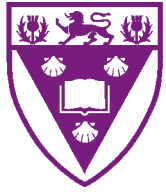


The Rhodes University Community Newsletter



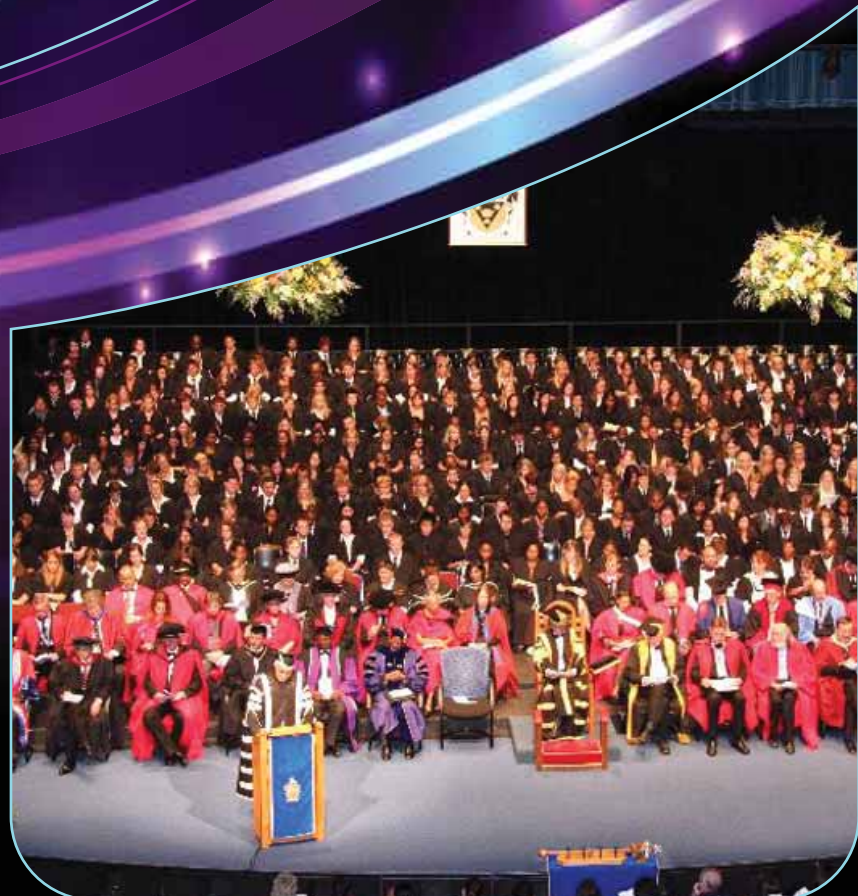
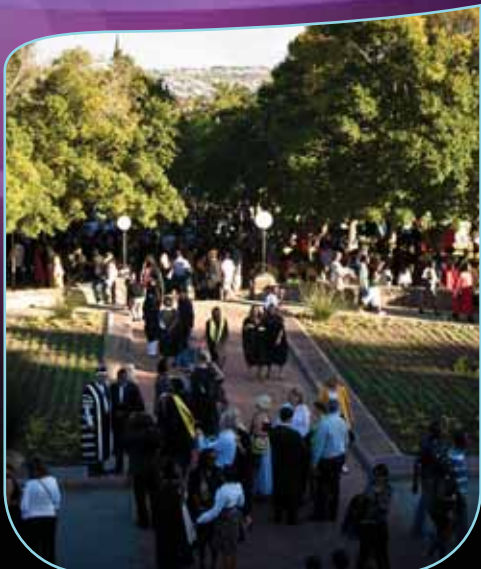
RHODES UNIVERSITY
Where leaders learn

Rhodos

Graduation Special Edition

May 2011

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Rhodos: Graduation Special Edition

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Community Engagement award spurs recipient to do more

Community Engagement should not be something you do to tick boxes, or to score points. Community Engagement should be something you do because you want to. So says Mr Mandla Gagayi, Assistant Sports Manager at Rhodes University and winner of the 2011 Vice-Chancellor's Community Engagement Award.

Mr Gagayi's involvement with the local community dates back to 2006, when he decided to do something about the lack of sporting opportunities for young people in the township, and started soccer and netball leagues at the high schools. It began informally, outside of his job at Rhodes, but was such a success that it soon became more formalised. Initially, he says, they had not a cent to run the league, and most expenses came out of his own pocket.

In 2007 he left Rhodes to work for the government, and the leagues, he says, "dulled a bit." However he returned to work for Rhodes at the end of 2007, and at this point the leagues were revived and became an official programme of Rhodes Sports Administration. Additionally, he put in an application for Lotto funding, and received an allocation of

funds for equipment and other items. This was not a speedy process; the grant was approved in 2008 but the funds were only received in 2010 and with this he bought kit, balls and equipment for all the participating schools.

Thanks to the Lotto funding the leagues are at a point where they can be self-sustaining, which pleases Mr Gagayi. His vision of community engagement incorporates empowerment very strongly, and he did not want the leagues dependent on Rhodes forever. Now that they have the necessary equipment, the leagues are being run by people from within the community, with Mr Gagayi fulfilling more of an advisory role.

There have been challenges throughout. "They expect the Maths teacher to teach Maths all day and then go out onto the soccer field after class, for no extra pay." At some schools there were groups of children excited and eager to play, but with no educator there to supervise them. This problem was overcome by targeting individual educators, inspiring some to volunteer.

Women educators particularly have stepped up to the challenge and there are now two schools with soccer teams run by women. Rhodes University students also get involved, and Mr Gagayi says they have up to twenty students volunteering their time on Wednesday afternoons when the leagues play. The project has grown with its members; people who learnt to play at school have now left and are active in the local leagues. Netball leagues have been set up by young women who have left school and want to continue playing.

His vision of community engagement incorporates empowerment very strongly, and he did not want the leagues dependent on Rhodes forever

There are still challenges, one of which is the sorry state of the soccer fields in Grahamstown East. The teams do come to Rhodes to play in tournaments, but league games are played in the township to encourage community building.

When I ask how he felt on being awarded the Vice-Chancellors' prize, he laughs, and admits that he thought the initial phone call was a practical joke. It took a letter from HR to convince him, he says. He insists that the award is not just about him, but is an award for the efforts of Rhodes Sports Administration in general, and a welcome recognition of the amount of community work they do both locally and regionally. The league programme is launching in Port Alfred schools in May, because, says Mr Gagayi, now that they have this recognition they must not sit back and rest. "Now we must do even more."

“Drama acts as a window onto the world”

Dr Anton Krueger, Lecturer in the Rhodes University Drama Department, is the recipient of the 2010 Vice-Chancellor's Book Award for his academic work *Experiments in Freedom: Issues of Identity in New South African Drama*. The book focuses on plays written after 1994 and according to the blurb:

“(It) examines ways in which identities have been represented in recent South African play texts published in English. It begins by exploring descriptions of identity from various philosophical, psychological and anthropological perspectives and elaborates ways in which drama is uniquely suited to represent - as well as to effect - transformations of identity.”

The holder of a D.Litt from the University of Pretoria, Dr Krueger is no newcomer to the literary scene. With a number of highly successful plays to his credit, among them *Living in Strange Lands*, which was nominated for the prestigious FNB Vita Award, he has also engaged in other genres. His first poetry collection, *Everyday Anomalies*, is due out later this year and his 2010 novella, *Sunnyside Sal*, garnered positive reviews.

Experiments in Freedom is his first full-length foray into academic writing and is, in fact, his doctoral thesis. He received the PhD in 2008, but it has taken a couple of years for the book to reach its final form. With a disarming grin, he explains that this is mostly due to his habit of constantly tweaking the text, and his tendency to send printers' proofs back with yet more changes marked. In fact, during the publication process for *Sunnyside Sal* he eventually had to hire a student to assist him, the publisher's own typesetter having refused to make any further changes.

Dr Krueger is modest about winning the award, having, no idea how many other books were published by Rhodes academics in 2010. It may, he says, have been a very short shortlist indeed. However, he was gratified to receive the award, both for the recognition it brings and the fact that impecunious academics appreciate awards with cash prizes attached.

A reviewer noted of *Experiments in Freedom* that Dr Krueger's conclusions seem to be the opposite of what he expected to find. South African identity, as presented by playwrights, appears to still be mired in the delineations of the apartheid era. He elucidates on this, saying that his book mentions several times that even now, seventeen years after the 1994 watershed, many things in our society still come down to race. He refers to the fact that on many application forms, the tickboxes asking about race still exist, and we still tick



He thinks for a moment about this, then offers: “I suppose it means that there's never really a perfect way to say something; you can never really decide that this is now a perfect sentence.”

them. He had held out the hope that South Africans would have liberated themselves from this self-classification by now.

Dr Krueger is an easy person to interview; remarkably interesting and erudite and with a refreshing sense of the ridiculous. Indeed, *Shaggy*, a book of comic monologues which he has co-authored with a friend, is being published later this year. His next non-fiction project will be a collaboration with Mark Fleischman on the history of the Magnet Theatre in Cape Town.

His output is prolific, despite his stated reluctance to ever declare a work completely finished. He thinks for a moment about this, then offers: “I suppose it means that there's never really a perfect way to say something; you can never really decide that this is now a perfect sentence.”

Drama acts as a window onto the world of others, providing a way of learning about this otherness. It functions as a method for understanding ourselves and our society. Dr Krueger has, through his plays and now his academic analyses, polished the window a little bit, allowing for a clearer view.

Born to love the aquatic world

Since an early age, Professor Alan Whitfield has been fascinated by the natural world, especially the marine environment. At the tender age of eight, he started collecting pictures of fish and brochures from aquariums, and compiled them into an album which he has kept to this day.

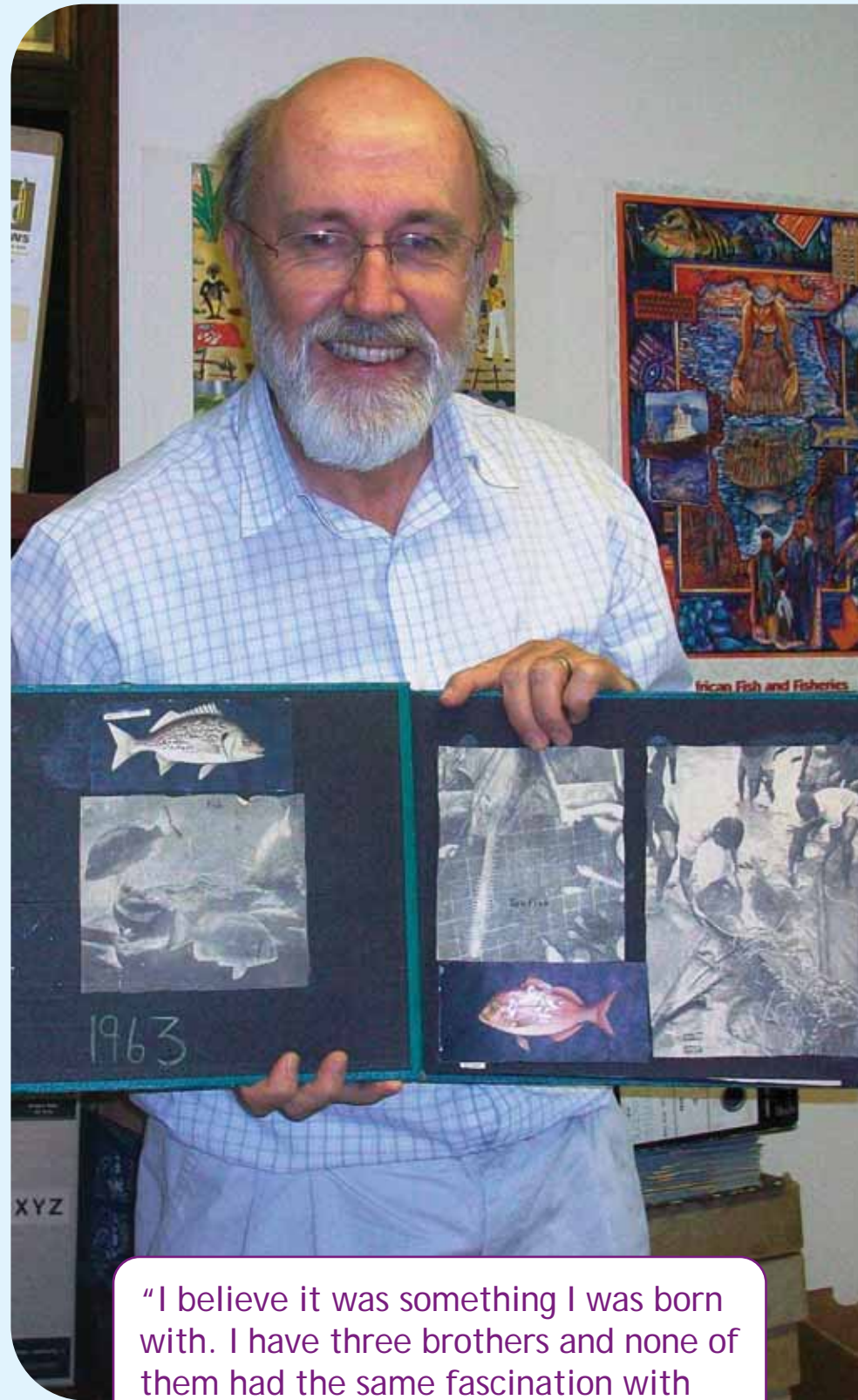
"I believe it was something I was born with. I have three brothers and none of them had the same fascination with nature, particularly the aquatic world," he said.

For all these years his greatest impetus has been discovery - "Discovering more about how the natural world operates and what we need to do to minimise negative impacts on our environment and the organisms (especially fishes) that share this world with us," he added.

His career spans 35 years and so far he has published more than 130 papers. His contribution to estuarine ichthyology in South Africa was recently honoured by Rhodes University when he was awarded the prestigious Doctor of Science (DSc) during graduation. The award is based on published work by an academic who has made a significant contribution to a particular research field.

Speaking about the award, he said he feels "very privileged and honoured to be a graduate of Rhodes University" (the alma mater of my father, mother and son). "The response of the graduation ceremony audience to my award was overwhelming," said Prof Whitfield.

You would think that his achievements and lifetime career in estuarine



"I believe it was something I was born with. I have three brothers and none of them had the same fascination with nature, particularly the aquatic world,

ichthyology would quench Prof Whitfield's thirst for the subject. No! He is currently busy writing a book on Estuarine Fishes and Fisheries of the World together with three international academics.

"We hope to finish that book within the next couple of years. I also have plans to write a book about the biology and ecology of fishes in southern African Estuaries, but that may have to wait until I retire," he said.

The idea to embark on a DSc journey was influenced by the NRF's performance management system. "The NRF performance system has a specific section which requires information on what you are doing to improve your skills or qualification in your job environment. I thought that undertaking a DSc was an interesting and rewarding target to set and the performance system gives one two years to achieve the set goal," he added.

The DSc award is open to any researcher/academic to apply to the University to submit a DSc for examination. "There is no supervisor, but the candidate has to submit a proposal to Faculty outlining the scope and magnitude of the contribution that is planned. Once this proposal is approved, the candidate can start collating the published papers for the DSc," Prof Whitfield explained.



Chemistry Department Professor churns out four PhDs

Professor Tebello Nyokong, of the Rhodes University Chemistry Department, is one of our most lauded academics, with responsibility for overseeing some of the Department's most celebrated programmes.

As Professor of Medicinal Chemistry and Nanotechnology for the DST/NRF South African Research Chairs Initiative, and Director of the DST/Mintek Nanotechnology Innovation Centre (NIC) for Sensors, she laughingly describes her work as a factory which churns out PhDs.

At any given time, Prof Nyokong is supervising a number of candidates in different stages of their doctoral research. Candidates who wish to study with her have a choice of three projects that they can join and find a niche within which to carry out their research. For funding reasons, Prof Nyokong explains, the Department cannot take on students who wish to work on research independent of the primary thrusts already established and funded.

The projects in which she accepts students are: the development of sensors for analysis of pollutants and of neurotransmitters; photodynamic therapy, which focuses on the treatment of cancer through the use of light; and nanotechnology. It is little wonder that this year she saw the graduation of four PhD students whom she has supervised and worked with for the past three years. In fact, she has seen as many as six of her PhD students graduate together in the past.

When one considers that many students from the bigger city universities such as UJ, Wits and UKZN are now coming to Rhodes specifically to work on her teams, and that Rhodes University has an arrangement with the University of Lagos in Nigeria whereby Prof Nyokong trains their lecturers to PhD level, it is not surprising that she sees so many of her students receiving their doctoral degrees at one time. This year, all four of her graduating PhDs were from African countries: two from Nigeria, one from Zimbabwe and one from Lesotho. Prof Nyokong explains that although three of these are lecturers at universities in their home countries, and were therefore being paid by their respective institutions while they were studying here, the higher cost of living meant that she had to find additional funding for them in the form of bursaries.

Sharon Moeno from Lesotho developed cancer-specific drugs, which are activated by light and

thus avoid the devastating effects of chemotherapy. Utilising nanoscience, Moeno developed a double action drug system which combines cancer diagnosis and treatment in one step. Her research, says Prof Nyokong, represents a crucial step in the early diagnosis and treatment of cancer. Additionally, this research resulted in 10 publications in international journals.

Tawanda Mugadza from Zimbabwe and Isaak Akinbulu from Nigeria worked on similar projects, utilising different methodologies to analyse their results. The research focused on the development of a new, efficient and cheap method for making nanomaterials. Mugadza used these nanomaterials to design extremely sensitive sensors for the detection of herbicides, with the goal of designing portable diagnostic tools for monitoring pollution. According to Prof Nyokong, this research is a first step towards nanotechnology-based water treatment.

The final candidate, Taofeek Ogunbayo from Nigeria, carried out research on water purification. Safer methods of water purification are constantly being developed, and research in this field is ongoing. Ogunbayo developed new ways of water purification using sunlight, nanotechnology and harmless dyes, thus avoiding further contamination with toxic chemicals.



Pictured here is PhD graduate Sharon Moeno with her supervisor, Prof Tebello Nyokong, Dr Edith Antunes, Dr Christian Litwinski (back) are members of staff of the Chemistry Department and Vice-Chancellor, Dr Saleem Badat.

“I am really proud of them”

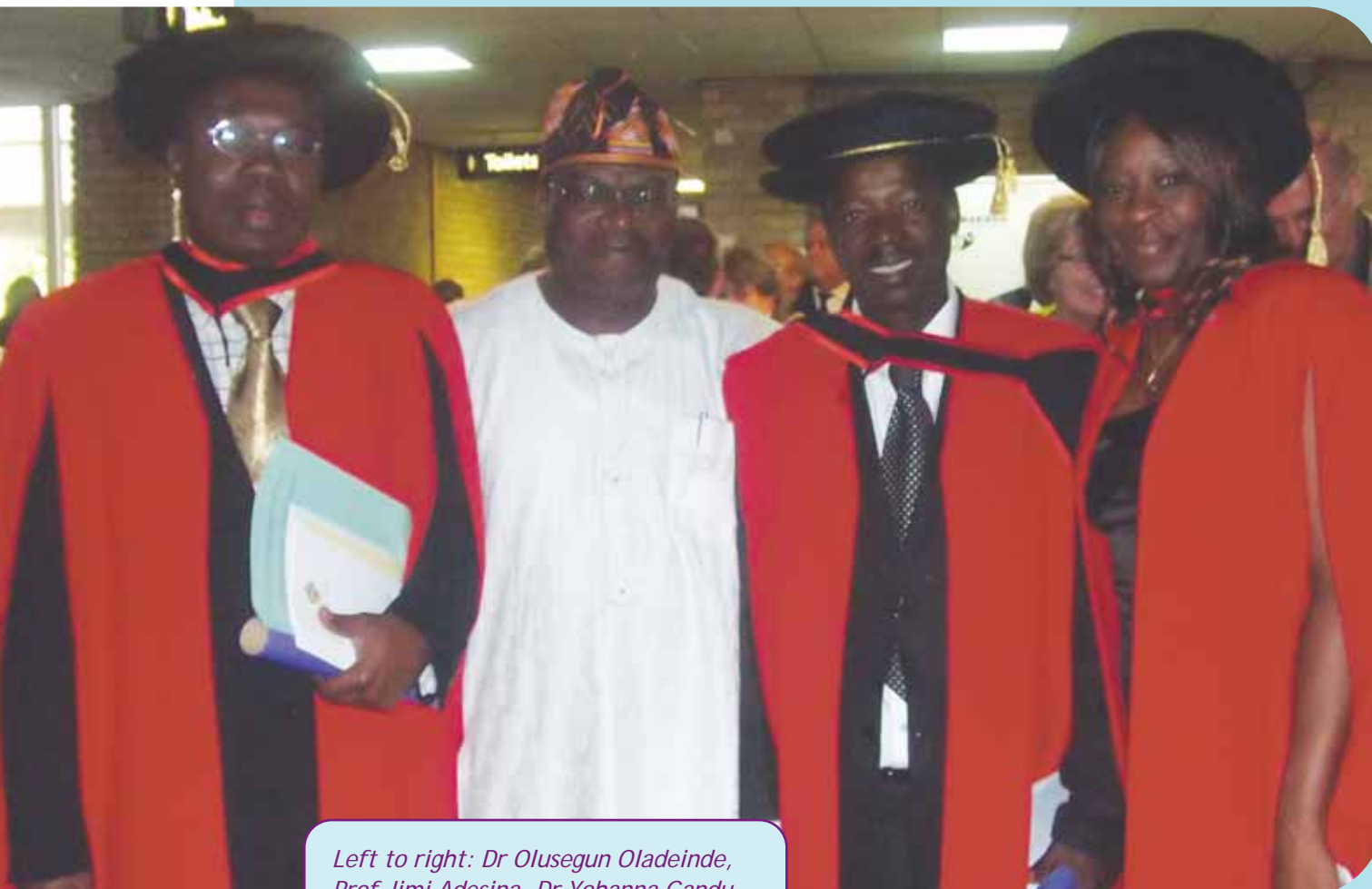
Professor Jimi Adesina, who has now left the Department of Sociology at Rhodes University to take up a post as Professor of Sociology at the University of the Western Cape (UWC), returned to see three of his PhD and two Masters-by-thesis candidates graduate in the 2011 Humanities Graduation Ceremony.

students. After all, knowledge production is collaborative.”

His three PhD graduates are Yohanna Gandu, Segun Oladeinde and Ashley Sarimana. Drs Gandu and Oladeinde worked on issues related to the oil industry in Nigeria, and Dr Sarimana’s thesis is on the political biography of Enos Mabuza. The two Masters graduates are Sthembiso Mungwashu and Precious Tanyanyiwa, and their theses reflect the work of the research groups that Prof Adesina started in 2009. Both students are moving on to PhD studies.

industry. Dr Sarimana’s thesis on Enos Mabuza, is described by Prof Adesina as “a smashing piece of intellectually rigorous contribution to South Africa’s Political Sociology. The bibliography alone, as one of the examiners noted, is a treasure trove for those who wish to work in the area.”

The MSocSc graduates contributed equally to the body of sociological knowledge. Mungwashu’s thesis fleshed out a concept developed within the Transformative Social Policy research group, namely the idea of ‘State learning.’ Tanyanyiwa’s thesis, part of a larger NRF-funded project is, as far as Prof Adesina is aware, the first thesis on the scholarship of Professor Bernard Magubane. “Hopefully we can get those who teach Sociology in South Africa to start paying attention to the works of Magubane, Archie Mafeje, Ruth First, and Fatima Meer, among others; not simply as activists but as outstanding scholars. Perhaps then we can start overcoming the Eurocentric status anxiety that is so pervasive in our social sciences.”



Left to right: Dr Olusegun Oladeinde, Prof Jimi Adesina, Dr Yohanna Gandu, and Dr Ashley Sarimana.

He is justifiably proud of his students, but stresses that it is more about the enormous amount of work which the students put into their research than his role as supervisor. The examiners’ reports reflect the quality of the theses produced and, says Prof Adesina, “I am really proud of them.”

Prof Adesina takes Prof Tebello Nyokong as his inspiration, saying, “If we in the Humanities get to grips with what makes the Sciences successful in PhD output—the laboratory system—we can be as productive and make the PhD journey more collaborative and less painful for our

One of the questions asked of supervisors is whether their newly graduated PhDs made a contribution to their discipline’s body of knowledge. The examiners are unanimous that this is the case. Dr Gandu’s thesis is on a neglected area of the conflict in the petroleum-rich Nigerian Delta region and Prof Adesina is hopeful that with this research, scholars and policymakers can start focusing on the hidden impact of an enclave economy on the local communities. Dr Oladeinde’s thesis significantly advances the frontier of knowledge in the Labour Process debate, by examining managerial practices and work relations in the Nigerian oil

Many of this cohort of students were members of two of Prof Adesina’s new research groups, namely African Intellectual Heritage, and Transformative Social Policy. He is proud of their involvement and success, despite what he describes as a problematic environment within the Department. Prof Adesina mentions too that in his view, students are placed under unnecessary stress with regard to financial resources and that this is an area he feels should be better managed. Lastly, he thanks Dr Clayton for his support during the period of his supervision of these candidates as they worked within the newly established research groups.

Significant postgrad output from BioSENS research group

Professor Janice Limson, Head of Biotechnology in the Department of Biochemistry, Microbiology and Biotechnology, supervised what Dr Peter Clayton, Vice-Chancellor of Research and Development described as a large group of postgraduates, who all received their degrees in the 2011 ceremony. Prof Limson confirms that two PhD, four MSc and one Honours student graduated from her BioSENS research group.

Dr Rory Brimecombe received his PhD. His study, which was described as "meticulous", shows how cost-effective treatments of nanomaterials can achieve what are the core criteria in the global sensors industry for diseases and pollutants, namely sensitivity and stability. After this important contribution to the field of nanomaterials-based sensors, he went on to design the first electro-chemical sensor for the anti-cancer agent wortmannin.

Dr Brimecombe is currently a Senior Technical Manager at Diasorin, a South African company working in the area of human disease diagnostics.

Dr Ronen Fogel, who graduated with his PhD, developed a model system for predicting enzyme performance while uncovering seldom explored phenomena in the field of protein immobilization. In applying his findings, he designed what Prof Limson describes as "possibly the most competitive sensor of its kind for several phenols, compounds which are amongst the most toxic pollutants worldwide." In addition, she comments that the word 'impressive' features no fewer than six times in the examiners' reports for his thesis.

Dr Fogel won a prestigious Claude Leon Postdoctoral Fellowship and has not been lost to Rhodes, as he is working alongside Prof Limson for the next two years in a cancer diagnostics project.

Shane Flanagan was awarded his MSc, and has this year begun his PhD studies in Prof Limson's research group. Flanagan developed a sensor system for ochratoxin A, a potent mycotoxin produced by fungi which contaminate several foods and beverages. His work also examined and optimised

methods for preparing carbon nanotubes for sensor applications, in a careful and thorough study.

Letshego Molawa received her MSc for examining the application of commercial Spherezyme Technology, utilised for immobilising proteins in biosensor development. This research was in collaboration with the CSIR and co-supervised by Dr Justin Jordaan, a former Rhodes Biotechnology graduate. Molawa is based at the CSIR and will be starting a PhD.

Mary Cromhout examined the use of new technology, namely the Quartz Crystal Microbalance with Dissipation, to rapidly assess whether drugs such as anti-cancer drugs will have any immune response. This is important in the field of drug delivery where new materials (such as nanomaterials) which can assist in targeted drug delivery are continuously under development.

a fuel cell to yield power outputs in excess of that achieved by platinum catalysts. At the same time, the bacteria in the fuel cells are capable of degrading waste.

Using living organisms to degrade waste and generate energy is a classic biotechnology process, says Prof Limson. Two of her current MSc and Honours students are continuing this research in collaboration with Mr Richard Laubscher at EBRU (Institute for Environmental Biotechnology, Rhodes University), while Edwards is currently travelling through the Far East teaching Science and English. He plans to return to do a PhD.



Sean Edwards (MSc), Dr Rory Brimecombe (PhD), Mary Cromhout (MSc), Dr Ronen Fogel (PhD), Prof Janice Limson, Shane Flanagan (MSc). Not in the picture Letshego Molawa (MSc)

Cromhout's work went some way towards addressing the need for testing as to whether such materials have any adverse effects on the human body. Her research was co-supervised with Dr Adrienne Edkins and, having received her MSc, she has started her PhD in Prof Limson's research group.

Sean Edwards, who received his MSc, conducted research which yielded excellent results for microbial fuel cells where, by coupling cost-effective catalysts with nanoparticles, he was able to optimise

Much of the research undertaken by this cohort of graduates was funded through the Nanotechnology Innovation Centre (Sensors) programme, a DST/Mintek initiative to generate capacity in nanotechnology and in the development of sensors for health and the environment. In addition, funding was provided via the NRF, and Edwards' research was sponsored by a WWF/Eskom grant.

“A beautiful privilege”

Ms Corinne Knowles, who teaches the Sociology and Political & International Studies Extended Studies courses and her son, David Knowles, achieved something relatively rare when they graduated together in the 2011 Humanities Graduation ceremony. Ms Knowles received her Masters in Politics and David was awarded his BA in Philosophy and History.

Ms Knowles's dissertation focused on the Womens Academic Solidarity Association (WASA), and the ways in which it uses its platform to contribute to transformation on the Rhodes University campus. Using a Judith Butler theory, she was looking for that little tipping point - the moment when transformation actually occurs. Asked if she found it, and she replies thoughtfully that she thinks she has, or, at least

a way to identify it, a theoretical tool through which to understand transformation.

Ms Knowles says frankly that her MA was a difficult undertaking. Working full-time, in an extremely intensive job where she not only sees her ESU students for two periods a day but also attends their lectures with them, she struggled to work on her thesis in term-time. However, in the student vacations (vac) she would “just bury herself in it, sitting for ten or twelve hours and just working” and then hand something in at the end of the vac. Did she ever get a chance to just sit back and relax. She laughs infectiously and says the writing is her relaxation. It's what she wants to do and she loves it so much that, come vac time, she can't wait to immerse herself in it.

This does not mean that she is any less passionate about her teaching, and, she says, she has another, overarching passion, which is transformation. She first came to Rhodes in 2002, and became involved with WASA a couple

of years later. This involvement, she explains, provided her with a way to articulate social justice issues, particularly around gender. Undertaking and completing her MA, she says, “has been a privilege, a beautiful privilege” and has allowed her to understand both power and vulnerability in amazing ways. She says it has completely changed not so much the way in which she thinks, but the way in which she can think.

Ms Knowles' son, David, is a musician, and spent a couple of years traveling in the UK, exploring his music. When he returned to South Africa, he began studying towards a B.Mus, and picked up Philosophy as an extra subject. He then found it was Philosophy that was imparting the skills he needed to hone the messages he wanted to send through his lyrics and his music, and changed his degree to a BA. David is passionate about the environment, and is now doing his Honours in History and Politics, hoping to develop ways of enabling people to change their attitude to environmental issues.

Ms Knowles is presently finishing her Assessors Course and during the interview she had an academic paper on her computer screen that was in the process of being written. She is also, “thinking thinking, thinking” about what to select as her PhD topic. This, she says, is the creative time, when she can explore her ideas before making a final decision.

It has been a very special experience, to be so immersed in scholarly endeavour, and to share that experience with a child who is also serious about finding meaning and finding truth

What has it felt like to be studying concurrently and graduating together with her son? Ms Knowles has nothing but good things to say about it.

“It has been a very special experience, to be so immersed in scholarly endeavour, and to share that experience with a child who is also serious about finding meaning and finding truth. We have established new and important ways to relate to each other because of this,” she concludes.



Passion for art

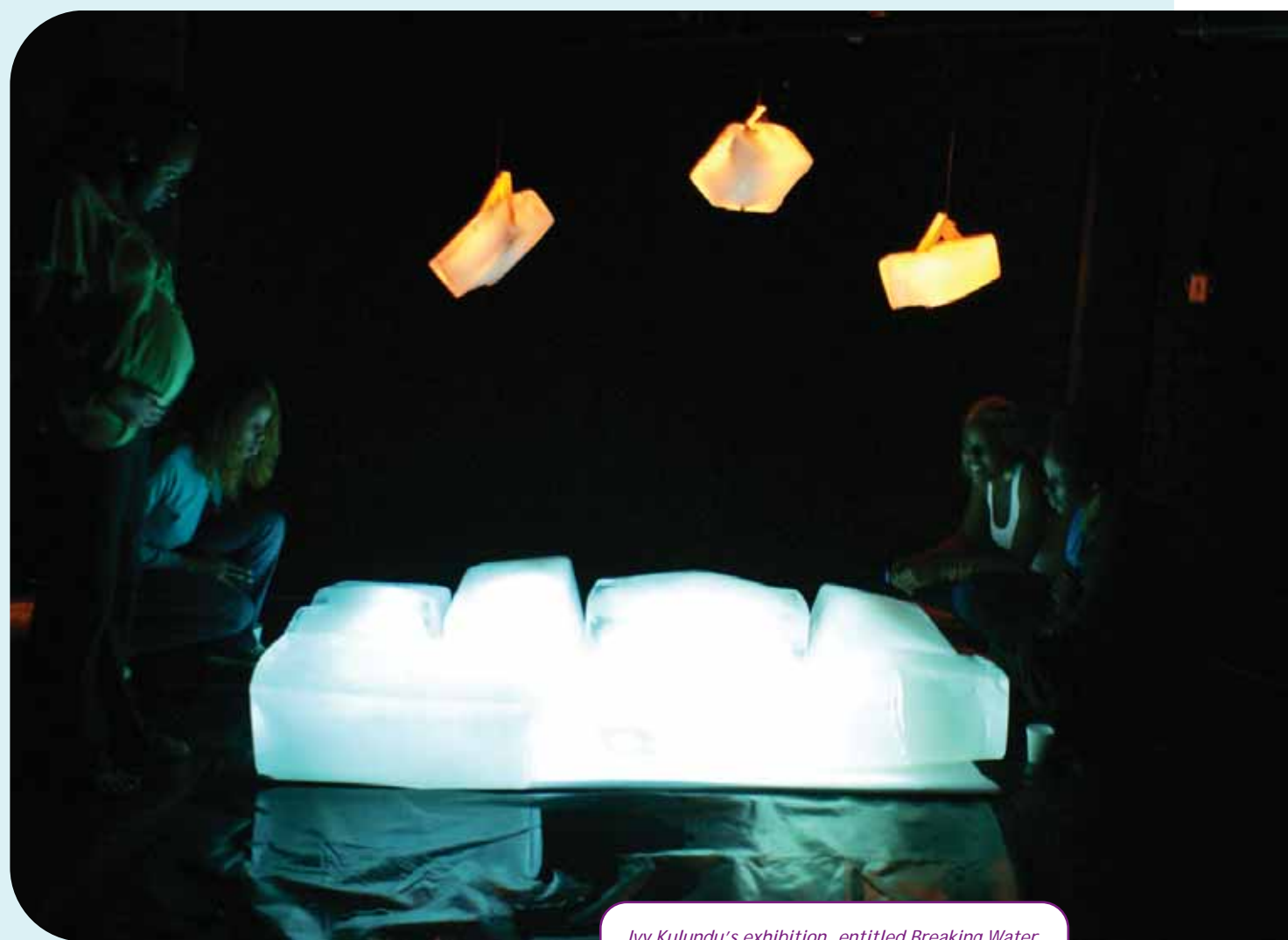
This year's cohort of Bachelor of Fine Arts graduates garnered an impressive 17 distinctions among them. One of the seventeen is Ivy Kulundu, whose final exhibition, entitled *Breaking Water*, represents not only the completion of her BFA, but also a major life change: the transition to motherhood.

In her own words, quoted in the Rhodes Fine Art Graduate Exhibitions catalogue, she explains: "This exhibition explores the transient nature of one's physicality and emotions. Using ice as a metaphor for change - which is inevitable, unavoidable and an integral part of life - I attempt to visually articulate my emotional and physical journey during pregnancy."

Kulundu initially studied Law at university. Having completed her LLB, she went into legal practice for two years, hoping, she says, to grow to love it. However, this didn't happen, and she decided to return to university to study towards her BFA. Art is her passion, she says with a smile. Initially she found it challenging but did settle well, and thoroughly enjoyed her first three years. And then, at the beginning of her fourth and final year, she and her boyfriend of seven years (now her husband) found out that she was pregnant.

This presented a challenge. People close to her encouraged her to take a year off, and return to complete the degree after the baby was born. Kulundu did give this idea due consideration, but had a feeling that if she did so, she would never in fact return to her studies. Instead she decided to incorporate her pregnancy, and her unborn baby, into her art and in doing so she found herself approaching her work in an ever more passionate and driven way.

Her final project for her degree related strongly to pregnancy, and the unknown territory into which she was embarking. Her choice of



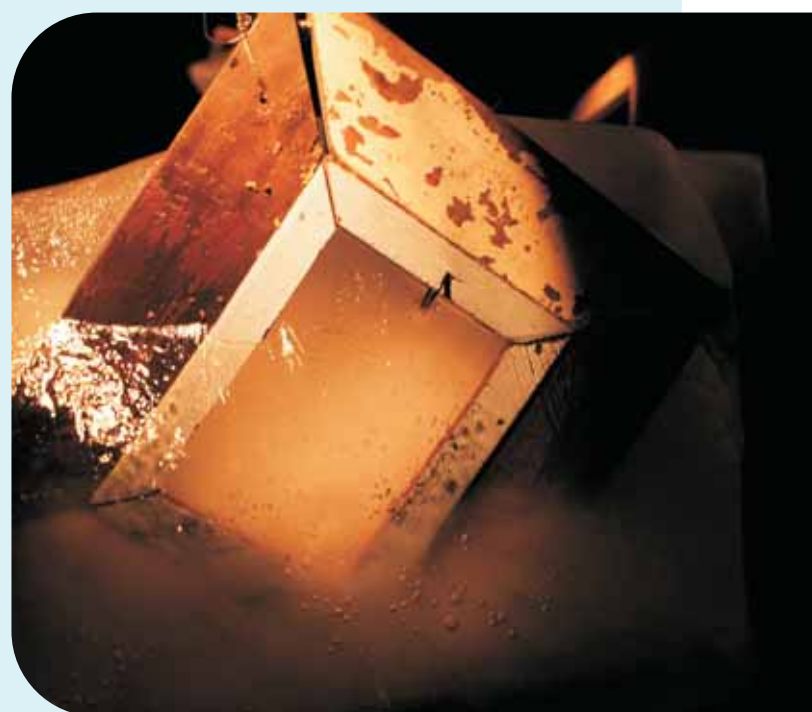
Ivy Kulundu's exhibition, entitled *Breaking Water*.

installation/performance and digital components "highlights the multiple levels and layers of being *in utero*, as well as the blur between the private and public experience faced." Kulundu decided to work with ice, feeling that it was the ideal medium through which to represent the change she could feel happening within herself from day to day.

Her installation consisted of nine ice sculptures hanging from the ceiling, embedded in which were empty frames, to represent the unknown. Kulundu says some of the questions in her mind were along the lines of wondering what sort of personality her daughter would have, and what kind of relationship they would have with each other. In addition, she had six huge ice blocks on the floor, which she used as her canvas. Using stop-frame animation, she projected onto them images of her changing belly, with focus particularly on the navel. As the ice blocks, both those hanging from the ceiling and those on the floor, were in the process of melting and disintegrating, her metaphor of change, and of constant flux, was well represented by her chosen medium.

Her baby was due during the time when her exhibition was running, and everyone was praying that the name of the exhibition would not prove

to be prophetic. Obliging, Luna, she of the wide, wondering dark eyes, complied, and arrived six days later. She credits Luna as her inspiration; towards the end of her pregnancy and her final year, she admits she was probably a little obsessed. Then again, she admits, she probably had to be, to get it all finished. She knows that people were concerned that she was over-exerting herself, but, "with the support of my friends and family," she says, "I succeeded in what I wanted to do."



More black students graduate in 2011

This year, 2 045 students from six faculties were awarded degrees, diplomas and certificates during the graduation ceremonies in April. Some 1 151 students received undergraduate degrees and 44% were awarded postgraduate qualifications.

The Faculty of Humanities graduated the largest number of graduates at 808 students, while Commerce produced 483, Science 359, Education 268, Law 64 and Pharmacy 63.

Addressing the audience, Vice-Chancellor, Dr Saleem Badat, reminded the new graduates that when they joined Rhodes University, they were told that "at Rhodes learning and education is a partnership of mutual commitment to the pursuit of knowledge and understanding, to the development of expertise and skills, and to the embracing of appropriate values and attitudes".

He said their achievement is a testimony that they have fulfilled their role in this partnership. "You have displayed the necessary commitment

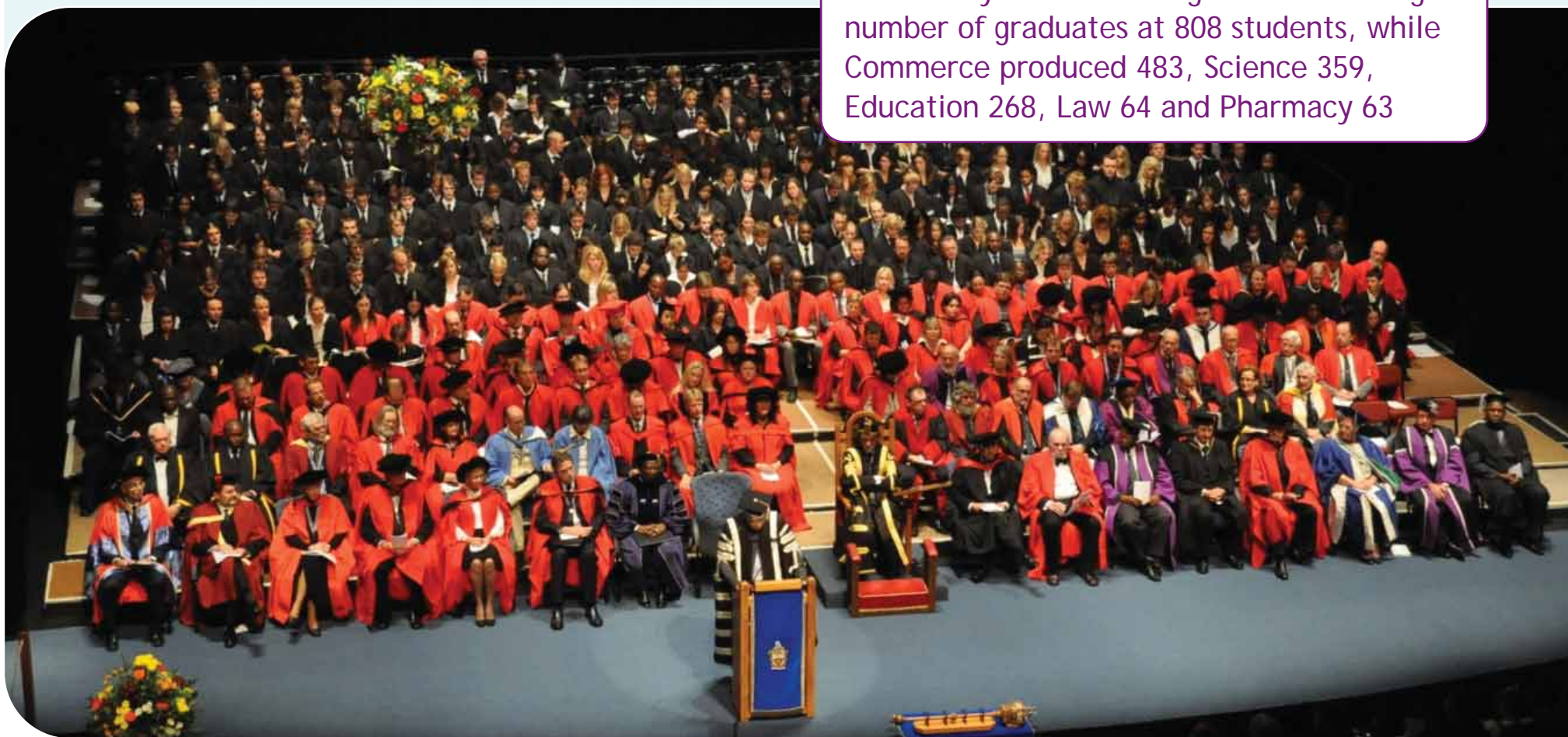
to learn, to acquire knowledge and to develop expertise," he said. "Your accomplishment, the fruit of years of toil, is a fantastic achievement in the face of a higher education system that struggles to realise the talents and potential of all our students."

Dr Badat said he trusts that the students will acknowledge the role and contribution of all the people who made it possible for them to graduate - such as lecturers and tutors, laboratory assistants and computer technicians, administrators and wardens, cooks, cleaners and gardeners.

"All of these people labour to create a special intellectual, social and physical environment at Rhodes to support you and to enable you to succeed," he added.

The University was pleased to witness the gradual increase in the number of black graduates compared to 2009 and 2010. In 2011, 815 black students graduated compared to 724 in 2010 and 712 in 2009.

The Faculty of Humanities graduated the largest number of graduates at 808 students, while Commerce produced 483, Science 359, Education 268, Law 64 and Pharmacy 63



Quotes from some of the Honorary Doctorate recipients



Dr George Bizos

"We may be blamed for not having foreseen that we could not within a period of sixteen years wipe out the injustices perpetrated for over three centuries to the vast majority of the people of South Africa. Some who have lost privileges wrongly complain that they have been deprived of their rights."

Dr Lillian Congo



"Wellness to most people means being Physically well, free from any disease, from any illness, perhaps brought to this state by exercise and good nutrition. Also this Wellness is supposed to mean a healthy balance of body, mind and spirit, consequently resulting in an overall feeling of Wellbeing."

Strong postgrad throughput for African Languages

The African language Studies Section in the School of Languages at Rhodes graduated a record number of 23 postgraduates in 2011, thanks largely to funding provided by the National Department of Arts & Culture (DAC). The DAC provided R7.5 million over three years towards bursaries for Honours and Masters students. There were 19 Honours degrees awarded, three Masters degrees and one PhD.

Prof Russell Kaschula, Head of the School of Languages says, "These students represent all nine indigenous languages and come from all over the country to participate in our postgraduate programme. The throughput that has been made possible by the funding from the Department has been most gratifying." The contribution of the Department of Arts & Culture was recognised at a celebratory luncheon held over Graduation weekend for the postgrad students, Rhodes staff members and representatives of the DAC.

In addition, a large number of undergraduate degrees were conferred with an African Language as a major, both for mother tongue and non-mother tongue students. This year also saw a group of 75 students graduating from the School of Languages as a whole - the biggest cohort to date.

It seems there is indeed something very seductive about African Language studies at Rhodes. Thola Nkwanyana, who received her



Dr Mbulelo Jokweni: Acting Deputy Director General: Department of Arts & Culture and Prof Russell Kaschula, Head of the School of Languages

Honours degree with distinction and is now doing her Masters, gave up a hot-shot career in Industrial Psychology because she was so enamoured by this field of study.

Thato Nteso, an Honours graduate in Sesotho who is also currently doing her Masters, relocated from Free State University because of the Rhodes programme. It might have something to do with the passion and commitment of the staff in this section - it's easy to see how their enthusiasm rubs off on the students.

The theses of the three Masters students who graduated in April focused on a number of interesting and significant topics. Andre Mostert looked at how new technology can benefit oral traditions in South Africa, Mila Fobe compared language teaching practices at an Afrikaans-speaking and isiXhosa-speaking school in Grahamstown, and Lena Magagane developed Sepedi translations for ICT terminology.

Such a large group of Honours and Masters students places a significant burden on supervisory staff. Prof Kaschula paid special tribute to Andre Mostert, who in addition to doing his own Masters, gave hours of his time voluntarily and selflessly to assist fellow students with writing skills, research design and a number of other factors that constitute success at postgraduate level.

Prof Kaschula says this is something they will have to factor into planning for the future, as postgraduate numbers continue to grow in the African language Studies Section in the School of Languages-there is currently a cohort of some 42 Honours students, 20 Masters students and six PhDs registered.



PhD graduate champions the use of isiXhosa

Dr Pamela Maseko obtained her PhD at the recent Rhodes graduation, with a thesis entitled “Intellectualisation of African Languages with particular reference to isiXhosa”. Dr Maseko is employed as a Lecturer in the African Languages of the School of Languages, and this is the first PhD to be awarded since 2007.

Rhodes University is very fortunate to have someone of her calibre and passion for the development of isiXhosa in its ranks, and she is contributing in a significant way to putting the African Languages section at the forefront of higher education language policy and development in the country.

Encouraged to join Rhodes by Prof Russell Kaschula, who first got to know her when they worked together at the University of Cape Town (UCT), she says she was inspired to make the move because of the opportunity to engage in a more practical way with introducing isiXhosa into various disciplines, as well as to explore her particular research interests.

Dr Maseko has not come to the academic highlight of a PhD the easy way. Right from the outset, she has worked and raised a family alongside studying towards her degrees. Commencing at the University of the Western Cape (UWC) in the mid-80s, when life was a

heady mix of resistance politics, “struggle” work, part-time studies and the responsibility of a young daughter, she admits she got into languages “by default”. She was teaching on the SACHED project to earn extra money and through this work, her contact with Dr Neville Alexander and teaching isiXhosa as a second language to “comrades”, she developed her love for language issues and activism.

After completing her BA degree with majors in Social Anthropology, History and isiXhosa, Dr Maseko also did her Honours degree in isiXhosa at UWC, focusing mostly on socio-linguistics. She has a particular interest in how language is used to facilitate or impede learning in the classroom. There followed a number of years working as a Lecturer in the African Languages Department at UCT and although she tried to further her studies, she had a heavy teaching load and didn’t quite find the niche she wanted there, as there was a strong focus on structural linguistics. She was already registered as a Masters student at Rhodes when Prof Kaschula approached her to head up the SANTED initiative (South Africa-Norway Tertiary Education Development Programme), so it didn’t take much persuading!

In her thesis, Dr Maseko explores the argument in some quarters that isiXhosa is not developed enough to teach and convey (educational) concepts at high school level. She maintains that the basis is there, laid by the missionaries years ago in their teaching and the introduction of print, and that the language can be further

intellectualized if it is used. “Languages develop as they are used and they are used as they develop,” she argues. Her work forms part of a larger movement that is using universities on the continent to facilitate scholarship in African languages.



Dr Pamela Maseko and Prof Russell Kaschula, Head of the School of Languages

Alongside her promotion of the more widespread use of isiXhosa in teaching at school level, Dr Maseko has also been very involved in the introduction of the language to students doing other professional qualifications at Rhodes, e.g. Journalism, Law and Pharmacy.

Losing her husband some years ago has meant that Dr Maseko and her two daughters became a very close-knit unit, and it is hard for her to be away from them. Both based in Cape Town, one is studying Chemical Engineering at UCT and the other works in retail, having done a degree in Social Science and Marketing. However, modern technology allows them to stay in regular contact and, she says, “We are each other’s greatest cheerleaders.”



A tale of inspiration

Mr Mzwandile Mayalo has a remarkably positive attitude to the various misfortunes that have befallen him. "I count my blessings," he says without any hint of bitterness or resentment.

He obtained his Honours degree in African Languages with distinction at the recent graduation, and is currently developing a proposal for his Masters thesis. He only has the use of one eye, having lost the other in an incident of police brutality in the 80s, and was recently severely beaten up in a senseless act of violence following the Phapamani service delivery protests.

Mr Mayalo's life story begins in Fingo Village, Grahamstown where he was born; it sojourns in Peddie for a number of years where he stayed with his grandmother and did most of his schooling, comes back to Grahamstown, takes off to Alice for studies at Fort Hare, and ultimately comes back to Grahamstown again.

Along the way there have been some serious set-backs, but strength of character and the unflinching support of family have seen him through and ultimately, he believes, there is justice and reason in everything. Like the fact that he is part of the cohort whose studies have been made possible by funding from the Dept of Arts & Culture, when in 1988 he had to give up a British Council scholarship to go and study overseas because of the incident with his eye. There was also an occasion during his Matric year when he missed out on a bursary because his spoken English wasn't good enough and the person reading out the speech that he had written was given the bursary instead.

The enthusiasm that has been instilled in the students of the African Languages division is evident as Mr Mayalo speaks. He says the attitude of someone like Prof Russell Kaschula, who dedicates himself to the cause even though he is not a mother-tongue indigenous language speaker, and the interesting kaleidoscope of students makes for a very stimulating and creative learning environment. "I see the School of Languages as a cauldron of some kind that with carefully chosen spices continues to improve the end product. This cauldron is producing language activists," he says.

He has had quite a turn-around in his own attitude to the value of teaching and learning isiXhosa. Where first he was convinced that the main imperative was to be accomplished in English, and even hated it when, as an experiment, Science was taught in isiXhosa during his senior school years, he now believes that isiXhosa should take pride of place alongside other subjects in the curriculum.

His task is not an easy one and there are many factors that conspire against it - the fact that the best teachers get allocated to other subjects first; the lack of platforms for people to express themselves and be heard or published in isiXhosa; and the perceived link between English and the job market.

That is why, as DoE Subject Advisor for isiXhosa in the Grahamstown district, he enrolled for postgraduate studies at the Rhodes School of Languages in the hope of getting inspiration for his work with teachers. He seems to have found that plenty, to the point where he has decided to continue his studies at Masters level. He says he has "fallen in love" with lexicography (terminology) and plans to explore this further in order to contribute to the broadening and deepening of isiXhosa teaching.

One would not imagine a man with full-time work responsibilities and part-time studies at postgraduate level to have much time for anything else, but he is also the ultimate "handyman". All the woodworking, metalwork and painting at his home are his own doing, he services his own car (and sometimes those of friends) and he has a flourishing vegetable garden.

He explains that these skills were garnered in Peddie while living with his grandmother. As a widow, she would get help from the men in the village with building and repair work, and their condition for helping was that he should also get involved.

Mr Mayalo is emphatic about the value of education. "I am the epitome of what education can do for someone. It levels the playing fields."



Erstwhile domestic worker graduates with a BEd degree



At the age of 44, Nokwayiyo Ntshakaza was the only student in the class who had worked as a domestic worker for the six years it took to fulfil her dream of obtaining a diploma in Early Childhood Development. Now, three years later, she has gone even further and obtained her BEd degree in Foundation Phase teaching.

In those days, she juggled her time between keeping house for a Grahamstown family of four, looking after her own family of three children, and her studies. However, since obtaining her ECD Diploma from the CSD, she has been employed as the supervisor of the Siyazama Multi-Purpose Centre in Extension Six, where she also teaches the Grade R class. The centre is mainly a pre-school, with four classrooms, playgrounds, a number of vegetable patches, and a shipping container for a neighbourhood sewing and knitting group.

Speaking about her struggle to obtain her Diploma, Nolundi said: "I had to attend lectures during the week. I'd go to work at 6am, and be in class by 8am. By 4.30pm I was home cleaning the house, doing more laundry and cooking for the family. Homework would start at 8pm and by 10pm I would fall into bed finished!"

Nolundi was a pupil at Nombulelo High School in the late 80s and took part in student protests and boycotts. But in the 90s she found herself working as a casual domestic worker for students until she was employed by the Loewe family in Grahamstown, where she worked for 13 years.

In 1995, after a discussion with her employer about studying, she was introduced to Di Hornby, then director of the CSD, who offered her a place in the Level 1 ECD course. After a family discussion, it was agreed that she would be released from her work to attend courses and practical work with local Grahamstown pre-schools, the first being St Andrew's Pre-Primary School for a year, and then for five years at Oatlands Preparatory School. "Without my employers, I would not be sitting here now," she said.

She was haunted with feelings of insecurity about making "that big step" from domestic work to teaching. "I kept on telling myself that I needed to study more. But jobs were coming up." She went for an interview with the School Governing Body of Siyazama and was shortlisted into the top four and finally told she'd got the post in March 2008. Who knows where her new qualification might take her?

Extract from the original story by Mike Loewe

Historic first cohort of BEd graduates

A collaborative initiative launched in 2008 by the Centre for Social Development (CSD) and Rhodes Education Department has yielded its first cohort of graduates in the BEd for Foundation Phase teachers.

The Foundation Phase incorporates the Early Childhood Development (ECD) phase of children aged 0 - 9 years, and includes Grade R as well as Grades 1 - 3, and the qualification was offered on a part-time, in-service basis over three years.

The importance of this groundbreaking partnership is twofold. Firstly, it provides the only significant career path option in the country for in-service ECD practitioners, because of its link to the initial training that commences at the CSD at NQF Level 4 (the equivalent of Matric), and makes maximum use of the fact that the CSD as an ECD NGO is affiliated to Rhodes University.

Secondly, it represents good progress. In 2009, the Eastern Cape needed 700 new isiXhosa-speaking Foundation Phase teachers. The universities in the Eastern Cape together only managed to graduate 4 such teachers. In 2011, Rhodes alone is graduating 7 isiXhosa-speaking Foundation Phase BEds.

Ms Vera Adams, Director of the CSD says, "We offer this in-service degree to train practitioners in the challenging and very important, often neglected field of Early Childhood Development. Our partnership with the Education Faculty is unique and we would like to thank them for supporting us in the presentation of this course."

It's a long haul for those determined to make it through to Degree level from scratch - the process takes a minimum of seven years - but is well worth the effort in the end. The BEd degree greatly enhances the professional status of ECD practitioners and Foundation Phase teachers, as well as their employment opportunities and their teaching practice.

The group totals 15 graduates, and represents a good demographic mix of students. The qualification has enabled most of them to gain promotion or be permanently appointed. There is a particular demand for these graduates because of the Department of Basic Education's policy of compulsory Grade R schooling.

The fact that the qualification is offered on an in-service basis to ECD practitioners and teachers, placed many additional demands on the graduates. "The students had a tough challenge. They studied part-time for many years. They had demanding jobs and gave up their weekends and holidays to attend classes. I salute them! It is such an achievement that they are graduating," says Ms Sarah Murray, a Senior Lecturer in the Rhodes Education Department.

One of the challenges of this unique career path is the development of academic literacy over the seven years, so that not only are Practitioners and Educators able to apply successfully for the Level 7 Honours course, but can teach the children and families with whom they work to be literate and numerate at levels far beyond those experienced at present. It also requires the service provider and Higher Education Institution to provide a broad enough yet detailed enough curriculum to qualify an ECD practitioner to work across a wide spectrum of situations (community work, classroom work, Grade R, three year olds, and Grade 3 for example).

Significant support from Prof George Euvrard, Dean of Education at the time of inception, the Professional Development Centre, and the Registrar's Division has ensured that this pilot project came to fruition. Having established a firm foundation, the next cohort of 28 students, mostly isi-Xhosa speaking, has enrolled and commenced their studies in January 2011.



From left to right: Ms Brenda Dili, Grade R teacher at Fort Brown Primary School, Mrs Jean Schafer (CSD co-ordinator of the programme who herself graduated with an MEd degree) and Ms Ntombekhaya Myeki, Grade R teacher at Umama Maria Monastery School.

CSD graduates one of its own

Ms Joyce Boniswa Teyise started out as a preschool teacher at Thornygrove Farm in the Sevenfountains area where she was born. From there she moved to Grahamstown where she worked as a waitress at Mad Hatters Coffee Shop, before she joined the CSD as an ECD trainer under the guidance of Mrs Thelma Henderson in 1989.

She is now an ECD Course Co-ordinator at CSD with her B.Ed degree finally in hand. After a long journey of obstacles, she graduated on April 8 this year.

She decided to study further several years ago but studying as an adult with other responsibilities became increasingly difficult as the years went on. She had children to think about and put their needs before her own. Being a single parent and managing poor health at times were a few of the many challenges she had to face which made her lose focus and put her dreams on hold.

It took a lot of courage to keep going. She admits that it would not have been possible without the enduring support from friends,

fellow students and some of her colleagues who were always happy to lend a hand.

"More importantly, I would not have been able to afford to study had it not been for the financial support from Rhodes University!" she confided with a smile of gratitude.

Ms Teyise enjoys being out in the field doing site visits, interacting with the community, and the children at the Toy Library more than being at the office. She loves the people she helps in the community because their stories are what keep her motivated to keep doing the work she does. She told me to never to lose hope for the things I most desire because if I really want something I should never let the hope of one day acquiring it die inside me. She pushed forward until what she most desired was hers.

Story by CSD intern
Zinziswa Dili



More importantly, I would not have been able to afford to study had it not been for the financial support from Rhodes University!

BEd creates more opportunities

Thandeka Ngqezana is passionate about teaching. Especially young children. It's what she's been doing since the year 2000, when she stumbled on the qualifications being offered by the Centre for Social Development (CSD) and launched into what has become a very rewarding career in Early Childhood Development (ECD). She matriculated at Nombulelo High School, but up to that point had been unable to find suitable work.

Ms Ngqezana started the Level 1 ECD course at the CSD while volunteering at the Raglan Road Child Care Centre, progressed on to the Level 4 Certificate, then the Level 5 National Diploma and finally, 10 years later, has emerged triumphantly with a BEd degree. She says, "It's a great achievement for me - I've always wanted the qualification to put the professional seal on my working life."

Along the way, her career in ECD has also developed and prospered, as she invested time in her studies while she worked. After volunteering for a year at Raglan Road, she was appointed as an ECD practitioner at the Red Cross' Gladys Williams Crèche, followed by an appointment two years later to teach the Grade R group at the Shaw Hall Day Care Centre in town. In 2008, she became the Supervisor at Shaw Hall, where her dedication and commitment to furthering her knowledge did much to inspire the parents and raise the standard of the early childhood development programme.

In February 2010, Ms Ngqezana took up a position as a Grade R teacher at Andrew Moyake Primary School in Fingo Village. With her trademark enthusiasm for putting into practice what she has learnt, Ms Ngqezana says she is now keen to be given a chance to interact with the children in Grades 1 - 3.

Making dreams come true

Ms Mila Fobe took one step further towards fulfilling her mother's dream of seeing her in a red gown, when she obtained her Masters degree in African Languages last month. The moment was made more poignant because her mother passed away in January after being diagnosed with a serious illness a few months ago.

Having a very close relationship with her mother meant that these were very dark and difficult days for her, and she acknowledges that she would not have persevered with her studies if it had not been for the encouragement and inspiration of her supervisor, Prof Russell Kaschula. In addition to her personal stresses, she was also coping with the commitment of being a full-time teacher at CM Vellem Primary School, where she teaches English and Arts & Culture, as well as doing an Advanced Certificate in Arts & Culture with NMMU. She is truly multi-lingual, able to speak isiXhosa, isiZulu, iSeswati, English and Afrikaans fluently as well as a bit of iSesotho and isiShona.

Education is in her blood. Born and bred in the Grahamstown area, her parents were both teachers and after attending a farm school in the Southwell area, she went as a boarder to the Thubalethu High School in Fort Beaufort.

Ms Fobe was one of the students enabled to do postgraduate studies in African Languages through the bursary support provided by the Department of Arts & Culture to the Rhodes School of Languages. With a BA and HDE qualifications from the University of Durban-Westville and a number of years' teaching experience under her belt, she enrolled for an Honours degree at Rhodes in 2008 and immediately thereafter embarked on a two-year Masters programme.

Her Masters thesis compared the language policy and practice in two primary schools in Grahamstown, i.e. CM Vellem and PJ Olivier, focusing on the teaching and learning of isiXhosa and Afrikaans in the Foundation Phase. Her major finding was that teachers at CM Vellem, for a variety of reasons, were not consistently applying the policy of mother-tongue teaching and communication.

The research seems to indicate that the Xhosa-speaking teachers lack the necessary in-depth training and orientation to apply the current language teaching policy and practices, and either resort to what they know or allow the children and parents to push for English usage.

Masters course in Financial Markets a popular choice

By far the majority of students who choose to complete a Masters degree in the Department of Economics and Economic History take the MCom in Financial Markets. The Department's Masters and Doctoral graduates this year comprised of 17 in Financial Markets, two Masters by full thesis and one PhD.

Professor Hugo Nel, who is the current Head of Department, notes that the Financial Markets Programme consists of both coursework and thesis, and that the coursework incorporates the SAIFM Financial Industry exams. SAIFM is the leading professional institute for financial markets practitioners. For this reason the Department feels the coursework is particularly relevant, as the successful completion of these exams enables the student to begin work immediately.

The Foord Chair, which was recently renewed and awarded to Professor Pierre Faure of the Department of Economics and Economic History, makes a significant contribution to the teaching of this course and illustrates the importance of private sector investment in the Department.

In this graduating class, says Prof Nel, they have seen an interesting development in that a large number of students conducted their research on topics involving the African continent. While around half of the theses produced focused on South Africa in particular, many of the research topics explored issues around Financial Market development in African countries, and the extent to which the development of the financial sector had contributed to economic growth and development in these countries.

This expansion of research interests into the rest of the continent is a very positive development, says Prof Nel. Many of these students make contributions to financial market development and indeed to overall development in their home countries. By producing research which is good for Africa, Rhodes will draw more students in future from throughout Africa. Already, the Bank of Botswana and Bank of Namibia have sent their staff members on the course. There is a consciousness at the moment, he says, that Rhodes is a university located in South Africa, but also in Africa - the university of choice for the African continent.

The students who received distinctions exemplify this trend, with a number of them choosing to focus on a wider geographic area. Zohaib Bholla's thesis was entitled 'Financial Integration in East Africa: evidence

from interest rate pass-through analysis' where he explored the success or otherwise of economic bloc formation.

Mabvuto Mumba came from Namibia and initially found the coursework extremely taxing, but gained in confidence as the course progressed. He was awarded an average of 91% for his thesis, entitled 'Analysis of Volatility Spillover Effects between the South African, Regional and World Equity Markets', and one of his examiners, Prof Stephanie Kleimeier from Maastricht University in the Netherlands, stated that his was one of the best theses she has ever seen in the Financial Markets field.

Mosili Moshabesha came from UKZN to Rhodes and her work, entitled 'Financial Development and Manufacturing Sector Growth: Evidence from Southern African Customs Union Countries' utilised a research method not covered in the coursework and which Moshabesha therefore had to learn on her own, an achievement which earned her a distinction. Prof Nel regards this thesis as making a valued contribution to the field.

Gordon Kerr, who also obtained his B.Com (Hons) at Rhodes, produced a thesis entitled 'The short-term effect on shareholder wealth of banking mergers and acquisitions during periods of real economic expansion and contraction'.

Beating the odds

Lamin Bangura, who graduated with a Masters in Financial Markets from the Department of Economics and Economic History in the 2011 Graduation ceremony, overcame substantial odds to achieve his goals. Born in Sierra Leone, he obtained his B.Sc degree in his home country, and was working in the banking system before traveling to Rhodes University to study further.

Prof Hugo Nel, HOD says Bangura struggled initially with the level of academic work required at Rhodes, but was determined to succeed and worked extremely hard to do so. His supervisor, himself from West Africa, encouraged him in his efforts and Bangura overcame both financial difficulty and the difficulty associated with the different standard of work required.

As a result of this dedication, he received a distinction for his thesis, entitled 'Adjustment of commercial banks' interest rates and the effectiveness of monetary policy: Evidence from Anglophone West Africa'. Prof Nel describes his dissertation as "a very interesting and important body of work, particularly for the West African region."

Bangura says he was able to conduct his research from South Africa, despite his area of interest being the policy of the Central banks and how, if at all, their policies were transmitted by the

commercial banks within the West African Monetary Zone. This topic was something he became interested in during the first year of his MCom, and he became particularly concerned about Monetary Policy Transmission Mechanisms (MPTM).

In West Africa, he explains, the banking sector dominates the financial system and plays an important role in transmitting the monetary policy stance of the central bank to rest of the economy. His research is both timely and relevant, as the West African Monetary Institute (WAMI) is working towards the long anticipated establishment of the Monetary Union for Anglophone West Africa, whereby the new currency - called the eco - will become the single currency in Sierra Leone, Gambia, Guinea, Ghana and Nigeria. The Francophone West African countries already have a monetary union and a single currency, which is linked to the euro.

Bangura will be returning to work in Sierra Leone in June, and would like to continue researching in this field.

The highest scoring student amongst the Financial Markets 2011 graduating class was Randall Starkey. Starkey, whose thesis is entitled 'Financial system development and economic growth in selected African countries: evidence from a panel cointegration analysis' also obtained his B.Com (Hons) at Rhodes. He found the Financial Markets MA challenging but highly rewarding, he says, with the guest lecturers from other universities and exposure to people already working in Financial Markets singled out as highlights. Starkey emphasises that he and the entire class are grateful to Prof Meshach Aziakpono, who was the course coordinator

and lecturer of two courses as well as supervisor to nine of the students.

Starkey's thesis, he explains, "attempted to examine the relationship between financial system development and economic growth in Africa by taking a new approach in terms of the variables used to measure financial development as well as the methodology used." This methodology in fact was one not previously seen by his supervisor at Masters level, but rather more commonly applied at PhD level. His thesis applies a Pedroni panel cointegration approach, examining the selected countries as a panel in order to utilise the data gathered in the most efficient manner possible. As a result of this methodology, countries and variables for which insufficient data exists to be examined in other methods, can now be included. This is also the first time, a paper analysing the African case has utilised three measures of financial system development, thereby "capturing the level of banking system development, the level of stock market development and the level of overall financial system development, thus removing the sensitivity of the result to the measure of financial development used."

Starkey faced considerable challenges in trying to complete his research, and acknowledges why his chosen methodology had not, prior to his own research, been advanced for Africa. As the pioneering researcher, he feels that his work lays a very good foundation, with much of the hard ground work now done. He believes, too, that there are many interesting and important pieces of spin-off research which can be advanced from his thesis.

ESU opens the doors of learning

The Extended Studies Unit (ESU) of the Humanities Faculty has done well to produce 12 students who graduated with postgraduate qualifications in 2011. The ESU exists to help students who have not achieved sufficient points in Matric for gaining automatic entrance to Rhodes, but who are deemed able to succeed with assistance.

The programme is carefully planned to enable the achievement of a degree over four rather than three years and Ms Judith Reynolds, Coordinator - Humanities Extended Studies Programme, explains that many of the ES students come directly from disadvantaged circumstances.

The ESU tries to make local students a priority. The application form asks for information on schools attended; sometimes, Ms Reynolds says, learners may have been to Model C or even private high schools, but spent their Foundation Phase in schools with far fewer facilities or resources. The form also asks about family backgrounds. A candidate who attended a rural school, lives with their granny who may be semi-literate and a number of younger cousins, and yet has received a Matric endorsement, is a good fit for the programme.

An ESU degree is not a soft option. Students take two mainstream subjects annually, with four lecture periods in each subject per week and another four lecture periods a week with their ES lecturer. There is a double period of Academic Literacy every week, and a course, specifically designed for the Unit, in Computer Studies. Students attend tutorials as usual in their departments. The ESU has what Ms Reynolds refers to as a reasonable success rate in terms of its students achieving degrees. Currently there are five ES Journalism graduates completing internships at the SABC. Mcebisi Ngqina, who works as a current affairs producer for Umhlobo Wenene FM in Port Elizabeth and as a sports reporter on an occasional basis, is one of the five.

Ngqina matriculated at Nathaniel Nyaluza, another local school, and recalls that on his first day in an ESU classroom he wondered if the university felt there was something wrong with him and the other ES students.

However, he says, "My first tutorial at Rhodes - that's when I realized the point of us being allocated to the ESU. It took

me hours trying to figure out the tutorial question and my ES lecturer assisted me with that. The Extended Studies Unit really helped me to deal with my academic work."

Ngqina, who received a BA degree in Journalism & Media studies and Organizational Psychology, also credits the ESU for improving his presentation skills. He relates an incident which occurred recently during his internship. "I was standing in for the Senior Producer in the line talk meeting (this includes all the SABC region editors) and I had to come back and present all the top stories and the stories that we were going to use that day. I did exceptionally well and I give credit to the ESU," he says.

Mzoxolo Budaza applied for a place at Rhodes University some five years after matriculating at Benjamin Mahlasela High (referred to, he says, as 'the worst school in Grahamstown'). He says his acceptance to university, which he had always regarded as for the elite only, was "enough for me to be over the moon." Academically, things were hard, but got better as time went by. He says, "I went to Rhodes knowing nothing about academic writing and reading and, thanks to Helen (Alfers) and Judith (Reynolds), in a matter of two months I was able to construct an academic argument."

Budaza obtained his Bachelor of Arts in Politics, Journalism and Industrial Sociology in 2008. In 2010, he obtained a Postgraduate Diploma in Media Management (PDMM) from the Sol Plaatje Institute for Media Leadership. He is currently an intern at the Independent Newspapers in Cape Town.

Ms Judith Reynolds says, "many of the ES students come directly from disadvantaged circumstances."



A significant contribution to South African Trust Law

Rowan Stafford, a Masters student in the Law Faculty, received his LLM degree with distinction after it had been praised by examiners as making a significant contribution to trust law in South Africa.



One of the external examiners suggested that copies of the thesis be made available to all the High Courts in the country and to the Supreme Court of Appeal so that it can be studied by judges, who can then consider the points it raises when giving judgments in cases involving trusts.

Thesis supervisor, Advocate Craig Renaud of the Law Faculty, said the praise was richly deserved and that he felt an immense sense of pride in Stafford's achievement.

The thesis deals with the concepts of sham trusts and alter-ego trusts, and argues that the two concepts have become confused with one another in South Africa over the course of the past few years. By making detailed analyses of comparable rules in the trust laws

of other common-law jurisdictions, the thesis shows that South African courts have struck out on a different path from that followed in other countries, which has been justified in part by the incorporation of the company law concept of "piercing the corporate veil" into trust law. The thesis argues passionately that this direction which the South African courts have taken has led to, and will continue to cause, uncertainty for trustees and potential harm to the interests of trust beneficiaries.

Not satisfied with merely pointing out what he argues is a wrong turn taken by the courts, Stafford makes practical suggestions as to how the confusion between alter-ego and sham trusts could be resolved in the future through the adoption by the courts of the legal principles which are currently applied in English, Canadian and Australian trust law.

Knowing, however, that theses often gather dust on library shelves, Stafford went a step further and produced, as an addendum to his thesis, a layman's guide book aimed at founders, trustees and beneficiaries of trusts. In this, he sets out the pitfalls which those involved in trusts might face, and gives advice on how to avoid those pitfalls. Stafford hopes to have the guide book published and made available through firms of attorneys and chartered accountants to clients who are considering setting up trusts.

Having completed his thesis, Stafford has now commenced articles with a firm of attorneys in Johannesburg. But the Law Faculty hopes to see him again. "When the day comes that Rowan wants a career break from the stressful life of a Jo'burg attorney, we will be waiting to welcome him back as a PhD student," says Adv Renaud.

MSc research contributes to understanding climate change

Tarryn Martin, a Botany Masters student, scooped the Junior Captain Scott Medal (Plant Science) for producing the top MSc of 2010. The award alternates between the disciplines of Zoology and Botany, and MSc candidates from all South African universities are considered for the award.

In addition, Martin's thesis received an award for "Outstanding Academic Achievement in Range and Forage Science" from the Grassland Society of Southern Africa. One paper has already been published from this thesis and Martin is preparing another manuscript which, says her supervisor Prof Brad Ripley, will go to a top international journal. In addition, Prof Ripley will be presenting Martin's work at a conference in Melbourne in July.

Martin really blossomed with her MSc, says Prof Ripley, and her chosen topic of research took a lot of hard, dedicated work. The project is a multi-species comparison, comparing the impact of fire on the recovery of grasses which use the C3 photosynthetic pathway as opposed to grasses that use the C4 (NADP-ME) pathway.

Martin says: "To put this in perspective, the C4 pathway evolved from the

C3 pathway and is believed to be a more efficient photosynthetic pathway. It was therefore hypothesised that the C4 NADP-ME grasses would recover more quickly and completely than the C3 grass species and would therefore be better adapted to fire."

She compared 14 species of grass and had well over 800 pots containing variants of these species, which she nurtured for one-and-a-half growing seasons. The grasses were then taken out of their pots and submerged in the landscape, and a fuel-load of dry straw was placed over them at a set weight per land surface area. The grasses were then burnt. Prof Ripley recalls the project as "one-and-a-half years of careful nurture, then two days of setting up and six minutes of burning." The next step was to dig the grasses up again, re-pot them and then move them to a greenhouse tunnel and monitor their recovery.

Martin, now based in Cape Town, is not presently studying, but Prof Ripley is hopeful that she will return to Rhodes to do her PhD at some point in the future.

Bromley scoops Research Medal

The S2A3 Medal for original scientific research at Masters level was awarded to Candice Bromley at the official Graduation luncheon held on Saturday 9 April. Bromley received the award, which acknowledges the best MSc thesis submitted in 2010/2011 at Rhodes University, for her Masters dissertation entitled "Studies in Marine Molluscan Chemistry". The thesis investigates the viability occurring in the secondary metabolites produced by three South African marine molluscs.

The S2A3 (South African Academy Advancement of Science) medal may be awarded annually by each South African university and university of technology to the most outstanding Masters Degree research student in a scientific discipline. Only one award may be made per year, as per the South African Association for the Advancement of Science rules. The S2A3 medal is a prestigious scientific award which is, according to the Association's own documentation, "made in recognition of the perseverance and dedication of the successful Masters student in the application of scientific principles in original research and the presentation of a full written dissertation as required at Masters level".

Bromley, who is Zimbabwean by birth, completed her undergraduate

studies at Rhodes University, obtaining a BSc in Chemistry and Microbiology in 2007. In 2008 she joined the Marine Biodiscovery group, and completed her BSc Honours in Chemistry (with distinction) working on the synthesis of cytotoxic marine prenylated toluquinones. Building on her award winning research at Masters level, Bromley has already begun her PhD studies with the Marine Biodiversity group and is focusing her research on the isolation and structural elucidation of bioactive secondary metabolites from South African ascidians. She explains her ongoing research as follows:

"The coastline of southern Africa is vast, stretching from southern Namibia in the west to southern Mozambique in the east, and can be divided into three general bio-geographical zones: the cool temperate west coast, the warm temperate south-east coast and the sub-tropical east coast. Each of these zones sustains a unique diversity of endemic marine fauna and flora that can offer rich rewards for marine natural products and chemists in search of novel bioactive secondary metabolites with possible medicinal properties. However, the secondary metabolites produced by South African ascidian species are presently not well studied."

Bromley will also be branching out into teaching this year, taking on responsibility for the Chemistry 1 remedial course. She is a qualified SCUBA diver and has been putting these skills to good use diving in Algoa Bay, Port Elizabeth where a lot of the work of the Marine Biodiversity group has been carried out.

Top undergraduate student manages her time well

The Humanities Faculty was pleased to announce during the Graduation 2011 celebrations that their top performing undergraduate for 2010 was Genevieve Jacot-Guillarmod.

A Grahamstonian, Jacot-Guillarmod took three majors in her final year of a Bachelor of Arts degree, namely English, Philosophy and Classical Civilisation. She excelled in all of them, obtaining three distinctions and an overall aggregate of 85%.

Jacot-Guillarmod says, she did not choose to study three majors in order to further a particular career choice. Instead, in the spirit of ongoing learning which characterises the Humanities, she chose to continue with subjects that she had enjoyed in the first years of her BA degree, and which she found to be mentally stimulating. She says that in terms of her future working life, she is convinced that the ability to think critically and creatively, skills which were essential for the effective study of her major subjects, will prove to be useful in the future.

The saying goes, 'When you want something done, ask a busy person.' With her study load last year, did she have time for anything else? One would expect her to say no, so her answer is somewhat surprising.

"I didn't have a great deal of free time on my hands last year, but I volunteered at the Library for the Blind and I made jewellery which I sold at local shops in town." She does add that both of these engagements were quite flexible though, "so that when things got busier I could manage my time fairly well."

Considering she managed to fit in both community engagement and part-time work, what about socialising. Surely something had to give? Jacot-Guillarmod responds thoughtfully that to a certain degree she supposes she did have to limit her socialising. She quickly adds that she didn't feel as if she was giving anything up. Rather, she says, she was just managing her time and being realistic about deadlines. Those are the skills that will stand her in very good stead in the future; in fact I'm sure that her professors probably wish that they were contagious.

While many of the local young people leave town to study elsewhere when they finish school, Jacot-Guillarmod chose to stay in Grahamstown to do her degree. "I liked the fact that Rhodes is a relatively small university, so students don't remain anonymous," she says.

She says she doesn't have a particular mentor but adds quickly that: "Although there is no single person in particular, the members of the Philosophy Department have provided a good example of what it takes to successfully negotiate and flourish in an academic environment." She is in fact keen to carry on studying Philosophy, and her ideal would be to read for a further degree in the discipline at an overseas university. "Philosophy is a lot of fun, and it would be incredible to be in proximity to the really big names in the field," she says.

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