



A question of balance

2016

ANNUAL REPORT

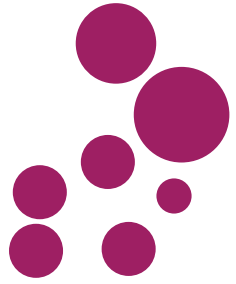
Extended Studies
The Trojan Academic Initiative (TAI)
Student Peer Mentoring Programme



**Student Peer
Mentoring Programme**
TROJAN ACADEMIC INITIATIVE



RHODES UNIVERSITY
Where leaders learn



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Annual Report 2016

Extended Studies

The Trojan Academic Initiative (TAI)

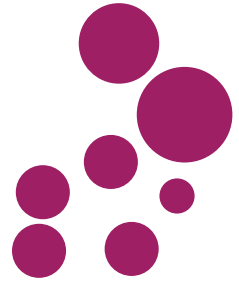
Student Peer Mentoring Programme

*Cover Image: Andisa Ndlovu, TAI Graduate currently working at eNCA.
Read her story on page 21.*



INTRO

Introduction



This annual report endeavours to inform all interested stakeholders about the activities and accomplishments of Rhodes University's Trojan Academic Initiative (TAI) Student Peer Mentoring Programme in 2016.

The TAI Programme aims to offer socio-emotional support to first year students from disadvantaged backgrounds as they adjust to the multiple demands of a new and challenging tertiary educational environment. The TAI, part of the Extended curriculum, undertakes to provide an opportunity for successful senior student mentors, often “first generation” university entrants, to draw on their previous experience. In so doing, mentors are able to offer guidance to their younger less-experienced peers who find themselves in similar circumstances.

The TAI Programme, in providing a mentor for each Extended Studies student at Rhodes University, aligns itself closely with the core purposes of the Extended Studies Unit (ESU). The Unit forms part of the university's strategic transformation plan. It provides a framework for addressing community and economic upliftment issues by ensuring “access and success” for disadvantaged students.

The Extended Studies purpose statement notes that the programme has “been defined by members of the university as ‘a vital part of the university's goal of widening access to include learners with potential, from a more diverse range of educational, cultural and socio-economic backgrounds, whose disadvantaged backgrounds may have hindered their school leaving performance’” (Boughey, 2010: 11); and as a programme situated to “ensure access for working class and rural poor students with potential” (Badat, 2011).

This purpose statement elaborates that the Extended Studies programme is understood to be a mutually beneficial arrangement between Rhodes University and Extended Studies students. The programme's core purposes are expressed as follows:

- to provide epistemological and ontological access to students from designated groups whose cultural, socio-economic or educational conditions could inhibit their success in a university with western academic traditions;
- to expand Rhodes' institutional culture, environment and practices to be more inclusive and supportive of a wider range of students.

Rhodes University benefitted from almost 60 TAI mentors in 2016 who partnered with 300 first year mentees across four faculties, namely Commerce; Humanities; Science; and Pharmacy.



MISSION

The Trojan Academic Initiative's mission is to provide an organised framework which encourages mentors to share their time, skills and learnings with first year students as they grapple with the many transitions between school and university. Partnering with a mentor and being part of a mentoring group can make a critical difference to the young person who is steadily guided and supported as she enters university, and in the time to follow. Caring for a younger student can also be hugely formative for mentors as they develop the critical skills necessary for assisting their protégés.





**Dr Chrissie
Boughey**

TAI Programme
Leader

DR CHRISSIE BOUGHEY (MA, MA, PGCE, DPhil) is Deputy Vice Chancellor, Academic & Student Affairs at Rhodes University. She has worked with issues related to access and success in higher education for many years and has published widely on her research in this area. As DVC, she is responsible for providing strategic leadership around teaching and learning at Rhodes University and, in this position, appreciates the role that the mentoring provided by TAI can play not only in enhancing black students' chances of success but also their sense of belonging to the University.



**Dr Carmen
Oltmann**

TAI Pharmacy
Facilitator

DR CARMEN OLTSMANN (BSc (Med) Hons, MSc, BPharm, PGDHE, PhD) obtained her Pharmacy degree (as a mature student) at Rhodes University, completed her internship at Cecilia Makiwane Hospital, and worked as a pharmacist before joining the Faculty of Pharmacy. Her areas of interest include Pharmacy education, mentoring, critical realism, and social pharmacy.



**Ms Corinne
Knowles**

TAI Humanities
Facilitator

CORINNE KNOWLES (B.A. (UPE); HDE (UCT); MA (Rhodes)) is a lecturer in the Extended Studies programme at Rhodes University, and teaches the Sociology and Political & International Studies Extended Studies courses. She is passionate about transformation, and has pursued this throughout her working life. She taught English, Literature and Guidance for 13 years at Secondary Schools in the Eastern Cape before joining the NGO sector. She has worked with and initiated projects to address poverty, HIV, job creation and community building. She started work at Rhodes in 2002 as a fundraiser for university projects. She also helped to develop and run the ACE Life Orientation course for in-service teachers from 2004-2006 in the Rhodes Education Department, has run workshops on a variety of subjects, and reads widely on issues in Higher Education. Her Master's thesis used Butler's performativity/normativity/subjectivity matrix to examine the Women's Academic Solidarity Association's contribution to transformation at Rhodes. She serves on a number of university committees, and community

STAFF

project boards. Corinne is a social justice activist, a poet, a feminist, and an incurable optimist.

MR AMON MAGADZA is currently studying towards a Masters in Education ICT at Rhodes University and holds an NHD in Computer Studies, KPTC, Zimbabwe. He has been teaching Computer Studies in the tertiary education environment for the past 10 years. Amon currently holds the position of Teaching Assistant within the Rhodes Extended Studies Unit, where he teaches Computer Skills for Commerce. He is interested in exploring ICT curriculum development and student support.

MR NKOSINATHI MADONDO attended local schools in KZN before enrolling at UDW for a B. Paed (Arts) Degree in 1994. In 1998 he graduated for an Honours Degree in English Literary Studies at UDW. In 2013 he obtained his MED in English and Media studies from UKZN.

Mr. Madondo's experiences as reflected in his teaching at various Higher Learning & Teaching Institutions in the field of English Studies, including the School of Education at UKZN, Extended Curriculum Programmes (ECP) both at UKZN and MUT, indicates that he has gradually settled into the field, in terms of teaching and supervising tutorials in the field of English language teaching. Through his experiences, Mr. Madondo was exposed to students from various linguistic and cultural backgrounds and is therefore able to adapt in various academic contexts. All the engagements with language teaching and learning put him in a position to realise the centrality of language in terms of how different disciplines construct their identities through language, and how to make this explicit to students.

His research interests are in English Literature, Critical Thinking, English Language Development and Academic Literacy.



**Mr Amon
Magadza**

TAI Commerce
Facilitator



**Mr Nkosingathi
Madondo**

TAI Science
Facilitator



Ms Denise Jeggels

TAI/ESU Secretary

DENISE JEGGELS (Dip. Secretarial certificate (GADRA Commercial Centre), Office Admin certificate (Rhodes University) & Supervisor certificate (Rhodes University)) joined Rhodes University in 2006 as a clerical intern at the Sol Plaatje Institute for Media Leadership. She joined CHERTL/Extended Studies Unit in 2009 as data capturer and secretary, where she works as a data capturer at CHERTL in the mornings and as a secretary at ESU in the afternoons. At CHERTL Denise is responsible for capturing student responses onto the Evaluation Assistant for lecturers from the various departments when teaching and/or courses are evaluated. She oversees the scanning of test and exam-related multiple choice response sheets. In addition, Denise is responsible for all administrative duties and financial services for ESU/TAI, and she assists with student queries.



**Ms Nicky
van der Poel**

Co-ordinator
TAI Student
Peer Mentoring
Programme

NICKY VAN DER POEL completed her BA and HDE (PGCE) at Rhodes University and went on to teach locally and abroad. A return to Rhodes saw her involvement in academic development for first year students, a post she held in the School of Journalism and Media Studies for twelve years. It is through this lens that Nicky fostered a particular interest in the transition between secondary and tertiary education environments and the challenges which this time inevitably brings.

This focus was honed by Nicky's work as an Extended Studies TAI Humanities facilitator, followed by her co-ordination of the TAI and Ncedana Student Peer Mentoring Programmes. In addition, she has been engaged in evaluation work with the Centre for Higher Education Research, Teaching and Learning (CHERTL) since 2010. Nicky completed her Postgraduate Diploma in Higher Education through CHERTL in 2016.





TAI MENTORS BEGIN EACH YEAR WITH A DAY-LONG MENTOR DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP IN FEBRUARY. THIS WORKSHOP INDUCTS STUDENTS INTO THE PROGRAMME AND ATTEMPTS TO EQUIP THEM TO GUIDE THEIR MENTEES THROUGH THE FIRST SEMESTER.

Mentors participate in the following sessions: introduction to the TAI seminar programme and faculty facilitators; achieving an NQF Level 5 mentoring qualification; mentors' code of conduct and contract; fundamental counselling skills; the needs of first year students; journal-writing and reflection skills; the need for confidentiality; team-building activities; as well as mentors' favourite session- past mentors' Q & A. This mentor development workshop also allows for social interaction with mentors across the various faculties.

Furthermore, mentors have the opportunity to develop a number of essential life skills during fortnightly TAI seminars, spanning the first semester. Seminars include discussions and activities related to stress and time management, as well study and examination skills and mentors' philosophies of mentoring. Students also participate in a session which explores ideas about how one might manage on a limited budget, a common challenge for many of our students. The TAI co-ordinator facilitates these seminars, which work to assist mentors in guiding their mentees. Student feedback suggests that seminars also build valuable capacities which mentors incorporate into their own daily lives.

The TAI provides the opportunity for mentors to complete a portfolio of assignments related to the various seminars, should

they wish to optimise their development throughout the course. In addition, the portfolio is concluded with an 'Evaluation of being a mentor' reflective assignment which is a valuable exercise for mentors and the TAI co-ordinator alike.

Faculty facilitators, all of whom are academics at Rhodes University, play a key role in facilitating weekly meetings with mentors. These aim to enable mentors to deal with issues arising with mentees, and sometimes themselves, during the course of each week.

The facilitator's role is to create a space in which other mentors in the group have the opportunity to offer suggestions to their colleagues regarding issues arising, while providing overarching guidance. Mentors and mentees are encouraged to assume accountability for their relationship, with the facilitator acting as a direct intermediary only in exceptional circumstances.

Mentors keep a regular critical journal which enables them to reflect on the mentoring experience and their learnings. Facilitators in turn read journals at points throughout the semester and a dialogue develops between mentor and facilitator. In addition, the journal serves as an important part of the mentoring process and is included in mentors' final portfolio submissions.

Students who complete assignments and submit portfolios obtain an NQF Level 5 Certificate in Peer Mentoring, while those mentors who choose to attend seminars without completing assignments receive a Certificate of Participation. In 2016, 27 mentors achieved their TAI Peer Mentoring Certificates and 32 mentors received TAI Certificates of Participation.

The Mentors' Mentors

As part of their Certificate in Peer Mentoring, mentors complete an assignment entitled "My Mentoring Philosophy". In this piece, mentors are asked to describe their own mentor, someone in their lives who has had a profound effect on their development. Mentors are then invited to share these stories with fellow mentors via our online mentors' forum. **One 2017 TAI mentor shares her story, below:**

"This person enabled me to grow by teaching me the importance of self-love from an early age. There is a beautiful poem by an unknown author which she gave to me when I was thirteen and I still carry with me. The poem talks about how a person may make you feel but only you decide which way you want to go, they may hurt you physically or emotionally but only you can place a limit on your abilities, build your own reputation. We are not defined by our circumstances nor by the people in our lives. She would always tell me that I get to live my life day to day so I should not live by what people do. But live by what I know is true. One of the many principles she raised me by is self-discipline and having a strong willpower. 'There is nothing you cannot do if you put your mind into it...you just have to want it bad enough', is what I now live by."

One of the many principles she raised me by is self-discipline and having a strong willpower. 'There is nothing you cannot do if you put your mind into it...you just have to want it bad enough', is what I now live by.





2016 GRADUATES & POSTGRADUATES

*Achievements of Extended Studies
Trojan Academic Initiative Students*

Graduates

The Data Management Unit at Rhodes University reports that Extended Studies TAI students who graduated with Bachelor's degrees in 2016 are numbered as follows.

*Science: 19; Humanities: 34;
Commerce: 25; Law: 4; Pharmacy: 2*

In the Faculty of Commerce

Bachelor of Commerce

Sphiwokuhle Bloko
Siviwe Luzikpho
Lulamile Sabuka
Likho Sithole
Khanyisani Kubheka
Mary Maluleke
Sandiso Koyiya
Siphilisiwe Gebashe
Christopher Kale
Kanyisa Kentane
Yamkela Yase
Sandisiwe Dial
Chegofatso Mashoeshe
Mendi Ntuli
Robert Niyonsenga
Qamani Gesha
Obonayo Bokolo
Yolanda Sidlabane
Zimase Ntutuka
Lunga Jonas
Snqobile Zungu
Siyavuya Ntlale
Nqobile Nzimande
Yonela Thole
Vuyolwethu Mndawo

In the Faculty of Humanities

Bachelor Of Social Science

Madintsi Lebea
Nomalotshwa Mavundla
Sphiwe Hliso
Mandilakhe Zabo
Thabang Selome
Mbulelo Mothibeli
Sibulela Ndemka
Sekgametsi Maloa
Langaliphu-mile Nyanda

Violet Mdluli
Sinazo Sobekwa
Ongeziwe Giwu
Ninati Mthwa
Zikhona Kiswa
Sihle Ngangqu
Nomsa Mkhonza
Siyanda Mati
Lizo Msululu

Bachelor Of Arts

Armand Mukenge
Nonhlanhla Mahlobisa
Mathapelo Dintlhe
Xolela Benayo
Lindokuhle Munyu
Comfort Phiri
Mbuso Maila
Vuyelwa Mtolo
Buhle Moholi
Lerato Mosola
Abena Yankey
Sikelelwa Qwasi
Siyambulela Khaphetshu
Zakhe Jombile
Xolani Kondile
Koketso Potsane

In the Faculty of Pharmacy

Bachelor of Pharmacy

Bonginkosi Gumedede
Simamkele Gcezegana

In the Faculty of Science

Bachelor of Science

Nomfundo Shoba
Odwa Skoti
Masego Mokhasi
Yonela Faba
Beauten Xoxo

2016 Graduates

Bachelor of Science (cont.)

Luxolo Joji
Khayakazi Matasimba
Zandile Nkopo
Mhlanguleli Boqwana
Nosabatha Mzimkulu
Nwabisa Tonyela
Olwethu Waka
Siphokazi January
Yamkelani Pipile
Sikelela Nkohla
Manabeng Phetla

Vuyokazi Mgxobane
Siphiwo Mangcangaza
Sinesipho Magangana

In the Faculty of Law

Bachelor of Laws

Busiswa Yekiwe
Nontobeko Gumede
Zola Mlobi
Relebohile Chabeli

Postgraduates

Extended Studies TAI students who achieved
postgraduate qualifications in 2016 are numbered as
follows:

*Science: 11; Humanities: 12; Commerce: 9;
Education: 23; Pharmacy: 1*

In the Faculty of Commerce

Bachelor of Economics (Hons)

Andiswa Mdingi

Bachelor of Commerce (Hons)

Luyanda Bheyile
Makhosazana Koza
Tebogo Mashego
Kossam Ndlovu
Ntombizethu Diko

Postgraduate Diploma in Accounting

Keitumetse Lupindo

Postgrad Dip in Enterprise Management

Songezo Mtshatsha
Shaddy Ngobeni

In the Faculty of Humanities

Bachelor Of Arts (Hons)

Colletta Simungu
Babalwa Resha
Masixole Heshu
Khanyisa Nomoyi

Postgrad Dip In Media Management

Boitumelo Moima
Simamkele Gayika
Candice Le Kay

Postgrad Dip in Journalism

Athenkosi Sawutana

Postgrad Dip In Int. Studies

Sibabalwe Makeleni

Master Of Social Science

Ziyanda Ntantiso
Sihle Ngangqu

Master Of Arts (Cwk/Thesis)

Violet Mdluli

In the Faculty of Science

Bachelor Of Science (Hons)

Kwezilom-so Jaji
Noluvuyo Matiwane
Sithayanda Mtwana
Rhulani Mageza
Reitumetse Nkhahle
Lindisipho Mmapela
Delsy Sifundza

Master Of Science

Grace Ngubeni
Sindisiwe Mvango
William Moloto
Nanamhla Gwedla

In the Faculty of Education

Postgraduate Certificate in Education (SP/FET)

Olwethu Benya
Nozuko Khuhlane
Tuletu Mabusela

Luncedo Matebese
Zimkita Mkwanyimba
Sinazo Nyembezi
Siyanda Tyobashe
Anelisiwe Gwangxu
Siphokazi Gambushe
Afika Mboli
Thando Mpolweni
Portia Kubheka
Sphosethu Plaatjie
Likona Ntlantsana

Postgraduate Certificate in Education (FP)

Ziyanda Sam
Babalwa Manyati
Xolisani Mtendeni
Anam Mnyani
Tamara Mpati

Postgraduate Certificate in Education (EI)

Olwethu Dyaloyi
Ninati Mthwa

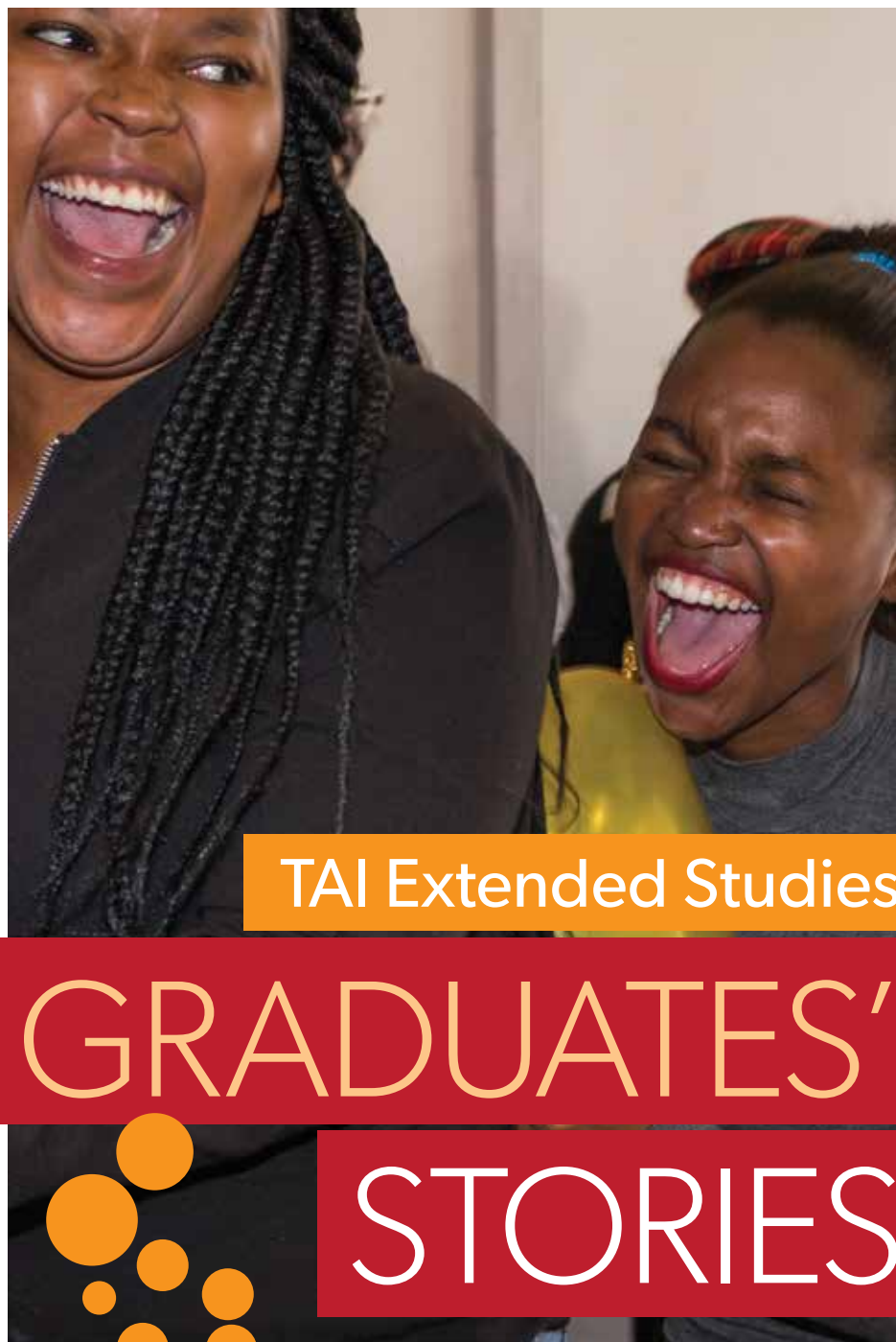
Postgraduate Diploma in Education (FP)

Siphosethu Quntu
Ramathetse Matabane

In the Faculty of Pharmacy

PhD – Pharmacy

Phindile Madikizela



TAI Extended Studies

GRADUATES' STORIES

ZOË TOBIE enrolled at Rhodes University to expand her horizons. From a young age, Zoë's parents instilled in her a passion for hard work in the pursuit of goals. In the Extended Humanities Programme at Rhodes University, Zoë found room for personal and professional growth, as well as the opportunity to 'give back'.

Zoë, who hails from Cape Town, read for a Bachelor of Social Sciences between 2012 and 2015, triple majoring in Anthropology, Organisational Psychology and Industrial Sociology. During her first and second years of study, she worked part-time at the Sunflower Hospice Shop "to give back to the Grahamstown community".

This community work, coupled with Zoë's participation in the Extended Studies TAI Student Peer Mentoring Programme, paved the way for her receiving the **Judy Orpen Memorial Award** in 2012. This award honours the life and accomplishments of Ms Judy Orpen, a talented and vibrant Rhodes student who was working towards her Masters in Anthropology when she passed away unexpectedly in 2010. Her family created the award to recognise and support young people with the same passion for living as Judy.

In order to be considered for the award, students need to demonstrate strong involvement in academic and community life, including the TAI Programme. For Zoë, the programme was a rewarding time for her to grow and to see her peers and mentees do the same. "It was amazing watching young adults who had been unsure of a lot of things become so confident," she says.

Zoë says that all of these experiences are helping to build her career today. She currently works as an **Employee Relations Intern at Transnet in Cape Town**, where she is responsible for assisting with disciplinary matters. "My [job] is very people-oriented," she says. "Understanding people and their experiences is key to being successful in Labour Relations."

Going forward, Zoë plans to expand her knowledge in the field, and is looking into completing a postgraduate qualification in Dispute Management, as well as Law.



ZOË TOBIE

Employee Relations
Intern, Transnet

For Zoë, the programme was a rewarding time for her to grow and to see her peers and mentees do the same. "It was amazing watching young adults who had been unsure of a lot of things become so confident," she says.



**NOMPUMELELO
MNCUBE**

Teacher,
Meridian College

In her first year, Nompumelelo was a mentee in the TAI Student Peer Mentoring Programme, and she says that this experience helped her to feel accepted and even loved at Rhodes. “It made life easier for me and helped me to adapt to the new culture quickly,” she says.

When **NOMPUMELELO MNCUBE** moved from her hometown of Pietermaritzburg to the metropolis of Cape Town in high school, she found it difficult to adjust. The language and cultural barriers were alienating, she says, and almost jeopardised her plans of pursuing a university degree.

Nompumelelo was required to repeat three of her Matric subjects to boost her prospects of being offered a place at a university, but her hard work was rewarded with an acceptance letter from the Humanities Extended Studies Programme at Rhodes. And there, she finally felt a sense of belonging. “I felt welcomed – and it was like a whole new world had opened up for me,” says Nompumelelo.

In her first year, Nompumelelo was a mentee in the TAI Student Peer Mentoring Programme, and she says that this experience helped her to feel accepted and even loved at Rhodes. “It made life easier for me and helped me to adapt to the new culture quickly,” she says.

Nompumelelo reflected this sense of community outside of study hours, participating in choirs, volunteering at local children’s homes, and making an effort to assist people who came knocking at her door. “Sometimes we ignore people, but they really need us,” says Nompumelelo. “I always think, let me just help.”

Her spirit of empathy and compassion was honoured with the **Judy Orpen Memorial Award** in 2011. The award celebrates a first year student who is purposefully and enthusiastically involved in various aspects of community life.

Nompumelelo graduated with a Bachelor of Arts, triple majoring in Journalism and Media Studies, Drama and isiXhosa, and she fell in love with education. Now 25 years old, Nompumelelo is a **Teacher at Meridian College in Limpopo**, where she works with Grade 5 learners and is on track to completing her Postgraduate Certificate in Education.

At 16, **ANDISA NDLOVU** matriculated and attempted to pursue her dream of joining the army and becoming a pilot. She was barred from enlisting owing to her young age, but this opened an unexpected door which ultimately led her to pursuit of a career in journalism. Andisa, who grew up in Bizana in the Eastern Cape, joined the Extended Studies Programme at Rhodes University in 2006.

The programme, particularly its Trojan Academic Initiative (TAI) Student Peer Mentoring programme, left a positive impression on this high flyer. "I think it was the best thing for me," she says. Andisa, who was a mentee in her first year and a mentor in her second, expresses gratitude for the programme's guidance and support, which helped her navigate university. "It helped me adjust between high school and university. As a young girl coming to Rhodes, you're not very familiar with your environment or sure of what it is you're doing. [TAI] gave me the **ABC's**."

Andisa achieved her Bachelor of Arts degree in 2009, majoring in Journalism and Media Studies as well as Politics and International Studies. She then obtained her Postgraduate Diploma in Media Management the following year.

Andisa currently works as a **Bulletin Producer** for **eNCA News**. "[Producing is] a technical position," she says, explaining her day-to-day responsibilities. "I upload what the bulletin looks like on TV. I work on all the words that you see running on screen, all the video footage, the scripts for the evening news, and I make sure that everything is timed correctly."

The key to her professional success, she notes, was a significant figure in the TAI Programme. "My mentor helped me build up confidence, and that is the one thing [you need] when you work in media, or people will walk all over you," explains Andisa. Andisa's confidence has given her the ability to engage in vital networking, which has resulted in the successful production of news. Highlights in Andisa's journalism career include coverage of major political moments such as the ANC Congress in 2016, and the EFF's first election manifesto. From here, for Andisa, the sky is certainly not the limit.



ANDISA NDLOVU

Bulletin Producer,
eNCA News

"[TAI] helped me adjust between high school and university. As a young girl coming to Rhodes, you're not very familiar with your environment or sure of what it is you're doing. [TAI] gave me the **ABC's**."



**LWANDILE
MAKHASI**

Business Analyst,
Discovery Health
Systems

Having benefitted greatly from working with his mentor and fellow mentees in his first year at Rhodes, Lwandile was inspired to partner with a group of eight first year TAI Extended Studies students in his senior year.

As the eldest of seven children, **LWANDILE MAKHASI** has always been well-acquainted with leadership roles, which have helped him to achieve his academic goals. “My ambition was to obtain a university qualification,” he says. “It was inspired by some of my high school teachers, who taught me to dream big and work very hard to achieve those dreams.”

Hailing from Tsomo in the Eastern Cape, Lwandile serendipitously discovered Rhodes University through an alumnus. After reading several issues of the university publication, *Rhodos*, he was motivated to apply for a Bachelor of Science degree. Lwandile was accepted, however a financial obstacle meant that he could not take up his position.

A year later Lwandile received another chance to join the Extended Studies Programme. “I decided that I was going to use that opportunity to shine and put in all the hard work required to succeed,” he says. Lwandile believes that the Extended Studies and its TAI Student Peer Mentoring Programme effectively prepared him for his years at university, as well as the time beyond. “I was well equipped and informed about university life and how to make it a success,” he says. Having benefitted greatly from working with his mentor and fellow mentees in his first year at Rhodes, Lwandile was inspired to partner with a group of eight first year TAI Extended Studies students in his senior year.

Lwandile currently works as a **Business Analyst** at **Discovery Health Systems**, where his natural leadership abilities and strong work ethic continue to pay off. “My daily job can be summarised into four major areas of responsibility, namely: business analysis, systems production support, data configuration, and testing,” he says, explaining that his career is moving from strength to strength.

“I have two ‘star nomination’s, which is about colleagues acknowledging the effort I put into my work, [my] leadership skills and most importantly passion and ambition for what I do, which keeps me going,” he says. Lwandile already has his next goal in sight – in the near future he is planning to venture into Data Science as a Machine Learning Specialist.

Originally from the Free State, **RELEBOHILE CHABELI** felt drawn to Rhodes University and applied to do a Bachelor of Science, majoring in Biochemistry and Microbiology. Despite not having studied Science subjects in high school, Relebohile's ambitions were not deterred, and she began her academic journey within the Extended Studies Programme.

Relebohile reflects on the valuable skills she gained through the support of the Extended Studies Programme and its TAI Student Peer Mentoring Programme, of which she was a part. "It really helped me in terms of my time management," she says. "It taught me to work in groups, because a lot of the work we had to do [was] a team effort. And it taught me perseverance, because Science was a brand new thing for me."

She understood that the Extended Studies Programme was a stepping stone towards her goals, and created an open-ended mantra to motivate herself: "When I get into mainstream..." Relebohile's persistence culminated in a BSc degree in Environmental Science in 2014. She went on to achieve an LLB in 2016.

Relebohile has since begun her career as an **Intern** in the International Climate Change Relations and Negotiations Division at the **Department of Environmental Affairs in Pretoria**. Relebohile explains how she currently uses her combined knowledge in the workplace. "My daily job entails me looking at the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and how to implement these international pieces of equipment domestically," she says. "I look at climate change [treaties] and how we as South Africa [can] aim to reduce carbon emissions in the atmosphere and live greener."

Relebohile has set her sights on the international arena. "The bigger picture for me is to become a United Nations Ambassador for International Human Rights, with a mix of Environmental Law. I don't even know if there is a position like that in the UN but we'll find it, we'll create it," she says, without a trace of doubt. *When she gets into the UN...*



**RELEBOHILE
CHABELI**

Intern, Department of
Environmental Affairs
in Pretoria

"It taught me to work in groups, because a lot of the work we had to do [was] a team effort. And it taught me perseverance, because Science was a brand new thing for me."



**KABELO KOSSAM
NDLOVU**

Technology Advisory
Consultant, KPMG in
Johannesburg

“What the TAI Programme did for me was to create a network of people who were more than willing to help and guide. The people I met during my TAI affiliation days really had a huge influence on my success at Rhodes.”

Extended Studies TAI graduate **KABELO KOSSAM NDLOVU** works as a **Technology Advisory Consultant** at **KPMG in Johannesburg**, where he assists with multiple IT audits. Kabelo graduated in 2017 with his Honours in Management, after completing a Bachelor of Commerce in Information Systems and Management.

Originally from Limpopo, Kabelo was involved in the TAI Student Peer Mentoring Programme as a first year mentee, and later, as a mentor. “When I came to Rhodes as a first year, there were many questions that I had in terms of the type of environment Rhodes was and the type of people that were there,” he says. “What the TAI Programme did for me was to create a network of people who were more than willing to help and guide. The people I met during my TAI affiliation days really had a huge influence on my success at Rhodes.”

Being a mentor was Kabelo’s favourite part of the TAI experience. “I really enjoyed interacting with first years and seeing how nervous and eager they were,” he reflects. “I got to develop some good personal relationships with my mentees. I still follow up on them on social media and it is always amazing to see how far they have come.”

One day Kabelo hopes to form his own company, one that could “inspire young people to be creative.” He explains, “I want to foster a place of growth and equal opportunity.” Beyond that, he wishes to get involved in community engagement work in the future, mentoring young people and providing them with a platform to access opportunities. Life since graduation has been different to what he expected, but “in a very good way,” he says. “I am learning something new from every project that I find myself in.”

SISONKE MAWONGA has come full circle. After being a student in the Humanities Extended Studies Programme, she now holds the position of **Commerce Lecturer** within the **Extended Studies Unit at Rhodes** in Grahamstown.

Reflecting on her student days, Sisonke shares, "I was very happy that I was in Extended Studies rather than in mainstream; I don't think I would have survived otherwise. It's a very intimate space, and the lecturers are amazing. You have access to your lecturers anytime, you have access to your peers. It's very nice because of the support system that you get."

Sisonke, who hails from Queenstown in the Eastern Cape, has been a permanent part of this support system since 2015, serving as a Language Specialist in Writing and Academic Literacy. Prior to that, she experienced the role of both mentee and mentor in the TAI Student Peer Mentoring Programme.

Sisonke graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Politics, Sociology and African Languages in 2012. She completed a joint Honours in African Languages and Sociology and then graduated a third time in 2015, with a Masters in African Languages. Now working on her PhD, Sisonke is researching "How students can use their own languages to facilitate learning".

When she is not juggling her time between teaching and research, Sisonke enjoys reading up on how the 'normal' education system can be improved. She always wanted to be a teacher, but not at primary or secondary school level, and is glad she has found her home in the Extended Studies Unit. "One of the values here is that it is not a top-down approach; there is a more reciprocal relationship within the Unit," she explains. "This is a better way of learning, because you sort of disempower yourself as a lecturer so that the students can be empowered."

The Extended Studies and TAI Programme provide not only learning support, but a sense of community. "We are a family," Sisonke says, smiling. "We are all here to learn."



**SISONKE
MAWONGA**

Commerce Lecturer,
Extended Studies Unit
Rhodes University

"I was very happy that I was in Extended Studies rather than in mainstream; I don't think I would have survived otherwise. It's a very intimate space, and the lecturers are amazing."



SIVIWE MNQOVU

Business Analyst,
Johannesburg

Hailing from the small farming town of Komga in the Eastern Cape, **SIVIWE MNQOVU** describes himself as being “one of the fortunate ones to make it in a challenging environment like the township.”

Following a gap year after Matric, Siviwe applied to Rhodes and was welcomed into Commerce Extended Studies and its TAI Student Peer Mentoring Programme.

“Joining the programme was a blessing for me, as it gave me enough time to settle and adjust to the environment,” he says. “It offered me opportunities to understand myself and my surroundings. It gave me the necessary support and foundation for what I would like to believe was a successful academic career.”

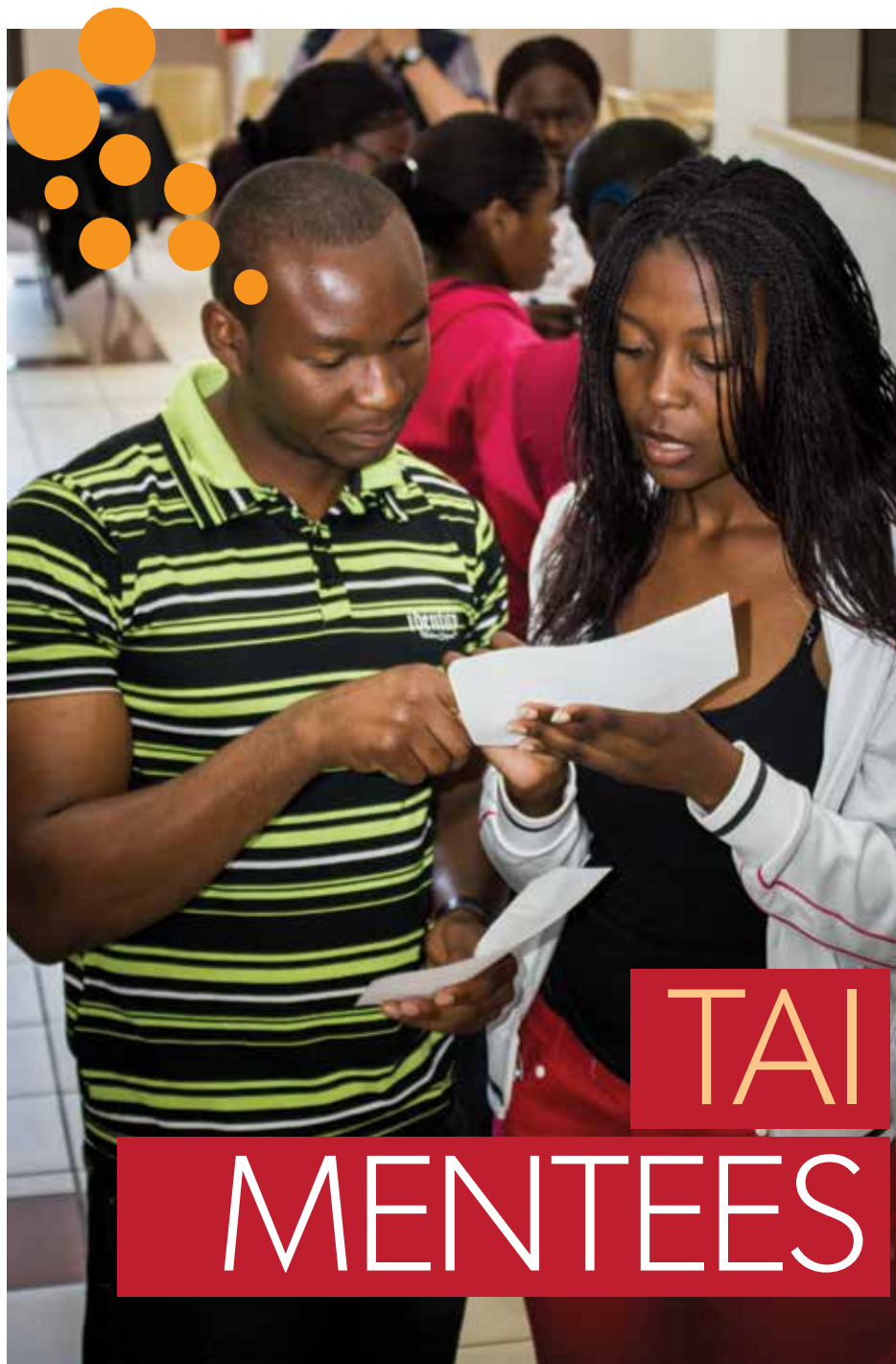
In 2014, Siviwe earned his Bachelor of Commerce, with Information Systems and Economics as majors, and in 2015 he obtained his Honours in Information Systems. He currently works as a **Business Analyst in Johannesburg**, where he focuses on “solving business problems by bridging the gap between IT and business.”

The values instilled in him by the Extended Studies Programme and the TAI have helped him in his career today, mainly through learning to be proactive and take ownership of what he does. Above all, however, is gratitude. “Gratitude is rooted in the programme,” he says, “and gratitude is a motto I live by on a daily basis.”

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When he is not working, Siviwe is exploring his new home, Johannesburg, or having “a run-around for soccer, even though it is not as competitive as back in the varsity days.” Looking towards the future, Siviwe plans to build a stable career and improve his skills in order to start his own consulting business, one that will “facilitate the technology age in South Africa...and Africa as whole.”





TAI MENTEES

FIRST YEAR MENTEES are introduced to the TAI programme by their lecturers who are also mentor facilitators at the beginning of the academic year. They are partnered with mentors as soon as possible thereafter. Facilitators endeavour to ‘match’ mentors with mentees as best they can, so that students have a starting point in common. To this end, facilitators utilise at least one of the following criteria in terms of matching students: same residence or hall, same home language, same past school, home town, province, and/or gender.

Many often overwhelming, transitional issues may be experienced by first year mentees, for example homesickness; being placed in the Extended Studies programme; managing the English medium instruction; diversity of teaching and learning styles; as well as acclimatising to the culture of campus and residence life.

Through the TAI mentees are exposed to the challenges of their new environment in a supportive context, through an approach which seeks to demystify university culture. The mentor-mentee relationship, as well as the relationship between mentees themselves, enables a less onerous transition from school to university. In so doing it is hoped that mentees learn to articulate their goals and take responsibility for achieving these, so as to enable them to realise their full academic potential.

In response to the question “What does it mean to be in Extended Studies?”, our 2017 first year Humanities Extended Studies TAI students reflect as follows:

“Being in the Extended Studies programme is a very great opportunity because some of us we are the first in our homes to be at university...there is no one [from home] who can help us through varsity life.”

“For me being at Rhodes and in the Extended Studies means a lot. It means that I will be prepared for next year.”

“One of the things that has really humbled me is the help that has been offered willingly by senior student [mentors] and our lecturers.”

“Being on the Extended Studies Programme is very helpful in a way that we don’t only acquire information and learning, we also build a relationship with our lecturers.”

“Rhodes University for me [has been] challenging...if I was in the mainstream I was going to fail because all the basics that the university wants, I got them in Extended Studies.”

“Extended Studies has enabled me to get access to higher education.”

“To me to be in Extended Studies it encourages me to progress my starting point at university. I was arrived here at Rhodes University without knowing what I will do, but because of Extended Studies I have some confidence in myself.”

“To be in the ES is to have a good foundation. I feel that the other students who are on mainstream are missing out a lot. ES is very helpful, especially to students who come from disadvantaged high schools. ES helps people to fit in in the university.”

“Extended Studies for me has been very wonderful, helpful and very informative in a sense of debunking all the major theories that I did not properly grasp in my mainstream subjects. I love Extended Studies for the extra support I get from [my] lecturer. The content we deal with in our mainstream subjects is simplified to small subjects which makes the work much more easier to understand, apply and even critically think about the world, life and my life in particular. This course has played a major role in my writing academically and now I articulate my opinions using theory.”

“If Extended Studies did not exist I would not be here at Rhodes today.”



“Things at Extended Studies are simplified for us because there are times when I feel lost and confused in [mainstream] lectures. That [ES] programme it is really helpful especially when it comes to writing tutorials and assignments.”

“Extended Studies has been very helpful because it is a very free and comfortable space...At Extended Studies I am more inquisitive in class and the fact that our lecturer values our input makes it easier for me to engage with both her and my peers.”

Even though I would love to be in mainstream I now realise that there is a high chance I would have failed. Most importantly, ES gives me an opportunity to find my feet first, because honestly the transition from high school to university is not a pretty sight as it looks. ES breaks down and helps me tackle academia, gives me an insight on what is expected of me and how I can accomplish that.”



“I feel very privileged and honoured to be studying at Rhodes University and I am grateful that I have been accepted into the ES programme...not many people get this opportunity. I must say that after my first term at Rhodes I have never read and learnt so much and I never would have ever thought that I would be able to have such intellectual conversations with my friends about things that affect us for example ‘fees must fall’, issues concerning race and gender etc.”

The Judy Orpen Memorial Award

The Judy Orpen Memorial Award honours and celebrates the life and accomplishments of Ms Judy Orpen. The Award, made by Judy's family in her honour, aims to recognise young people with the same passion for living as Judy. Judy was working towards her Master's in Anthropology at Rhodes University when she passed away unexpectedly in late 2010.

Judy began her studies at Rhodes in 2006, majoring in Anthropology and Linguistics. She attained her BA Honours in Anthropology in 2009. One of the requirements of her Honours degree was a piece of original research. Judy chose to do this research with students in Extended Studies, examining the way in which they experienced the University and the demands of academic study. Judy went on to teach in the Humanities Extended Programme as a leave replacement in the latter half of 2010.

Owing to unforeseen circumstances, it has not yet been possible to make the 2016 Judy Orpen Memorial Award. This process will be concluded in due course.



Evaluation

The TAI mentors' questionnaire has been developed by the TAI co-ordinator in collaboration with a CHERTL lecturer. This questionnaire is facilitated at the end of the first semester, so that student feedback can be critically reflected upon and incorporated into the following year's course.

Finances

Stipends are paid to each mentor from February to May. In addition, mentors are allocated a once-off R100 'outing' allowance, which they share with their mentees, towards a group social activity of their choice. Faculty facilitators receive an annual honorarium in appreciation for their contribution to the programme's work.

Programme Expenses 2016

Facilitator Honorariums	R 25,500.00
Mentor Stipends & Allowance	R 89,760.00
Programme Running Costs	R 14,955.90
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TOTAL Programme Cost 2015	R 130,215.90
<i>(excluding programme co-ordination)</i>	

Sponsors of the Trojan Academic Initiative

- The Department of Higher Education and Training: South Africa
- The Riley Family/BBJ Trust
- The Orpen Family

The TAI continues to share a valued partnership with the Orpen family who, in honour of their daughter Ms Judy Orpen, established an Endowment Fund for the furtherance of the TAI's work. The Orpens continue to be steadfast supporters of the TAI. Mrs Alison Orpen makes monthly contributions towards the development of the Endowment Fund. The TAI has been in a secure position in terms of annual running costs since 2014 thanks to a Grant from the South African Department of Higher Education and Training. The Endowment Fund, in turn, protects the medium- to long-term future of the programme. Prospective sponsors are invited to consider donations to the Fund in order to secure the programme's future work.





TAI Mentor Development Workshop 2017





2003 – 2017

Learning Guidance Commitment Collaboration Accomplishment
Responsibility Fulfilment Honesty Tolerance Challenge Resilience
Tenacity Balance Trust Thought Action Growth Inspiration

Celebrating 14 Years Of Mentoring Excellence at Rhodes

