



NEWS

August 2011

Strong national and international support for recently established Centre for the Community School

Inspirational start for new Centre

The official launch of the Education Faculty's Centre for the Community School took place on Friday, 26 August in the sports centre on the Missionvale campus. The event was by all accounts an exciting and enjoyable one, attended by a large number of guests who came from near and far to celebrate the launch.

The activities on the launch programme reflected the Centre's inclusive approach to connecting schools and communities to the university. Among the guests were school principals, teachers, parents, learners, university faculty, and a host of people representing other organisations. Our very own student MCs, Nomzamo Moss and Ashwin Hammond, did an outstanding job in hosting the evening's activities and ensured that the items flowed smoothly. Learners from one of the Manyano schools performed a high energy dance that livened up proceedings and two inspiring pieces of poetry were shared with the audience.

Among the speakers was Ms. Palesa Tyobeka, the Deputy Director General in the Department of Basic Education, who brought a message of support from the Minister and highlighted the role the Centre can play in contributing to improving the quality of schooling in the province and the country. Prof. Derrick Swartz, NMMU's Vice-Chancellor, commended the Education Dean, Prof. Denise Zinn, for her vision in contributing to the conceptualization and establishment of the Centre. He called on the faculties and departments across the university to support the Centre's work in improving academic and social outcomes for young people in the metro and elsewhere.

The keynote address was given by Prof. Pedro Noguera from New York University, who praised NMMU as a good example of a university who has committed itself to addressing some of the critical issues facing South Africa. He noted, "How fitting for a university named in honour of the great Nelson Mandela to play a leading role in using its intellectual resources to benefit those who have suffered the most."

Director of the Centre, Al Witten expressed his delight with the launch and thanked the team from the Faculty of Education who helped organize the event and worked hard to make it a success. Witten added, "We got off to a great start and look forward to preparing for the upcoming activities of the Centre".



Celebrating the establishment of the Centre. From left, Prof Derrick Swartz, Dr Al Witten, Prof Denise Zinn and Prof Pedro Noguera

From the mouths of babes... *by Flavia & Victoire Davids, aged 10*

The Centre for the Community School Launch was hosted by Professor Denise Zinn. The MC's were Nomzamo Moss and Ashwin Hammond. The official welcome was said by Professor Denise Zinn. Professor Derrick Swartz, the Vice-Chancellor, gave a speech of importance and humour. The items were performed by Loyiso High School, Lelethu and the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University Choir. Palesa Tyobeka, the Deputy Director General of the National Department of Basic Education, gave a speech on change to children and students. Nomzamo Mazwai, an award winning poet, said a poem based on a children's book, *The Emperor's New Clothes*. Dr Allister Witten introduced Professor Pedro Noguera from New York University. Professor Noguera has written several books. He thanked Professor Denise Zinn and Professor Derrick Swartz. Dr Sindiswa Mbokodi, the Head of the programme, translated Professor Pedro Noguera's speech in Xhosa. The Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University Choir gave an excellent performance. The Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University Choir has just returned from their successful tour to Argentina. Professor Nonnie Botha thanked Professor Pedro Noguera, Palesa Tyobeka and Professor Denise Zinn. It was a very interesting experience. It was a very interesting launch.



SAMA award-winning artist, poet and activist, Nomzamo Mazwai, wows the audience with her performance at the launch for the Centre for the Community School

'Flash Mobbed' at Launch



The NMMU Choir showed their prowess in musical performance at the Centre launch last Friday. They performed three medleys, including their recent 'flash mob', to a mesmerised audience.



Learners from Loyiso High during their performance

briefs

Welcome, Deon!

A warm welcome to **Deon Swartz** who joined the Faculty this month in SERE. Deon has a Master's degree in Psychology and specialises in Special Needs Education. He brings with him a wealth of competence, experience and knowledge in this field and has worked closely with schools. This means he is knowledgeable about the 'coalface', knowing what happens at grassroots level.

Construction commences

The construction for the Boardroom and additional offices on the podium commenced mid-August.

This construction is a 3 month project; the practical date set for completion is the end of November.

Rotary Youth Award 2011

Intermediate Phase student, **Jodi Hattingh**, recently received a Merit Citation at the 2011 Rotary Youth Awards.

As a gifted young achiever with an unbridled passion for community involvement, Jodi has become a leading light in the *Girl Guide Movement of South Africa*. She achieved her Protea Award, the highest possible accolade for a youth member under the age of 25 years and was accorded the honour of representing the South African Girl Guides at "Camp Mosaic 2010" held in Canada to celebrate the Centenary of the Girl Guide Movement worldwide. Her contribution to Guiding has resulted in her selection as a member of the National Youth Committee of South African Guiding. As a qualified Peer Educator, Jodi also facilitates the training of Guides from all over South Africa.

In addition to her involvement with the *Girl Guide Movement of South Africa*, Jodi is also a committed supporter of the Uitenhage Rape Crisis Centre, the SANTA TB Hospital's children's ward, and she plays an active role in raising funds for the Uitenhage SPCA.

Matriculating from Riebeek College, Jodi has begun her Bachelor of Education degree as she ended her schooling career – excellently! Jodi was one of only two outstanding matriculants to achieve distinctions in all 7 subjects (87% aggregate) in her final 2010 examinations and she has attained distinctions in three of the four modules completed thus-far.

We are proud of you Jodi!



Golden Key Lecturer of the Year

Acknowledging her hard work and dedication, **Darrilyn Bradley** was awarded the Golden Key Lecturer of the Year award.

Students nominate and vote for lecturers in each of the faculties as recipients of these awards.

The Golden Key Lecturer of the Year awards ceremony was held on Thursday, 18 August, with the key note speaker being Prof Vivienne Lawack-Davids, Dean of Law Faculty.



Darrilyn receives her award from Prof Christo von Loggerenberg

Darrilyn stated, "I do feel very honoured however, and really appreciate the gratitude shown by the students."

We are proud of you!

A Danish Invasion!

Seven Danish student teachers from the **Arhus University College** (in the city of Arhus) have registered as full-time students in our Faculty for the second semester.

Their academic programme consists of modules such as PGED, HMS (rugby, gymnastics, soccer, etc.) and modules in other Faculties (i.e. module in playing the Bass Guitar in the Department of Music).

The students also follow an intensive school-based learning programme, visiting schools in the townships, northern areas and the city over a nine week period (two or three days per week).

They are keeping a blog where they write and reflect on their experiences: <http://southafricanexchange.blogspot.com/>



Teaching Practice at Woolhope High. Left to right: Morten, Dorte, Anne, Martin, Stine, Sabina and Michael

A glimpse of their exchange experience thus far...

Your most memorable moment in South Africa so far?

MARTIN: *The differences between the Danish schools and the township schools are remarkable and the South African learners' desire towards school is something very different and exiting.*

ANNE: *My teaching practice at Kabana High School in the township of Port Elizabeth. Here I met both learners and teachers that, despite desperately bad conditions and for most learners very low living standards, have an open, positive and welcoming approach towards the world.*

MICHAEL: *During my teaching practice I went to a township school. I saw students who had experienced death, crime, abuse and were suffering in so many different ways. These students were struggling, but did not give up. They were fighting the unfairness of life with vitality, gratitude and respect for other humans. They were fighting, because they have HOPE for a brighter future. For me this was an overwhelming experience and a wakeup call.*

Re-visiting Tyume Village

Nokhanyo Mayaba

It was a glorious day for me to be able to disseminate my MEd findings to the research participants at the Tyume Village in Hogsback.

The teachers who participated in this study proved to me that neither rain, snow nor sleet would prevent them from attending the session.

The aim of my study was to investigate the effect of a scientific literacy strategy on Grade 6 and 7 learners general literacy skills in IsiXhosa and English. What excited the teachers the most was to find out that the scientific literacy strategy statistically significantly improved their learners' reading skills in English, their listening skills in both IsiXhosa and English and their writing in IsiXhosa. However, they were a bit concerned that their learners writing skills in English did not improve since the language of learning and teaching in their schools is English. After a lot of discussion, it was obvious that I needed to conduct a session on different strategies that they could use to improve their learners writing skills.

At the end of the session my MEd promoter, Prof Paul Webb, and I gave each teacher a copy of our paper titled Webb, P. & Mayaba, N.(2010). The effect of an integrated strategies approach to promoting scientific literacy on grade 6 and 7 learner's general literacy skills. *African journal of Research in SMT Education*, 14(3),pp 35-50.



Paul and Nokhanyo with the group who participated in her research study

Visual Art in action...

"The important role of the arts in society, as well as the important role of arts education for the holistic development of the learner is widely accepted. As such, arts education forms part of the national school curriculum. Our own B Ed FP and B Ed IP first year students are equipped to implement arts education in their future classrooms by doing PICA/PFCA in their first years. The aim of the module is to introduce the student to the basic elements of each arts discipline. By actively participating in dance, drama, visual art and music activities, the students are not only (1) conceptualising these elements, but are also (2) developing specific arts skills and experiencing (3) enjoyable but focused teaching strategies suitable for these phases", Prof Alette Delpont.



For the PFCA and PICA student the goal of Visual Arts is, not to train the student to become artists, but to provide the tools by which they can bring creativity to the learner by inspiring and stimulation the learners' imagination.

Many students have had little or no experience using various media owing to their educational background as subject choices. Visual Arts serves to introduce the student to the use of various media, tools and materials through practical activities. It also aims to encourage - many students are negatively inclined towards Arts and Culture in general and are critical of their own 'creative abilities'.

The emphasis is on the process and the advantages of creative activities and thinking for the learners. Individuality and the uniqueness of each person are emphasised as, although all have access to the same material, tools and media, no end product is the same as another.

Students are also exposed to various teaching methods such as co-operative learning, which is practised during the lecture and activity and this, hopefully, will assist them in their teaching careers. Group work and being mindful of the opinions and feelings of others is stressed during lectures. Students often remark that group work has made them aware of the importance of time management and being focussed on a task. ~ Desma van der Walt, Lecturer



*The staff choir presented their repertoire of multicultural music in English, Afrikaans and isiXhosa to a very receptive and supportive audience at the Staff Diversity Concert on Wednesday the 17th of August at the Goldfields Auditorium on the North Campus. The three members of staff representing the Faculty of Education on the staff choir are **Ndileka, Linda and Logan**. The staff choir was so well received by those in attendance that they were encored to sing all the songs again!*