



# NEWS

April 2012

*A time to celebrate the fruits of all our labour*

## Graduation 2012

NMMU graduation ceremonies were held between 13 and 23 April, with the Faculty of Education ceremony being held on 19<sup>th</sup> April.

As remarked by Executive Dean, Prof Denise Zinn, graduation is “a time to celebrate the fruits of all our labour, and the 'commencement' (as it is called in the USA) of new future possibilities for our graduating classes.”

This year, as a faculty, we celebrated the achievements of:

- 42 B Ed Foundation Phase graduates
- 70 B Ed Intermediate Phase graduates
- 21 B Ed FET graduates
- 60 PGCE graduates
- 13 NPDE graduates
- 525 ACE graduates (various programmes)
- 153 B Ed Honours graduates
- 7 M Ed graduates
- 6 D Ed / PhD graduates

We are especially proud of our colleagues, Ms **Marinda van Zyl**, who obtained her Magister Educationis, and **Dr Priscilla Gitonga**, who obtained her PhD under supervisors Prof Alette Delpont and Dr T Toni. Well done!

The Faculty also celebrated the bestowment of an Honorary Doctorate to **Prof Catherine Odora Hoppers** in recognition of her work on gender, science and innovation, and the integration of indigenous knowledge systems which has created ground-breaking shifts in traditional knowledge paradigms.

After the ceremony, the Faculty hosted an intimate book launch for Prof Hoppers' newly published book, *Rethinking thinking: Modernity's "other" and the transformation of the university*, which she co-authored with Dr Howard Richards.



Pictured alongside with Prof Catherine Odora Hoppers (left) at the book launch is Robert Pearce (Director: NMMU LIS) and Eileen Scheckle (SITE lecturer).



*Prof Denise Zinn (front, second right) is pictured with the 6 new doctorates and several staff members at the Education 2012 graduation ceremony*

### HIV and AIDS Education Community of Practice

The HIV and AIDS Education COP held a symposium in PE recently with the theme, “*Being a Teacher-Educator in the age of AIDS: Psycho-Social and Pedagogical Challenges in Integrating HIV and AIDS in the Academic Curriculum*”. Speakers and panel participants from across South Africa and abroad attended, including Dr Ramneek Ahluwalia, Head of Higher Education HIV/AIDS Programme (HEAIDS).



*Teachers presenting on the first panel in the programme, “Psycho-social challenges at school – What we as teachers experience in schools and what we wish we were trained for!” Facilitator: Prof Lesley Wood with participants: Noluthukela Mguca, Sindiswa Gwaxula, Nontobeko Ntshininda, Nomonde Ntsundwana, Thozama Mahlakahlaka.*

## George Achievers!

A recently held merit awards evening at the George Campus saw several of the B Ed FET students shine.

Ms Petula Booysen, highest achieving 1<sup>st</sup> year B Ed FET student, says she obtained her merit award through hard work and perseverance. When asked she said her BEd degree is a "last chance to make something of myself". And, even though she has to commute to the George Campus from Oudtshoorn every day, she loves the campus and finds her lecturers very helpful. The attendance of the Dean and senior academics from PE impressed her, "[it shows] their interest in what their students do and their desire to take the university forward".

Mari Terblanche is the top 2<sup>nd</sup> year B Ed FET student. She is an example of a student who is motivated by the example set by the previous year's highest achiever - she decided she wanted to see if she could do that too. Mari surprised herself when she found she was indeed able to do it!

Ms Nina Hanekom, the top achieving student in 3<sup>rd</sup> year B Ed FET, is an exceptional student whose marks average 90%! When asked she emphasised her success was "99% due to hard work". She also attributes her success to her lecturers, saying they make a "big difference". Nina is now undertaking her practice teaching at Outeniqua Hoerskool.



From left: Mari Terblanche, Suz Phillips (B Ed FET Administrator), Prof Denise Zinn (Executive Dean), Paddy Esselaar (B Ed FET lecturer), Petula Booysen and Nina Hanekom

**"Identity, Sexuality and Higher Education in the Age of HIV and AIDS"** Dr Mathabo Khau facilitated an interactive meeting around this topic with B Ed students this month, to invoke interesting discussions and stimulate engagement on the topic. Of particular concern is the increase in the number of unplanned pregnancies over recent years.

## briefs

### 2012 Research Seminar Series



Dr Mathabo Khau presented this month, the title of her presentation "What's love got to do with it?" *NMMU Students' Perceptions of Multiple Concurrent Sexual Partnerships (MCSPs) and HIV risk.*

'This paper presents university students' experiences of mobility and migration in relation to how they perceive MCSPs and HIV risk. Data generation was through memory work, photo-voice, drawings and focus group discussions with ten international students at the NMMU's Post Graduate Student Village. The findings show how students construct MCSPs differently in relation to 'risk' and how their constructions reconstruct their sexual identities and relationships in a foreign context.'

### HMS Hockey coaching with Abrie de Swardt

A beautiful day at Saasveld Campus... The George B Ed FET students were privileged to recently enjoy a HMS session of hockey coaching with Abrie de Swardt.



### NRF grant for new project

Prof Naydene de Lange (Research Chair: HIV and AIDS in Education) was recently awarded an new NRF grant over three years for an exciting project titled, *Not leaving data in the dark: participatory archiving and visual data to address HIV and AIDS.* We are proud of you, Naydene!

### Visual Arts module = creative students!

1<sup>st</sup> year Foundation Phase students apply their newly acquired visual arts knowledge and skills (colour, perspective, form, etc):



# Conference News

## NELTA Conference in Kathmandu

Sylvan Blignaut and Logan Athiemoolam presented papers at the 17<sup>th</sup> International NELTA (Nepal English Language Teachers' Association) conference from the 18<sup>th</sup> to the 20<sup>th</sup> of February 2012 in Kathmandu at St Xavier's School in Lalitpur.

The conference brought together English language practitioners from across the Indian sub-continent, UK, Singapore, USA, Malaysia, Japan, New Zealand and Thailand. 179 papers were presented in Kathmandu and 80 in Chitwan. While Sylvan presented his paper at the NELTA conference in Kathmandu, Logan presented papers in both Kathmandu and Chitwan.

The conference theme, *"Beyond Binaries: Sharing ELT Practices and Creating the Future"*, created ample opportunities for delegates to share best practices in English language teaching with practitioners from across the globe and to expand their horizons in the field.

Both Sylvan and Logan's papers were well received by a very receptive audience. Sylvan presented a paper entitled *'Language as a Medium to teach for social change'*, and Logan presented his paper *'Empowering Trainee teachers to use drama and theatre-in-education in their classes'*.

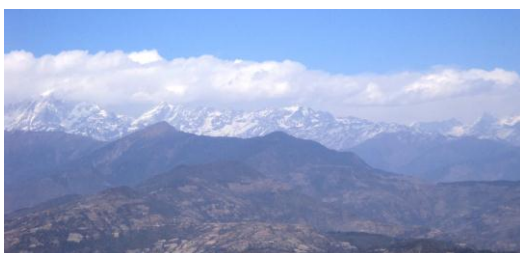


Sylvan (far left) and Logan (third left) pictured with fellow delegates at NELTA

Highlights of the conference were the three globally recognized key speakers, Professor Rod Ellis from the University of Auckland, a leading figure of task-based language teaching and second language acquisition, Angi Malderez an Honorary Senior Fellow of the School of Education, the University of Leeds, a leading figure in teacher mentoring, and Professor Fredericka L Stoller, a leading figure in English second language teaching.

The conferences in both Kathmandu and Chitwan were a great success and the hospitality, warmth and friendliness of delegates and organizers was overwhelming.

During their visit to Kathmandu, Logan and Sylvan were also able to gain a bird's eye view of the spectacular Himalaya Mountains which proved to be a spiritually uplifting experience for both.



## South African Basic Education Conference

The inaugural SA Basic Education Conference was held from 2-4 April 2012 at the International Convention Centre in Durban. The conference succeeded in bringing together all stakeholders who are passionate about quality teaching, learning and assessment, management and leadership capacity in our schools and districts, and the relation of schooling to its local and broader social and economic environment.

The conference provided a platform for research-focused institutions (universities, research institutions) and practice based organizations (education administrations, schools, NGOs) to share education experiences and insights and to promote collaboration and partnerships both amongst researchers and practitioners and across the sector.

The organizers and co-chairpersons of the conference, Mary Metcalfe and Mpo Letlape, received 320 abstracts from teachers, principals, academics, government organizations and corporate sector. Ultimately, 120 peer-reviewed abstracts were selected. There were 650+ delegates, 120 speakers, 100 poster presentations and 30 exhibitors.

The outcome of the conference was a commitment to improve collaboration amongst all stakeholders by motivating them to think about how they could work together to ensure that the limited resources at their disposal could go further and achieve greater impact so that the changes they all dream about could be realized.

The following papers were presented by colleagues from the Faculty and partner schools from the metropole:

*Developing a Broader and bolder Approach to School Improvement in South Africa* by Dr Allistair Witten & Mr Bruce Damons (Plenary – Characteristics of schools that succeed in challenging environments)

*Empowering Rural Teachers to Conduct Action Research in their Classes* by Dr Logamurthie Athiemoolam

*The Manyano Network – A Proactive and Sustainable Approach to School Improvement* by Mr Lamile Faltein (Limekhaya High School), Mr Bruce Damons (Alfonso Arries Primary School) and Mr Paul Blake (Manyano Network)



From left: Lamile Faltein, Paul Blake, Mary Metcalfe, Logan Athiemoolam, Mpo Letlape, Bruce Damons and Al Witten

All the papers presented were well received and the presenters were lauded for their commitment to the upliftment of marginalized communities.

The conference succeeded in bringing together people who shared a commitment to improving education in South Africa and the depth of talent, innovation and passion was impressive and inspiring to all those present. The next Basic Education conference will be held in 2014.