

NEWS

October 2014

WV

Research Teach



Congratulations to Prof Paul Webb for being named Distinguished Professor. In this picture Prof Webb is seen at the 2013 Excellence Awards Dinner with Prof Thoko Mayekiso.

Distinguished Professor

Prof Paul Webb has been officially notified by HR that his application for the position of Distinguished Professor has been successful! Congratulations to Paul! This is the crown on a long career that spanned several decades of intense dedication. Since his appointment at the level of full Professor, he has demonstrated sustained performance at a level higher than this over an extended period of time, covering the areas of research and innovation, teaching and learning as well as academic engagement.

His research focus has been on several dimensions of the development of scientific literacy and he is currently probing reasoning and thinking in the context of scientific literacy. His sustained contribution to committee work provides evidence of his commitment and expertise as well as peer acknowledgment. His work in CENCE and SMATE over many years had a significant impact on the community and it resonates well with the NMMU vision and some of its strategic objectives.

His ability to attract, manage and retain outside funding for engagement projects is exceptional and his leadership in this area is outstanding, also at international level. His mentoring and guidance and willingness to share are all attributes that we have come to know well in the Faculty!

Well done Paul! We are proud of you!!



Prof Nonnie Botha

CERM-ESA2

GOLDEN KEY 5

EXHIBITION13



INTRODUCING CERM-ESA NMMU

Professor Bernd Siebenhuner, Vice-President of Oldenburg University, Germany, introduced the newly established Centre of Educational Research Excellence situated jointly at the NMMU, Moi (Kenya) and Oldenburg universities (CERM-ESA) to NMMU's Faculty of Education staff. This public information event focused on the project plan, implementation and on establishing the first steps of the project from August 2014 – January 2016.

Professor Siebenhuner and Ms Malve van Moellendorf from Oldenburg University have already arrived to kick-start the South African leg of the project. Late in January 2015, CERM-ESA NMMU will hold its first conference for delegates from all partner universities including, Ugandan Management Institute (Uganda) and University of Daar es Salaam (Tanzania).

The German Federal Foreign Office (DAAD) funded project seeks to:

- Establish Centres of Excellence at leading African universities,
- Create modern educational capacities of supranational influence and;
- Contribute towards improvements in the educational quality and greater research capacity.

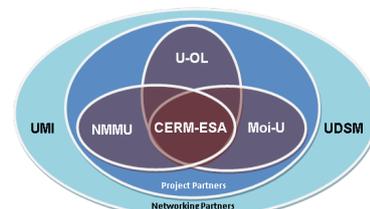
Education's School of Educational Research and Engagement (SERE) is the host of the project's Support Office and all interested parties within the Faculty were invited to contribute any ideas they might have towards the development of the project.

The Faculty of Education is recognised for its proven research capacities at Master and Doctoral levels. As such, the project's Support Office will offer capacity building for Master's and Doctoral programmes as well as facilitate research on three (first three) of the four themes:

- The role of language in science and maths education,
- Research methods in African contexts and the;
- Community Schools and engagement for social development and;
- Languages, Intercultural Communication, Indigenous Knowledge and Arts.

The invitation to apply for one fully funded Master's and one fully funded Doctoral research studies on one of the project themes are open to all interested candidates beyond the Faculty of Education. Applications will be accepted in the latter part of 2015. The project plan for all centres of excellence also includes research colloquia, summer schools and staff development workshops.

Kholisa Papu



Symposium on Academic Depth and Rigor in Initial Teacher Education



On the 30th – 31st October 2014 colleagues presented at the Symposium on Academic Depth and Rigor in Initial Teacher Education. The conference at WITS Education Campus was hosted by a myriad of universities, such as WITS, North-West University, University of Pretoria and UNISA, along with UNESCO. The symposium interrogated various areas of education, with special focus on institutional policy and curriculum. When asked about the symposium, Professor Alletta Delpoit said she is “proud that NMMU was well represented and that our papers were well received. The papers from our colleagues at other HEIs also proved to be very stimulating and thought-provoking”.

ACE-SL CONFERENCE EMPOWERS STUDENTS TO CONDUCT AND PRESENT RESEARCH PAPERS

The ACE-SL conference that was held in October this year focused on showcasing students' research related projects that they conducted at their schools incorporating the research related skills they acquired during the course of the ACE-SL programme. The conference which was jointly co-ordinated by Logan Athiemoolam and Vuks Tshazibana with logistical support by Ms Gishma Daniels and Mr Sherwin King was once again a resounding success. This was the seventh conference of its kind for ACE-SL students and was probably the last as the ACE-SL programme has been phased out.

The following papers were presented at the conference:

Addressing violent related activities in a Primary School by Primrose Cunge

- Learner absenteeism in a previously disadvantaged Secondary school by Victor Jonas
- Addressing the drop out rate of Learners at Kwa Nomzamo Adult Learning Centre by Piliswa Lugebu
- The lack of parental involvement in a Primary school: A Case Study by Patrick Palmer
- Learners' perceptions on the reasons for drug abuse in a Primary school by Michael Peter Mxolisi



Ms Mboya, who served as the adjudicator, was so impressed with the standard of the research that she compared the presentations to research at Honours or Masters levels. This was indeed really complimentary remarks from a very knowledgeable and active freelance researcher and lecturer. The conference culminated with the awarding of certificates and the adjudicators' overall review of the presentations. Dr Tshazibana co-ordinated the activities exceptionally well and enthralled the participants and visitors with his insight into educational management related issues. The active and engaged audience participation was impressive as demonstrated by the very insightful and critical questions they posed to the participants which kept both the presenters and the audience thinking.

Logan Athiemoolam

SOCIAL JUSTICE WORKSHOP SHOWCASES SOUTH NORTH COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH

BACKGROUND TO THE WORKSHOP



The workshop with the theme 'Social Justice in Education' was held at the South End Museum from the 15-16th of October and was collaboratively conceptualised and co-ordinated by Professor Kerstin from Bromsön, Dr Logan Athiemoolam and Professor Sylvan Blignaut.

This was a collaborative workshop between the University of Gothenburg and the NMMU's Faculty of Education which afforded both doctoral students and academics from both institutions to share their research with their fellow colleagues from the North and the South.

Professor Paul Webb opened the workshop with an insightful commentary on social justice in education from a South African perspective which set a very good tone for the workshop as a whole.

Thereafter the movie on social justice by Dr Katija Adam and her PGCE students entitled 'Heart of the Who' was showcased to a very receptive audience. The movie led to stimulating, critical discussion on issues relating to the plight of the marginalised and disadvantaged in both South Africa and Sweden.

The workshop showcased research undertaken by doctoral students from both the Universities of Gothenburg and NMMU, collaborative papers by colleagues from both institutions, and papers by established researchers from the two institutions. Some of the issues focused on religious discourses, emotional intelligence, rainbow youths, social justice in teacher education programmes, literacy, learning through video interaction and joint collaborative projects on social justice.

The joint South/North collaborative papers presented included the following:

- Prof Kerstin von Brömssen, University of Gothenburg and Dr Logamurthie Athiemoolam (NMMU): An analysis of pre-service teachers' role plays on religious issues in classroom contexts by using critical discourse analysis.

- Dr Tore Otterup Gothenburg and Dr Nokhanya Mayaba : Writing in Science Classrooms: Some Case Studies in South African and Swedish Second-language Classrooms.

- Ann-Charlotte Lindgren and Dr Laetitia Greyling: Learning Video Interaction

These collaborative research projects involving the members of staff from the two institutions have been on-going projects over a period of at least two to four years which led to the building of relationships and the further deepening and strengthening of research themes in their respective fields of endeavour.

CONTINUE TO PAGE 5 ...



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4 ...

In order to open the workshop space to school and learner participation to enhance an understanding of social justice issues as manifested in the curriculum, Mrs Robertha Nazer, a social science teacher from Lawson Brown High School, was invited to showcase her research related activities with her learners in her grade 9 class.

A group of grade 9 learners presented their research project on 'Oral History Accounts based on the Forced Removals' to a spellbound audience. The group of learners interviewed members of their community who were affected by the Group Areas Act and forced removals and presented their research findings to the delegates.

This exciting presentation which saw learners entering into the academic workshop space, supported by commentary from their teacher, provided the delegates with insights into some of the wonderful projects being undertaken by teachers in various schools in the Nelson Mandela Metropole.

All delegates present from both the South and the North agreed that the workshop was a resounding success as it served to strengthen existing relationships, build new ones for future collaborative projects and most importantly of all provided them with insights into the social issues and the common challenges affecting both countries as they try to come to terms with the demands of a fluid, changing, globalised more inter-connected world.

Prof Kerstin von Brommson and Dr L Athiemoolam



Golden Key Lecturer of the Year



WINNERS PER FACULTY ... Osiphesona Ngcanga (Golden Key NMMU Chapter) (from left), Dr Benita Barton (Faculty of Science), Ms Claudette Leppan (Faculty of Arts), Ms Cheryl Schroder (Faculty of Engineering, the Built Environment and Information Technology), **Mr Sikhumbuzo Nofemele (Faculty of Education)**, Ms Sharon Tessendorf (Faculty of Business and Economic Sciences), Dr Susan Burton (Faculty of Health Sciences). Absent from this photographs Ms Tanya Wagenaar (Faculty of Law).

Huntshu is a Xhosa exclamation used to express congratulations. This time, the Faculty says Huu-untshu! to Education lecturer, Mr Sikhumbuzo Nofemele for being voted Lecturer of the Year, at the recent Golden Key NMMU Chapter Awards held on Wednesday, 04 November 2014 at Rendezvous Campus Café. The Values in Education, Child Development and Communications in isiXhosa lecturer won the Winner per Faculty category.

The Golden Key NMMU Chapter recently conducted a survey where NMMU students were asked to vote for lecturers of the year in each Faculty. Students were asked to rate lecturers' approachability; provision of sufficient supplemental material; use of latest teaching methods and technologies; presentation of course material in such a way that it prepares students to work and live in the globalised world; going beyond what is expected to help students; and involvement in extracurricular activities.

In total, 956 NMMU students voted for 300 lecturers. Huntshu Skura Huntshu!

HERO OF THE DAY



Halala to Dr Kathija Adam who was named PE Herald's Hero of Day on 8 October 2014. A very elated Dr Adam had this to say about her recent honour: "This is my first public biography. It is an well written article that beautifully captures the work I do with my students. I feel so special today. Never been hero(ine) of the day before so this is a significant day for me indeed". More on Dr Adam is written on the NMMU Website under NMMU News and Events. Let's raise the banner!

Colleagues complete Certificate in Secondary English Language Teaching (CISELT) FET

The CISELT (Certificate in Secondary English Language Teaching –FET) which was jointly designed by the British Council and the Department of Basic Education aimed to expose participants to British Council English teaching methodologies, approaches and material that could be adopted to teach the CAPS English First Additional language curriculum at FET level.

The participants included subject advisers, Departmental officials and lecturers from Higher Education Institutions. The modus operandi for including the various stakeholders was to create closer collaboration between the Department of Education and Higher Education Institutions with specific reference to English First Additional language teaching at FET level.

Two members from the Faculty of Education namely Dr Eileen Scheckle and Dr Logan Athiemoolam attended the training programme in August and gained invaluable insights into novel approaches that could be implemented to facilitate the teaching of English first additional language at FET level. The eleven workshops focused on topics such as; motivating teenagers, critical language awareness, teaching grammar, thinking skills, teaching literature, errors and mistakes, testing and assessment, mixed ability classes, teaching EFAL using the genre approach and teaching English across the curriculum. The course also included a micro-teaching session during which each participant had to teach a group of participants, and was rounded off with the provincial planning of CISELT roll-out and presentations. The Department of Basic Education expressed the hope that the delegates from Higher Education institutions would assist them in the roll out of the programme to district officials and teachers in their respective provinces and regions.



The week long programme which was held at the Birchwood Conference Centre in Gauteng culminated in the awarding of certificates to the 150 delegates present. Both Eileen and Logan were able to forge close relationships with Departmental officials in the Eastern Cape and indicated their willingness to support the Department in their efforts to facilitate English language teaching and learning in the province. The two members from the faculty will be using the skills and insights that they gained during the CISELT programme to design material in second language teaching for the envisaged new modules that will constitute the revised FET curricular. Both colleagues are indebted to Professor Alette Delpont and Ms Heloise Sathorar for supporting their application to attend the in-service language training programme.

Dr Logan Athiemoolam



Halala is a Xhosa term that is used to express excitement and congratulations for achievement or in a celebratory event. The term is used in this month's Briefs' section to congratulate some of the Faculty's achievements that are mentioned briefly but without understating their importance.

Super Ed AGM

Halala to NMMU South Campus Super Ed Society for hosting successfully yet another Annual General Meeting on 29 October 2014. Dr Logan Athiemoolam was the guest speaker and elections of the new executive committee were carried fairly and successfully. Well done to the 2014 Super Ed committee for establishing this society and for keeping the fire burning from George campus to Port Elizabeth. Welcome to the newly appointed Executive Committee consisting of Ocilla Howard, Nangamso Buthelezi, Cadi Baatjies, Siphumelele Kati, Carmen de Kock, Ruth-Naomi Harry, Ntando Muma and the re-appointed Khushelo Minnie and Rifqa Moose, who are also part of the 2014's Executive Committee Halala Super Ed Halala!



Academic Writing Month



Halala goes to English Lecturer, Dr Eileen Scheckle who celebrates this year's Academic Writing Month by writing 500 words per day in 30 minutes. This way, Dr Scheckle writes generates the first drafts of her next academic publication. Eating the elephant one piece at a time, Go Eileen!

Action Research Unit



Halala goes to Dr Mathabo Khau who will be succeeding Dr Nokhanyo Mayaba as the Faculty's Head of Action Research Unit. Dr Mayaba will be missed dearly as she continues to soar into new heights. All the support goes to Dr Khau!

First Summer Graduation for NMMU!

In anticipation of the upcoming, first ever Summer Graduation for NMMU and also, the Faculty of Education, 2014 Academic Achiever and FoE student assistant, Lauren Geduld, is already imagining the day she will graduate with her Bachelor of Education degree. Meanwhile, Lauren is focusing her strength towards her last examinations. "I am very excited that students are allowed to graduate in the year that they complete their studies," said Lauren. The proud Lauren also said, "Graduating the same year allows students who are not from Port Elizabeth to complete everything in same year without the stress of returning the following year. I look forward to being one of the first December Graduates for NMMYOU in 2014!" Halala to NMMU and the Faculty of Education, Halala!



Corridor Exhibition on Gender

The daring theme of "Talking Walls and Talking Heads", with the theme, "What does Democracy mean?" did not begin and end in August - the official Diversity Month - for NMMU's Faculty of Education. Instead, this Faculty has found other creative ways of continuing the dialogue "on diversity outside of the designated months or days of remembrance", said FoE lecturer Ms Robin Notshulwana. Ms Notshulwana and her Foundation Phase students have presented a "Talking Walls" exhibition on Gender and Education. Her students covered the corridors in the first floor of Building 6 with a collage of pictures that represent the interface of gender and education. Ms Notshulwana acknowledged Dr Khau's insight and contribution to this project. Halala to the team, Halala!





Preparing children for schooling.

Mrs Lilda Koekemoer addressing the public on Gr R and school readiness in Humansdorp on the 17th October 2014. Lilda's advice will form part of a video to assist parents and teachers in preparing children for schooling.

Boss's day on has come and gone- everyone seemed to enjoy the gifts. On the 16 October, the 2 Dean's 4 Dos's, 11 HOP's, the WIL co-ordinator and Operations manager were presented with a mini garden of cacti and succulents to beautify their offices.

The responses were very positive:

Many thanks for the lovely wishes, and the very special gift. We appreciate you.

Prof Aletta Delport

Thank you for the lovely little garden, it will have a special place in my office. You are wonderful.

Dr Christina Jordaan

My sincere thanks for the lovely gift. It is much appreciated.

Dr Vukile Tshazibana

BOSS'S DAY



Thanks to all of you wonderful PASS staff in the Faculty. You and all you do are highly appreciated. You are always available, always able and always smiling. And you deliver quality work on time as needed.

We know we are not always the easiest bunch to work with, but you always let us feel as though we are also wonderful. Thanks again!

Professor Nonnie Botha



Media, Policy and Democracy project Colloquium

Mrs Taryn Isaacs at the Media, Policy and Democracy project Colloquium in Johannesburg on the 20 October 2014. The colloquium held at the Women's Prison at Constitutional Hill was centred around World Freedom Day. Participants presented their research on conducted on policy and media freedom. The findings of the project will be published in January 2014.

Tempus fugit! Milestones achieved are a sign of Hard work

Tempus fugit! is a Latin phrase meaning 'time flies' in English. As this year draws to an end, a few milestones achieved and plenty of lessons learned, time is taken to celebrate some of the Faculty of Education's (Faculty) accomplishments.

It has become a tradition to celebrate such accomplishments at the end of each Faculty Board meeting. On Wednesday 22 October 2014, the Faculty gathered at Rendezvous for a cocktail event to applaud, firstly, the success of the Faculty's Newsletter Team. This Team has diligently propagated the success of different kinds of activities - professional, academic, administrative, research and engagement, extra-curricula and even, social-responsibility activities – undertaken by its students and staff on a monthly basis. The all female Newsletter Team consists of Jackie Smith, Taryn Isaacs, Kelly Felix and Kholisa Papu. The Team shared this celebration with many students and staff who continue to contribute to each month's issue.

The second item for celebration was the conclusion of the European Union (EU) Foundation Phase (FP) project which was part of the bigger EU FP project spread out in different universities nationally. The NMMU strand of the project has done much to raise the profile, research, teaching & learning and engagement related to curriculum development, pilot modules that address multilingualism, and sharing multiple opportunities for cross-institutional engagement", said lecturer and contributor, Ms Robin Notshulwana. Importantly, the FoE FP team exceeded expectations in terms of deliverables. Amongst those celebrated for the successful completion of the project were Dr Deidre Geduld, Ms Robin Notshulwana, Dr Margie Childs, Ms Nadeema Musthan, Ms Thandiwe Hlam, Ms Sanet Deysel, Ms Marinda van Zyl, Ms Nadeema Musthan, Dr Priscilla Gitonga, Dr Noluthando Toni (until 2011), Ms Basheera Brooks as the administrator of the project and project leader, Prof Elize Koch. The Faculty commends the tireless work of this team.

The third item for celebration was the list of accredited publications of 2014. Twelve of the Faculty's academic staff published a total of 15 publications in DHET accredited sources. A gift of a candle was used to encourage and to acknowledge each academic's accomplishment. Prof Nonnie Botha, who presented all the celebrations teasingly mentioned that the size of each candle corresponds to the number of publications achieved per person. One would expect that Prof Naydene de Lange and Prof Prakash Singh would receive the biggest candles since they had three publications each. However, to the surprise of the attendants, Dr Nokhanyo Mayaba received the biggest candle and some gifts even though she had only one publication in 2014! Again, Prof Nonnie explained that Dr Mayaba received more because she is also leaving the Faculty to work at North West University. Dr Logan Athiemoolam bid Mayaba farewell with a heartfelt speech filled with memories and insight. Prof Sylvan Blignaut had two publications while Prof Paul Webb, Dr Kathija Adam, Dr Les Meiring, Prof Denise Zinn and Prof Nonnie Botha had one publication each. The size of each candle not only congratulated each publisher, but also, encouraged them to aim for a bigger candle next time. As part of the Faculty of Education's symbolism, overall, the candles represent the light and the ever-burning fire that must light up our communities. Tempus fugit!: Milestones achieved are a sign of Hard work!



Kholisa Papu



The KREW Street Dance Society



We, The Krew Street Dance Society, received a nomination by one of our members to accept the challenge by taking part in the Ice Bucket Challenge. This challenge was established in aid of raising funds for people suffering with Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS) or commonly known in South Africa as Motor Neuron Disease. The Challenge has been a huge success internationally and has been found to be a huge hit in South Africa as well.

We accepted that challenge and sought to raise funds for those suffering from this disease and donate the proceeds to a facility which houses and assists those currently facing the challenge of Motor Neuron Disease. We have therefore identified the Cheshire Homes in Summerstrand, Port Elizabeth area, whose mission is "To provide care support services that empower Persons with Disabilities". With this, we as a society felt that it would be in the best interest of all involved to donate that which was made during the challenge to the Home.

The challenge itself took place at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University on the South Campus Kraal area, just outside the cafeteria, during 12pm and 1pm. The challenge found 2 of our society members being thrown with Iced and Water as part of showing their contribution to the cause.

The Cheshire Homes also sent forth a representative to the event to share their expertise as well as useful information about Motor Neuron Disease and those who fall prey to this disease.

In total we were able to raise the total sum of R965.50 which was handed over to the Cheshire Homes representative on the day of the Challenge.

Of the members which took part and played a major role in the event were Lesley-ann Schultz, Siyabonga Spelman Clinton Schutters, Standon Davies, Shaun Nel and Zuko Ntapu.



Clinton Schutters

Preparing students for employment

The Employability Workshops took place on the Friday 31 October, and Wednesday 5 November.

During this workshop, students dealt with the following topics:

Module 2: Marketing Yourself - This module aims to look at the following aspects to empower you to market yourself successfully: * Transferable skills I have acquired * Generic skills and abilities employers want * What can you offer * How to market yourself * To understand and effectively use networking as a method of job searching * Getting information about job opportunities?

Module 3: Portfolio of Personal Marketing Documents - This module aims to look at the following: * Portfolio Development * Preparing a CV * The Application Form * The Covering Letter

Module 4: Interview Preparation - Understand the purpose and different types of interviews - * Identify the impact of dress code : dressing for success * Recognise and apply appropriate behaviours during the interview * Identify and understand typical interview questions & types of questions you can ask * Follow up after the interview.



The workshop was a success, after which students received a booklet made up of well wishes, advice, secrets and tips from staff, along with a teacher survival kit made by Mary-Anne Laufs. We wish all students success in their search for employment for 2015. Thanks to Mary-Anne Laufs for the time spent on preparing students through innovative means.

ENGLISH METHODOLOGY PLAYS HIGHLIGHT CHALLENGES IN SCHOOLS



The annual English methodology group plays which were staged on the 21st of October, focused on a trilogy depicting education related challenges in school contexts. This is the tenth year of the English Methodology plays which were first introduced in 2004. The students conceptualised and designed their own plays and wrote original scripts for their presentations.



In the first play entitled 'Let it Go' the group examined the effects of bullying on a learner as she tries to come to terms with her challenging and dysfunctional home environment, coupled with her marginalisation by an autocratic teacher and her classmates who constantly ridicule her because she is overweight. In her quest to come to terms with her dejected, desolate and alienated existence from an oppressive environment she commits suicide. In their production the group experimented with the use of the psyche or conscience and various kinaesthetic movements to depict the mind's instability.

In the second play entitled 'Voiceless ... A Silent Tragedy', the group made exclusive use of mime to showcase a variety of scenes depicting the rape of a school girl by a mature teacher, the trauma that she has to endure as a result of the pregnancy and the eventual relinquishing of the baby for adoption. In this play the group captured the various nuances of the rape victim's experiences through cleverly articulated gestures and kinaesthetic simulation.

In the third play of the trilogy entitled 'Teaching a Teacher', the group focused on how an incompetent drunk teacher abuses his authority in a classroom context and then furthermore takes advantage of a trainee teacher by manipulating her into teaching his class, while he engages in his debauchery.

He is eventually reprimanded by the principal of the school for insubordination and summarily dismissed.

A noteworthy feature of the plays is that all of them focused on very pertinent and relevant school related issues that have featured quite prominently recently in various news reports. When students were interviewed as to why they selected the themes they indicated that the plays showcased some of their lived experiences at schools while on teaching practice, coupled with news reports and gossip in the staffroom. The plays demonstrate how real issues affecting education at large can be animated to such an extent that they could leave the audience not only thinking about them, but also reflecting on what needs to be done to address such pressing challenges confronted by learners, the school and the community at large.

The adjudicator Ms Aarti Narotam a lecturer at Stageworld Performing Arts School, praised the students for their riveting performances, excellent use of gestures, commanding presence, their clever use of props and their creative use of a classroom space as part of the acting area. The audience was afforded opportunities to interrogate some of the key issues arising from the plays with facilitation by Ms Aarti Narotam and their lecturer, Dr Logan Athiemoolam.

Although some of the students were initially reticent to participate in the plays as they regarded it as childish, their comments during the feedback session indicated that they found the experience an enriching and stimulating one as it enabled them to tap into their hidden talents which they never knew they had.

Exposing students to drama and theatre in education enables them to unleash their creative potential and to rise above their idiosyncrasies and perceived limitations. If we do not create these multiple opportunities to unleash their hidden talents, students may never know what they are capable of doing. This is so aptly summed up by Thomas Grey in his poem *Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard* when he says 'Full many a flower is born to blush unseen and waste its sweetness on the desert air'.

Logan Athiemoolam



Celebrating Drama: “The Goodbye that Unites”

One family's life takes on a fatal turn when a widowed mother of four is suddenly attacked by cancer. Her wish to spend her remaining days with her four children is nullified when two of her now, affluent children send money home instead of paying their mother a visit. The twin daughter adopts the superfluous, narcissistic personality of # tags and Facebook Likes while her twin brother leaves university to take care of the mother. However, her deteriorating health and his sibling's distance from home makes the sight of his dying mother unbearable. One day, he leaves her for a while, only to come back to an empty wheelchair and a neighbour's daughter who shows him a goodbye letter that later brings back the estranged family and later, unites them. “You gave me money when I needed your love, you sent me money, when I needed you to pay me a visit” are the words of the goodbye letter. “But I forgive you” is the comfort and “love one another, be united” are the words that unite a once, estranged family.

This is a synopsis to a theatre production, “The Goodbye that Unites” by the Drama Society of NMMU. The play was written and directed by three students from the Faculty of Education (FoE) namely, Jeffrey Kapel, Thubelihle Ndlovu and Yongezwa Papu, together with guest director Nobesuthu Rayi.

Again, three of the FoE students, Jeffrey Kapel, Leandro Plaatjies and Thubelihle Ndlovu were part of the 15-cast play. The rich satire, high technical innovation, the excellence of the cast and dialogue that spoke to the age of social media, received multiple applause and standing ovation. “The Goodbye that Unites” was showcased at the NMMU South campus auditorium together with another student written play, “In 20 Years” which featured yet another FoE student, Adrian de Kock, on 31 October 2014. Both productions were supported by a partnership between NMMU Department of Arts and Culture, the Drama Society, Opera House and directors, Xabiso Zweni and Lonwabo Xatasi. Yongezwa Papu, second year Intermediate Phase student, is also Chairperson of Drama Society. Among the accolades received this year, the Drama Society has also won an award for “Best Outreach” at the recent NMMU Arts and Culture Awards. Congratulations are in order!

Kholisa Papu





EDUCATION THROUGH VISUAL ARTS

An exhibition by the students and staff of the Education Faculty

Educators use different methods to share meaning and express ideas; reading, drama, poetry, song and visual interpretation are a few of the many tools used to express different philosophies. As part of their innovative teaching methods, lecturers of the Education Faculty encourage their students to use visual arts to express their thoughts on important issues such as sexuality, education and HIV/AIDS. The culminations of these teachings were exhibited to celebrate the end of a year, marked by creativity, innovation, dedication and hard work. The exhibition entitled Education Through Visual Art created a platform for presentation and dialogue on the work of students and staff. The exhibition was assembled by Graphic Designer and Fine Art professional Kelley Felix, and Media and Communications practitioner Taryn Isaacs. Both feel that projects like these are integral to building the students' spirit and confidence in their work. Launched on 29 October 2014, the exhibit included artworks contributed by 4 groups who aim to educate through the visual arts.

The first groups of contributors were first year PICA art students, taught by Desma Van Der Walt. As an art teacher Desma feels that "art is to be shared and enjoyed". Their works included 3 dimensional cubes, posters and mobiles themed around knowledge and education. An especially remarkable piece entitled the 'Pillar of Enlightenment', demonstrated the work of the PGCE art students through painting, graffiti, and texture design. Essentially the art students created pieces that were meaningful and inspired their fellow scholars, as experienced by IP student Ruth-Naomi Harry who says that "it is inspiring! To be able to share the experience and view the talent of our fellow students".



CONTINUE TO PAGE 14 ...

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 13 ...

The second contribution was by lecturer Robin Notshulwana and Foundation Phase students on the topic of “He said, She said”. The project allowed students to engage in activities and discussions around gender and its influence on life. Robin explained the motivation for the project being that “as teachers we play an influential role in the lives of the children we teach. We are in a position to challenge young minds and ultimately, equip young children to face experiences of the world in which they live.” Projects such as these prepare Foundation Phase students to be teachers who are sensitive and aware of how they have been socialized in terms of gender. Many attendees enjoyed this segment of the exhibition as IP student Anneke Van Vuuren found “the section on woman, gender and acceptance was excellent [and used] words and images to make people see the bigger picture”.



The third contribution by lecturer, Dr Christina Jordaan and the IP students was centered on Sexuality Education Teaching. Christina explained that “Sexuality education has changed dramatically over the last few years, [and] this exhibition is a representation of what we learn[ed] and what are we going to teach”. The experience was rather powerful and thought provoking, as many students, such as Anna Snyman who expressed that she was very proud to see her work displayed, “we are very proud to see our hard work being displayed. Also, it was nice to see the different views of all the students,” said Anna.

The final contribution came from the HIV/AIDS researcher Professor Naydene de Lange and the HEAIDS Education Community of Practice. The piece entitled Seeing, believing and acting for change: Integrating HIV and AIDS in Higher Education Curricula uses photography to share everyday realities of HIV and AIDS. Naydene explained that “teacher educators who participated in this project took photographs with digital cameras focusing on how we could represent - through photographs – the changes in our own practices or in our institutions more broadly in relation to HIV and AIDS integration. The photographs in the collection, numbering more than 40, individually and collectively served as visual narratives of integrating HIV and AIDS into the curriculum, of reflecting on teaching sexuality education, of considering our collective responsibility, and learning from each other within the Community of Practice in teacher education. More than anything [the photographs] highlight the idea that our work in this critical area goes far beyond the walls of our classrooms. The curriculum is everywhere”.



Overall the 2014 exhibition was well received by staff and students who like Anzel Kotze found the experience “inspiring, fun and beautiful”. Majority of the students have never exhibited in art exhibitions and the experience will be fondly remembered. Many students were proud to view their work like Miandi Brunsdon who said that “it is lovely to see our work and that it’s appreciated”. Congratulations to all who contributed at this year’s exhibition, your work is inspirational and proves that creativity stimulates educational debate.



Special thanks to Naydene De Lange, Desma Van Der Walt, Christina Jordaan, Robin Notshulwana and their students who participated in the exhibition. Also thank you to the Department of Arts & Culture and to Khusele Minnie and Ginique Brown for assisting with the preparation of the exhibit.

Kelley Felix and Taryn Isaacs

EXHIBITION GALLERY

An exhibition by the students and staff of the Education Faculty

