

RUCE Staff



Back row: Lihle Manene, Gamu Chakona, Hlengi Mlambo, Anelise Toni, Masixole Jonono, Eric Kamau, Nosi Nkwinti, Thandiwe Matyobeni, Thandi Nqowana.

Font row: Tiisetso Nhlapo, Di Hornby, Prof 'Mabokang Monnapula-Mapesela, Dr Margie Maistry, Anna Kinsler, Kristena Reddy.



RHODES UNIVERSITY
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RUCE | community
engagement



MESSAGE FROM THE DEPUTY-VICE CHANCELLOR

Once again we commend the Rhodes University Community Engagement (RUCE) for sustained efforts to make Rhodes University (RU) the Hub for excellent Community Engagement in the Country and for ensuring that RUCE is globally recognized. This year's Community Engagement (CE) Awards coincide with a huge milestone for the University. The Celebration of its 120th Anniversary, achievements, excellence, and unique history. We all take pride in the years of continued excellence in the academic endeavor.

We take exceptional pride in our community engagement Division for relentlessly ensuring that community engagement is respected as an important mission of the University together with teaching and research. We celebrate the efforts of the community of Makhanda - our students, staff, and community partners who continue to challenge the 'ivory tower' ideology, breaking the invisible borders that separate the University from the communities of our beautiful city of Makhanda, borders that are making us oblivious to the City's challenges and unliveable conditions. Through their commitment to CE and their exemplary partnerships, collaborative work, engaged citizenry, service learning, social innovation and engaged research, they make Makhanda a better place for all who live in it.

This year, the University is celebrating 16 years of excellence in community engagement and impressive growth. RUCE's community partnerships and projects in education, and recently in health and economic development promise a great future for Makhanda.

The launch of the first African Journal for Higher Education Community Engagement (AJHECE), in October 2023, and the development, accreditation by the Council on Higher Education (CHE), and recent registration by the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) of the Postgraduate Diploma in Higher Education Community Engagement (PGDip HECE) prepare us as the University and community of Makhanda for a promising future of CE scholarship and scholarly engagements.

I congratulate everyone who is receiving an award this year. This is a testament to your commitment to social justice, being part of the Makhanda community, and living by the values of a true community and Ubuntu. I also congratulate everyone who has been part of the CE community of practice this year. The RUCE Team cannot work alone. If each one made a contribution we could turn the tide around.

Sincere gratitude to the RUCE Team, community partners, students, and staff for achieving all these great milestones and living the motto that Rhodes University is not just “in, of, and for” Makhanda but showing that Rhodes University is Makhanda, and Makhanda is Rhodes University. The two are intertwined and inseparable. Let us all do our part because there is no Rhodes University without Makhanda and no Makhanda without Rhodes University.

Once again warm congratulations to all the 2024 CE award recipients!

Prof 'Mabokang Monnapula-Mapesela

Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Academic and Student Affairs

PROGRAMME

WELCOME ADDRESS

18H10

RUCE HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2024

18H20

THE IMPACT OF CE ON MY LIFE – CLAIRE McCANN

18H25

COMMUNITY PARTNER OF THE YEAR

18H30

HALL/RESIDENCE OF THE YEAR

18H35

SPORTS CLUB/SOCIETY OF THE YEAR AWARD

18H40

ENGAGED RESEARCHER OF THE YEAR

18H45

GOLD AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE IN COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

19H00

STUDENT VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR AWARD

19H05

CLOSING REMARKS: VC PROF SIZWE MABIZELA

PROGRAMME DIRECTOR - TISETSO NHLAPO

CERTIFICATE AWARDEES

BuddingQ Literacy Programme

Student Leaders

Anela Kuta
Anoka Latchmiah
Azazole Dastile
Emihle Bonita Luvalo
Hlela Dayimani
Iviwe Khohlakala
Khanya Dunga
Lalelisile Mncwabe
Londeka Gumede
Minenhle Mbali Ndlela
Ngoba Boyi
Ripfumelo Pascalia Chauke
Savuyiswa Lungile
Sibulele Ngamntwini
Sihle Mtongana
Takudzwa Makuwa
Thatohatsi Motlounq
Tiisetso Nhlapo
Wendy Baloyi
Zibuyile Majoji

Reading Clubs Programme

Student Leaders

Ammaarah Morris
Bongiwe Ngwenya
Grace Ndlovu
Liya Planga
Masego Kutumela

Project Read Programme

Student Leaders

Ambani Musida
Felicitus Dlamini
Macy Lethabo Maimela
Sindi Xolo

Nine Tenths Mentoring Programme

Student Leaders

Asive Mafani
Chidinma Iheanetu
Chido Chatikobo
Christophina Ainima
Chumani Nelo
Eddie Khunoana
Emihle Gcwabe
Hlengiwe Mlambo
Jodi-anne Rooi
Kamvalethu Ntsomi
Lusanda Luciano Witbooi
Luviwe Mngcambe
Markan Nkhwazi
Matimu Shivambu
Regomoditswe Dikobe
Sachin Smith

High School Tutoring and Mentoring Programme

Student Leaders

Akimu Rajab
Aphelele Nkwinti

CERTIFICATE AWARDEES

Emily Morgan
Evuya Nomapelana
Shakhola Sekeleme
Silindelokuhle
Siyamthanda Ngesi
Siyanda Mjoli
Suphile Majodina
Zandile Valela

Vulindlela Programme

Student Leaders

Akhona Mkhathini
Aphelele Mjobo
Caylin Gillies
Nduduzo Vundla
Njabulo Dlamini
Siyanda Mjoli

SHORT COURSE CERTIFICATES

CE Reading Club Orientation Course

Aphelele Goswana
Azasakhe Muteyi
Benjamin de la Fontaine
Felicitus Dlamini
Liyema Mtyida
Pamella Aphile Maphumulo
Shamilla Mthembu
Siyolise Masulumbana
Jessicah Sibuyi
Nokulunga Akeda Nsibande

Tesa Kanyile
Abby Nomdoe
Mpho Nyambi
Sinenhlanhla Magwaza
Sengetile Dube

CE Mentoring Orientation Course

Afikile Msebi
Akani Mungoni
Akanindyangu Lebeso
Akhanyile Ngqiyaza
Akhona Selani
Amahle Zimele
Analo Ngobo
Anesipho Tshisani
Aphiwokuhle Habana
Asiphe Johnson
Athenkosi Mtwana
Aviwe Mali
Avuyile Norongwana
Azisa Memani
Bahle Maqina
Chabishi Chokoe
Chardonay Esterhuizen
Chishimba Chisha
Chulumanco Vumazonke
Eden Lester
Enver Lottering
Evuya Nomapelana
Germinah Ramathoka
Hlumelani Mbutye

CERTIFICATE AWARDEES

Hlumelo Hoyi
Jaryd Thomas
Jessica Khoza
Kago Selumi
Kamvelihle Tshunungwa
khanya Yekane
Khanya Myathaza
Kholiwe Ntloko
Kristi Kruyer
Lance Myburgh
Lathitha Stamper
Lesego Monyai
Likhona Mabandla
Lunathi Mlatsha
Lusanda Mabaso
Luyanda Hlophe
Luyanda Shema
Lwandle Zangqa
Manelisi Mlangeni
Melody Faku
Michelle Dlamini
Minentle Silumko
Mmathapelo Ramoshaba
Naledi Madikane
Nande Ngindana
Ncebakazi Mnakwa
Nomfundo Mabaso
Nonhlanhla Ntuli
Ntombizanele Shabangu
Ntsako Chauke
Onele Ntshona

Onke Matiso
Othandwayo Myona
Palesa Ragoleka
Pfhumbisa Chabalala
Phiwayinkhosi Mfundi Dlamini
Phumelela Tsili
Princess Sathekge
Sandile Manyike
Sanezo Matenjwa
Sesethu Bele
Sesethu Gaga
Sibongiseni Maphumulo
Simamkele Yona
Simbulele Muleka
Simphiwe Yende
Sindisiwe Tshona
Sinoxolo Mpahleni
Siphelele Futhusi
Siphelo Centane
Siphethuxolo Mtshawulana
Siphokazi Damane
Sisipho Ngqameni
Someleze Lose
Songezwa Kana
Soyama Sihlahla
Tarryn Kaela Shnier
Thandiwe Anesipho Nombanjana
Thembela Veleleni
Trinity Mashele
Tshepang Nkosi
Vincent Mbilini

CERTIFICATE AWARDEES

Vukona Worship Khobani

Vuyokazi Ngaleka

Yonela Mpande

Zamaswazi Bembe

Zandile Fama

Zenande Nondula

Zikhona Mbekwa

Zintle Xayimpi

Zizo Mpila

Literacy Fundamentals and Social Justice

(BuddingQ and Project Read)

Akhona Mkhathini

Alizwa Hafe

Allison Smith

Asemahle Kweta

Ayanda Pako

Carol Mojapelo

Gugulethu Maqina

Hlumelo Mtebele

Jenee du Plessis

Kholiwe Ntloko

Leigh Human

Libongo Bisha

Lindokuhle Pama

Nkhaviso Mathebula

Raasetja Jennifer Makhafola

Siphesihle Mbikwana

Sonwabiso Mlonyeni

Thato Tsheole

Yonela Mandondo

Literacy Leadership and Advocacy

Britney Visagie

Gontse Phaswana

Olwam Bedeni

Simangele Lingani

Simbulele Muleka

Siphokazi Kunene Kunene

Siyamtanda-Sonke Madikane

High School Tutors

Akhona Mkhathini

Akimu Rajab

Alice Mhindurwa

Alicia Mututo

Angela Sibanda

Aphelele Nkwinti

Arrynne Van Der Sandt

Asenako Ntame

Ayabulela Mankayi

Ayamkele Mzongwana

Ayathandwa Tsili

Azile Matha

Bahle Maqina

Buntu Noganta

Chabishi Chokoe

Chiamaka Jessica Okeke

Chulumanco Mjekula

Daniel Spies

Emily Morgan

Esihle Diya

Esther Seriki

Evuya Nomapelana

CERTIFICATE AWARDEES

Fhulufhelo Thikhathali
Hlumelo Msindwana
Indiphile Mcingana
Inga Madenyuka
Iviwe Maqondo
Jade Tuper
Jade Tupper
Ju-Lee Webber
Kago Selumi
Kamogelo Radebe
Kamva Dudumashe
Khonaye Ludusu
Khwezi Cele
Kyla Fullarton
Lebogang Shabangu
Lelethu Tom
Lethabo Pitjeng
Lindelwa Andiswa Dlamini
Lisakanya Kepe
Litemba Tanga
Loren Delponte
Lulibo Halom
Lusanda Mabaso
Manelisi Mlangeni
Maserame Mofokeng
Anelisa Mawisa
Melusi Mbuli
Minenhle Ndumo
Mkhavele Titile
Mohau Madiope
Naledi Mabusela

Naledi Malotana
Nduduzo Mvundla
Neo Seganye
Njabulo Dlamini
Nkosinathi Shongwe
Nobuhle Mpanza
Nthabang Somhlahlo
Nthabiseng Banda
Ntombenhle Hadebe
Owam Jilana
Palesa Raisibe
Ponahalo Makabe
Sandile Cengani
Sanele Mkhumbeni
Sello Maake
Sesethu Ndiniso
Sesona Bingwa
Shakhola Emmanuel Sekeleme
Sibongiseni Maphumulo
Sikelelwa Maneli
Sikhp Pahlane
Silindelokuhle Mdleleni
Simbulele Muleka
Sinalo Kinzela
Sinathi Nongebeza
Sinenhlanhla Mthalane
Sinethemba Mayekiso
Sinovuyo Peter
Siphosihle Ngcwangu
Siyamcela Mhlanga
Siyamthanda Mbatha

CERTIFICATE AWARDEES

Siyamthanda Ngesi
Siyanda Mjoli
Soncedwa Wotsetse
Suphile Majodina
Thandile Gcwati
Tumelo Lekoma
Vuyolwethu Makamba
Wenene Mpakama
Yazini Gcule
Zandile Darondile
Zandile Jilana
Zandile Mthethwa
Zanele Nomatshila
Zenande Gwele

Noluthando Kasi
Noluthando Ngantweni
Nomaindia Toto
Nontle Mdoko
Nosipho Moyikwa
Noziphiwo Ngindana
Ntombekhaya Moyikwa
Pakama Ngcete
Phumeza Mxube
Siyanda Qhude
Thandie Kise
Thembelani Msutwana
Thembisa Kondile
Wandisa Boma
Wandisa Singata

Computer Skills Training

Bongiwe Poti
Bulelwa Dyan
Busisiwe Ntlanjeni
Fezeka Mahlaza
Jeffrey Beuzana
Leesa Roberts
Luleka Kepe
Luntukazi Nkungwini
Masixole Mdoda
Mongezeleli Mkolo
Msondezi Mfabana
Nandipha Ntlanjeni
Nobathembu Memani
Noluthando Butana
Noluthando Buwa

Professional Digital Skills

Valance Wessels
Ayanda Qomfo
Ntombizanele Rabeshu
Mbulelo Magopeni
Siphokazi Khanyile
Siphokazi Ngesi
Mncedisi Mtimkulu
Monica Nolusindiso Marenene
Ronn Mathew Mager
Walter Peters
Roslyn Smith
Manelisi Ketse

CERTIFICATE AWARDEES

Digital Storytelling for Social Innovation

Asemahle Tuse
Awiwe Jack
Eric Maina
Jabulani Ndaba
Lucky Dlamini
Masixole Jonono
Mbali Ngulube
Nobuhle Mpanza
Nokubonga Mbandzi
Nomalungisa Maloni
Phumeza Xabashe
Princess Makhatha
Siphelele Dyantyi
Siposetu Bekwa
Sivuyile Nduli
Siyamthanda Gatya
Thandiswa Melane
Vuyolwethu Mxo

Good Shepherd Primary School:
Phelia Kramm, Mekki and Mr
Ngcozana

Makana Primary School: Nonkosi
and Sinazo

Ntaba Maria Primary School: Ms
Lotter, Ms Jongile, Ms Nel and Ms
Sakkie

NV Cewu Public Primary School:
Mrs Williams and Mrs Nxopo

Oatlands: Meriska Rossouw

PJ Olivier: Elisma Hallier

Rhodes Preschool: Annidene Davis

Using Community Assets for Social Innovation

Malungisa Onceya
Mandisi Mpolweni
Thando Nombewu

Seventh Day Adventist Primary
School: Ms Magaya

Nine Tenths Mentoring Programme

Khutliso Daniels Secondary School
Teacher Coordinator: Ms Mayalo
and Ms Jawa

Volunteer Managers from Community Partner Organisations

Literacy Projects

CM Vellem Health Promoting School:
Lettiwe, Siphokazi, Yandisa, Ms Qupe,
Ms Funiwe Coko, Ms Mdnlungu and
Mpumi.

Mary Waters High School
Teacher Coordinator: Ms Duiker

Nombulelo Secondary School
Teacher Coordinator: Ms Quntu

CERTIFICATE AWARDEES

Ntsika Senior Secondary School
Teacher Coordinator: Mr Mvambi
PJ Olivier
Teacher Coordinator: Ms Celeste van
Vuuren

Siyakhana eMakana Residence Programme

Allan Webb Hall - Luzuko Preschool
Volunteer Manager: Ncumisa Deliwe

Courtney-Latimer Hall - Boy Boy Mginywa
Preschool Volunteer Manager: Emihle
Gqina

Desmond Tutu Hall - Rhodes Day Care
Centre Volunteer Manager: Annidene
Davies

Drostdy Hall - Noncedo Preschool
Volunteer Manager: Lelethu Sandi

Founders Hall - Pumpkin Patch Day Care
Centre Volunteer Manager: Busisiwe Booii

Hobson Hall - Lithalethu Preschool
Volunteer Manager: Luleka Che

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

Kimberley Hall - Care Hugs ECD
Centre Volunteer Manager: Erica
Plaatjies

Lilian Ngoyi Hall - Nompumelelo
Preschool Volunteer Manager:
Zukiswa Baba

Miriam Makeba Hall - Happy Kids

ECD Centre Volunteer Manager:
Christelle Marthinus

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

Oppidan Hall - CSD Toy Library
Volunteer Manager: Noluthando
Shelle

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

Nurse

St. Mary Hall - APESSERV Volunteer
Manager: Zimasa Burns-Ncamashe

Victoria Mxenge House – Ikhaya
losizo Volunteer Manager: Carmè
Fantelas

AWARD CITATIONS

Tiisetso Nhlapo



Tiisetso Nhlapo is a vibrant, committed and knowledgeable student and leader. Her community engagement journey has been firmly rooted in the BuddingQ early Literacy Programme since 2020 where she has become valuable to all stakeholders and her “belief in the power of collective action and the importance of practising social responsibility” has been reinforced constantly.

She joined the programme in 2020 and stood out amongst 120 volunteers for her deep and thoughtful engagement with the accredited online short course that all volunteers in the programme undertake. Since 2021 she has been a student leader in the programme serving at 4 different local primary schools. In her role as a leader she has been nurturing of new volunteers (in our view - a master trainer) and a great mentor to new leaders in the programme. She is gentle in her interactions with learners and respectful with teachers ensuring that all stakeholders are fully engaged and acknowledged.

This year, she has ramped up her leadership and commitment to social change significantly. She was selected to travel to Rwanda on a Service Learning exchange trip, she has presented in the International Rhodes University Community Engagement conference and she is currently co-authoring a paper on the role of RU Engaged citizenry programmes in building democracy. This is remarkable at the Honours level!

Similarly, she has been on the organising committee of a major community imbizo which is entirely student-led (right from funding to execution). She has been innovative and resourceful about how to guide and support her peers to the successful and professional execution of this large-scale event.

Beyond this, Tiisetso is an active member of our community – a leader in the Law Society at Rhodes University (2022) and tutor in the Psychology department (2021-2023).

Tiisetso works diligently to be the change she wants to see in the world. She serves as an inspiration to our whole community to lean into the complexity of community

AWARD CITATIONS

Takudzwa Makuwa

Takudzwa Makuwa, fondly known to all of us as Boots, has an extensive community engagement CV. His journey began in 2020 as a BuddingQ volunteer and CE Rep in Joe Slovo House. Since then, he has occupied several CE leadership positions, most notably in the BuddingQ Early Literacy Programme.

Having been selected for this award in 2023, this year we highlight how he has elevated his commitment to CE. This year has been a bumper year for him. Among his many accolades and achievements in 2024, he was selected as 1 of 6 South African students to participate in a Transdisciplinary International Learning Laboratory experience in Canada; he's been named as one of Africa's Top 50 Most Impactful Young Leaders (which unlocked significant seed funding from Global Changemakers to host a student-led evaluation of BuddingQ); and he was a participant in the international Geneva Challenge essay competition.



So in celebration of his achievement we want to highlight who Boots is to us. We acknowledge him for three unique traits that the selection panel felt elevated his CE journey:

First, his demonstration of how to work in the nexus of CE and research. This year, Takudzwa has undertaken the co-authorship of two research papers with staff and students at RUCE. These papers focus on participatory democracy and personal journeys of volunteerism and youth empowerment – clearly influenced by years of experience in community projects.

Second, is his advocacy for CE. He is a well-known spokesperson for CE locally and nationally – having presented on radio, conferences and serving as a support for many student groups at Rhodes. He works closely with several student societies to guide their CE practices. This requires a deep understanding of CE principles and collaboration. He also maintains his own VERY active and engaging social media which often highlights his own and other CE work in Makhanda and sheds light on many social injustices in our society.

And finally, his ability to collaborate and rally groups together. He never does anything alone – he embodies a mature sense of servant leadership and understanding of what it means to work with people. Boots serves as a mentor

to fellow leaders in the BuddingQ programme and in the residence system. His mentorship has arguably been influential in attracting more men to our early learning programmes and recruiting student volunteers.

Takudzwa has been a great ambassador and community convenor for RUC and the larger Rhodes community this year. We applaud his momentum and quantum of community engagement!

AWARD CITATIONS

Nduduzo Mvundla



Nduduzo has shown great commitment to his CE partner Vul'indlela. He started volunteering as a tutor and mentor in 2022. In 2023, he became a Student Leader in the programme, a role he continues to hold with passion and dedication.

Nduduzo sets a good example of leadership for his peers and mentees. As a student leader, he not only works with the tutors and assists the coordinator with admin, but also takes it upon himself to tutor three different subjects across all three grades from Grade 10 to 12. Ndu has gone above and beyond the call of duty to ensure that his learners are fully prepared to write their exams and to apply to Universities.

Nduduzo has shown incredible leadership in all aspects of his varsity life, including being a leader in the Hall/Res structure and in Student Organisations. He also participated in the CE Partner and Student Imbizo in 2022 where he not only presented, but also led a group of volunteers who were interested in presenting.

Ndu has all the instincts of a diligent and critical thinker, setting him apart as a Student Leader.

AWARD CITATIONS

Matimu Shivambu



Matimu's journey in community engagement started in Calata House as a first-year student, where he was inspired by his CE Rep, Sesona Yendwa. Under Sesona's leadership, Matimu participated in various Residence and Hall initiatives and visited partner organisations.

Matimu then joined the Engaged Citizenry programme at RUCE and was placed with the Masiphumelele Youth Development community partner. In this programme, he became a tutor and mentor at Nombulelo Secondary School. As a returning volunteer in 2022, Matimu participated in the Nine Tenths, BuddingQ, and Engaged Citizenry programmes. By 2023, Matimu progressed to leadership roles across three programmes: BuddingQ at Makana Primary School, Nine Tenths at Ntsika Secondary School, and Computer Skills Training with the Social Innovation Hub.

In 2024, Matimu collaborated with Tshepang Nkosi to present a Case Study of the Nine Tenths Mentoring Programme.

AWARD CITATIONS

Tshepang Nkosi



Tshepang Nkosi began her Community Engagement journey in 2019 in the Nine Tenths Mentoring Programme, where she mentored students from Khutliso Daniels, Mary Waters, and Nombulelo schools. Her mentorship played a role in the personal and professional development of her mentees, reflecting her deep commitment to service and community development. Tshepang is also a CE Rep for the Wellbeing Association Society who have partnered with Home of Joy. In 2024, Tshepang proved her dedication to working in the nexus of CE and she presented at the International CE Conference.

Taking on these leadership positions shows her efforts to raise awareness about community wellbeing and to promote meaningful service.

Beyond her achievements, Tshepang is known for her compassion, dedication, and drive. She consistently embodies integrity, responsibility, and an unwavering commitment to positively impacting the lives of others. Tshepang's passion and dedication make her a true inspiration to those around her.

Congratulations, Tshepang Nkosi! We look forward to seeing all you will continue to accomplish in the future!

AWARD CITATIONS

Siyanda Mjoli

Siyanda's dedication to fostering positive change in the community, coupled with his exceptional leadership skills has made a significant impact in various community engagement initiatives he participates in.

Siyanda has been a Student Leader for the past three years, dedicating his time and efforts to several programmes, including Vul'ndlela Parent Engagement and High School Tutoring and Mentoring. His commitment to tutoring and mentoring young people is particularly noteworthy.

His versatility and passion for education and community development are evident in his multifaceted contributions. Through engagement, cultural sensitivity and respect, Siyanda has cultivated strong working relationships with partner organisations, fellow volunteers, and programme participants.

Siyanda's journey reflects a deep commitment to community engagement, which continues to be a source of inspiration for those around him.



AWARD CITATIONS

Grace Ndlovu



Over the past four years, Grace has made significant contributions to Makhanda through her involvement in various CE programmes. She has shown a passion for empowering and inspiring young people and served as a student leader for the Project Read programme at Fikizolo Primary School.

This year, she continued her leadership role with the reading programme at Good Shepherd Primary, demonstrating her unwavering dedication to supporting and guiding young learners. Grace is also a mentor in the High School Tutoring and Mentoring (HSTM) programme.

Grace's commitment to making a difference in the lives of young people has been a driving force throughout her volunteer journey. Her genuine enthusiasm and compassion create a nurturing environment where children feel seen, valued and empowered.

Grace's selection as one of the top 12 student volunteers of the year nominees is a testament to her dedication, leadership and passion for making a difference. Congratulations, Grace!

AWARD CITATIONS

Ripfumelo Pascalia Chauke

Empathetic, compassionate and accessible are just some of the characteristics that make this recipient warm and inviting as a volunteer and person. Hailing from a village in Limpopo, she quickly and deeply empathised with the struggles faced by students from disadvantaged backgrounds in Makhanda. So, she found a home in participating in CE initiatives.

Her journey began in 2022 when participating in service learning at Archie Mbolekwa Primary School. She has since become a Nine Tenths mentor and grew as a literacy activist in the BuddingQ programme. This year she is a BuddingQ Student Leader. Her extensive involvement in community engagement includes, but isn't limited to being a CE Rep in the Residence structure, as well as for the Rhodes University Politics Society.

We have witnessed the pride she takes in pouring her heart into these initiatives, demonstrating a dedication to making a positive change and contributing to solutions for South Africa's literacy crisis and the revitalization of public schools in Makanda.



AWARD CITATIONS

Sibulele Ngamntwini



In 2022, this recipient joined RUCE as a volunteer in the BuddingQ programme, grew in the space and is now a student leader for the programme. She also helped steer a student-led programme evaluation of BuddingQ which took place this year.

She has also been involved within the Residence system and Student Organisations, acted as a mentor in RU Seventh Day Adventist Student Movement Society, and played various roles at the 2024 CE Conference, including facilitating one of the sessions.

This recipient has a go-getter attitude that makes her highly reliable even in unprecedented situations. It has been pleasant to watch her grow and promote the principles of good engagement practice with every initiative she has joined.

As a testament to her commitment, the N.V Cewu Public Primary School Head wrote "We have had the pleasure of witnessing her exceptional leadership skills, dedication, and passion for making a positive impact on our learners."

On behalf of everyone who gets to work with her, we echo the words of the student leader who nominated her when we say - Sibulele Ngamntwini has been a true beacon of inspiration.

AWARD CITATIONS

Suphile Majodina

Suphile has been dedicated to educational advancement since 2021, volunteering with the CM Vellem Reading and Chess Club and St. Mary's Development and Care Centre, where she boosted learners' enthusiasm for reading. Even during the COVID-19 pandemic, she adapted to online platforms to continue nurturing literacy skills.

This year, Supsie demonstrated exceptional dedication to community engagement through a variety of impactful roles. As the Oppidan CE Rep, she effectively managed a large group of students, nurturing inclusivity. She also served as a tour guide for the Exploring Makhanda Tours, providing valuable historical insights to first-year students, and facilitated the Community Engagement Orientation Course to create enriching experiences for participants. Suphile's commitment extended to volunteering at the CSD Toy Library and spearheading fundraising efforts through the Batho People Project and Ubuntu Clothing Drive. Her contribution to the 2024 Rhodes University Community Engagement Conference further demonstrated her impactful leadership.

Congratulations, Suphile for your ongoing commitment and warmth!



AWARD CITATIONS

Enver Lottering



Enver has heartily integrated CE activities into every facet of the student experience. As the SRC Community Engagement Executive Coordinator, Enver managed major events such as Leadership Week and the CE Blended Bazaar for Entrepreneurs. He also played a pivotal role in his Hall, serving as a liaison between CE Reps to encourage collaboration and inclusivity in the space.

He has also led impactful initiatives such as the Funny Money Drive for the Grahamstown SPCA and raised over R2,200. Additionally, Enver has worked alongside the Rhodes Preschool this year, and spearheaded Kiddies Play Sessions.

Enver's commitment extends to mentoring matric learners weekly through the Nine Tenths programme.

His proactive approach to CE and his ability to balance leadership and mentorship highlight his versatility and dedication. Being a recipient of the Reverend Dr Simon Gqubule Leadership Award further validates his commitment to ethical leadership.

Tonight, we acknowledge this promising student's dedication and drive. Well done, Enver!

AWARD CITATIONS

Vuyokazi Ngaleka

In 2022, Vuyokazi Ngaleka began her community engagement journey with the BuddingQ programme, focusing on promoting social justice and literacy in Makhanda schools. Her dedication to education and social impact was clear from the start. In 2023, she took on the role of Community Engagement Representative, organising the successful Hugh Masekela Hall Easter Egg Hunt and facilitating the Community Engagement Orientation Course for first-year students. These efforts helped foster community spirit and introduced new students to the importance of service. As a tour guide for the Exploring Makhanda initiative, she provided educational tours that deepened students' understanding of the town's history and culture.



In 2024, Vuyokazi expanded her impact by mentoring high school learners through the Nine Tenths Mentoring Programme at P.J. Olivier Hoërskool.

Her leadership, mentorship, and commitment to social change make her an outstanding finalist for the Rhodes University Community Engagement Student Volunteer Awards.

RES/HALL OF THE YEAR

Nelson Mandela Hall



Nelson Mandela Hall has developed impactful programs for C.M. Vellem learners, benefiting both students and the wider community. These initiatives, including events such as Disability Day, Career Day, Sports Day, and Mental Health Day, promote education, self-confidence, and social awareness. The programmes

engaged parents, students, and community members, raising awareness on key topics like disability, career choices, and mental health. Notably, Disability Day featured a Rhodes University psychologist educating attendees on identifying and addressing disabilities, while Career Day inspired learners to pursue their dreams. Sports Day, held at Rhodes University, motivated learners by exposing them to university life.

The Hall also organised a clothing drive on Mandela Day and a Heritage Day celebration, fostering a sense of cultural pride and unity. Nelson Mandela Hall's Community Engagement Representatives raised funds through hotdog sales to support these efforts, ensuring responsible use of resources.



Cullen Bowles

Cullen Bowles Residence has demonstrated exceptional leadership in community engagement. The Res used SWOT Analyses as well as Asset-Based Community Development and Community Mapping to develop and execute meaningful initiatives, successfully partnering with the SRC, academic departments, and local organisations.

Notable projects implemented by CB include a Snake Awareness Stall and the Community Engagement Orientation Sessions, which addressed critical issues and promoted inclusive dialogue. The

Res organised a Kiddie Play Session and Funny Money Drive which exemplifies their ability to align efforts with community needs. These activities resulted in sustainable positive changes - the SPCA built new structures for their dogs and play is vital for children's growth.

RES/HALL OF THE YEAR

Cullen Bowles' consistent debriefing and evaluation sessions with the stakeholders of projects reflect their commitment to improvement and success. Their model of collective action, mutuality, and collaboration with diverse stakeholders advances effective community engagement practices, while supporting the Nexus of CE, the goals of the Division of Student Support and Development, as well as the overall Rhodes IDP goals.

Their work is a catalyst for meaningful, lasting impact, making them a deserving candidate for this award.

Drostdy Hall

Drostdy Hall has demonstrated exceptional leadership and commitment to community engagement through their partnership with Noncedo Preschool, making a lasting impact on the lives of young learners. By organising engaging activities such as the Mr. and Miss Noncedo pageant, creating educational activity packs, and leading a vibrant classroom painting project, Drostdy Hall has contributed significantly to improving school readiness for preschoolers.



These initiatives fostered confidence, literacy, and numeracy skills among the children, while also bringing together parents, teachers, and students in a spirit of collaboration. The Hall's creative and hands-on approach to early childhood education, combined with strong teamwork from its CE Representatives, has set an inspiring example for Community Engagement. Drostdy Hall's efforts have not only enriched the lives of Noncedo learners but have also strengthened the connection between Rhodes University and the broader Makhanda community.

STUDENT RESEARCHER OF THE YEAR – Lian May



Lian May has been awarded the CE Student Researcher of the Year award for his outstanding contributions to research in Political and International Studies. His charismatic personality and deep commitment to his community in Makhanda are evident in his Masters dissertation, which focuses on the often-overlooked politics of local identities, particularly the Coloured community of Makhanda.

Lian's research aims to challenge harmful stereotypes by providing a platform for community members to share their own stories, emphasising their agency and contributions. His innovative approach involved conducting interviews in multiple languages and fostering trusting relationships, which even led to community members inviting him into their homes for the interviews. This level of engagement reflects the significant impact he has made, as evidenced by participants' willingness to re-interview after a technological mishap.

Lian is the most deserving candidate for this award due to his dedication to creating sustainable knowledge within his community and his plans to continue this important dialogue, potentially leading to further research opportunities. His role as a co-researcher in broader community engagement projects further amplifies his influence and commitment to transformative practices in academia.

CLUBS AND SOCIETIES

Rhodes University Toastmasters Club

Two years ago, Rhodes University Toastmasters Club partnered with Nombulelo Senior Secondary School to run sessions on public speaking, covering everything from body language and voice projection to speech



writing. Last year, the student society expanded the programme to include four more schools - Khutliso Daniels, Nathaniel Nyaluza, Ntsika Senior Secondary Schools and Mary Waters High School. Both years, the Club ended the year by putting together a Public Speaking Competition, now an annual event.

By 2024, Toastmasters had grown their Community Engagement to another level. This year, the programme welcomed two more schools - Victoria Girls' High School and P.J. Olivier - to the roster. The 3rd Annual Rhodes University Toastmasters Finale is scheduled for later this month (September 2024).

Rhodes University Toastmasters Club has displayed initiative, sustainability and innovation this year. The Society's strong leadership, understanding of community engagement principles, and commitment to inclusivity has been impactful in fostering communication skills in English, isiXhosa, and Afrikaans among Makhanda youth.

Rhodes Kings and Queens Chess Club

The Rhodes Kings and Queens Chess Club had an impactful year inspiring a love and passion for Chess. Early this year, the Club hosted the Sarah Baartman Chess Trials here at Rhodes University, in partnership with Sewelo Maths and Chess



Community Youth Academy (SEMCCYA). The organisations formulated a team that would represent the Eastern Cape province in the provincials.

CLUBS AND SOCIETIES

They also donated chess books and a chess set to the Duna Library and held community games in partnership with Amazwi South African Museum of Literature. The club also facilitated the Makhanda Schools Chess Tournament which was held at Kingswood College in July 2024.

The Club's efforts this year have been continuous - they hosted weekly Blitz Chess Tournaments which were open to interested chess players, and their educational engagements included weekly chess coaching at Grahamstown Primary School. The Kings and Queens also participated in the Disability Week programme in September.

These initiatives reflect the Rhodes Kings and Queens Chess Club's commitment to promoting chess, inclusivity and community engagement.

Rhodes Shotokan Karate Club



The Rhodes Shotokan Karate Club has demonstrated strong community involvement through various initiatives this year. The Club offered weekly Karate, self-defence, and obedience classes to Grade 8 and 9 pupils at Diocesan School for Girls, Kingswood College, and the Eluxolweni Child and Youth Care Centre.

Shotokan Karate Club formed a partnership with the SPCA Makhanda. They volunteered at the SPCA's Mandela Open Day and put together the Funny Money Drive which raised over R2200 towards the SPCA's Brick 'n Bark Project. The event featured marimba performances and karate demonstrations. Later this year, they volunteered at the SPCA Troll Movie Night, where their CE Rep stepped in as co-host making it an enjoyable experience and overall smooth event.

COMMUNITY PARTNER OF THE YEAR

Assumption Development Centre (ADC)

The ADC has established a strong culture of deep and meaningful engagement with various community partners and student volunteers.



The centre's ability to coordinate a wide range of programmes, from education and employability training to counselling and enterprise support, reflects the effectiveness of its engagement.

The seamless integration of student volunteers from RUCS, partnerships with local schools, Rhodes Departments, and community organisations, demonstrates a commitment to working collaboratively and respectfully with all stakeholders. By partnering with the Department of Education and Maqubs Academy of Excellence, ADC continues to ensure that qualified teachers and tutors are available to support the learners who attend their Second Chance Matric Programme. The collaboration with Rhodes University's Psychology Department, where student volunteers offer psychosocial support, further highlights ADC's commitment to engaging volunteers and the Makhanda community in a meaningful and supportive manner. ADC's support for small businesses through the Rhodes University Masakhe Enterprise and Supplier Development programme, has guided local entrepreneurs, towards achieving sustainability and contributing to the economic vitality of the town.

This holistic approach has made a tangible difference in the lives of countless individuals in Makhanda. Congratulations ADC!

Talking Technology to Power

Talking Technology to Power, a programme under the Social Employment Fund Initiative, is made up of a group of young people of Makhanda, who have formed sustainable partnerships with various



organisations in Makhanda, and has consistently demonstrated an exceptional commitment to community engagement to revitalise the education space in

COMMUNITY PARTNER OF THE YEAR

Makhanda.

Talking Technology to Power has demonstrated a remarkable ability to collaborate with various community organisations. The Club extended the reach and impact of the #SDcardMakhanda campaign, which makes learning materials accessible through cell phone memory cards. The group has maintained a strong partnership with Vul'indlela and has an ongoing collaboration with the Lebone Centre, where SD cards loaded with educational content in three local languages are being prepared for young children in 50 families.

The SD card project, which provided vital educational resources to Grade 9 to 12 learners, has been a game-changer for learners facing the challenges of limited access to study materials. By facilitating access to high-quality, CAPS-aligned educational content, The Talking Technology to Power group has directly contributed to improving educational outcomes for these students, as evidenced by the testimonies of learners who have benefited from these resources.



Meal After School

Meal After School was designed to support local school children by providing them with essential after-school services. The programme ensures that learners receive nutritious meals to combat hunger and improve focus. The programme also helps bridge the educational gap by offering homework assistance, reading practice, and personalised tutoring sessions. In addition to meals, the children receive tutoring assistance in various

subjects, particularly in reading and literacy. The initiative aims to create a safe, supportive environment where learners can develop academically and socially outside of regular school hours.

The Meal After School Program has significantly impacted the local community by addressing key issues such as hunger, education, and child welfare. By providing meals, tutoring and mentorship to the learners, Meal After School has contributed to improving the well-being of many children in Makhanda, helping them focus better in school, achieve academic success, and feel supported in a nurturing environment.

This programme assists in combating food insecurity in Makhanda, but also improves literacy and educational outcomes, which can have long-term positive effects on the community.

2023 VC'S DISTINGUISHED COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AWARD WINNER

Dr Jessica Cockburn

For the Vice-Chancellor's Distinguished Award for Community Engagement



The Vice-Chancellor's Distinguished Community Engagement Award is a prestigious and competitive annual award, which recognises academics who have successfully established meaningful and sustainable partnerships between members of the University and community partners in the areas of teaching, learning and research to contribute to sustainable human and community development. Such individuals have demonstrated to a panel of peers that their contribution to community engagement is truly distinguished and worthy of the Vice-Chancellor's award.

I am honoured to present Dr Jessica Cockburn for the 2023 Distinguished Vice-Chancellor's Community Engagement Award.

Jessica is a senior lecturer in the Department of Environmental Science, in the Faculty of Science. She earnestly believes in and enthusiastically contributes to the idea that we are caretakers and not conquerors of the natural world. Dr Cockburn embodies the ethos of community engagement through her wide and deep-ranging efforts to bring together a multitude of stakeholders in the service of both social and environmental sustainability and justice.

Through various integrated engaged teaching and research activities, Dr Cockburn has pioneered a transdisciplinary and holistic approach to community engagement, which is rich and inspiring. She has applied teaching, learning and research resources to meet community needs to specifically confront the pressing social-ecological sustainability crises the community faces. These initiatives have thus promoted university social responsibility. Her transdisciplinary and integrated methodologies, what she describes as organic processes of "weaving engagement into teaching and research", have been developmental and participatory, and the partnerships built with River Rescue, the community around the Tsitsa River catchment and more recently the team at Assegai Trails are reciprocal and collaborative.

Implementation of the projects has entailed joint planning, innovative monitoring and evaluation, and efficient utilisation of resources. As a result, the local natural environment, community partners, as well as students and staff

have benefited. Balancing the advancement of teaching and research with community development with remarkable synergy, Dr Cockburn is recognised by her students, colleagues and community partners as deeply aware of the importance of context, connections and care, and these ideas are core to her personal philosophy as an academic.

Dr Cockburn began as a volunteer at River Rescue, a small, local volunteer-based organisation, which started in Makhanda in early 2020 with the mission to clean the rivers in the city of Makhanda. The aim of River Rescue is to restore the link between our rivers and our people. Dr Cockburn now serves as a facilitator, fostering a learning partnership between River Rescue and the Department of Environmental Science. Environmental Science Honours students participate as volunteers in the River Rescue clean up effort, where they bring their knowledge of environmental science into discussions and planning sessions for River Rescue activities. During these engagements, students develop their own specific projects to benefit River Rescue, such as social media campaigns, mapping activities, and educational outreach activities. In this way, students share their knowledge and enthusiasm with the River Rescue community, and they are, in turn, enriched by gaining knowledge from the community partners of the local context and challenges related to water and waste management. This service learning project involves staff members from the Department of Environmental Science, and all of the Honours students.

It contributes to the transformation of the way in which local rivers are managed and cared for; the way in which local residents interact with and relate to the river; the relationships between the university and the local community and physical environment; students at a personal level in terms of personal growth, skills and knowledge beyond what they get in a formal classroom setting. Reflective practice is embedded as a key aspect of the course. Students reflect with facilitators in regular meetings, and in regular reflection reports, which they submit for assessment. The project includes reflective meetings with River Rescue team members, and rich collaborative discussions with community members. In these discussions and reflections, community partners showcase the value of other forms of knowledge, beyond the academic, in addressing sustainability issues, something which is core to the Environmental Science curriculum, but can be difficult for students to grasp in a world where science is still treated as a far superior form of knowledge.

In the words of one of her community partners, Helen Holleman:

“The hands-on exposure of Honours students to the realities of the local watercourses and the lives of the people who live along them makes real the theory of systems thinking and often compels re-assessment of one's understanding and assumptions.

Working side by side with members of the community, listening to their problems,

seeing the daily reality of the difficulties they contend with provides life-lessons that no theory can provide.... "Jess' involvement with the River Rescue programme has been profoundly beneficial in strengthening links between the University and community and in transforming the direction of the programme; it has brought direct educational (and practical) benefits to both the community and the Honours students, and has introduced new, reflective ways of thinking about the links between people and their environment."

The River Rescue team were honoured for their critical role in this co-learning partnership by receiving the Rhodes University Community Engagement Partner of the Year Award in 2023.

When she reflects on the partnership and how it has shaped her work as an engaged teacher in the university, Dr Cockburn puts the warm, respectful, open relationship she has with the River Rescue team at the centre of the story, and she expresses deep appreciation for the work that Helen Hollemann, Elizabeth Davies, Ntombomzi Monakali, Margaret Wolff, the late Preven Chetty, Nosi Mtati and many others, including her students, have done to enable these meaningful outcomes for so many people.

Jessica believes that a community engagement award should not be awarded solely to an individual. She says: "When I stand on that stage to accept the award I want the audience to know that I am standing there not as an individual winner but as someone helping to shine the spotlight on the important, heartfelt and difficult work we have done in collaboration".

Complementing this teaching initiative is Dr Cockburn's engaged research, which focuses on landscapes, linkages, and learning, which ultimately aims to conserve the watercourses of Makhanda and the broader landscapes of the Eastern Cape.

Dr Cockburn's endeavours as an engaged researcher are best described through an account of the Tsitsa Project, a large collaborative project involving numerous stakeholders, including researchers, local community members, natural resource managers, policy-makers, local NGOs and others, collectively working towards more sustainable landscape management and rural livelihood development in the Tsitsa River catchment. She acknowledges and celebrates the work and commitment of her colleagues Nosiseko Mtati, Margaret Wolff, Tally Palmer, Eureta Rosenberg, Harry Biggs, Monde Ntshudu, and many others who made this project the success that it was.

It is this crossing of disciplinary, methodological, social and physical borders, and the concomitant appreciation of interconnections and the foregrounding of relationships that makes Dr Cockburn a worthy recipient of the 2023 Vice-Chancellor's Distinguished Award for Community Engagement.

Rhodes University Community Engagement (RUCE) 2024 Highlights

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

This report shares the highlights of 2024 providing evidence of the contribution and impact of CE on community development.

EXTERNAL DONOR PARTNERSHIPS

Community engagement is an unfunded national mandate. Donor partners, therefore, play a crucial role in stepping in to fund this important work. We are deeply indebted for their contribution to community engagement as it not only has impact on the community in which we live but also contributes to the repositioning and transformation of Rhodes University. In 2024, we have again enjoyed the financial and moral support of donor partners, Ms Zanele Twala and the Standard Bank Tutuwa Community Foundation, Ms Vuyo Mwase from the Energy Mobility Education Trust, Mr Paul Smith from the Kagiso Fund, Ms Barbara Proudfoot from the KAVOD Trust and Mr John Williams from GBS Local Bank for being so meaningfully committed to the transformation of the Makhanda community.

MAKHANDA CITY WIDE INTERVENTIONS (towards an Integrated Social Development Model)

As we work collectively to revitalise the city of Makhanda, we do so in an integrated manner leading and participating in interventions that accelerate education,

health and economic development simultaneously. The development of knowledge and models in these sectors are important so that we are able share practices and have a broader societal influence.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The two key drivers in this area are the newly established Masakhe Programme and the Social Innovation Hub located at RUCE.

The Masakhe Social Enterprise Development (SED) Programme, focusing on Enterprise and Supplier Development was established in January 2023. This is a partnership between the Finance and Procurement Office, Business School, RUCE and community partner, the Assumption Development Centre (ADC). In 2024, the following highlights are noted:

- Showcase Event held at RU on the 31 July 2024
- Enterprise Development Course for 12 SMME's offered by Prof Tshidi Mohapela (Business School)
- Certificate in Business Development Studies for 12 Businesses offered by Tabang Moleko (Business School)
- Financial Literacy Course for Artists by the Black Power Station (in partnership with National Arts Festival)
- IT Equipment for Assumption Development Centre
- Investment of equipment and infrastructure into the following businesses: Glenda's Sewing Centre, Masi Gagayi's Upholstery Business and Sis'Dambisa's Laundry.
- Purchase, branding and equipping of 2 Food Trailers to be situated on the Rhodes University campus, owned by two local entrepreneurs.
- Twelve designed and installed Framed Chromadek Signs on poles for Businesses.
- 14 Businesses to benefit from Branding packages to the value of R5,000 each.

The Social Innovation HUB (SIH), which was established at RUCE to contribute to social innovation, had a successful year, and the highlights are as follows:

- Sixty-five participants have received certificates from the SIH accredited short courses this year completing the Basic Computer Literacy and Digital Storytelling for Social Innovation.
- Digital Storytelling short courses have been run with over ninety students in curriculum-bearing courses this year from Social Psychology, Community Psychology and Journalism and Media Studies.
- The Digital Storytelling curriculum is part of a Collection of Interactive Digital Narrative syllabi, which will be published by Carnegie Mellon University Press. A book chapter on Teaching courses run at Rhodes University has been published by Rowman and Littlefield.
- Many community partners visit the HUB regularly. The Workspace has been a vibrant hub of activity with the Talking Technology to Power Media Club and Vulindlela using the facilities for the #SDCardMakhanda campaign. The Hub has been helping community partners and visitors with writing business plans, marketing projects and creating CVs.
- Six workshops on digital tools and enterprise related skills were facilitated for staff, students and community.
- The Digital Resource Centre has supported seventy participants with basic technologies for events, planning and implementing projects.

HEALTH DEVELOPMENT

A long-standing partnership between Rhodes University and the District Health Department was boosted with the renovation of the new Extension building at the Joza Clinic.

- This R800,000 project was funded through the RU Masakhe programme and has effectively doubled the space for health services to take place at the Joza Clinic.
- Rhodes researchers and lecturers from various departments, including Psychology, Pharmacy, Information Systems and HKE are involved in service learning, engaged research and engaged citizenry (volunteer) programmes. Pharmacy have placed students in the Clinics, Information Systems implementing electronic systems and HKE is running an extensive programme with over 130 top athletes in Joza and has various wellness interventions at school level.

- The Psychology Department has established a permanent Counselling facility at the Assumption Development Centre offering daily free counselling services for learners and their families. The training Psychologists also offer preventative workshops in the schools as well as career guidance.
- HKE Department is integrating community engagement into teaching and research at all levels, creating opportunities for their students to apply their knowledge outside the academe. Undergraduates are involved in 3 Primary Schools (George Dickerson, Grahamstown Primary and St Marys Primary) in various physical literacy and sports coaching activities. They are working in the High-Performance Centre in Joza, at the post-graduate level, with 130 selected athletes.
- The Warriors Cricket Development Programme, a multi stakeholder partnership between RUCE, HKE, Kingswood College, the Gary Kristen Foundation, Grahamstown Primary School, St Mary's Primary and George Dickerson continues to do well, creating employment for unemployed youth and opportunities for learners in the school.

EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT

- The matric pass rate has increased from 62% in 2015 to 80% in 2023.
- The number of Matric Bachelor passes produced has increased from 179 in 2015 to 307 in 2023.
- The school drop-out rate has dropped by 20%.
- Enabling local disadvantaged students to gain access to Rhodes: The number of local disadvantaged students who have gained access to Rhodes University has increased from 11 in 2012 to over 160 in 2023.
- 70 Student Leaders selected from the 7 Engaged Citizenry Programmes travelled to Hogsback on the 13/14 April for the annual Student Leader Bootcamp. This highly successful event has now become a highlight on the RUCE calendar.

The VC's Education Programme is a multi-stakeholder initiative with interventions from ECD through to post schooling, working to keep learners

in the system through various interventions. The value of this pathway is evidenced in the Grade 12 results. RUCE co-ordinates 7 programmes working with volunteers to contribute to this pathway. Some brief highlights of each are mentioned below.

Nine Tenths Matric Mentoring Programme (Grade 12's)

- A vibrant partnership with GADRA education in its ninth year of existence continues to impact and delight at so many levels.
- In 2024, five schools participated in the project with the following number of learners: Ntsika-84, Mary Waters-28, Nombulelo-56, PJ Olivier-28 and Kutliso Daniels-28 making the of 224 learners.
- The above learners are mentored by 114 well trained RU volunteer mentors and fifteen student leaders.
- June results were very encouraging with 181 Bachelor passes, up from 130 in their November marks last year. This bodes well for the final examination.
- In 2024, 51 learners were welcomed from last year's cohort to Rhodes University as first year students from this programme.
- We were delighted when thirty-four former learners from the programme graduated with Bachelors and postgraduate degrees in the April 2024 graduation.

Vulindlela Parent Engagement Programme

- The Vulindlela Programme targets RU Support Staff and their school-going children in Grades 9 to 12. In 2024, the programme introduced Homework Clubs to Grade 9 learners, which grew the programme numbers exponentially and introduced academic support in the Senior phase.
- In 2024, the Vulindlela programme has a total number of sixty-four parents and eighty-two learners. The learners come from seven local High Schools.
- Twenty-one (21) active student volunteers, and six student leaders attended Saturday sessions at the Faculty of Education buildings.
- There are two service-learning courses embedded in the Vulindlela programme. The first is a partnership between twenty-three third year

School of Journalism and Media Studies (JMS) students, the Social Employment Fund (Talking Technology into Power) group, and six no-fee High Schools in Makhanda. This resulted in 714 SD cards being loaded with carefully selected content and distributed to learners in no fee schools. JMS students prepared and published articles on the project.

- A second service-learning course is the Financial Life Skills course, offered to the Parents of the Vulindlela Programme over five weeks. This course is linked to the Rhodes University Management Department (Management Honours students) and is provided in partnership with the GBS Mutual Bank.

High School Tutoring Programme

- The programme collaborated with six community partner organisations- Inkululeko, Ikamva Youth, Sophumelela, PJ Olivier High School, Khanya Maths and Science and GADRA Education, engaging 117 university students in tutoring and mentoring learners from Grades 8-12 across a variety of subjects.
- The Faculty of Education offered an accredited short course training for the 117 registered students which includes eight student leaders.

BuddingQ Literacy Programme for Gr R

- 118 RUCE volunteers work across nine schools, and our partner organisations who have adopted the program work with Kingswood College, St Mary's DCC, Amakhala Foundation (Sidbury School) Lebone and Holy Cross School.
- 2024 marks the 5-year anniversary of the programme. To celebrate this milestone a student led IMBIZO was held in September to evaluate the programme with stakeholders.
- Student leader, Takudzwa Makuwa, with assistance from RUCE applied for and was awarded funding from a global initiative, Global Changemakers to organise and host the Imbizo as well as a BuddingQ Bootcamp for Student Leaders.

Project Read

- Project Read is led by the Lebone Centre, and it targets the Grade 1 literacy development. It follows on from the Budding Q work done in Grade R in schools. This programme places a strong emphasis on developing conventional literacy abilities in line with the Science of Reading research.
- The programme reaches eight schools with twenty dedicated Rhodes mentors working at CM Vellem and Ntaba Maria supporting grade 1 and the St Mary's Grade R learners. The Education Faculty's second year Teaching Practicum students are supporting Good Shepherd and Makana Primary, and Lebone interns are involved with George Dickerson and Grahamstown Primary.

CERCO (Community Engagement Reading Club Orientation)

- CERCO follows on from Project Read. It is designed and led by Professor Sam Naidu from the Literary Studies in the English Language Department in partnership with RUCE.
- This year the programme worked with five student leaders and fourteen dedicated student volunteers. Participating schools are CM Vellem, Good Shepherd, and Oatlands Primary, Fikizolo. Lebone oversees two more clubs at Grahamstown Primary and George Dickerson.

INFUSED MODEL OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The model Rhodes University has chosen to implement for community engagement is the 'infused model'. To this end we have built partnerships across the University, ensuring community engagement is embedded not only in Academic Departments but also in the Support Departments. We have successfully built partnerships with the Residence/Hall System, the SRC Societies and Sports Clubs, through the initiatives below.

Community Engagement Orientation (CEO) for 1st Years

- RUCE celebrates a successful partnership with the Division of Student Services and Development (DSSD). Working closely with Residences, RUCE trained the community engagement representatives to facilitate five sessions to the first-year group, thereby introducing them to community engagement. First

year students achieved 828 certificates of attendance and 172 certificates of competence.

- The DSSD funded the second element of the programme, the bus trip into Makhandha. Community engagement representatives were trained as tour guides and they shared stories around the history of Makhandha.
- This CEO programme really gave the SRC Cllr and her community engagement Residence representatives, a platform to innovatively grow and establish themselves as leaders.

The Siyakhana@Makhandha (S@M) Programme

- This is a project targeting Residences partnered with 15 ECD sites and led by the 52 SRC community engagement representatives in the Residence System.
- Initiatives this year included the establishment of reading clubs, promotion of literacy, launching recycling programmes, gardening, painting and renovating sites, health campaigns, nutrition and disease prevention amongst other successful initiatives.

Societies and Sport Clubs

- Twelve active societies have been instrumental in coordinating useful projects in collaboration with carefully selected community partners. Examples include cultural festivals, health and wellness workshops, educational programmes and mentoring.

The integration of Community Engagement into Departmental Teaching and Research has been the key focus and good progress has been made.

ENGAGED RESEARCH

- RUCE hosted the International Community Engagement Conference at the Monument building on 14th to 16th May. 22 South African Universities and 7 International Universities attended the conference. International Universities included the Open University of Tanzania (Tanzania), Tangaza

University College (Kenya), Universidad de la Republica (Uruguay), University of Kusibi (Uganda), Oxford University (UK), Stanton University (USA) and Cornell University (USA). Other important stakeholders included USAf, NRF, HSRC and the Carnegie Classifications Foundation of HE (USA). The Conference also attracted 4 Schools and 9 NPO's. A total of 160 delegates attended the Conference.

- The African Journal of Higher Education Community Engagement (AJHECE) is gaining much interest in the sector. There is sufficient interest from the recent Conference hosted by RUCE for two publications and a book. The second issue will be published in November 2024 and the third in April 2025.
- The UNESCO Knowledge for Change (K4C) Consortium is an integral part of the RU Engaged Research Programme. The consortium embodies the University's commitment to collaboration and leveraging knowledge as a catalyst for positive societal change. Rhodes University is one of 22 UNESCO Knowledge for Change (K4C) hubs that have been established in sixteen countries as part of an International UNESCO Consortium. In 2024, RUCE contributed to the establishment of a Regional HUB located at GULU University in Uganda. Two new Universities are in the process of joining the Southern section of the K4C Hub located at RUCE, namely Nelson Mandela University and Eduvos.
- Two short courses in Community Based Participatory Research were offered this year reaching lecturers in Psychology, Centre for Critical Studies in Sexualities and Reproduction, School of Languages and Literatures, Biochemistry, Microbiology and Bioinformatics, University of Pretoria, Rhodes Business School, Rhodes Library and Community Engagement.
- RUCE was delighted to honour Dr Jessica Cockburn from the Department of Environmental Science, Faculty of Science, the prestigious 2023 Vice Chancellors Distinguished Community Engagement Award for her efforts to bring together a multitude of stakeholders in the service of both social and environmental sustainability and justice. Through various integrated engaged teaching and research activities, Dr Cockburn has pioneered a transdisciplinary and holistic approach to community engagement, which is rich and inspiring.

RUCE TRAVEL

- Dr Margie Maistry presented at the International Social Work Conference in India in February.
- Nosi Nkwinti, Anna Talbot, Thandie Nqowana attended the Pan African Summit in Johannesburg in April. Anna Kinsler, Thandi Matyobeni and Kristena Reddy presented at the CE Conference in May.
- Di Hornby and Dr Margie Maistry presented at the Higher Education Close Up Conference in July at Rhodes University.
- In October, Thandi Nqowana, Dr Gamu Chakona, Kristena Reddy and Nosi Nkwinti are presenting at the Higher Education, Teaching and Learning Conference at NMU in Gqeberha.
- Dr Oosthuizen was invited to serve on a panel discussing the Future of Higher Education in Africa at a UNESCO-African Union convened event taking place at the African Union Headquarters in September 2024.
- Di Hornby will be presenting on Universities as Anchor Institutions at the International Association on Research in Service-Learning and Community Engagement (IARSLCE) which is to be held at the University of San Diego, California, USA in October.
- In November, Dr Joana Bezerra will be presenting at the 8th Global Symposium on Health Systems Research in Nagasaki, Japan.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

RUCE is delighted to have received correspondence from SAQA that the Post Graduate Diploma in Higher Education Community Engagement, NQF level 8 has been accredited.

The accredited online short course, titled Community Based Service Learning: What-Why-Where was offered twice at Rhodes University and once at the Vaal University of Technology.

The University has made available an amount of R525,000 000 annually for the support of service-learning programmes, making this a very enabling space for growth.

RUCE has offered ten accredited short courses this year, these short courses form the theoretical basis of all the Engaged Citizenry (Volunteer) Programmes.

Much has been achieved to strengthen the community engagement structures at Departmental level. We are very pleased that CE Faculty Reps are now able to report to Deputy Deans. Our Community Engagement Faculty Representatives have been supportive this year and worked hard to ensure community engagement is embedded in the Faculty and reports are written and presented at Faculty Board Meetings. A special thanks to the following representatives: Humanities-Prof Sam Naidu, Science – Prof Lizanne Raubenheimer, Education – Ms Angi Jones, Law – Adv Shuaib Rahim, Pharmacy – Farisai Chiwanza and Dr Xolile Antoni from Commerce.

Sincere thanks to the VC, Professor Sizwe Mabizela, DVC's Prof Mabokang Monnapula-Mapesela and Dr Kwezi Mzilikazi as well as Senior Management and other Colleagues who have played key roles to build the community engagement space. We know we are privileged to have an executive leadership and staff that truly understands the strategic value of community engagement in higher education.

Lastly to the hard-working RUCE staff, it's been a tough year but a full and very productive year. Your strong sense of purpose for the work you do is inspiring, you lead by example!

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

