khumalo-Seegelken, part-time lecturer in Intercultural and Diversity Education and in Theology at the Carl von Ossietzky University in Oldenburg, Germany, visited at the beginning of September 2009 as part of the project "Teacher Education and Research with an Emphasis on Disadvantaged Learners in Selected Subject-Fields" (TERDAL) the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University to renew contacts and exchange experiences with colleagues and students in order to intensify the ongoing cooperation between the two partner-universities and explore possible avenues for future joint-ventures. Prof Denise Zinn, Dean of the Faculty of Education, and Prof Andrew Leitch, Dean of the Faculty of Science, each discussed at length and exchanged opinions on matters pertaining to academic exchange programmes in South-North context.

Altogether 5 staff members and 3 post-graduate students shall be visiting Oldenburg on the TERDAL programme this year. Ben Khumalo-Seegelken, one of the activists in the Black Consciousness Movement forced to exile and landed in Germany in 1975, joined the Centre for South-North Cooperation in Educational Research and Practice at the University of Oldenburg in 2008 and was visiting the NMMU for the first time: "Phambili! – Carry on with the good work you are doing here!" ~ Ben



Ben celebrated his birthday during his visit; here with Neville

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Conference News

A Seminar on Communication of Research for Uptake and Utilisation sponsored by the Department for International Development (DFID-UK) and part of a scoping exercise to discuss ways to strengthen the capacity of researchers in Africa to have the expertise to improve research uptake and utilization.

DFID is one of the donors that facilitates and encourages communication in research. As a result DFID's Research Strategy for 2008-2013 has identified Research Uptake as a strategic issue. The at the University of Stellenbosch and the (ACU) have been in discussion with DFID about a project that would focus on building a new knowledge base and formal support facility for researchers and universities. 18 South African and African organizations were represented at the seminar. The purpose of the seminar was to inform DFID's Uptake Team of the current levels of capacity, interest and potential in sub-Saharan Africa. DFID also wanted to have a better understanding of the challenges and opportunities that researchers are faced with. Furthermore, where DFID can inject its resources to improve and enhance uptake and to find out what kinds of support structures that already exist for DFID to tap into.

Presentations were made around the issue of research uptake and utilization. It was evident that an awareness of uptake and utilization has to be created. A call was made for a multi-directional impact of research. The question that became clear was how institutions will meet the challenge of communicating and disseminating research so that it becomes accessible and available. In a quest to understand what optimizes research utilization, models of research uptake and utilization were presented. Three models were identified: the science push model of research utilization; the user driven model and the network model.

One of the presentations offered solutions to the quest of optimizing research uptake and communication. The suggested solutions were that research projects:

- should have key drivers
- need concerted effort
- should be integrated, multidisciplinary and multi-dimensional
- should have strategic partnerships
 - closer ties with African universities / linking researchers within Africa
 - developing research networks
 - inter-institutional collaborations
 - creating communities of excellence and communities of practice



As presentations were made, a critical question arose: **What is the impact of our research and how does it improve the quality of life of people?** ~ Muki

Scientific Literacy Colloquium

In this instance the Scientific Literacy Short Learning Programme (SLP) was offered to both external persons and academics in the Department of Science & Technology Education in order to expand capacity to promote Scientific Literacy in schools. Participants who have participated fully in the programme, other than the academic staff in the picture alongside (Jeff, Raj, Lyn, Elsa and Helena), include Nicky Daniels (principal of the Museum School), Sam Streak (principal of the Montessori School), and Les Foster, Pam Spady and Brian Walters (consultants). ~ Paul

"There is interesting research happening here at NMMU in our faculty (Department of Science Education) on the notion of scientific literacy, that incorporates many features of literacy development in general. To my mind they have in fact adopted an emergent literacy approach within their scientific literacy framework, very interesting work!" ~ Denise



Presenters. From left Paul Webb, Les Foster, Lyn Webb, Helena Oosthuizen, Elsa Lombard, Elize Kotze, Brian Walters, Nicky Daniels, Raj Kurup and Jeff Ilsley (missing Pam Spady & Pam Streak)

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"Page 3" Profile - getting to know each other

I am **Cordelia Ntombizanele Mazomba**, known as Nomanono. I was born in Alexandria at Zuney Farm but grew up in Port Elizabeth. I am the eldest daughter of 7 children of Mr Tamsanqa Talbert Ndimba and the late Mrs Nowani Ndimba. I also have a large extended family as my father was an only son with 6 sisters. Thus, according to our culture, he could not leave his father after he got married. This disadvantaged his children because everything he and my mom worked for was for his dad.

I learnt to be a hard worker growing up because my parents owned small businesses selling fruit, vegetables and meat at Soweto, Njoli and Daku Squares. We often had to wake up as early as 05h00 for my brother to transport us before he went to work his 06h00 shift. As my primary education was in schools with the platoon system, I would attend school after working. During weekends I never had time to do anything else except work hard in the business and I remember days where I would go to school not having done homework because my father used to say "school work stops at school".

As my mom's helper, I was witness to how she struggled to make something out of nothing. She never received an education and her family accepted that she got married for them to get lobola. She had little choices in life. In our culture a married woman must be submissive and loyal to her husband, so she did not even have a say in the family finances which she so tirelessly worked for. I became determined to break the trend of illiteracy; that "I will never be the same; I will strive to better myself and other women". That made me who I am today. I am proud to say I am a hard worker, independent, loving, caring, dedicated, and reliable. I learnt to find God's purpose in each and every situation I find myself in. I listened to my inner voice that said, "Education is the only weapon that can liberate me from this situation".

My schooling career was not an easy road but through perseverance I made it to where I am today. I remember when I was still at primary school that I never wore a new school uniform ("black gym dress" as we called it). I was its third owner. The only time I got a new uniform was when I went to Loyiso High School. I am grateful to my high school educators because it was the first time I felt appreciated. I was identified as a netball player, an athlete and a soft ball player. In 1980, 1982 and 1983 I was a school prefect as well as the 1983 sport's girl of the year. Unfortunately, I had to repeat standard 10 in 1982 as I fell pregnant during the 1980 political strikes. At the time it was unacceptable to have a child if you were unmarried, so I had to leave school to look after the child. That did not stop me! Instead it became my life changing experience.

After matriculating I never stopped furthering my studies. I did my Secondary Teacher's Diploma at Cape College of Education. In 1987 I started my teaching career at Addo Primary School. I moved in 1989 to Isaac Booi Primary, in 1996 to Motherwell High School and in 2002 to Melisizwe Primary School as H.O.D. Throughout my teaching career I continued my studies because I felt it was the only way I could fully understand my learners as most of them come from disadvantaged backgrounds and many have learning disabilities. I received my BA degree from Vista University, my Further Diploma at Rand Afrikaans University and B Ed Honours from UPE.

I always praise God the Almighty for giving me hope, faith and love and by blessing me. God places me in at the right place at the right time. In 2004, by volunteering to be part of a HPS programme, I was fortunate to meet Prof. Lesley Wood and Prof. Tilla Olivier. As an active and dedicated educator, I then received SMATE funding to do a short course in HIV & AIDS. I found the course so relevant to me and all educators that I decided to complete the ACE HIV & AIDS in Teaching.

I believe we control our destiny and our future is in our hands. We need to have a dream and make sure we remain focused on it; always working towards achieving it. I have a slogan "*Forward ever and backward never*". I will never be the same, I will keep on moving and I will never give up. I am a Christian who believes that the only way to serve God is to be of service to your people. I make sure that I am a living testimony that God listens to our prayers because I strive to find a message in whatever situation I find myself in and a blessing in every bad thing I experience. I am a member of Anglican Church in Motherwell and have served twice as a church warden. I am a member of Mother's Union, serve as a member of social development, a volunteer of lovelife's motivational programme and a volunteer in NU12 in a community based organization that helps orphans and vulnerable children.

I am very proud to say I got married to my high school boyfriend, Vuyani Siyabulela Mazomba uNala, uNdokose who also had to leave school to pay damages to my family after they found out that I was pregnant. He was also doing standard 10. He went back to school to complete his matric whilst I was doing my first year at teacher's college. He completed his teaching diploma at Algoa College of Education and obtained his Master's degree in Musicology at NMMU. We are blessed with two sons, Mncedisi, who owns his own business, and Mawetu, who is in Grade 12, and two grandchildren, Lithemba and Zinala.

I am also very proud to have joined the staff of NMMU because it gives me hope that we must not stop doing good things because at the time I volunteered my service to be part of the NMMU outreach programme I never knew that it was going take me to where I am today...



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TESSA Presentation

Jayshree Thakrar, Director of Training & Academic Projects / TESSA at the University of Fort Hare, delivered a presentation to staff and students on the Teacher Education in Sub Saharan Africa (TESSA) portal as well as Open Educational Resources (OERs) in general last week.

Well attended by both staff and final year students, the presentation detailed the TESSA web platform and OERs available on the site for educators to use, share, adapt and add to in order to enhance and expand their own teaching and learning. www.tessafrica.net



Administrative staff were treated to a special breakfast function on 02 September in acknowledgement of their contributions to the Faculty. Our thanks to the Dean and organisers, Laetitia, Tobeka and Hugh



Current Fulbright Scholar

Dr. Eileen B. Raymond from the State University of New York in Potsdam (Associate Dean, School of Education/Professional Studies) joined the NMMU Faculty of Education family in July 2009 as a Fulbright Scholar on a lecturing/research grant until June 2010. During this year, Eileen will be teaching in the inclusive education modules and working with our Special Needs Education faculty to develop that curriculum further. In addition, she plans to spend time in local public schools, gaining insight into their implementation of inclusionary practices to better serve diverse learners. She is particularly interested in the Universal Design for Learning framework for inclusive education, and looks forward to offering workshops on UDL for local educators as well as NMMU faculty and students.

Eileen selected South Africa and NMMU because of the prospect of working within an educational system that is just beginning to fully take its new shape. "South Africa presents me with many intriguing opportunities as a country with a new form of government and an educational system focused on including all children. In only 15 years past the end of apartheid, South Africans have reconfigured their national P-12 and higher education systems, as well as making significant changes to teacher preparation for today's challenges. The opportunity to be part of that program development and to share my professional experiences is an extraordinary one," she said. "This is a very exciting opportunity to spend an extended period of time in a different culture. I look forward to working with colleagues who are confronting many of the same challenges we do in America, but within a different governmental system and educational context. At this point in my career, I am eager to reconsider my knowledge and skills through a different cultural lens."

When she returns home next June, Eileen looks forward to sharing what she has learned about developing inclusive schools and classrooms with her American colleagues. "I hope to gain insights that can inform my practice with diverse learners in schools at home. Too often in America, we focus only on disability and sometimes race when we consider diversity in the classroom. My impression is that South Africa takes a much broader perspective. During the first two months here, I have been particularly impressed with the complexities of implementing South Africa's language policy, and I look forward to exploring that challenge more in the coming months."

Eileen is one of approximately 1,100 U.S. faculty and professionals who will travel abroad this year through the Fulbright U.S. Scholar Program, sponsored by the U.S. Department of State. Since 1946, the Fulbright Program has provided approximately 108,160 Americans who have studied, taught or researched abroad and 178,340 students, scholars and teachers from other countries who have engaged in similar activities in the United States, with the opportunity to observe each others' political, economic, educational and cultural institutions; to exchange ideas; and to embark on joint ventures of importance to the general welfare of the world's inhabitants. If you are interested in learning more about Fulbright opportunities, Eileen invites you to stop by for a chat, or maybe join her for lunch!

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Dealing with Diversity

Thank you to those who attended the Dealing with Diversity discussion at the beginning of September – the afternoon was a huge success and I feel a very necessary step in the right direction. Colleagues were given a platform to express their own experiences, challenges and insights in dealing with *At Risk students* and an open forum-type discussion was held in this regard. I think we all discovered that a student at risk can indeed be defined in a variety of ways, but for all intensive purposes, we agreed that this type of student is one who – for reasons either within or outside of their control – is at a risk of not being able to complete their current year of study. These students included those identified via CAAR testing, who exhibit poor academic performance/class attendance and those who may be experiencing emotional disturbances which need attention.

The purpose of the discussion was to identify a way forward in dealing with these students and, although we ran out of time (!), a consensus was reached. Dr Childs and Dr Jordaan were both in agreement that academic staff often experience work burnout and overload and expressed their concern that the process of referring the student may present more work to the lecturer and only exacerbate this workload. The suggestion was made that a general template should be created which could be used by all individuals working with the student (mentors, peer helpers, SI tutor, lecturer and so forth). This template would be a hassle-free means of identifying problem areas (from a list) on behalf of the student with a section to add additional comments.

The completed form would be sent to the Support Office (i.e. me!) and would be categorized from there; all forms would be grouped together for each respective student and referral performed by the SO to the **SCCDC**. Once the student has been referred and appropriate procedures put in place by the SCCDC, feedback will be provided to the referee on the student's performance. This form would also serve as an effective means of identifying suitable intervention for the student as it would assert the SO to possible trends developing in the student's behaviour. A file of all forms will be held by the SO and could be accessed by the lecturer / staff member if so needed and for their reference. The SCCDC will be working with the SO so as to construct a transparent, yet effective referral form. The completed template is available on the Education G drive for your use. ~ Melissa

Since its inception 3 years ago, the faculty's **Support Office** has been assisting Education students with all aspects of their studies, including the 1st Year Periods which were introduced this year to assist students to the different support services on campus.



The office also identifies intervention methods for struggling students and acts as the "ear" of the faculty - all students can rest assured that by visiting with the Education Access and Retention Officer (**Miss Melissa May**), the correct way forward can be identified and assistance given in whatever way possible. By making an appointment or by popping in between lectures, any concerns the student may have can be voiced in a friendly and comfortable environment.

Situated in Building 6, 1st floor, Room 35 (in the lecture room 32) students are encouraged to meet with the EAR-O regularly regardless of the concern or problem at hand.

Centre visit for NPDE: Lusikisiki & Bizana, 25 - 26 September 2009

A centre visit with a view to quality assurance was undertaken by Neville Rudman, Nokhanyo Mayaba and Anneline Vermaak. The trip included a brief stop-over in Flagstaff, a sub-centre of Lusikisiki. While Neville dealt with administrative issues of students and centre managers, Nokhanyo (*Language & Professionalism in Education 111*) and Anneline (*Technology 11*) had the opportunity to interact with NPDE students and tutors. The students were clearly extremely happy to meet the people who were setting their examination papers, and it was useful to touch base with the tutors regarding the delivery of the modules in question. Nokhanyo also made use of the opportunity for some 'on-site' moderation of tests and assignments in Lusikisiki. A successful trip, which adds much to the delivery in far-off places! ~ Neville



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The Sky is the Limit Research Project



From 17-19 September 2009, members of the Walmer Schools Project set out for Alexandria to take part in a retreat at the beautiful Nduna Lodge game farm. The participants included 12 teachers from 3 schools in Walmer Township: Walmer Primary, Walmer High and John Masiza Primary. The 2-day retreat was lead by Prof Tilla Olivier and Prof Lesley Wood of the Faculty of Education's Centre for Research, Technology and Innovation (CERTI). Ms Cordelia Mazomba, of the Faculty, and Ms Esme Mack, a doctoral student in education, part-time lecturer and full-time teacher at David Livingstone High, assisted with the retreat. Ms Mack also undertook interviews with the teachers for the purposes of her research. Research assistant, Mr David Morton, made sure that all the logistical and technical aspects were well taken care of.

The retreat served: to facilitate and enable the teachers in the making of video-documentaries in the form of participatory research; to inspire the teachers in their work as teachers, especially regarding their relationships with their learners, the parents and the community at large; and to create a bond between the NMMU researchers and the teacher-researchers, and of course between the researchers themselves.

The teachers also had time for socialisation and enjoyed themselves thoroughly, as was shown by the manner in which they spontaneously sang before and after each session. The teachers and researchers even took part in quad-biking and a game ride. The researchers felt that the retreat was a great success and that certainly a strong foundation was built from which the three Walmer schools will benefit greatly and on which further exciting projects can be built. ~ Tilla & Lesley



Teachers working with the posters



Teachers working with the camera



Tilla with a group of teachers



Socialising and fun! Quad biking and game drives



We cannot change the cards we are dealt, just how we play the hand Randy Pausch, The Last Lecture