



Community Engagement Awards

2023

..... 3 OCTOBER

Redefining learning | Redefining teaching | Redefining research



RHODES UNIVERSITY
Where leaders learn

RUCE | community
engagement

PROGRAMME

18h00

Welcome Address

18h10

Highlights & Summary of 2023

18h20

Community Partner of the Year Award

18h30

Hall/Residence of the Year Award

18h40

Sports Club/Society of the Year Award

18h50

Gold Award for Excellence in Community Engagement

19h15

Student Volunteer of the Year Award

19h20

Thank you and closing of the ceremony

Master of Ceremonies | Sakhe Ntlabezo

MESSAGE FROM THE VC

Hearty congratulations to all those who contributed to the various Community Engagement activities in 2023. Whether you have received an award or not, your contribution has made a positive difference in the lives of others. I hope that you have also grown and developed as you have served others. I also hope that you have found joy and fulfilment in being of service to others and that you have developed a greater appreciation of what it means to be fully human.



I wish to thank our community partners who have allowed our staff and students to be part of their own initiatives and projects to respond to the needs of our community. It is in working together that we can create a better, inclusive and sustainable future for our community.

I commend and applaud the Division of Community Engagement - the Director and Staff - for the professional manner in which they continue to drive our University's community engagement goals and objectives.

Once more, congratulations on the stellar achievements of 2023.



DVC AWARDS MESSAGE



Rhodes University (RU) celebrates Community Engagement (CE) Awards annually in honour of our students, staff and community partners who dedicate their time towards making a difference in the local community, through service learning, engaged research or engaged citizenry. Their efforts are always commendable.

As we celebrate 120 years of RU's existence, resilience and success, we must also celebrate the 15 years of strong Community Engagement at Rhodes University and strengthen our plans for CE to become a significant anchor that will turn the state of Makhanda around. This will be in support of our vision and mission to achieve "a just and sustainable society". Although we have a "leading community engagement programme embedded within the mainstream research, teaching and learning endeavours of the University" (RU IDP 2023-2028: 34) and have made significant strides promoting and ensuring that the University embraces CE, there is still much to be done to ensure that this important role of higher education is well understood and implemented. The purpose of a university is commonly understood as that of preparing students for a career and for contributing to the country's economy through knowledge generation. Receiving an award by a student for his or her performance in the chosen field of study and other programmes at a university is a great honour for the student and their family.

With the advent of democracy in South Africa and the changing developmental role of universities, the purpose of solely 'educating for a career has undergone changes which were further compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic. What is clear now is that educating students for a career alone, is not enough and universities need to educate both for life and for a living.



The emergent developmental mandate requires Universities to be socially responsible to both students and local communities. The core function of Community Engagement serves to promote the social responsibility roles of universities by being the interface between community and the university. Through building authentic, sustainable partnership relationships with community organisations, the Rhodes University Community Engagement (RUCE) division enables academics and students to interact, learn and share their knowledge with diverse groups of people outside of the university boundaries. Many lessons for life and living are experienced by students through the engaged citizenry, community based service learning programmes and other projects organised by RUCE. Receiving a RUCE award should be considered an honour for the student, family and community, as it is indicative of the 'cultivation of humanity' that is a critical purpose of higher education and community engagement serves as a platform to enable this to happen.

Prof 'Mabokang Monnapula-Mapesela

Deputy Vice Chancellor: Academic and Student Affairs



CERTIFICATE AWARDEES

BuddingQ Literacy Programme Student Leaders

Monica Lerato Mathebula
Hlela Dayimani
Jemaine Chettiar
Khanya Chulumancolwethu Dunga
Kopano Lesese
Lilitha Boco
Lutho Ntobongwana
Matimu Shivambu
Sanelisiwe DiKo
Sibulele Ngamntwini
Siphesihle Mtongana
Takudzwa Makuwa
Tiisetso Kwanda Nhlapo

Reading Clubs Programme Student Leaders

Grace Ndlovu
Lilitha Hole

Project Read Programme Student Leaders

Azelea Nerine Robyn Harker
Bridget Koketso Molopyane
Masoni Precious Ntebogelang Maotoane

Nine Tenths Mentoring Programme Student Leaders

Abenathi Claire Nqweniso
Anam Baba
Anathi Mgijima
Chidinma Iheanetu

Chido Kimberley Chatikobo
Chumani Nelo
Kholofelo Koko
Likhonithemba Hope Miselo
Matimu Shivambu
Nakhane Simani
Samnkeliwe Esona-Sipho Vuso
Sivenathi Duma
Sovash Chetty
Timothy Cullen Christian

High School Tutoring and Mentoring Programme Student Leaders

Binita Manilal
Grace Ndlovu
Mukelisiwe Kunene
Pertunia Macigane
Samkele Skhosana
Simpfiwe Malinga
Sivenathi Duma
Siyanda Mjoli

Vulindlela Programme Student Leaders

Nduduzo Mvundla
Njabulo Dlamini

Basic Computer Skills Programme Student Leaders

Hoden Mahamud Guled
Matimu Shivambu
Nombasa Mangqengwana



CERTIFICATE AWARDEES

Simpfiwe Dlamini
Siphelele Mqambali
Siyanda Mjoli

SHORT COURSE CERTIFICATES

CE Reading Club Orientation Course

Ammaarah Morris
Ayanda Mpanza
Bongiwe Ngwenya
Grace Ndlovu
Lilitha Hole
Lindani Sifanele
Liyabona Planga
Masego Kutumela
Monnye Ntjana
Ntombenhle Namba

CE Mentoring Orientation course

Abenathi Claire Nqweniso
Anam Baba
Anathi Mgijima
Andisiwe Mdambatya
Anesipho Tshisani
Angelica Skrenya
Aphiwe Gumede
Aphiwe Liann Thamba
Aphiwe Xanti
Asiphe Mtlomelo
Asive Mafani
Awiwe Mali
Babalwa Msiza
Babazile Zondi

Bonolo Moche
Busisiwe Luvuno
Canadace Themba
Chardonay Esterhuizen
Chidinma Iheanetu
Chido Kimberley Chatikobo
Christophina Ainima
Chumani Nelo
Crystal Felix
Emihle Gcwabe
Hope Shangane
Kamvalethu Ntsomi
Katerien Loubser
Khanya Sibutha
Khanya Sinovuyo Sokani
Kholofelo Koko
Kinnie Plaatjies
Lehlohonolo Mabotja
Lihle Ngcawe
Likhonithemba Hope Miselo
Liliso Mandaba
Lisakhanya Kamana
Liyabona Notuku
Londeka Gumede
Lusanda Luciano Witbooi
Lutholwethu Ntshebe
Luviwe Mngcambe
Mandy Riba
Matimu Shivambu
Matshidiso Makae
Michelle Dlamini
Mihlali Mbalentle Mpotulo
Mihle Ndlodaka



CERTIFICATE AWARDEES

Mmathabo Bless Maebela
Mokgadi Rasekele
Mukelisiwe Kunene
Nakhane Simani
Noluthando Zulu
Ntombekhaya Adam
Ntsako Patience Chauke
Okuhle Fobe
Olwethu Bikani
Olwethu Maaotla
Phakamile Gumbi
Princess Mmakgatla Sathekge
Rachel Shingai Chimone
Reekeditse Mphela
Ripfumelo Chauke
Sachin Smith
Samkelisiwe Esona-Sipho Vuso
Sanele Juqu
SenzokuhleNqabeni
Shiposethu Sikwana
Simbulele Muleka
Sinethemba Ngwenya
Siphamandla Mbele
Siphesande Bobo
Siphosihle Sentile
Sisikelelwe Sandi
Sivenathi Duma
Siyambuka Jacobs
Siyasamkela Ndabankulu
Siyolisiwe Nelo
Someleze Lose
Sovash Chetty
Taigue Mitchell

Tania Alomu
Thembeke Hlela
Timothy Cullen Christian
Tlogang Mosupye
Tshavhungwe Madavha
Tshepang Nkosi
Vukona Worship Khobani
Vuyiseka Tana
Yoliswa Thwala
Yonela Mahlulo
Zikhona Ntombolwana
Zintle Likhona Ngqoyiya
Ziphezihle Nkani
Zipho Jantjies

*Literacy Fundamentals and Social
Justice course
(BuddingQ and Project read)*

Monica Lerato Mathebula
Akanindyangu Lebeso
Ambani Musida
Anam Hokwana
Anela Kuta
Anoka Latchmiah
Anovuyo Mali
Azazole Dastile
Azelea Nerine Robyn Harker
Babalo Bakana
Benjamin de la Fontaine
Bridget Koketso Molopyane
Britney Visagie
Bulela Matshingana
Bulelwa Matiwane

CERTIFICATE AWARDEES

Chantel Chirairo
Chelsey van Heerden
Chumisa Mama
Hlela Dayimani
Iviwe Mathew Khohlakala
Jemaine Chettiar
Khanya Chulumancolwethu Dunga
Khanya Dunga
Kopano Lesese
Kuhle Dladla
Lalelisile Mncwabe
Lilitha Boco
Lindokuhle Menze
Liyema Mtyida
Londeka Gumede
Lusanda Shezi
Lutho Ntobongwana
Mabala Xabiso
Macy Lethabo Maimela
Masoni Precious Ntebogelang
Maotoane
Matimu Shivambu
Matipa Basvi
Mihlali Khethimali
Minenhle Mbali Ndlela
Mpho Makoti
Munashe Muzarewetu
Musa Titus
Mvume Nkosi
Nelisiwe Masinga
Nqoba Boyi
Olwam Bedeni
Reamogetse Ndlovu

Rethabile Vykens
Samukelisiwe Amahle Pearl Dladla
Sanelisiwe DiKo
Savuyiswa Lungile
Sibongile Mbotoza
Sibulele Ngamntwini
Simbulele Muleka
Sindi Xolo
Siphelele Prince Mqambayi
Siphesihle Mtongana
Siphokazi Kunene
Siphuhle Reabetswe
Siyamtanda Madikane
Sphokazi Ncapai
Tafi Masuta
Takudzwa Makuwa
Thapelo Maluleke
Thatohatsi Motloun
Tiisetso Kwanda Nhlapo
Titile Mkhavele
Tshegofatso Moloto
Tshepang Tau
Yanga Tyobela
Zibuyile Majoji

Community Engagement Tutor course

Afikile Msebi
Amahle Sitole
Aphelele Nkwinti
Asemahle Mcaba
Awiwe Mali
Ayabuyela Mankayi



CERTIFICATE AWARDEES

Bahle Maqina
Bodiba Magobosha
Cara Dube
Enver Lottering
Evuya Nomapelana
Grace Ndlovu
Ibanathi Copiso
Inga Madenyuka
Kamvelihle Tshunungwa
Kinnie Platjies
Kyla Fullarton
Liyabona Mbalu
Lubabalo Mini
Lufuno Masindi
Malebo Mabilu
Matimu Shivambu
Mercedez Louw
Mihlali Dyeshana
Mukelisiwe Kunene
Nompumelelo Thwala
Ntsika Tyopo
Omphulusa Nengwekhulu
Praise Ndlhovu
Rethabile Botsane
Rifuwo Shivambu
Sikelela Goloda
Siliziwe Mahambehllala
Sindi Gumede
Siphelele Mqambayi
Sisipho Mtholo
Sive Dyaffa
Siyabonga Zuma
Siyamthanda Ngesi

Siyolise Fikizolo
Thandolwethu May
Tshepang Thokwane
Unathi Mdletshe
Yonela Tshaka
Zandile Fama

High School Tutors course

Amila Mbana
Andile Ntuli
Anelisa Mnyamana
Anesipho Bobo
Awiwe Mali
Bahle Manqina
Binita Manilal
Bodiba Magobosha
Busisiwe Paliso
Cwenga Dilata
Dustin Hendricks
Emily Morgan
Evuya Nomapelana
Ian Mwanawene
Jessica Khoza
Jones Rambau
Ju-Lee Webber
Kabelo Ramollo
Lebo Nakene
Libhongo Nel
Limpho Mgxoteni
Lubabalo Mini
Luphelo Makehle
Mihlali Sotondoshe
Mlibatisi Mamba

CERTIFICATE AWARDEES

Mondekazi Sontsele
Mpumelelo Sibeko
Muzhelele Muvhango
Neliswa Maqanda
Njabulo Motloung
Noluthando Mthombeni
Ntokoto Mamafa
Ntsika Tyopo
Pertunia Rendani Macigane
Rethabile Botsane
Samkele Skhosana
Shakhola Sekeleme
Simbarashe Hwata
Simphiwe Malinga
Singobile Mdakane
Siyamthanda Ngesi
Siyanda Mjoli
Tandokazi Mxinwa
Thandolwethu May
Thokozile Tshabalala
Thusanang Kennedy Mogomotsane
Tristan Harakraj
Tshepang Lizelle Thokwane
Unathi Bosi
Unathi Mdletshe
Vuyisa Sigonyela
Yazini Gcule
Zandile Valela

Basic Computer Skills course

Amanda Faxi
Anadene Michaels
Anethemba Bobotyana

Anusha Hashe
Babalwa Mase
Bongiwwe Miranda Nkuna
Christopher Botha
Frederick Prince
Fundiswa Aneta Dyrha
Jack Sivuyile Tsili
Lawrence Plaakies
Liso Mafu
Nakita Madyo
Nonhise Cangweni
Ntombizandile Sikere
Nwabisa Sibahle Mantile
Olwethu Ntlanjeni
Olwethu Silo
Precious Gadavu
Simthandile Sharon Ngidana
Thembisa Ndleleni
Thomas Mgodeli
Unathi Pheli
Vuyiseka Precious Mzimba
Zandi Mazingisa

Digital Storytelling course

Madeyiandile Mbelani
Nozipho Madinda
Ayanda Qomfo
Sylvia Dyonase
Bathandwa Gobingca
Nosiphelo Nogaqala
Khaya Mgaba
Priscilla Boshoff
Nwabisa Nkani



CERTIFICATE AWARDEES

Carolyn Grant
Yonela Mahlulo
Phiwokuhle Mtana
Noxolo Matakane
Chidinma Iheanetu
Mihlali Mpendu
Carol Leff
Andile Nayika
Lelethu Zono
Vuyolwethu Mxo
Amanda Gura

Volunteer Managers from Community Partner Organisations Literacy Projects

CM Vellem Health Promoting School:

Siphokazi Mafumana, Yandisa
Nyumka, Lettiwe, Mpumi Frans

Good Shepherd Primary School:

Phelia Kramm

NV Cewu Public Primary School:

Lulama Nxopo, Veliswa Williams

Rhodes Preschool: Annidene Davis

Seventh Day Adventist Primary

School: Nomava Mbonda

Ntaba Maria Primary School: Ms

Lotter, Ms Jongile

Makana Primary School: Ms Bangisa

Nine Tenths Mentoring Programme

Khutliso Daniels Secondary School

Teacher Coordinator: Ms Mayalo

Mary Waters High School

Teacher Coordinator: Ms Duiker

Nombulelo Secondary School

Teacher Coordinator: Mr Nayika

Ntsika Senior Secondary School

Teacher Coordinator: Mr Bojo

Siyakhana eMakana Residence Programme

Allan Webb Hall - Luzuko Preschool

Volunteer Manager: Ncumisa Deliwe

Courtney-Latimer Hall - Boy Boy

Mginywa Preschool Volunteer

Manager: Nondumiso Quza

Desmond Tutu Hall - Rhodes Day Care

Centre Volunteer Manager: Essie Davis

Drostyd Hall - Noncedo Preschool

Volunteer Manager: Lelethu Sandi

Founders Hall - Pumpkin Patch Day

Care Centre Volunteer Manager:

Busisiwe Booï

Hobson Hall - Lithalethu Preschool

Volunteer Manager: Xoliswa Pellem



CERTIFICATE AWARDEES

Hugh Masekela Hall - Cozy Nest ECD
Centre Volunteer Manager: Berenise
Roberts

Kimberley Hall - Care Hugs ECD Centre
Volunteer Manager: Kim Evans

Lilian Ngoyi Hall - Nompumelelo
Preschool Volunteer Manager: Zukiswa
Baba

Miriam Makeba Hall - Happy Kids ECD
Centre Volunteer Manager: Christelle
Marthinus

Nelson Mandela Hall - CM Vellem
Primary School Volunteer Manager:
Nompumelelo Frans

Oppidan Hall - CSD Toy Library
Volunteer Manager: Noluthando
Shelle

Solomon Mahlangu Hall - Nokwandile
Day Care Centre Volunteer Manager:
Nandipha Nurse

St. Mary Hall - Phaphani Preschool
Volunteer Manager: Mfundo Balakisi

Victoria Mxenge House - Ikhaya losizo
Volunteer Manager: Carmè Fantelas



AWARD CITATIONS

Sports Club/ Society of the Year

Rhodes University Mountain Club

The Rhodes University Mountain Society proudly stands as a finalist for its exceptional commitment to enriching the life skills and sports capabilities of young boys at Eluxolweni Child and Youth Care Centre. Collaboratively, their community engagement representative and committee members orchestrated a series of events that have allowed the club to successfully achieve their targeted objectives. Their partnership with Eluxolweni CYCC has grown into a strong and enduring relationship over the last 2 years built on a solid foundation of trust and cooperation that led to greatly facilitated event planning and communication throughout their projects. The members of the club showed exemplary leadership by actively engaging with the boys and imparting valuable knowledge about nature, sports, and life in general. These interactions have positioned the club members as positive role models for the boys, fostering personal growth and development. The Club members introduced the boys to unconventional sports like wall climbing and hiking, broadening their horizons beyond conventional activities.



AWARD CITATIONS

Rhodes University Toastmasters Club

The RU Toastmasters dedication to its core values, including partnership, resilience, passion, excellence, and hard work, has resulted in remarkable achievements and a significant impact on local public schools. A notable club initiative is its youth-focused communication and leadership program, the Annual Public Speaking Competition now in its 2nd year.

The club is partnered with five nearby high schools, with the aim to develop crucial skills in participating learners, fostering self-confidence and personal growth through enhancing oral communication and leadership skills in a supportive learning environment. Their Community Engagement program emphasised multilingualism and inclusivity, enabling learners to deliver speeches in English, IsiXhosa, and Afrikaans, promoting diversity and inclusiveness. The leadership program consisted of training and coaching sessions and school-level contests of which 54 learners persevered through the process and participated in the grand finale recently.

The programme has masterfully helped learners acquire essential communication skills, including effective communication techniques, body language mastery, vocal variation, audience engagement, and speech writing, aiming for excellence in public speaking. It is clear through their tireless and collaborative work that The Rhodes University Toastmasters Society Club is dedicated to youth development and community improvement, envisioning a future where individuals confidently navigate higher education, workplaces, and public life through effective communication. We are proud of their positive impact.



AWARD CITATIONS

Rhodes University Ultimate

To RU Ultimate Club, fostering engagement with the broader community and expanding their services represents a core tenet of their mission. Their commitment to inclusivity knows no bounds, as they actively advocate for and welcome individuals of all skill levels, be it those taking their first steps into the world of ultimate frisbee or seasoned veterans of the game.

One noteworthy testament to their commitment to community engagement is their invaluable partnership with PJ Olivier High School and Oatlands Prep. Through this collaboration, RU Ultimate Club has played a pivotal role in introducing the exhilarating and unconventional sport of ultimate frisbee to a diverse group of eager learners. This society/club has, with unwavering enthusiasm, orchestrated weekly sessions during term time, which have provided an exceptional opportunity for over ten enthusiastic learners at PJ Olivier High School and more than 20 eager learners at Oatlands Prep School to immerse themselves in the world of ultimate frisbee.

One of the most heartwarming and rewarding aspects of RU Ultimate Club's dedication to frisbee engagement is the sheer delight that radiates from the faces of the children as they master the art of throwing and develop a myriad of skill sets within this captivating sport. By bridging gaps, RU Ultimate Club not only cultivates sporting prowess but also fosters a sense of community and inclusivity, where the joy of the game unites people from various backgrounds and experiences.



AWARD CITATIONS

Community Partner of the Year

CM Vellem Health Promoting Primary School

CM Vellem as a school team has wholly embraced collaboration and joint planning with their student partners across various programmes for more than 5 years. By partnering with various organisations, CM Vellem has pulled off a jam-packed year of meaningful engagement. Along with their partner Hall, Nelson Mandela Hall, the school hosted a successful sporting event, encouraging physical fitness and overall wellness for staff, students, and learners. Another focus within the Siyakhana e Makana residence partnership programme was Career Day, where CM Vellem welcomed Mandela Hall reps to talk to students about the value of education and the importance of choosing a field of study that interests them as well as a Mental Health Day to raise awareness of mental health among grade 7 learners. CM Vellem is also the current home of the Joza Chess and Reading Club and collaborated with the Rhodes University Chess Club, to engage with learners at the Joza Youth Hub Open Day.

This year the energy and work of CM Vellem has further been increased by the active engagement in Project Read (a Grade 1 literacy project) and BuddingQ (our Grade R motor development programme) - where student volunteers often fight to get a space because of the vibrant and warm engagement they receive from the volunteer managers and teachers.

This is deserving recognition as the school has consistently had dependable volunteer management and an open approach to partnerships.



AWARD CITATIONS

Ntsika Secondary School

In the heart of Makhanda, a remarkable educational institution stands as a beacon of hope, community engagement, and collaboration. Ntsika Secondary School has consistently demonstrated an unwavering commitment to both its student volunteers and the broader community, setting an example of dedication and leadership. Ntsika Secondary School has long been a partner school, working closely with Rhodes University's Community Engagement office, specifically through the Nine-Tenths mentoring program. This partnership has flourished due to their staff's deep understanding of the value of mentoring and support for their learners. Led by the reliable and active volunteer manager for Nine-tenths, Mr. Bojo, Ntsika extends a warm reception to student volunteers and ensures that the Grade 12 learners are ready and available for the mentoring sessions. What sets Ntsika apart is its commitment to going beyond the traditional role of an educational institution. This dedication creates a supportive environment that fosters both personal and academic growth among their learners. Throughout the year, Ntsika Secondary School has showcased a continued sense of leadership, which is reflected in Ntsika being able to maintain a high pass rate over the years. In 2022, Ntsika's pass rate stood at a commendable 82.8%, and in 2023 it is expected that this high pass rate will be maintained. Ntsika's willingness to embrace community engagement principles has allowed it to become a vital hub for positive change. Ntsika Secondary School's impact isn't limited to its partnership with the CE office, but actively collaborates with various community organisations, further strengthening the school's ties with the broader community. These partnerships have paved the way for the implementation of programs that have a profound and lasting impact on the students and the community as a whole. Congratulations to Ntsika Secondary School.



AWARD CITATIONS

River Rescue

River Rescue, an assembly of passionate environmental stewards, has etched an indelible mark in our community. These eco-champions hail from diverse backgrounds, spanning academic departments, sports clubs, community groups, and individual enthusiasts, and have united under the banner of River Rescue to actively champion the cause of environmental care.

This resolute collective convenes on a regular basis, embarking on the crucial mission of cleaning our precious waterways. Their growth in the last few years transcends mere numbers; it signifies a profound commitment to change and environmental preservation. Their transformation into a registered Non-Profit Organization (NPO) stands as a testament to the evolution of their mission.

River Rescue serves as a shining exemplar of how a united and passionate community can exert a meaningful influence on our environment. Their



AWARD CITATIONS

dedication to safeguarding our natural world is both inspirational and indispensable.

We take immense pride in acknowledging River Rescue for their exceptional contributions to environmental conservation. Their collaboration with the CE office has been instrumental, particularly their partnership with our Department of Environmental Science through the Service Learning course for the Honours Class. This ongoing collaboration has enriched our academic community. Their engagement with student volunteers is truly exemplary, with the core team readily available to collaborate, attend meetings, and share their invaluable work, all while accommodating the needs of our academic project. This remarkable dedication shines even brighter considering they are all volunteers, selflessly dedicating their time to this noble cause.

The tangible impact of River Rescue's river clean-ups is undeniable; every clean-up removes a skip's worth of waste from our community and their partnership with National Arts Festival SEF has magnified their clean-up efforts in Makhanda townships, resulting in visible improvements and a renewed sense of hope for a cleaner, safer environment. River Rescue's advocacy, education, and networking activities are equally vital for a lasting impact. River Rescue has become a pivotal hub, connecting various community organisations and partners, catalysing engagement in vital environmental and social justice issues. Their commitment to fostering a network of concerned citizens around water management and related issues is commendable.

We proudly recognise River Rescue for their outstanding contributions to environmental conservation.



AWARD CITATIONS

Hall/Residence of the Year

Cullen Bowles

Cullen Bowles has been an example of unwavering community engagement, particularly in the Desmond Tutu Dining Hall. Their remarkable ability to secure funding for residence and hall community projects is noteworthy and has enabled the sustained, impactful relationships that earn them this award.

Under the guidance of Lusanda Witbooi, Cullen Bowles has collaborated on an ongoing basis with their primary partner, the Rhodes University Pre-School, organising educational playdates and contributing to a welcoming environment for the children, enriching lives through their actions.



Further to this students from the residence have also actively participated in the Food4Futures programs, assisting with food parcel packing and striving to secure funding for the impactful "Parking for Parcels" project. With Hillside Technical High School, they assisted by supporting the Women's Day sanitary pad drive, exemplifying their generosity and meaningful partnerships, reciprocated by the school. At Andrew Moyake School, Cullen Bowles has made a significant impact by donating sanitary pads and conducting talks on menstrual health, highlighting their ongoing commitment to this important topic.

Cullen Bowles' dedication to community engagement is truly inspiring. Their continued efforts and enthusiasm for making a positive difference in the community are both admirable and deeply appreciated. We commend them for their outstanding contributions and eagerly anticipate their ongoing impact.

AWARD CITATIONS

Hugh Masekela Hall

Hugh Masekela Hall has established enduring and meaningful relationships through a series of impactful community initiatives, supported by dedicated student



leadership and staff. They hosted an Easter Egg Hunt at Rhodes University on Good Friday, skillfully led by students, engaging children at Cozy Nest Preschool in enriching activities that nurtured their storytelling, public speaking, and communication skills. Their collaboration on Mandela Day at Cozy Nest, driven by student leaders, led to the acquisition of essential items, benefiting the preschool's daily operations.

The Hall initiated an ongoing book drive at Cozy Nest, with unwavering support from staff, fostering literacy among children and preparing them for school. A collaborative sports event near Cozy Nest

Grounds, bolstered by student and staff involvement, provided diverse physical activities, promoting healthy competition, teamwork, and physical fitness. The well organised Environmental Day at Cozy Nest, represented a culmination of efforts led by students and supported by staff to enhance the school's environment, organising clean-up activities and introducing more greenery. Hugh Masekela Hall's unwavering dedication, complemented by the commitment of student leaders and staff, underscores their profound commitment to positively impact the lives of children and their broader community, forging deep and enduring relationships.



AWARD CITATIONS

Nelson Mandela Hall

Nelson Mandela Hall, in collaboration with CM Vellem Primary School, has demonstrated a deep commitment to community engagement through several years of well-executed planning, actions, and assessments. Their Community Engagement Representatives have worked closely with the school, focusing on events that promote education and address critical aspects of mental health and physical fitness.



One notable event, Career Day, saw Nelson Mandela Hall CE representatives visiting CM Vellem to inspire learners about the value of education and pursuing their passions. This initiative aimed to ignite a passion for learning and dreams in young minds. In the realm of physical health, Nelson Mandela Hall's CE representatives organised various sports activities, encouraging students to stay active and even prompting the school to establish its own sports tournament. Mental health received dedicated attention as well. Collaborating with Rhodes University Peer Educators and a local social worker, they educated grade 7 learners on mental health topics, fostering awareness and initiating ongoing support. The project evolved with intimate classroom discussions, where bullying, mental health, peer pressure, and family relations were addressed, creating a safe space for learners to share personal concerns.

An end-of-year function celebrated their enduring partnership, showcasing the school's culture and commemorating their years of academic excellence and mental health awareness. Through these initiatives and partnerships, Nelson Mandela Hall's CE representatives have enriched the lives of CM Vellem learners and strengthened the bond between the university and the community. Congratulations to Nelson Mandela Hall and CM Vellem Primary School for their outstanding commitment to community engagement.

AWARD CITATIONS

Student Volunteer of the Year

Chidinma Uchenna Iheanetu

Chidinma's journey as a volunteer has been characterised by unwavering dedication and fervent inner energy to make a difference. Her participation in numerous community initiatives throughout the years signifies her strong commitment to community engagement. Chidinma found her niche in Home of Joy, where she has been collaborating closely with students, staff and community groups since 2018. In 2022 she began her (formal) journey with RUCE as a volunteer in the Khanya Maths and Science Club and as a Nine Tenths mentor. This year her engagement has deepened exponentially. She currently serves as a leader in the Nine Tenths programme and has taken on the role as a Community Engagement Coordinator for Youth Quake South Africa, underscoring her capacity for effective leadership and community mobilisation. In both these roles she has recruited, trained and managed large groups of volunteers and community partners across Makhanda.



Furthermore, Chidinma's commitment extends beyond the campus, as exemplified by her involvement with The Golden Games (a city-wide activation to get our elderly locals moving playfully for their health) and volunteering at Victoria Girls High School.

Chidinma's educational contributions have been equally impactful. Her active involvement in mentoring at various schools, participation in educational programs, and her role as a teacher at GADRA Education, all demonstrate her commitment to fostering learning and personal growth in the community. Her consistent support for the Home of Joy orphanage over the years showcases her deep compassion and dedication to making a difference in the lives of others.



AWARD CITATIONS

Currently pursuing a PhD in Pharmacy with a focus on community environmentalism, waste, and water management, Chidinma Iheanetu embodies the spirit of a dedicated and deeply engaged scholar. Her journey is a testament to her unwavering commitment to creating a positive impact in both the academic realm and the communities she serves. Her story inspires us all to anticipate the remarkable contributions she will continue to make.

Grace Naume Ndlovu

It is with great pleasure that we recognize Grace Ndlovu for her outstanding leadership and unwavering commitment to the Engaged Citizen Programme and our Reading Clubs. Grace's dedication and deep understanding have consistently left an indelible mark on our initiatives.

As a student leader, Grace has exhibited tireless dedication and a profound commitment to our mission. Her focus on building impactful relationships has borne fruits in the form of increased joy for reading among the children we serve.



In the Engaged Citizen Programme, Grace's leadership has shone brightly. Her tireless efforts, driven by a passion for community engagement and education, have been an inspiration to her peers and an asset to our program. This year, she extended her commitment to our Reading Clubs, where her genuine dedication and profound understanding of children's needs have been instrumental in fostering a love for reading.

Grace's focused and impactful approach is a testament to her leadership qualities and her ability to bring about positive change. We are proud to recognize her for her exceptional contributions and eagerly anticipate the continued impact she will make in the lives of the children we serve.

Congratulations, Grace, on this well-deserved recognition.

AWARD CITATIONS

Lihle Manene

Lihle Manene embodies the true spirit of community engagement through his dedication and energetic commitment to the Nine Tenths Matric Mentoring program. For several years, Lihle has selflessly served as both a mentor and a student leader, leaving a profound impact on those he guides.



In the current year, Lihle has further expanded his role by taking on the position of SRC Community Engagement Councillor. In this capacity, he has gone the extra mile to ensure the seamless operation of the extended Community Engagement Orientation Program and the Exploring Makhanda tours, providing invaluable guidance to students eager to immerse themselves in community engagement.

Lihle's leadership and dedication have not only enriched the lives of the students he mentors but have also contributed to the overall success of community engagement initiatives. His boundless energy, commitment, and transformative contributions make him an exemplary model of service and a source of inspiration for both his peers and those he serves.

We take immense pride in recognising Lihle Manene for his exceptional service and leadership in the realm of community engagement. His passion, drive and dedication reflect the very essence of Rhodes University - where leaders learn. We eagerly anticipate the positive impact he will continue to make in the future as he continues to embody the values of community engagement and inspire those around him.



AWARD CITATIONS

Lilitha Boco

Lilitha Boco is a devoted and exceptional student leader and volunteer whose commitment to community engagement and early childhood literacy has been a remarkable journey over her four years at Rhodes University. Her involvement began in the challenging year of 2020 when she fearlessly joined the first cohort of volunteers, adapting to virtual engagement amidst the pandemic.

From the early days, Lilitha has demonstrated a profound embrace of the core values of community engagement. During the COVID Pandemic, she took the initiative to translate children's books into her home language for Book Dash, reflecting her dedication to literacy.

She also provided insightful perspectives on South Africa's literacy crisis, showcasing her passion for making a meaningful impact.



In her second year, Lilitha transitioned into a leadership role within BuddingQ, tirelessly working to enlist teachers as co-facilitators in the program. Last year, she extended her deep understanding of community engagement to a global platform by participating in the University Social Responsibility Network's Bootcamp, where she brilliantly bridged her academic pursuits in Linguistics with the mission and purpose of her volunteer work with BuddingQ.

Lilitha aspires to venture into research and education policy, and her contributions to our IDP discussions and volunteer training sessions augur a bright future for our children. We wholeheartedly congratulate Lilitha on her well-deserved recognition and eagerly anticipate the remarkable impact she will continue to make in the field of early childhood literacy and beyond.

AWARD CITATIONS

Matimu 'Xihluke' Shivambu

Matimu's journey at Rhodes University over six years has been nothing short of exceptional, marked by an unwavering commitment to community engagement that truly shines. His passion and dedication are evident through his active involvement in a multitude of RUCE programs, showcasing a depth of commitment.



He has devoted two years to the Engaged Citizen program, delving into the heart of community engagement from 2021 to 2022. In the subsequent two years, Matimu's dedication extended to Budding Q and the 9/10th Mentoring program (from 2022 to 2023), leaving no program unexplored

within RUCE. Notably, in 2023, he embraced the role of a Basic Computer Skills tutor, affirming his commitment to empowering others.

Matimu's leadership qualities have illuminated his path, as he undertook the student leader role in three different programs in 2023 - Budding Q, 9/10th Mentoring, and Basic Computer Skills. His ability to take charge and guide others is truly inspiring.

Furthermore, he has embraced leadership beyond RUCE, serving as a community engagement representative for the Nhlalala Ya Vatsonga society in 2022 and the Vha Venda Society in 2023. His selfless efforts and immersion in community life, combined with various leadership roles, underscore his profound commitment to community engagement.

Matimu's dedication, commitment, and many leadership roles have expanded his sphere of influence and deepened his commitment to serving diverse communities. His journey is a testament to the transformative power of community engagement, and we are honoured to celebrate his remarkable contributions.



AWARD CITATIONS

Monica Lerato Mathebula

Monica Mathebula's journey at Rhodes, marked by a steadfast commitment to community engagement, is an inspiration to us all. Having joined Rhodes mid-degree, her immediate dedication to the cause was unmistakable, and she has since become a cornerstone of our community.

For four years, Monica has been a devoted volunteer and student leader in BuddingQ at CM Vellem. Her remarkable 100% attendance record over this period forms the bedrock of her deep understanding of community engagement.

Monica's unwavering commitment to a single school throughout her volunteer career has resulted in exceptionally close relationships with our community partners. She consistently goes above and beyond, whether it's her immersive involvement in baseline assessments, mentoring new leaders, or serving as a phenomenal trainer. Monica's reliability, organisation, and knowledge make her a quiet yet influential authority, capable of leading her team with grace and competence.

As a sub-warden in Hugh Masekela Hall, she sets an exemplary standard and continues to promote community engagement in her personal space, supporting her residence CE Rep and actively participating in the S@M program.

Monica aspires to open a community foundation, and her rich experiences and personal growth through these endeavours undoubtedly position her to drive meaningful social change. She has been a great asset to our community.



AWARD CITATIONS

Quinlan Victor Caiger

Quinlan Caiger is a true community champion, having established a deeply meaningful relationship with Eluxolweni Shelter for Boys. His unwavering commitment is nothing short of inspiring, as he dedicates himself to making a positive impact on the lives of these young boys.



Quinlan's exceptional contribution shines through his personally designed program, "Men Mentoring Men." This initiative, born out of his passion and commitment, represents a beacon of hope and guidance for the boys at Eluxolweni. He has crafted a program that is not only impactful but tailored to the boys unique needs.

Quinlan's dedication to the Eluxolweni community is noteworthy. He tirelessly devotes his time and effort to ensure the delivery of a high-quality program. His quiet yet fierce determination is a testament to his character and his commitment to making a difference in the lives of these young boys.

We proudly recognize Quinlan Caiger for his selfless dedication and innovative approach to mentoring and community engagement. His contributions exemplify the spirit of service and the transformative power of one individual's dedication.



AWARD CITATIONS

Simphiwe Malinga

Simphiwe Malinga's remarkable journey in community engagement began in 2021 and has been a testament to her unwavering dedication and leadership. Her dedication to community engagement is a long-term commitment, spanning her entire journey at Rhodes University. In her initial role as a student leader for the Home of Joy community partner site, she set the stage for the transformative impact she would have on both the community and her fellow student volunteers. This commitment continued into 2022, where she continued to excel in her role.

In 2023, Simphiwe took on a new challenge as the student leader for the PJ Olivier High School tutoring partner site, further showcasing her ability to coordinate student volunteers effectively and forge meaningful connections with community partners and fellow volunteers. Her journey has not been without its challenges, but her resilience and innovative problem-solving skills have allowed her to address issues like learner demotivation head-on, resulting in positive and lasting change within the tutoring program. Her proactive approach extended to organising informative and motivational sessions, as well as a campus tour, which significantly contributed to uplifting the spirits of the learners.

Simphiwe's collaborative nature has inspired those around her to create sustainable, impactful, and lasting change within the Makhanda community and highlight her commitment to the well-being of future generations. Simphiwe's exceptional contributions make her a deserving recipient of this award.



AWARD CITATIONS

Siyanda Mjoli

Siyanda embarked on his community engagement journey in 2022 by joining the Vulindlela High School tutoring program. His commitment and enthusiasm for community engagement were readily apparent, and in 2023, he assumed the vital role of student leader for the Inkululeko High School Tutoring program. This progression in leadership demonstrates Siyanda's inherent talents and unwavering dedication to advancing the principles of exceptional community engagement.



Taking on the role of student leader for not one but two significant programs, the Basic Computer Skills Course and Inkululeko, showcases Siyanda's deep-seated passion for education and community development. His versatility is evident through his involvement in high school tutoring and his contributions to the university's computer training initiative for operational staff.

Siyanda's remarkable dedication and commitment, coupled with his potential to inspire others positively, and his ability to carry multiple leadership positions, as well as promote the principles of sound community engagement practice, is a testament to his character. He is engaging, culturally sensitive, and respectful allowing him to cultivate strong working relationships with partner organisations, fellow volunteers and program participants. Siyanda is a well-rounded individual with a curious and positive-minded approach. His journey reflects a deep commitment to community engagement, which continues to be a source of inspiration for those around him.



AWARD CITATIONS

Takudzwa Makuwa

Takudzwa (Boots) Makuwa embarked on his remarkable journey as a reluctant Community Engagement Representative on the house committee in 2020. Since then, he has seamlessly integrated into the RUCE family, becoming a dedicated volunteer in BuddingQ. Notably, Takudzwa is among the few male volunteers in the early childhood sector, and he has emerged as a beacon of positive masculinity, inspiring others to join the program.

Takudzwa's contributions and insights have significantly enhanced the way our program operates, making it more inclusive and impactful. His efforts were so notable that he was selected as a delegate member to represent our institution at the Talloires Network Conference in Bloemfontein in 2021.



Furthermore, Takudzwa has admirably served as a student leader in the BuddingQ program for the past three years. Student leaders in BuddingQ are tasked with making sustained and in-depth commitments to the program. They play a vital role in training and managing volunteers, assessing the children involved, and contributing to the program's monitoring and evaluation.

Takudzwa is highly respected by his peers and volunteer group. He manages relationships with a quiet ethicality that reflects his unique and refreshing flair in the space.

Congratulations, Takudzwa (Boots) Makuwa, on this well-deserved recognition. Your journey from reluctant beginnings to becoming a role model for positive change is truly inspiring.

AWARD CITATIONS

Tiisetso Kwanda Nhlapo

Tiisetso Nhlapo has been a remarkable student leader within the BuddingQ program for the last 3 years. Her unique blend of child-like, infectious energy and assertive, organised leadership has become a wellspring of inspiration for everyone involved. We find her boundless enthusiasm to be a constant source of motivation, which she generously shares and infuses into our community.



Tiisetso is not just a passionate leader; she is also remarkably organised, ensuring the program's seamless and efficient operation. Her graceful and considerate nature brightens our interactions, making her a true joy to work alongside. As a dedicated team player, she embodies the collaborative spirit that lies at the core of our mission.

It's Tiisetso's infectious energy, unwavering dedication, organisational prowess, and team spirit that make her an invaluable asset to the BuddingQ program. Her contributions have been nothing short of exceptional, and we take immense pride in recognising her for her outstanding service.

Congratulations, Tiisetso, on this well-deserved recognition. Your energy, commitment, and remarkable leadership have left an indelible mark on BuddingQ, and we eagerly anticipate the continued positive impact you will bring to our community.



2022 VC'S DISTINGUISHED COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AWARD WINNER

It was with great pleasure that we announced the winners of the 2022 Vice Chancellor's Distinguished Award for Community Engagement; the **Joza Assumption Development Centre (ADC) Counselling Hub** established by the **Psychology Department team, Ms Nqobile Msomi, Dr Duane Booysen, Prof Megan Campbell, Christine Lewis and Mandisa Ndabula.**

The work of the Hub was made possible through partnership building and collaboration between the ADC, Rhodes Psychology Clinic and the Rhodes Student Counselling Centre (SCC). The history of the Hub is also manifold and involves strong partnership building. Several years ago, **Prof. Jacqui Akhurst** founded a smaller counselling service for pupils at Nombulelo Secondary and Joza Youth Hub. During the COVID pandemic, Ms. Nqobile Msomi offered school leaders, teachers and pupils online counselling support sessions. Out of these various efforts and partnerships, the ADC Counselling Hub was built. Therefore, it is not surprising that an outstanding feature of this organic project was the team members' in-depth understanding of partnership building as a key component in the application of community engagement in higher education.

The application highlighted that *"an intervention focused on addressing the needs as identified by the community partner, within their particular context. It challenges the psychologist to work in collaboration with their community partner to bring about interventions that meet these needs and in so doing the psychologist respects and promotes the community partner's agency for change. One of the most practical, concretely visible ways in which this approach is applied, is by taking psychology to the community partner, in their physical setting. While most South African professional training programmes offer a community psychology component, few currently integrate this with a service-learning component. However, CBSL is a very effective vehicle for teaching the principles and practice of community psychology to our student psychologists. It is also a revolutionary way of understanding how psychology could (and should) be practiced in South Africa"*.



The Hub has transformed the Rhodes University space by building on the principles of community psychology and community-based service learning within the Masters in Counselling and Clinical Psychology programmes, as well as in the internship year completed by Counselling Psychologist Interns at the Rhodes Student Counselling Centre. In this way, it has responded timeously, effectively and collaboratively to fulfil a moral and political imperative by addressing social and epistemic injustices. The Hub provides counselling and psychological support beyond the university space, whilst developing key skills of university students and academics.

The Hub has implemented and succeeded in its aims of:

- 1) Providing mental health resources in the form of free individual counselling and psychoeducational groups/workshops for people living in Joza and accessing services at the ADC, particularly Makhanda youth.
- 2) Facilitating a community based service-learning training opportunity in community psychology for the Masters in Counselling and Clinical Psychology students at the Rhodes Psychology Clinic, and the Counselling Psychology Interns at the Rhodes Student Counselling Centre.

The project is commended for its specific understanding and implementation of community engagement and service learning to facilitate the teaching and learning of community psychology at Rhodes University through a collaborative partnership. Modules of community psychology in the Masters in Counselling and Clinical Psychology programmes provide students with a theoretical lens, framework and orientation towards psychological intervention that challenges many of the typical western hegemonic biomedical conceptions of how to bring about health and wellbeing. With a specific focus on partnerships, this theoretical approach promotes understanding of mental health needs and priorities within a cultural context of social action/social liberation model that recognizes and emphasizes the impact of social and structural inequalities. More importantly, the university team members are immensely applauded for their **IMAGINATION** and courage as they work towards transforming curriculum to be contextually relevant in Community Psychology and building a sense of **place** with their community partner, the ADC.



ADC, the main community partner, is a skills training and small business development centre situated in the heart of Joza managed by **Mr Maso Nduna**, an alumni of Rhodes University. When the ADC identified psycho-education and counselling support as additional services it would like to offer as part of its transformational vision, the Hub was developed.

The selection committee strongly believe that the inclusive, participatory partnership development process of the Hub, the trust and commitment that exists between the diverse partners and the existing impact of the Hub on the youth of Makhanda are significant indicators of a sustainable, purposeful community engagement programme.

The Hub team is comprised of a wide-range of individuals not mentioned above and whom were critical to its success. These include the ADC Centre Manager, **Maso Nduna and Madoda Mkalipi, Prof Jacqui Akhurst who won the award in 2018 and the Interns and Masters students who provided the quality day to day service.**

Congratulations to the entire team!



Rhodes University Community Engagement (RUCE) 2023 Highlights

The Rhodes University vision is *'to be to be foremost in the generation and advancement of locally responsive & globally engaged knowledge that seeks to create a just & sustainable society'*. The mission states that through transformative, rigorous scholarship and research, the university aims to advance human understanding and wisdom, cultivate graduates who are caring and engaged citizens, responsible, courageous and ethical leaders and to drive equitable and inclusive development through mutually beneficial partnerships. Through its nexus with teaching and research, community engagement (CE) enables and promotes the Rhodes University vision and mission with strategic intent.

2023 is the 15th Anniversary of the introduction of Community Engagement as a core function of Rhodes University. The University has gone some way to anchoring itself in the Makhanda community by contributing to various sectors. Being an educational institution has meant that we have started by investing heavily in the public education sector working to position Makhanda as a Centre of Education Excellence nationally. We are also working with community-university partnerships to contribute to the revitalisation of our economy and the health sector.

This report shares the highlights of 2023 providing evidence of the contribution and impact of Rhodes University CE on community development.

1. External Donor Partnerships

CE is an unfunded national mandate and it's for this reason that we are deeply indebted to external donors who contribute to the repositioning and transformation of universities through CE. In 2023, RUCE enjoyed the financial and moral support of the following donor partners: Ms Zanele Twala from the Standard Bank Tutuwa Community Foundation, Ms Vuyo Mwase from the Energy Mobility Education Trust, Mr Paul Smith from the Kagiso Fund, Ms Barbara Proudfoot from the KAVOD Trust, Ryan Redman from the Flourish Foundation and John Williams from GBS Local Bank for being so meaningfully committed to the transformation of the Makhanda community.



2. Economic Development

A new programme, the Masakhe Social Enterprise Development (SED) Programme focussing on the promotion of small Black business development was established in April this year through a dynamic partnership between the RU Procurement Office, Business School, RUCE and the Assumption Development Centre (ADC) in Joza. Four established small businesses will be supported through the Supplier Development Programme and 19 new businesses will be supported with equipment and/or business branding through Enterprise Development. A further 40 young people will benefit through a targeted training programme to translate their ideas into initiatives. We are very encouraged by this new development and the partnership with the Joza based ADC Hub.

3. Health Sector Development

In the health sector, we are deepening a long standing partnership between Rhodes University and the District Health Department under the leadership of Dr Mohammed Docrat. The partnership involves a number of Rhodes University departments (Psychology, Pharmacy, Information Systems and HKE) participating in service learning, engaged research and engaged citizenry (volunteer) programmes. The Pharmacy department has placed students in the Clinics, IS is implementing electronic systems and HKE is running an extensive programme with over 130 top athletes in Joza and has various wellness interventions at the school level. The Psychology Department have established a permanent counselling facility at the Assumption Development Centre offering free daily counselling services for pupils and their families. The training Psychologists also offer preventative workshops in the schools as well as career guidance. We are now in the process of working with Dr Docrat to extend services at the Joza Clinic through a new infrastructure development project. Hopefully this new vision will ultimately take the pressure off the hospitals.

The winner of the **2022 Vice Chancellor's Distinguished Award for Community Engagement** was a group award led by Ms Nqobile Msomi, Prof Megan Campbell, Dr Duane Booysen, Christine Lewis and Mandisa Ndabula from the Psychology Department in the Faculty of Humanities for the much needed ADC Counselling Hub they established in Joza offering free daily mental health services to schools



and the community in general. The success of the ADC Hub has been due to the collaboration and input of this Team as well as the ADC staff, the Masters (M1 and M2) students and the experience of Prof Jacqui Ackhurst who supervised the students.

4. Engaged Research.

It has been pleasing to note that the research output for 2023 continues on an upward trajectory. In order to firmly establish Community Engagement as a core function of Universities, we need to contribute to the scholarship of engagement and grow the national body of knowledge in the emerging discipline of CE.

RUCE organized the **2023 Community Engagement Learning Symposium**. This is the 7th biennial symposium which took the form of a blended event. CHERTL Ed Tech team played a key role in making the online element a success. The Symposium attracted 22 South African universities and 10 International universities. A total of 164 people attended (123 from HEI's, 25 students and 16 community partners). The international universities that presented included: Cornell University, Universidad de la República de Uruguay, Universidad Nacional de Mar del Plata Argentina, King's College London, Stanford University, University of Michigan, University of Oxford, West Virginia University, Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul in Brazil and University of Gulu, Uganda.

Overcoming the challenge of the Ethics Application Process for Engaged Researchers.

The Human Ethics Research Committee developed a two-tiered ethics application process for engaged research studies. The first tier involves a scoping approval for initial community engagement, followed by a proposal submission informed by community input. This allows for engagement with the potential community partner to negotiate the topic and the research process.

The new African Journal for Higher Education Community Engagement (AJHECE)

has been established by RUCE and hosted on the platform managed by the Rhodes University Library. The systems have been set up and we are very grateful to Prof Sizwe Mabizela for providing funding in the amount of R430,000 for the first three years. The first issue will be published in November 2023. We are grateful to



Dr Margie Maistry, Editor in Chief for driving this process and Wynand van der Walt from the Library who is managing the registration and the site. This Journal will provide a much needed platform for engaged scholarship in South Africa, across Africa and for international partnerships that contribute to CE in South Africa and the rest of Africa.

Roundtables on Engaged Research Community of Practice (CoP)

The Engaged Research Community of Practice hosted three insightful roundtables this year, addressing engaged research challenges and opportunities, lessons learned from universities in the global South and North, and on Higher Education engaged research ethics support and limitations. Distinguished speakers, including Prof. Catriona Macleod, Prof. George Openjuru from Gulu University in Uganda, Prof. Budd Hall (UNESCO Co-Chair for CBPR, University of Victoria, Canada), Prof. Peter Clayton and Dr. Janet Hayward, shared their expertise and insights.

Other strategies to enhance Engaged Research include the appointment of **three Research Associates** (Dr Margie Maistry, Dr Sharli Paphitis and Dr Katy Pepper) who have all published this year. We are grateful to the Research Office for funding a post-doctoral fellow, Dr Lilymore Mudziwapasi who is fully involved in RUCE's programmes, research and submission of publications. The RU accredited Engaged Research short course continues to be in demand with three courses being offered this year.

Rhodes University is one of 22 **Knowledge for Change (K4C)** hubs that have been established in 16 countries as part of an International UNESCO Consortium. Two of our staff will be travelling to the USA to present at a Conference on Engaged Scholarship at Michigan State University held on 4 and 5 October 2023. The presentations cover the newly established AJHECE and the work of RUCE's K4C Hub and Engaged Research.

5. Teaching and Learning:

RUCE submitted the PGDip Higher Education Community Engagement qualification for approval in 2022 and may be on the agenda of the CHE Committee for the 27th September 2023. Meanwhile RUCE has engaged Margaret Irvine to work with the team to prepare the Facilitators Guide and



Student Information Booklet. This postgraduate professional development qualification at Level 8 is the first of its kind to be offered in South Africa.

In 2019, RUCE launched an accredited online short course, titled **Community Based Service Learning: What-Why-Where**. The course has done much to assist academics to launch quality SL programmes as it has equipped them with the necessary theoretical knowledge and practical skills. In 2023, two courses were offered at RU and a further course at the University of Zululand. The Rhodes University Institutional Development Plan (IDP) requires RUCE to grow the number of SL programmes and RUCE is grateful to the University for providing annual funding of R525 000 for this purpose. In 2022, there were a total of 41 courses with 22 new courses established this year, making it a total of 63 courses currently running across the 6 faculties, reflecting a 58% increase.

CE Orientation for 1st Years:

Working in partnership with the Division of Student Services (DSSD) and Development, RUCE leads a CE short course for all first year students. The second element to the orientation course includes the 'Exploring Makhanda' bus trip around Makhanda East and West for students to learn more about the city they will be living and contributing to. RUCE is grateful to the DSSD for funding the transport for the Exploring Makhanda tour.

- The CEO Course, spanning Terms 1 and 2, played an important role in introducing 1st year students to the concept of Community Engagement in Higher Education. Notably, the students showed a positive response and a clear understanding of their roles as caring and compassionate citizens contributing to the Makhanda community.
- The SRC CE Residence representatives play a key role in this programme which has given them much direction for their role in community engagement. They are also trained as 'tour guides'.

6. Engaged Citizenry

RUCE has **12 accredited short courses registered** which form the theoretical basis of all the Engaged Citizenry (Volunteer) Programmes as reported below.



VC's Education Initiative: 2017 - 2023

The VC Programme and other initiatives have achieved considerable progress in the past eight years. Some of the outcomes achieved include the following:

- The matric pass rate has increased from 62% in 2015 to 85% in 2022. This is 5% higher than the National Average and 8% higher than the EC Provincial Average.
- The number of Bachelor passes produced has increased from 179 in 2015 to 305 in 2022.
- The school drop-out rate has dropped from 43% in 2015 to 35% in 2022.
- The number of local disadvantaged students who have gained access to Rhodes University has increased tenfold over the past decade, from 11 in 2012 to over 200 in 2023.
- Rhodes students are the heart and soul of the Vice-Chancellor's Initiative (VCI): 4 926 students have volunteered over the past six years and approximately 490 students are involved in the VCI's on an annual basis, either as volunteers or in service learning programmes.
- Researching volunteerism and the scholarship of engagement: The VC's Programme recognises all three key areas of the academic project – research, teaching and learning, and community engagement. The 2021 establishment of 'the Nine Tenths Research Group', dedicated to engaged research on the highly successful Nine Tenths Mentoring has expanded to all programmes and is a significant step toward achieving the sustainable integration of research and community engagement.
- Developing School Leadership: The Aspiring Leaders course for promising school leadership is currently being offered pro bono by the RU Business School.
- The Circle of Unity have diligently organised and supported the Makhanda Principals Forum which meets regularly and engages on multiple topics affecting them. They are the lead organisers of the 2024 Education Summit which is an exciting development.

2023 Nine Tenths Matric Mentoring Programme

- A strong partnership in its 8th year with GADRA Education has strengthened the work at Nsika, Nombulelo, Kutliso Daniels and Mary Waters Secondary Schools.
- Nine Tenths started the year on a high note with 116 bachelor passes, 61 Diploma passes from the 2022 cohort. The Makhanda Class of 2022 achieved



an excellent pass rate of 85% and the Vice Chancellor's Education schools (Khutliso Daniels, Mary Waters, Nombulelo and Ntsika) contributed 91% to the city's pass).

- A significant achievement is the increase in the number of Bachelor passes, reaching 305 in 2022, a substantial improvement from previous years. Importantly, the contribution of no-fee schools has risen significantly, with 66% of Bachelor passes originating from these institutions.
- In a historic moment, Nombulelo, a no-fee school, achieved the highest number of bachelor passes, securing 80 in total. Moreover, the programme has fostered a sense of commitment among mentors, leading to improved student results.
- The programme's impact extends to the academic excellence of its participants, with two no-fee schools, Makhanda East, outperforming fee-paying public schools. Kutliso Daniels secured second place in the city with an 88.9% pass rate, and Nombulelo claimed third place with an 87.4% pass rate. VG led with a perfect 100% pass rate, demonstrating the program's commitment to quality education.
- For 2023, there have been 110 active, trained RU student volunteers (of which 16 were student leaders) reaching 224 Gr 12 pupils in four local no-fee paying High schools for individual mentoring
- In April 2023, the programme celebrated the graduation of 26 former Nine-Tenths mentees who obtained degrees or post-graduate degrees from Rhodes University.
- This year the intentional use of senior student leaders as co-facilitators has created an environment conducive to knowledge sharing and team bonding, this is in line with the RU tag line of 'where leaders learn'.
- RU Mentors have assisted Mentees to apply for registration, to date 51 online applications have been successful and a further 20 have provisional acceptance.

BuddingQ Literacy Programme for Gr R and Gr 1.

- The Budding Q programme has been adopted by Partner Organisations who extend the reach to children in the community. This is exactly the sustainable and multiplying effect that RUCE is trying to achieve through building and



sharing models.

- In total, the Budding Q programme works with 13 sites engaging over 200 volunteers weekly and reaching approximately 500 children. The partner organisations who have adopted the programme include Kingswood College, St Mary's DCC and the Amakhala Foundation (Sidbury School).
- This year a significant focus of BuddingQ has been impact measurement. As such there have been various research projects undertaken in multiple collaborative groups. Student Leaders presented the programme at the CE Learning Symposium in May, demonstrating the impact of BuddingQ on both students and children's development. A research paper on the effectiveness of BuddingQ on Children's Literacy and Motor Development is currently under a journal review and a further study of the long term effects of BuddingQ on children's English literacy abilities is in its final stages.
- By all indications BuddingQ seems to be making a significant impact not only on children's motor development but also on the practice of teachers who are part of the programme.

Project Read

Project Read is a targeted Grade 1 literacy development initiative in Makhanda that places a strong emphasis on developing conventional literacy abilities in line with the Science of Reading research. Managed by the Lebone Centre, the programme involves training and mobilizing volunteers to work in seven local schools. Schools are chosen based on their readiness to adopt the programme.

- In 2023 three groups of volunteers are actively engaged with their respective schools. In total, 94 facilitators provide weekly support to 270 Grade 1 children.
- RU Volunteers are working at CM Vellem and Ntaba Maria, Education Faculty 2nd Year Teaching Practicum students are supporting Good Shepherd and Makana Primary, and Lebone interns are involved with George Dickerson and Grahamstown Primary.
- The progress of Project Read is evident through pre and post assessment tests revealing that two significant achievements at the participating schools have been recorded: 55% of children dramatically improved their letter sound knowledge and show more motivation and aptitude toward reading.



CERCO (Community Engagement Reading Club Orientation)

- This programme is designed and led by Professor Sam Naidu from the Literary Studies in the English Language Department working with 10 dedicated student volunteers.
- Each Reading Club is guided by a dedicated group of volunteers who work with teachers and learners to promote literacy development and reading for enjoyment.
- These volunteers, serving at CM Vellem and Good Shepherd, actively engage with Grade 2 and 3 classes to foster a love for reading among students. Additionally, the Lebone Centre oversees two more reading clubs at Grahamstown Primary and George Dickerson, further expanding the programme's reach.

Vulindlela Parent Engagement Programme

The Vulindlela Programme targets RU Support Staff and their school going children who are in Grades 10 to 12. The parents in the programme have learned how to manage their homes effectively to promote educational success, and students have shown remarkable improvement in their academic performance.

- In 2023, the Vulindlela programme has a total number of 39 parents and 46 learners. The learners come from 7 local High Schools.
- 12 active Student Volunteers and 2 Student Leaders have attended over 85 % of the tutoring and mentoring sessions. Activities take place in the Faculty of Education every Saturday mornings in term time.
- There are two service learning courses embedded in the Vulindlela programme. The first is a partnership between 22 3rd year School of Journalism and Media Studies (JMS) students and 5 no-fee High Schools in Makhanda. The activity involved fundraising and the provision of 600 SD cards, loaded with carefully selected study materials for Grade 12 learners. The loading of the 32gb cards is followed up with reflective articles written on the project by the JMS students.
- The second service learning course is the Financial Life Skills course which is offered to the Parents of the Vulindlela Programme over 5 weeks. This course is linked to the Rhodes University Management Department and is offered in partnership with the GBS Mutual Bank. The Management students are part of class discussions, mentoring support for participants (parents) and mark the assignments. 14 Certificates were awarded to parents in 2023.

High School Tutoring and Mentoring Programme

- A total of 5 organisations-Ikamva Youth, Inkululeko, Khanya Maths and Science, Sophumelela were involved in the High School Tutoring and Mentoring Programme this year, RUCE is pleased to welcome PJ Olivier as a new partner.
- 85 active student volunteers worked in the 5 selected sites.
- A notable highlight this year was a campus visit organized by RUCE and Student Leader Simphiwe Malinga for the PJ Olivier learners and teachers and motivational talks presented by Prof. Euvrard (retired Dean of Education) and Babsie Makombe from GADRA.

Young Warriors Cricket Development Programme

- A multi stakeholder partnership between RUCE, HKE, Kingswood College, the Gary Kristen Foundation, Grahamstown Primary School, St Mary's Primary and George Dickerson has seen the birth of the Young Warriors Cricket Programme.
- Four unemployed young people were identified and trained as Cricket Coaches through an online cricket programme provided by the Gary Kirsten Foundation. RUCE raised funding from GBS for the construction of two sets of cricket nets, Kingswood donated astro turf and the GK Foundation contributed the funding for the coaches monthly stipend. Full cooperation and buy in from the Principals has meant that the programme has gotten off to a good start.

Siyakhana@Makhanda Programme (CE for Residences)

- The momentum in the Residence space was very encouraging this year as the 54 elected CE Residence Representatives were active and exercised their leadership. Together with their 15 Community Partner Organisation Managers, they were trained in Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) in March 2023.
- Each Hall was partnered with an Early Childhood Development Centre which allows for relationship building, ensuring continuity. Phase one involved joint planning around an identified project, phase two was the joint implementation and phase three, evaluating and celebrating the success. Each week saw over 100 students working in the 15 ECD sites to achieve their shared goals.



- The Residential Operations Division kindly contributed to the transport costs enabling effective initiation and execution of their community engagement initiatives.

Societies and Sport Clubs

- The Societies and Sport Clubs experienced significant growth and a newfound sense of independence in how they engaged in collaborative partnerships within the Makhanda community. One of the outstanding achievements of the year was the way in which different societies came together to collaborate on addressing pressing social issues together. As examples, 7 societies collaborated to support the Home of Joy and eight Societies collaborated with Victoria Girls High School.
- RU Societies and Sports Clubs faced a number of difficulties to start the year, including a limited budget for community engagement projects. The main focus this year was to partner societies and sports clubs with local primary schools, which resulted in some exciting initiatives. Although it was a slow start, Societies and Sports Clubs ended up having a good year.

7. RU Social Innovation Hub

- Digital Storytelling has had exciting developments with the workshops being restructured into three separate accredited short courses. Nine workshops have been facilitated this year, benefitting PSAM, Social Psychology 201 and in-service B.Ed students amongst others. 28 participants have qualified for certificates for the DST for Social Innovation Course.
- Two exhibitions of digital stories made in the workshops have been held in partnership with Makana Tourism and The Black Power Station.
- The Basic Computer Skills course started in March 2023 with 62 enrolled participants, six student leaders and 23 student volunteers. Five of the participants were from the community and 57 were Rhodes staff (part-time and full-time).
- RUC's Digital resource library has continued to be used by RUC's partner organisations and programmes including GADRA Education, Awarrenett and Vulindlela to run mobile labs for learners.
- RUC also loaned equipment to partners, community members and students with over 350 devices or accessories being used.

- RUCE conducted five Business for Better discussions in partnership with Rhodes Business School, establishing a community of 20 aspiring entrepreneurs.

8. Other:

RUCE's Community Engagement Faculty Representatives have been supportive this year and worked hard to ensure CE is embedded into the Faculty and reports are written and presented at Faculty Board Meetings. A special thanks to the following representatives Humanities - Prof Sam Naidu, Science - Prof Lizanne Raubenheimer, Education - Ms Angi Jones, Law - Adv Shuaib Rahim, Pharmacy - Ms Farisai Chiwanza and Dr Xolile Antoni from Commerce.

Thanks must go to the VC, Professor Sizwe Mabizela, DVC's Prof Mabokang Monnapula-Mapesela, Senior Management and other Colleagues who have played key roles to build the community engagement space. RUCE is blessed to have leadership across the university that truly understand the strategic value of community engagement in higher education.

Lastly to the hard working RUCE staff, its been a full and productive year, especially made possible by outstanding team work. Your commitment to social justice and to shaping and remaking a more just and sustainable community is acknowledged.

Have a wonderful evening, thank you for sharing in this celebration and thank you for the part you have played to achieve the impact mentioned here. You are all valued as part of the RUCE and Rhodes family.





*A very special thanks must go to our Donor Partners
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