

RHODES UNIVERSITY
Where leaders learn

The Rhodes University Community Newsletter

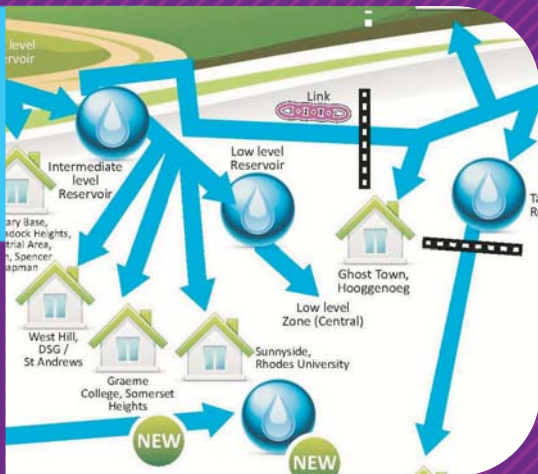
Rhodos

Staff Edition

OCTOBER 2014

R100 Million
to be spent on
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woes

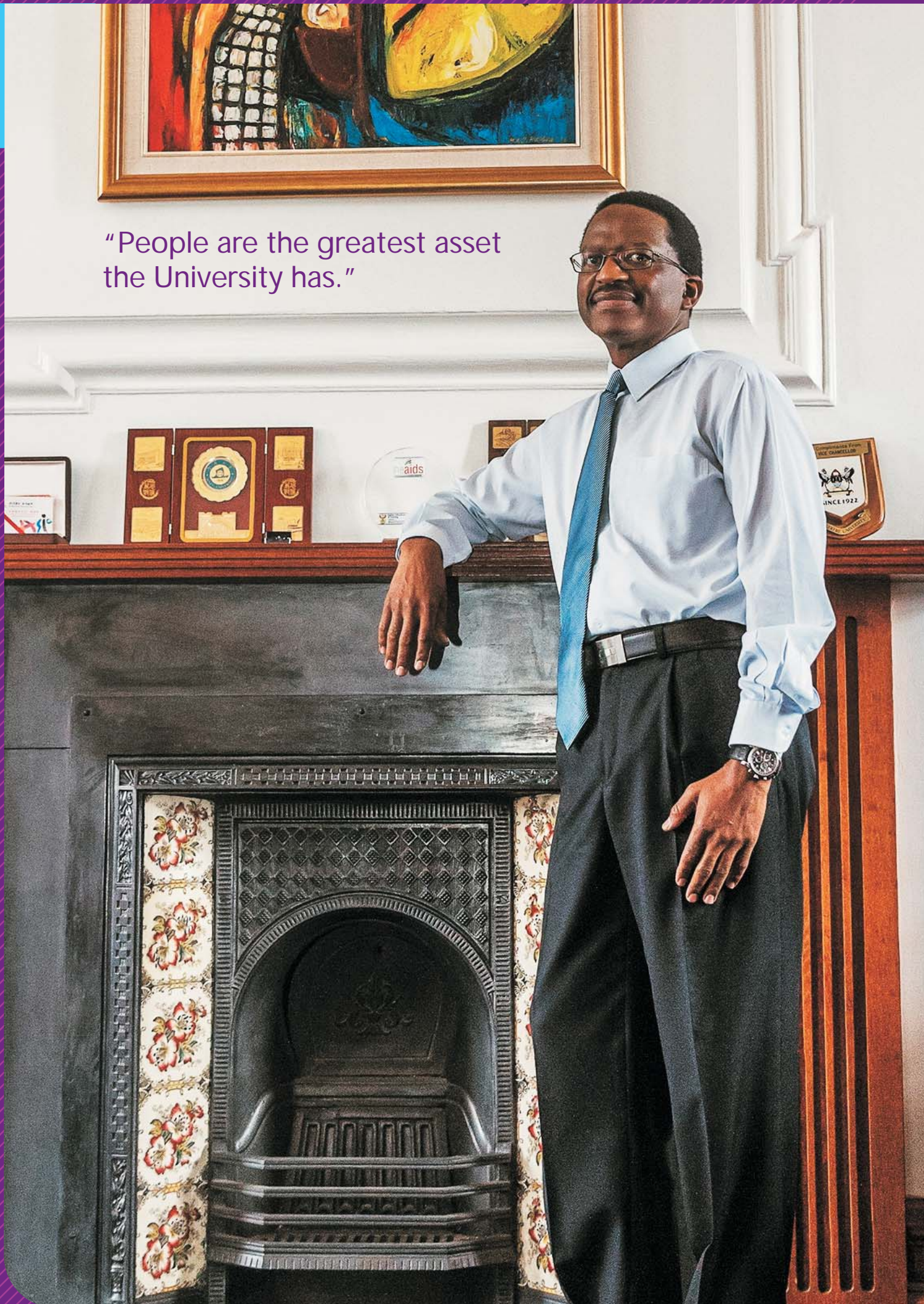
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Thembi's biggest
struggle is accessing
places



Van Wyk represents
South Africa at the
2014 Summer Youth
Olympic Games



"People are the greatest asset
the University has."

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Rhodos Editorial team
would like to express
their gratitude to
everyone who supplied
us with pictures.

Rhodes University
wholeheartedly
congratulates and
welcomes Dr Mabizela
and wishes him an
exceptional seven years
in his new position.
The University is
delighted to have one
of its own at the helm.

Congratulations to our new Vice-Chancellor, Dr Sizwe Mabizela

When Dr Mabizela addressed the University's Selection Committee on his vision for Rhodes, one of the points he emphasised was the paramount importance of staff:

"The staff of Rhodes University, both the academic and support staff, are the critical success factor in advancing Rhodes' formidable academic project, based on quality teaching and learning, research and community engagement," he said.

A professor of Mathematics with a PhD in *Parametric Approximation* from Pennsylvania State University, United States, Dr Mabizela has been at Rhodes for 10 years.

He has been the acting Vice-Chancellor of Rhodes University since the departure of the former Vice-Chancellor, Dr Saleem Badat (2006 to 2014) in July this year. Dr Badat resigned to take up a post in New York with the Andrew W Mellon Foundation Higher Education Programme.

Dr Mabizela has served as the Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Academic & Student Affairs at Rhodes from 2008 to the present. Prior this, he was the Head of the Department of Mathematics (Pure & Applied) from 2004 to 2008.

In the process of selecting a new Vice-Chancellor for the University he was the absolute frontrunner for the position.

"Throughout the selection process it was very clear that Dr Mabizela had the overwhelming support of all the University constituencies, including the Senate, with whom a Vice-Chancellor has to work very closely," says Dr Stephen Fourie, Registrar of Rhodes University who has headed its academic administration and university committee structures for the past 21 years.

The *nem con* or 'no opposition' vote for Dr Mabizela in the Senate expressed, as Dr Fourie puts it: "the University's overwhelming trust in a man we have come to respect and admire over the years, especially in his role as Deputy Vice-Chancellor. We are absolutely delighted that Dr Mabizela has been appointed Vice-Chancellor."

As the Secretary of Council, Dr Fourie is the custodian of the process of selecting a new Vice-Chancellor, ensuring that the considerable administrative processes required are in place for the Chair of Council, Mr Vuyo Kahla, to lead the appointment.

Under Dr Fourie's Chairmanship, the Senate approved the process for choosing the new VC, as well as the membership of the selection committee. The 17-member selection committee, approved by Senate, included the Chair of Council, members of Council and Senate, executive members of Rhodes' administration, Deans, the SRC President and Rhodes' two Labour Unions.

The post of Vice-Chancellor was advertised in South Africa and internationally, to which 17 applicants responded. Dr Fourie and the Director of Human Resources at the time, Ms Sarah Fischer, narrowed the list down to four applicants who were asked to produce a statement of their vision for Rhodes.

The selection committee decided on Dr Mabizela after an interview with him that lasted several hours on 11 August this year.

"Dr Mabizela thoroughly engaged on key issues at Rhodes including financial sustainability and transformation issues within the academic body, notably the need to increase the numbers of black and women academics, particularly at the professor level," explains Dr Fourie.

The Selection Committee's choice was then put to Senate where the *nem com* vote was taken on 23 September. Such was the support for Dr Mabizela that Council then went ahead and issued a circular to the effect that if there were no objections to Dr Mabizela's appointment by Wednesday 8 October, the Chair of Council would announce his appointment.

Apart from moving offices, Dr Mabizela will seamlessly assume his new role.

"For some time Dr Mabizela has been leading the development of an Institutional Development Plan (IDP) for Rhodes so in his new role as Vice-Chancellor he will be able to see that to fruition and ensure that Rhodes continues on its current, successful trajectory," says Dr Fourie. "On the other hand, he understands the challenges that Rhodes faces and has committed himself to addressing them with imagination and creativity."

The IDP is a strategic document that will be the institution's compass for the next 10 years.

"In the process of formulating the IDP we have identified seven Grand Challenges," Dr Mabizela explains. "They need to be addressed imaginatively and creatively to advance our intellectual project and fulfill our social function as a public higher education institution."

"People are the greatest asset the University has," says Rhodes University's new Vice-Chancellor, Dr Sizwe Mabizela (52) whose appointment was announced on Sunday 12 October.



The seven challenges are to:

- Ensure financial sustainability of the University;
- Improve staff remuneration and salary competitiveness;
- Improve staff and student equity profile and advance transformation;
- Modernise systems, processes and procedures;
- Attend to infrastructure maintenance;
- Find funding for financially in need students; and
- Engage the local municipality to ensure provision of basic services such as water, sanitation and electricity.

He has applied himself to develop innovative ways in which to address each of these challenges.

To address financial sustainability, he suggests several approaches, one of which is to increase student enrolment in disciplines that do not need significant investment in physical infrastructure.

"This must be approached with due care so that we do not compromise the quality of teaching and learning in our academic programmes," he says.

Another possible source of finance is to look into offering additional short courses and a limited number of distance learning programmes.

He will also be encouraging the academic and support staff to improve their levels of productivity.

"If we could get to the stage where each academic staff member produces at least two peer-reviewed journal articles per year, our financial position would improve significantly," he explains.

To address academic equity, he aims to ensure, inter alia, the continuation of the Next Generation Academic Programme at Rhodes, which focuses on attracting and developing top-achieving black and women academics to Rhodes.

Recent studies have shown that almost 20% of academics will retire in the next ten years, including half of the professoriate.

Since its inception in 2001, 41 new lecturers have participated in the 3-year Next Generation Academic Programme at Rhodes, which is the model being used to develop a national programme for all universities in South Africa.

"It must be emphasised that in pursuing our institutional imperatives of equity and transformation, we must guard against the temptation of pursuing a narrow objective of achieving 'representivity'," says Dr Mabizela.

"Our approach should be premised on and guided by the principle of pursuing 'equity with quality and quality with equity', which our former Vice-Chancellor, Dr Badat, has so eloquently advocated."

To address modernisation issues, he will see to it that systems, protocols and procedures are speeded up in order to enhance efficiency, speed up decision-making in the University and timeously respond to opportunities that come its way. "This can be achieved without undermining good governance and participatory decision-making," he says.

In addition to the challenges specific to Rhodes, Dr Mabizela will also be championing the protection of institutional autonomy within the higher education landscape and the sustainability of rigorous academic quality within South African tertiary education programmes.

His most recent published article, co-authored with Y Ballim and JC Mubangizi, addresses these issues. It is titled: *Professional Bodies and quality assurance of Higher Education programmes in South Africa: Towards an appropriate framework*, South African Journal of Higher Education (2014).

Dr Mabizela adds to this, citing the South African Constitution, which, he says: "provides an important backdrop against which the transformation of higher Education in South Africa should be appreciated and understood. In its preamble it reflects a commitment to 'establish a society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights' and to build 'a democratic and open society' in order to 'improve the quality of life of all citizens and free the potential of each person'.

Towards achieving this he quotes the National Development Plan (NDP), which, he says, "will serve as a compass for our country". It recognises that 'universities are key to developing a nation' and outlines three main functions of universities in a society:

- First, universities educate and provide people with high-level skills for the labour market;
- Second, they are the dominant producers of new knowledge, they assess and find new applications for existing knowledge, and they validate knowledge and values through their curricula; and
- Third, they provide opportunities for social mobility and strengthen social justice and democracy, thus helping to overcome the inequalities inherited from our apartheid past.

Dr Mabizela says that as the new Vice-Chancellor he is proud to assume the helm of a University that performs well in all three functions.

"As a knowledge institution we have taken a conscious decision as part of our enrolment plan to pursue a postgraduate trajectory - and we have important reasons for doing this," he explains.

"It's about human resource development for the country, in line with the national strategic objectives. Without a research-intensive trajectory, the future of higher education is at risk."

"If you look at the strategic plan for Science and Technology - it is all about developing human capital - developing human capacity - so that we are able to contribute to the generation of knowledge. The Minister of Science and Technology, Ms Naledi Pandor, has been very clear about participating in the knowledge economy so that we can be active and contributing players."

The three points below constitute Rhodes' academic project, its *raison d'être* or purpose for existence, he explains.

1. **Generating knowledge** - doing research and other creative works to push the frontiers of knowledge - both new knowledge existing knowledge.
2. **Dissemination of knowledge** through teaching and learning so that we produce graduates who are knowledgeable and competent, but more than that: graduates who have a heightened sense of social responsibility; who understand the issues surrounding social rights and social justice and are prepared to play a role in the reshaping of our society for a more human, just and equitable society.
3. **Apply knowledge** in a true community engagement way - to address the pressing socio-economic needs of the society of which we are a part of, and to draw on knowledge to build respectful and mutually beneficial partnerships with our local community.

Dr Mabizela adds that Rhodes has a long history of contributing to research and it ranks in the top three South African universities per capita in this regard.

"We have a well-entrenched culture of research and we need to sustain and enhance this," he says.

"We are well aware that there are five other universities eyeing the same research-funding 'market' but compared to other universities we have one of the highest percentages of staff with doctoral degrees and we are therefore in a strong position to provide the supervisory capacity that postgraduates need."

Some of the scholarly indicators he cites at Rhodes are:

- We have a strong history and well-entrenched culture and tradition of academic excellence and of nurturing exceptional intellectual talent in our students;
- We take the notion of "cultivation of the intellect" very seriously. We enjoy the enviable reputation of having the best pass and graduation rates of any South African university;
- Over the past few years we have been breaking our records on the numbers of graduating students - both at undergraduate and postgraduate levels;
- We have outstanding postgraduate success and graduation rates;
- We enjoy one of the best research outputs per

academic staff member of any South African university;

- Our academics are at the cutting edge of their fields of research and knowledge generation and dissemination. This means that our students are taught by academics who are actively engaged in advancing the frontiers of knowledge;
- Despite the fact that we are the smallest public university in South Africa:
 1. We produce 4.2% of doctoral graduates nationally;
 2. We hold 7% of all the NRF Research Chairs awarded to date;
 3. Rhodes graduates have attracted 14% of Mandela-Rhodes Scholarships; and
 4. We have the second highest percentage of academic staff with PhD qualifications, giving

us one of the best scholarly environments in South Africa.

- 59% of our students are women, 30% are postgraduate students, and over 20% are international students from some 66 countries in the rest of the world;
- Our outstanding graduates are sought after by employers and they make an indelible mark in many and diverse fields of human endeavour right across the globe.

In accepting the position as Vice-Chancellor, Dr Mabizela emphasises that it is "a wonderful challenge" to lead a university and a team of staff with such a strong foundation. He adds that he is committed to working on the range of issues that will further enhance this great University's stature and sustainability.

Rhodes Council Chairperson urges Rhodes to reflect on its heritage

Rhodes University's 110th anniversary provides an opportunity for reflection on the heritage of the institution to help inform the direction which should be pursued, particularly in the democratic South Africa that "has moved beyond the age of innocence". This is according to Mr Vuyo Kahla, chairperson of Rhodes Council and former member of the Student Representative Council and secretary of the Law Society at Rhodes.

Mr Kahla was speaking at a public debate hosted by the office of Equity and Institutional Culture at Rhodes University ahead of Heritage Week.

He called on Rhodes staff and students to reconcile with the institution's past, as this "provides an opportunity to reflect on where we have been, where we are and where we could be. Let us free our minds and not be imprisoned by what it is and start to imagine what it could be."

Mr Kahla said the university has a history of "peaceful protest and freedom of expression" which have a crucial role to play in encouraging dialogue and forging an inclusive future in South Africa.

He reflected on his years at Rhodes as a student during which he participated in public debates with former Vice-Chancellor, Dr Derek Henderson on the appropriateness of the name of the university.

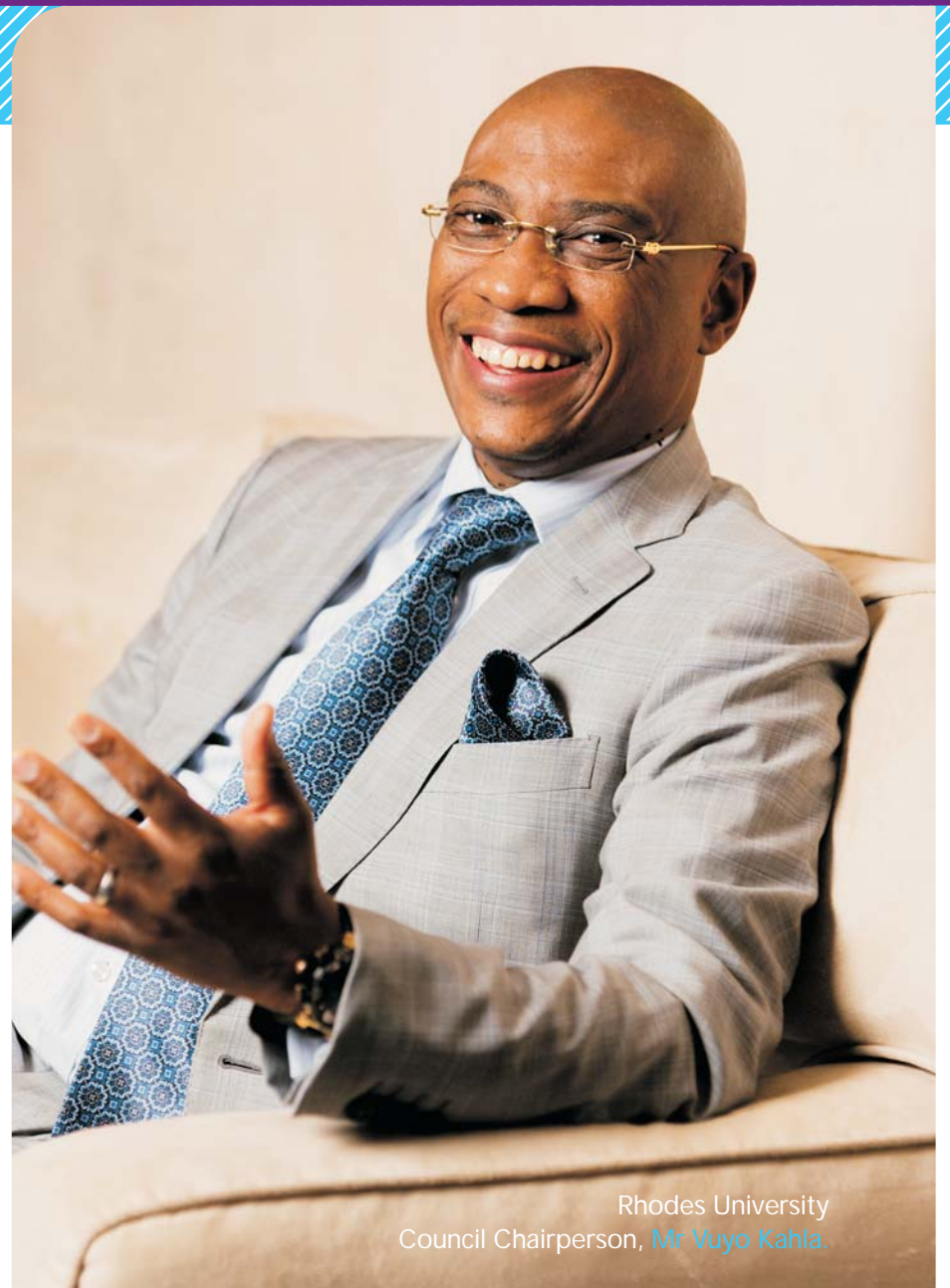
"I argued at the time that, given the transformational path that our University had to traverse, it would be more appropriate that it be renamed after the renowned freedom fighter, gender and equality activist and scholar, Ruth First."

"Dr Henderson argued that, while Cecil John Rhodes' imperialist pursuits were considered by many to be inconsistent with some of the values that the University sought to pursue, it could not simply deny the reality of its heritage, especially that, but for the contribution made by the Rhodes Trust, Rhodes University may never have been established," he said, referring to the funds made available to the then Rhodes University College by members of the Rhodes Trust.

The debate between him and Dr Henderson was not unusual, he said, "It has always been part of the heritage of Rhodes University - the SRC and freedom of expression has always been integral to the vibrancy of the life of this University," he said.

He encouraged staff and students to embrace the history of the University, which he said reflects the greater history of South Africa, in an effort to bridge divides.

"The heritage of Rhodes is peppered with contradictions," he said, citing the formation of the South African Students Organisation (SASO) at Rhodes in 1969 after Stephen Biko, Barney Pityana, Aubrey Mokoena, Mosioa Lekota and Saths Cooper led a breakaway of black students from the National Union of South African



Rhodes University
Council Chairperson, Mr Vuyo Kahla.

Students (NUSAS), arguing that NUSAS had been more preoccupied with the pursuit of white students and had not been alive to the challenges faced by black students under apartheid.

Almost 20 years later, the Rhodes University contingent of the South African National Students Congress (SANSCO), one of the successors to SASO, had some of the most vociferous voices advocating the merger of SANSCO with NUSAS following the unbanning of the ANC. In early September 1991, black and white students from all over the country met at Rhodes to merge NUSAS and SANSCO to form the South African Student Congress (SASCO).

"Rhodes is in many ways a different place to the one I was at as a student and yet the fundamental core of its character as the place where leaders learn, remains intact," he said.

He called on Rhodians to debate critical issues such as the nature and quality of scholarship that should be pursued at university and to facilitate dialogue with different groups in an effort to lead a society that "is underpinned by social cohesion that President Nelson Mandela desired of his rainbow nation. A lot of struggles were waged by many at Rhodes to safeguard the non-racial character of this great institution," he said.

Dr Sizwe Mabizela, Acting Vice-Chancellor, thanked Mr Kahla for his thoughtful call for Rhodians to embrace the "deep contradictions embedded in the DNA of this institution" and cautioned against adopting a "revisionist approach of trying to obliterate certain aspects of our history. If we do so we deprive ourselves of a very rich and deep history."

"We are being called upon to fashion a different, caring, just, equitable society out of the past. A society where we are able to advance the humanity of others. That is something that we at Rhodes should engage ourselves with. The graduates we produce should be imbued with the kinds of values that can make each one of us a worthy citizen of our global community," he said.

Maintaining a healthy heart

Pharmacists have a crucial role to play in disease prevention and health promotion in the fight to curb the current epidemic increase in non-communicable diseases (NCDs) in developing countries. This is according to a panel of health experts who marked World Heart Day at Rhodes University recently.

The event, which took place under the 2014 theme, *Creating heart-healthy environment* featured presentations by district pharmacist Mr Mohammed Docrat, Sister Heather Ferreira of Rhodes University sanatorium, Professor Louise Vincent of the Department of Political and International Studies, Dr Candice Christie, Head of Department of Human Kinetics and Ergonomics, and Professor Harry Dugmore of Journalism and Media Studies.

Organiser, Professor Sunitha Srinivas said the event focused on advocacy and health promotion at Rhodes given the rise in the cases of heart disease in South Africa. One in three men and one in four women will have a heart condition before the age of 60, making heart disease the biggest killer in South Africa.

Lifestyle factors such as lack of exercise, stress, smoking and an unhealthy diet can lead to high blood pressure and cholesterol which subsequently may cause heart disease and heart attacks. Therefore raising awareness of the risk factors and encouraging public awareness is crucial, Prof Srinivas said.

"Prevention strategies focused on NCDs such as heart related diseases and diabetes requires collaborative partnerships with communities such as support staff at Rhodes, students and the wider community in Grahamstown to identify culture-sensitive participatory approaches," she said.

According to the World Heart Federation, four key risk factors drive heart disease - increased diet high in salt, fat and sugar; reduced physical activity, increased use of tobacco and increased use of alcohol.

In his presentation titled *Pharmaceutical expenditure and CVD: Strategic plan for the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases 2013-2017*, Mr Docrat shared statistics that NCDs such as diabetes, chronic respiratory tract infections, cancer and mental illness, as a result of the four risk factors highlighted above, account for 43% of total deaths annually in South Africa, out of which 18% are from heart related diseases alone.

He said drug expenditure of the five hospitals in the districts of Makana and Ndlambe comprised 842 items, with 10 items accounting for the majority of funds. Drug expenditure is the second largest driver, he said, second only to the wage bill. To try and alleviate the expense Mr Docrat suggested basic cost-saving measures including prevention (healthy lifestyles, curbing the risk factors of physical inactivity, tobacco use, harmful use of alcohol, obesity, and hypertension); early diagnosis of risk factors and conditions; improved control and management of cardiovascular diseases; and increased monitoring and evaluation and research.

World Heart Day is an annual event which takes place on 29 September every year. It was founded in 2000 to inform people around the globe that heart diseases are the world's leading cause of death, claiming approximately 17.3 million lives each year.



Sister Heather Ferreira and Mr Mohammed Docrat



Exercise induces healthy living

Professor Harry Dugmore, Director of the Discovery Centre for Health Journalism at Rhodes University described the epidemic proportions of cardiovascular disease as a problem that affects all South Africans.

Citing statistics from the International Journal of Epidemiology (April 2014), South Africans over the age of 50 have the highest blood pressure of all the people in the world, at any time in history. "This is not an abstract problem. It affects people all around us and who are members of our families. We all need to take notice of this," Prof Dugmore said.

There is a great deal of sedentary behaviour and obesity, he said, which is a known contributor to cardiovascular disease.

"We have a clear idea of the problem and what one has to do to improve chances of not developing cardiovascular disease, but we have made our focus ever so slightly in the wrong direction," he suggested.

He called for attention to the obsession with weight in the mass media which "stigmatises and shames people for being fat. It (media coverage) says to you that you're a bad person and that you're out of control."

Prof Dugmore shared findings from a study of the coverage of obesity in the five bestselling magazines in South Africa. The majority of the coverage is culturally insensitive, sizeist, stigmatising and promotes a "one-size-fits-all" solution to obesity.

"The main prescription for being overweight is to lose weight. There is no evidence that making fat people feel bad about being fat is making the

situation any better. We are using a dieting and weight-loss culture and getting nowhere. The reason is that the overwhelming majority of diets simply don't work," he said.

He suggested that as much as 95% of people who go on diet put all the weight they've lost back on and more within two years of losing the weight. "Bodies have an amazing evolutionary capacity to feel there has been some kind of famine, then the bodies cleverly reaccumulate that weight through a variety of subtle strategies. A lifetime of dieting and putting on a little more weight each time is the driver of obesity in the world," he said.

A shift to a focus on health and exercise could prove to be much more effective in the face of the increasing epidemic, Prof Dugmore suggested, as real steps need to be taken to curb the increase in obesity, an essential risk to cardiovascular disease.

"No matter what size you are if you exercise you reduce your risk. This doesn't mean running the comrades marathon - just some form of exercise helps. What we have been including in our Health Journalism courses is that if we approach the issue of most of the risk factors with an attitude to encouraging people to exercise, we will get a lot further than if we focus on diet or dietary modification," he said, noting that a lack of national health awareness campaigns is not helping the situation.

One of the best ways to modify one's lifestyle to becoming more healthy is to introduce some form of exercise, Prof Dugmore said. "When we start building exercise to 20 minutes a day, watch what will happen to your body - it will start asking you for more healthy food and more water. There is an exercise induced desire for healthy eating. The fitter you get the more prevalent this becomes. We would like to encourage all journalists and those involved in public health to encourage people to start exercising and do what they enjoy," he said.

Get up, Get out, Get running

137 runners and walkers participated in the first Parkrun in Grahamstown at the Botanical Gardens on 27th September. This initiative was setup by Mr Bruce Fordyce and his wife Gill who have been involved in Parkrun in South Africa for the past three years. There are 38 Parkruns across the country with Grahamstown being the most recent member.

Parkrun was started in the UK 10 years ago by Mr Paul Sinton-Hewitt (a South African). He started the first run in Bushy Park with only 22 runners. It then spread all over the world with Parkruns being held in Australia, all over Europe and the United States.

The idea of Parkrun is that everyone and anyone can join as it's FREE. The 5km run/ walk is held every Saturday morning at 8am. All ages and abilities are encouraged to take part in this community project. All you need to do is register via www.parkrun.co.za (registration is free and is only required once no matter where you are in the world, you will never have to re-register or sign up for Parkrun!) you then receive an athlete barcode which is what you bring with you every Saturday so your time can be recorded. Later that day you receive an email telling you where you came and what time you managed to finish the route in.

Parkrun SA is sponsored by Blue Telecommunications, Adidas and Discovery. Discovery Vitality members can earn 500 points for finishing a Parkrun. They rely on volunteers from the community in order to have the run take place EVERY Saturday. Rhodes University supported Grahamstown Parkrun with signs and Mr Phillip Crous from Grounds and Garden has been extremely supportive of Parkrun.

"We were thrilled with the turnout and even though the route was a little tough I think everyone there thoroughly enjoyed being out in the Botanic Gardens. The record has been set, Stuart Hobson took 22 minutes to finish the 5km route!" said Parkrun Director, Ms Nicola Brown.



Correct diet, physical activity curbs cardiovascular disease

Continuing the call for increased levels of exercise to curb the rising rates of cardiovascular disease, Dr Candice Christie, Head of Department of Human Kinetics and Ergonomics at Rhodes University described physical inactivity as a global pandemic and highlighted the benefits of an active lifestyle which needn't involve excessive exercise but rather introducing gentle physical activity on a regular basis.

In her paper entitled *The value of exercise and physical activity for people with cardiovascular conditions*, Dr Christie explained that physical activity "doesn't mean going to the gym or going for a run, but moving more and being less sedentary".

Low cardio respiratory fitness is shown to have a greater impact on cardiovascular disease than all other factors, she said, with approximately 28-46% of South Africans displaying low cardio respiratory fitness, across all genders.

In contrast, by introducing gentle daily exercise into one's routine, you can reduce the risk of heart disease by up to 40%, incidence of diabetes and cancer by 50%, colon cancer by 60% and stroke by 27%, she said.

Cultural aspects/politics of health care in the context of obesity

Professor Louise Vincent of the Department of Political and International Studies presented *Cultural aspects/politics of health care in the context of obesity and challenged the history of science nutrition*.

According to Prof Vincent, "We now know that people who avoid carbs and eat more fat have fewer cardio risks than people who follow the low fat diet that health authorities have advocated for decades. For me the question is why it took so long to make this knowledge mainstream."

Prof Vincent showed how the history of the science is a textbook case of how science is deeply personal, political and economic. "Thankfully now we do have access to this knowledge thanks to the path-breaking work of journalists. The notion that dietary fat is harmful, particularly saturated fat, arose decades ago from comparatively odd disease rates among populations."

"Now we know these research findings were doctored. Why did it take so long for the scientific community to allow questioning?" she challenged, referring to how the myth about saturated fats became immortalised, and how mechanisms of science constantly challenging beliefs came to be disabled.

"Good science should be ruled by scepticism and self-doubt, but the field of nutrition has been influenced by passion and zealotry," she said.

Challenges of support staff in monitoring Rhodes support staff with cardiovascular conditions

Head of the Sanatorium, Sister Heather Ferreira, highlighted the biggest problems facing healthcare workers in her paper titled *Challenges of support staff in monitoring Rhodes support staff with cardiovascular conditions*, which she said is a lack of compliance and a adherence to instructions pertaining to medication.



Dr Candice Christie



Professor Louise Vincent

"Some people are diagnosed with cardiovascular disease and find it very hard to accept the diagnosis. Nobody wants to accept they have a chronic disease. Some think if they ignore the diagnosis it will eventually go away."

"We know how difficult it is for some of our clients to complete a course of antibiotics, and we have to have empathy with people who have to take medication every day of their lives," she added.

Sister Ferreira said it takes skill and counselling to get patients to take their medication according to the prescribed dose.

"Many default on their treatment and confess to only taking treatment when they have symptoms. Some don't come back for refills, and only return to the clinic when they get sick again," she said, flagging lifestyle as the major problem.

"Major adjustments should take place when clients are diagnosed. Alcohol consumption is a challenge with support staff, and to get our clients to reduce their intake is an ongoing struggle. Nobody said it was going to be easy but we need to continue to shine our torches as health professionals. Even if there is only one person we can save, that person has a precious life."



Sister Heather Ferreira

Is RU disability friendly?



Lindokuhle Zungu faces the challenge of stairs as the only means of accessing his office on the third floor of the Bantu Stephen Biko Building

Activism and Transformation Councillor on the Rhodes University Student Representative Council, Lindokuhle Zungu's office is on the third floor of the Bantu Stephen Biko Building. But he can't access it. Or at least that was his experience at the recent RU Disability Friendly event held in September. This was the second time that an event has been organized at Rhodes to give able-bodied students a chance to experience Rhodes as a disabled student.

"I took it upon myself as the Activism and Transformation Councillor to challenge the University to do something to transform our institution to be a home for all. I also felt that the student body's attitude and ideas around disability needed to be challenged and have an open platform where we can express our opinions on disability," explained Zungu.

Zungu took on this challenge, along with other students, by experiencing Rhodes in a wheelchair for a day.

"As one of the participants, I must express that the day in a wheelchair was an eye-opener for me. I realized that while some things I take for granted, to someone else it was totally inaccessible. I could not go into my residence and office the whole day," said Zungu.

Five wheelchairs were borrowed from various local organizations. Having seen all the other participants off, Zungu climbed into his own wheelchair to head off for his tut in the Chemistry Building. A route which included ramps was discussed as well as the fact that the building has an elevator. However, what seemed basic enough to able-bodied students didn't prove to be as easy in practice.

"One experience I had at the Chemistry Building was the elevator being too small for my wheelchair. The other issue being that the same elevator does not go down to the ground floor, which left me stranded on the second floor. The secretary I spoke to informed me that the elevator has been broken for a while now and no one has bothered to fix it," said Zungu.

"Facilities like the Counselling Center, Career Centre and SRC are not available at any time for these students. They must make an appointment so the counsellor or the career center staff can find another venue to use," said Zungu.

The event was organised as Rhodes does not have events that raise awareness around disabilities. Statistics from the Director of Student Affairs show that a number of students identify themselves as disabled.

"It was disappointing to see the low turnout of students at the debriefing, which I feel was very important because we need to realise our privilege as those who are abled beings. The participants all came to the conclusion that Rhodes was not a home for us while we were in wheelchairs as we could not carry on with our day-to-day plans to further our academic project," said Zungu.

"One positive thing that we can mention is the establishment of the Rhodes University Disability Committee which I am a member of. In this committee, as the SRC I represent the student body in making sure that this committee pushes for transformation of Rhodes to be disability friendly," he added.

RU Disability Committee

The newly formed RU Disability Committee is chaired by Ms Noluxolo Nhlapo, Director of Equity and Institutional Culture. Their first meeting took place on 26 September.

Why was the Disability Committee formed?

The Disability Committee was formed when the Disability task team acquired the status of a Senate Committee. Its objectives are summarised in its Terms of Reference. The committee consists of representatives of divisions that have to play a part in creating a culture and environment that promotes the successful participation of people living with disability in the institution. It also consists of people living with disability who have to play a role in determining how the institution proactively responds to the needs of people living with disability.

The Disability Committee is based on the foundation that Rhodes strives to create and foster an academic and working environment that is accessible and which respects the rights and dignity of its students and staff. All members of the University community are expected to interact on the basis of mutual respect, and to promote an environment which supports and advances our commitment to undertake reasonable efforts in providing equity in opportunity for staff and students.

What are some of the committee's objectives?

The objectives of the committee are to elevate the importance of disability issues at Rhodes by identifying barriers that impact the lives of people with disabilities at Rhodes and the opportunities available to improve accessibility for them. The committee is also responsible for monitoring progress by the University with regards

to realising its equity targets as they relate to people with disabilities.

What was on the agenda for the first meeting?

At its first meeting a history of the Disability Task Team was given, the Terms of Reference were agreed on, the staff, student and concessions policy review process was discussed and it was recommended that all three policies be merged into one policy so that the policies have one language and communicate the same vision and principles. The SRC gave a report on its "Walk in my shoes" day. The student activism councillor was commended for the success of the day and for the insights such as student and staff responses to disability that the day yielded.

What is the role of committee members?

Each division represented in the committee will be informed by the learning thrown up by this work. For example the report reinforced the realisation that there is need for a concerted awareness raising programme to be implemented. The E&IC unit is one of those units that is tasked with awareness raising amongst staff and students. And it also reinforced the realisation that there needs to be work done to make the physical environment more disability friendly. An audit of the institution's buildings has already been undertaken and a report on the findings will be on the agenda for the next meeting.

Where to next?

An audit of the institution's buildings has already been undertaken and a report on the findings will be on the agenda for the next meeting.

Thembi's biggest struggle is accessing places

Thembi Ngcai was diagnosed with Spinal Muscular Atrophy Type 3 when she was just six- years-old.

"The progression of the disease is gradual, but I do get weaker and weaker noticeably to myself and my health practitioners, as the years pass," said Ngcai.

Spinal Muscular Atrophy is a genetic degenerative motor neuron disease which is characterised by a wasting away of the muscles which then results in limited mobility.

"I have difficulty and sometimes am completely unable to climb stairs, walk fast, walk long distances, carry my own school bags, open or handle heavy doors and sometimes even a tray in the dining hall," she said.

But her disability is not stopping her from pursuing her degree in Radio Journalism and Political and International Studies. It just makes it quite a lot more difficult than able-bodied students. Her biggest struggle is accessing places.

Her lectures are all accessible but there are absolutely no short cuts. While many journalism students on their way to the Journalism Department will cut past Adamson House, Ngcai has to take the long way around which doesn't make for easy travelling with many speed humps, uneven paving and deteriorating pathways to manoeuvre. In some places there are no pathways friendly enough for her mobility scooter and she has to share the road up to the Journalism Department with cars.

"My scooter doesn't have any indicators so it can be quite dangerous," added Ngcai as she veers to the edge of the road to stop and chat to a friend making her way down to campus.

In the eyes of many able-bodied drivers passing by, the scooter shouldn't be parked off to the side of the road, while the occupant immerses herself in a chat. But this is not the path Ngcai chose, it is the only option she has.

"My peers just use the front door and go downstairs. When I have to take longer routes because I'm driving looking for ramps, my disability isolates me from walking with my friends. I always say "I'll catch up with you guys eventually."

"There's an important and difficult aspect to being disabled which is, accepting that socially things will always be more difficult for you," explained Ngcai, clearly accustomed to the isolation that being physically disabled in an able-bodied environment brings.

"Rhodes as an institution has been incredible. Having struggled in my first year to adjust, Rhodes was able to purchase the mobility scooter which I now have to help me retain the level of independence I want, and to help me move from venue to venue with ease," she said.

Her journalism lecture was moved from the Chemistry Building to Economics because the elevator is often not working which meant she had to miss lectures.

"Whenever there has been a venue for a tutorial or lecture that was not accessible, I would speak to my lecturer and it would be sorted," she added.

Although getting a degree is the primary goal, many other factors contribute to the ease with which one is able to attain it, especially as a disabled student. The transport department has been very helpful in seeing to any issues with Ngcai's scooter.

Her warden Dr Amanda Hlengwa has always been able to assist her with any problem she encounters, student services such as the San have taken good



Ms Ngcai makes her way to the Journalism Department past Milner House in her fiery red mobility scooter. She is a keen activist highlighting the issues that students with disabilities face.

care of her in times of need. The library staff have also been incredibly caring and are always willing to go the extra mile to ensure that she has access to every service within the library.

"It's honestly been the little things here and there in the Departments that I have studied in, that have made my life so much easier and happier," said Ngcai. "My daily life is highly reliant on the people I live and study with, classmates help me up in class, res mates help me carry my tray, my room is designed to make sure I can hold on to a chair to help myself up and so forth," Ngcai explained.

And although access to places is a problem and Rhodes as an institution is trying to be as accommodating as possible, the biggest challenge is educating students and staff about the ways in which they encounter and interact with disabled people.

"The popular thought on campus among the student body is 'if it doesn't affect me, if I don't have a friend who is disabled, why should I care about disability issues?' This is a popular thought with regards to all other issues on campus - such as transport issues. The biggest frustration then is trying to encourage students to care about something that we can't give them for a day; to live, to experience," added Ngcai.

Ngcai has been appointed to serve on the Rhodes University Disability Committee.

"There's an important aspect to the disability conversation - education. Rhodes is premised on the value of creating whole-rounded leaders. What kind of leaders would we be moulding if we did not teach them the value of difference? Which is what a disability is - just a difference - a difference no different to sexual orientation, ethnicity, culture and so forth. This is the biggest challenge that faces not just me, but the whole of the Disability Committee," she explained.

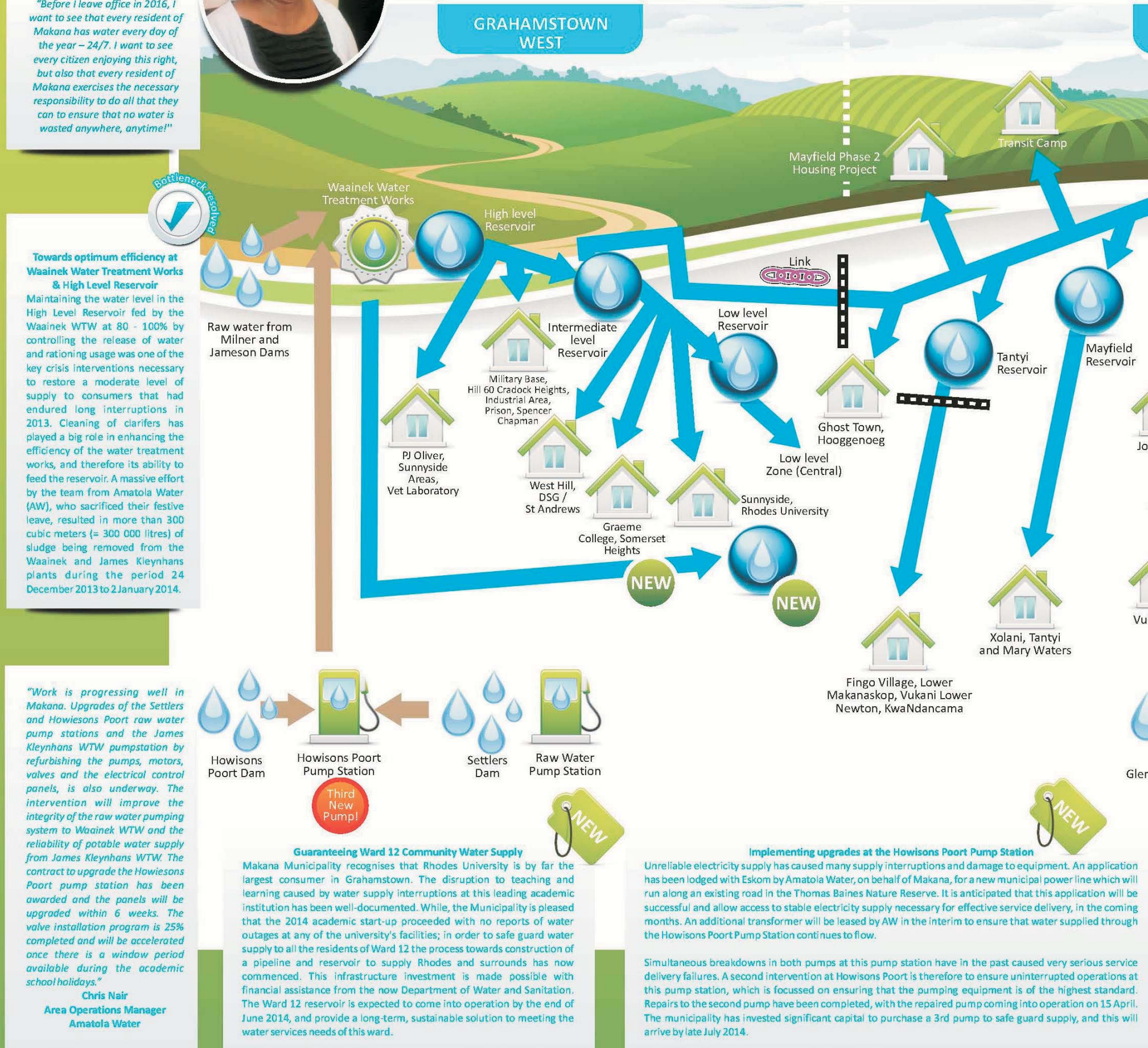
R100 million to be spent on

Councillor Nomhle Gaga
Chairperson
Portfolio Committee: Engineering
and Infrastructure Services

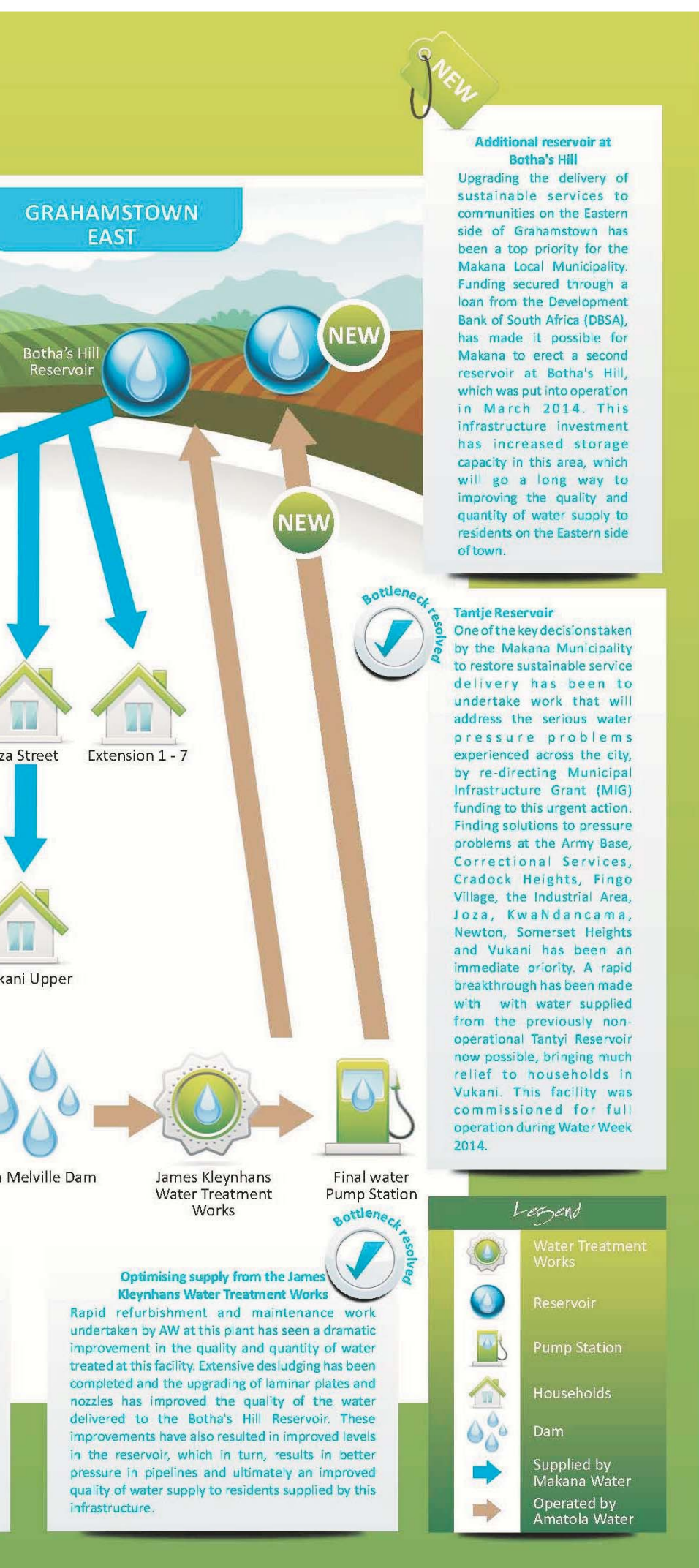


"Before I leave office in 2016, I want to see that every resident of Makana has water every day of the year – 24/7. I want to see every citizen enjoying this right, but also that every resident of Makana exercises the necessary responsibility to do all that they can to ensure that no water is wasted anywhere, anytime!"

Highlighting upgrades to water supply infrastructure in Grahamstown to ensure a lasting service delivery solution



stabilising water woes



The installation of an additional waterline and reservoir to cater for the water needs of upper campus could mark the end of the water woes that have plagued the upper campus of Rhodes University in recent months.

Following city and campus-wide shortages earlier this year, interventions have been undertaken at local, provincial and national levels of up to R100 million to curb a rerun of the outages which saw the university go without water for up to 11 days at a time.

According to Executive Director of Infrastructure, Operations and Finance, Dr Iain L'Ange, Grahamstown, including Rhodes "is in a far better place now than it was a year ago with regards to water" given the extensive efforts at stabilising the supply of water.

He was speaking after been taken on a tour of the City's bulk water supply systems provided by Mr Peter Ellis of MBB Consulting Engineers (MBB). They were accompanied by Professor Chrissie Boughey, Acting Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Academic and Student Affairs and Grahamstown Foundation Executive Director, Mrs Louisa Clayton.

The Makana Water Crisis Intervention Project, initiated by the Department of Water and Sanitation, in collaboration with key provincial partners such as the Department of Treasury and Planning, have allocated R100 million over the period 2013/14 - 2014/15 to support water supply operations, maintenance and rehabilitation.

According to Mr Ellis, the interventions have included the refurbishment of two existing and the purchase of a third new pump set located at the Howisons Poort dam which supplies the Waainek Water Treatment Plant. "Seeing that only one pump set is required, a large amount of redundancy has been built into the system," he added.

"The existing 11kV power line is in the process of being replaced and a further 22kV line directly linked to ESKOM is being installed to circumvent any future power outages which have occurred regularly in the past. Similar attention is being given to the James Kleynhans water supply scheme in that an additional bulk supply line and storage reservoir has been installed at Bothas Hill," said Mr Ellis.

He added that "a Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) system has been installed which enables the bulk water supply system and the reservoir levels to be monitored."

Amatola Water has been contracted by the municipality to upgrade the bulk water supply system and attend to the operation and maintenance of the system for the next five years, which has already born much fruit, according to Dr L'Ange. MBB has been appointed by the municipality to attend to water and pressure loss problems being experienced.

This has involved the refurbishment and replacement of valves, replacement of fittings and pipes and the installation of zone and bulk water meters. The layout of the reticulation system and valve positions is being captured on a geographical information system.

The City's sewerage reticulation system is also being assessed by the Municipality and the consultants in order to establish a clear plan to address the problems.

On the campus a programme is in place to install a set of tanks, one per residence, to collect rainwater and act as backup should it be required. Similarly such tanks are being set up at strategic points on the remainder of campus.

According to Dr L'Ange, Rhodes is working closely with Makana Municipality and MBB to establish a plan whereby water from one side of town can be shared throughout town on a rotation basis in the event of a water outage on either side of town.

"In that plan it is proposed that priority should be given to areas of high occupation density such as the hospital, homes for the aged, schools and the university with boarding facilities or residences, and the prison. Under such circumstances water will be made available to the remainder of the City on a rotation basis," he said.

The University has already on several occasions made its water tanker available to the Municipality to supply water to areas of the City experiencing outages.



Sarah-Jane Bradfield and Zamuxolo Matiwana journey to find out about the current water situation in Grahamstown

When Mr Peter Ellis of MBB Consulting Engineers invited Matiwana and Bradfield for a brief tour of Grahamstown's bulk water supplies, in order to see for ourselves and understand what has happened since the water crisis in 2013, we grabbed the opportunity with both hands.

On the chilly morning of 10 October, keeping a watchful eye on the heavy clouds rolling in over the hills, we climbed into Mr Ellis' white bakkie and criss-crossed the City on dusty dirt roads in search of evidence for a better future.

After winding our way out of town towards Port Elizabeth we took a brief detour on a short bumpy road that led us to the Waainek Water Treatment Works, where we witnessed the first of many interventions that have been undertaken since 2013 to improve the City's ailing water infrastructure. Our first piece of evidence - a rusted decaying valve that has been replaced close to the main gate. Ellis heads a team tasked with overseeing the water reticulation system throughout the City, managing water leaks, pressure, and overseeing the repairs of leaks of broken pipes.

The huge water losses which result from excessive leakages across the city's aged infrastructure are thought to account for as much as 30% of the water losses, and we believe all residents of Grahamstown/ Makana will benefit from every resident taking responsibility and reporting leaks to the Municipality. Ellis' team is doing a sterling job that will only be bolstered by residents joining in the fun, a strategy that will go a long way to saving money that is spent on chemicals to treat our waste that travels from Waainek Water Treatment Works to our households.



Testament to the gargantuan efforts displayed by the many individuals involved in the upgrading and restructuring of the City's infrastructure, Makana Municipality employees Mr Andile Heleni and Mr Themba Hewana were hard at work in the Waainek control room recording their activities so their colleagues taking over from them at the end of their shift are up to speed.

The set-up runs on a 24 hr rotation system with four shifts per day (from 06:00 to 14:00, and from 20:00 to 06:00), guaranteeing that there are always people on duty should disaster strike. Even if it doesn't, it's a full time job.

Mr Heleni took us for a brief tour at Waainek and his responsibilities include monitoring the water levels of the dams, treating water and monitoring the levels of E.Coli. He also told us about the importance of keeping the dam water level high.



We didn't envy their tasks - a commitment to ensuring the availability of water is required for this work and we appreciate their efforts to ensure that we have access to water.

Mr Ellis explained the purpose of the two big-screen sized computers which line the front walls - to modernise the water monitoring system. Whereas in the past there was no way of knowing the levels of any of the City's dams without physically performing a water level test, the highly automated communications process of the telemetry system allows measurements to be made and data collected at remote or inaccessible points and transmitted to receiving equipment for monitoring. This has been a game-changer.

From the control room we jump back in the bakkie, our clothes and faces slightly damp from the sheets of rain now settling into the hills, and traverse up the hill to encounter further evidence of the work being done to ensure sustained access to water. Parking in the shrubbery on Waainek hill overlooking Rhodes University and the rest of the City, Ellis tells us how fortunate Grahamstonians are to be receiving this upgrade, a perk not afforded to many other places in South Africa despite having the ailing infrastructure in common.

Looking out over the new residences we see the rusted, decaying infrastructure dotted around Waainek hill like forgotten treasure has been excavated and replaced with brand new equipment, which should set most Grahamstown residents' minds at ease about the future of their water. Given the lack of infrastructural maps contractors have had to dig up areas on Waainek hill to locate pipes needing replacement, all of which has been documented for future ease.

The installation of a new power line to provide a back-up alternative supply is underway to our right, and new reservoirs have been built on Rhodes upper campus to assist with capacity. We also witness how our water moves - after being pumped in from Settlers dam, water moves to Howison's Poort and then to Waainek, where it is treated and kept in various reservoirs and intermediate holding reservoirs before moving to the new reservoir situated on Rhodes University's upper campus, feeding the lower industrial area and linking up to Bothas Hill reservoirs.

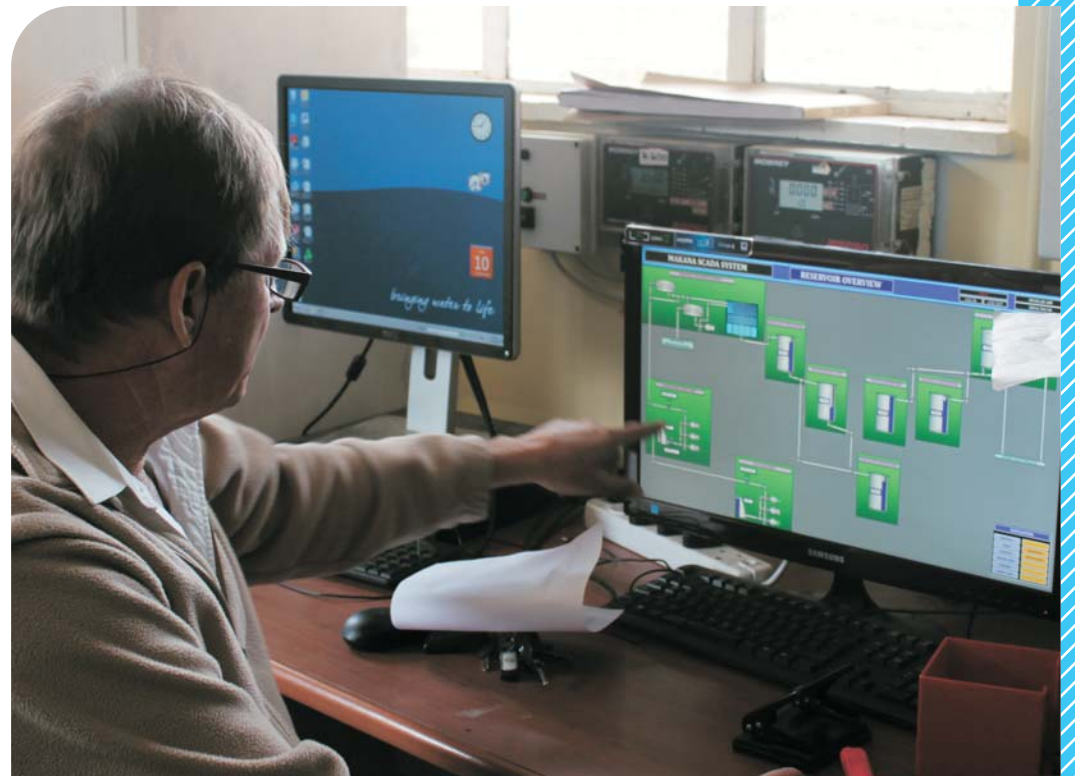
While the City's water woes continue to attract widespread attention after extended outages and compromised water quality, we have witnessed a dedicated team of blue collar workers, experts and engineers whose efforts aimed at restructuring

and upgrading the City's ailing infrastructure will surely increase access to water for decades to come.

The decades of corrosion and degradation of metal pipelines, valves, and fixtures, caused by oxidation or chemical action and lack of maintenance, have come to an end, and a guided tour of Grahamstown's bulk water supply is testament to a better future.

We would like to thank much Mr Ellis sincerely for the eye-opening tour. We look forward to the next installment which will see us completing the journey, with visits to Howisons Poort Dam and Glen Melville Dam.

The system allows an automated reading of flow rate, litres per second and volume.



The Matyana River School

In celebration of the 24th annual World Water Week on the 2nd of September citizens from all over Grahamstown came together to broaden their understanding of the Kowie (Matyana) Catchment and how we as people living in this catchment play an integral role in caring for its health.

The group consisted of members from the citizen based research group Khulumani Water for Dignity (KWfD), 14 learners from seven different schools, a member from the Community Water Forum based in Grahamstown East, representatives from the Institute for Water Research (IWR) at Rhodes University, the Wildlife and Environmental Society of South Africa (WESSA), the Kowie Catchment Campaign (KCC), the Young Water Professionals (YWP) and the Albany Museum.

The day started at the Albany Museum with a talk about river health and introduced the citizen science monitoring method known as miniSASS. From there everyone went out into the field stopping at various sites along the Bloukrans River investigating the effect that the various human impacts have on the river by conducting river health sampling using miniSASS. The Bloukrans River, into which all the river channels in Grahamstown flow, leaves town via the Belmont Valley and eventually connects to the Kowie River on its way to the sea at Port Alfred.

The group stopped at several sites along the river; the first on the outskirts of Grahamstown, the second a few kilometers below the Belmont Valley Sewage Works, the third at the site of the new golf course that is under construction and finally at the Sacred Pools where the R67 to Port Alfred crosses the Bloukrans River.

The purpose of the day was twofold; firstly, it served as an event to establish School Water Forums within the schools of Grahamstown East, an initiative of Khulumani Water for Dignity. Many of these schools have substandard



The contributions of all the participants ensured a hugely successful Matyana River Day.

hygiene and sanitation conditions creating an undignified learning environment for school children.

The objective of the School Water Forums is to capacitate interested and motivated learners with the understanding and skills to monitor hygiene and sanitation conditions within their schools on a monthly basis. The findings of these reports will provide weight to initiate action by the school governing bodies to improve conditions within the schools that fail to comply with basic hygienic standards.

Secondly, the day served to nurture the understanding that everyone in the world lives in a catchment and that our catchment in Grahamstown is the Kowie Catchment of which the Bloukrans (Matyana) River is a tributary. The environment and the people who live in the Kowie Catchment are all affected by our behaviour towards it which in turn determines the quality of the ecosystem services that we receive from it.

The group followed the course of the river noting and discussing the different types of impacts that humans have on the river ranging from rubbish, detergents, human and animal waste to agriculture, the sewage treatment works and the construction of a massive new golf course.

To connect these impacts to the condition of the river the water quality of the river was measured using miniSASS which is a fun and easy way to monitor the condition of our streams. Findings are shared on a national online database (<http://www.minisass.org/en/map/>) which allows for the tracking of river health over time, comparison between catchments and networking with other miniSASS practitioners.

Different aquatic macroinvertebrates (small animals) found in the river have varying tolerance to pollution and by identifying the composition of the aquatic community living in an area one can get an indication of the river health class ranging from natural to very poor.

The groups conducted miniSASS samples at two different points on the river, one site nestled in the agricultural lands downstream of the Belmont Valley Sewage Works, and the other the Sacred Pools, several kilometres downstream where the river crosses under the R67 to Port Alfred.

Left: The learners reflected back to the group what they had learnt during the course of the day.



Water Forum Day



The first site on the outskirts of Grahamstown was heavily polluted and posed the perfect example of the direct impact that people have on the river. A turbidity test showed that clear water is not the only sign one must look for when testing water quality.

The learners enthusiastically took part in identifying all the insects and were amazed at what the sampling nets turned up. They learnt about dragonflies, mayflies, damselflies, beetles, bugs, worms and crabs and the different roles they play in the aquatic ecosystem and how sensitive they are to pollution.

Under the shade of the trees beside the Sacred Pools the learners compared findings from the two sites and reflected on what they had learnt. There was a marked difference in water quality between the two miniSASS sampling sites, the first being largely modified with a low species diversity and the second improving to a moderately modified category but containing more than double the species diversity. So even though the Sacred Pools are situated in pristine Eastern Cape thicket and the water is crystal clear, the insects sampled tell a different story: that the lingering human activities occurring up river towards Grahamstown have far reaching effects.

To further reflect on the importance of people living and caring for the Kowie Catchment the learners of each of the seven schools were forwarded the challenge of producing a poster that told the story of the Catchment drawing on what they have learnt and their findings on the day. These posters will allow the learners to share their experience with their fellow classmates and teachers and hopefully provide a stepping stone towards changing perceptions, attitudes and behaviour the Kowie Catchment citizens have towards the river.



miniSASS is a simple and fun way for anyone to measure the health of a stream. Damselfly nymphs (bottom right) are sensitive to pollution and are an indicator of good quality water.

Rhodes Business School's MBA a "Wow Factor"

When Dr Chuka Onaga took over the Clinical services of Settlers Hospital in Grahamstown in August 2013 as Acting Chief Medical Officer, the hospital (a public-private institution) was seeking to fill several vacancies for doctors.

"We managed to fill those posts in a relatively short period and I attribute this to my MBA from Rhodes Business School. It empowered me to market the institution, attract additional good staff and to deeply understand what it means to lead," says Dr Onaga who was subsequently appointed as the Head Clinical Manager of Settler's Hospital on the 1st February this year, the same year that he completed his MBA with distinction.

Leadership for Sustainability is the motto of Rhodes Business School. Its MBA focuses on an integrated approach to business that increases competitiveness and profit at the same time as it focuses on a sustainable future for people and the planet.

"When I started my MBA at Rhodes Business School, I dismissed the whole concept of sustainability as hugging trees. I came to realise that sustainability determines not only the profitability but also the survival of your business," Dr Onaga explains.

After qualifying as a medical doctor at the University of Nigeria in 2003 he moved to South Africa on the recommendation of a fellow Nigerian doctor who was working here.

"He described South Africa as a beautiful country with wonderful people and good opportunities in the public health system. I came here in 2006, first working at a hospital in Mount Frere in the Eastern Cape and then transferring to Settler's Hospital in Grahamstown in order to enroll for my MBA at Rhodes Business School, which I started in 2012."

"I am interested in public health and wanted to do a formal degree in management after completing a Masters degree in Public Health, in order to advance my knowledge base and my financial and management skills," says Dr Onaga who chose Rhodes Business School because of its modular MBA.

"It accommodated my heavy work schedule and I could apply what I was learning in my workplace," he explains. Completing his MBA in the minimum period of 2.5 years, given his workload and the birth of his and his wife Juliet's

twins, is exceptional. Juliet Onaga has a Masters degree in Public Health from Unisa and is currently in her second year of a Pharmacy Degree at Rhodes.

Dr Onaga says the Rhodes Business School MBA met all his expectations in many different ways: "The Bible talks about talents in a monetary sense, but through my MBA I have learnt that our employees are our talents. In line with staff sustainability, I have introduced staff recruitment, retention, motivation and talent management initiatives at the hospital."

He adds that the MBA enhanced his performance management, marketing and financial skills, it helped him to "become a better person" by developing his people skills, it enhanced his belief in his ability, and it opened his mind to sustainable, integrated management.

"For me the whole MBA was a wow factor," he states.

Rhodes Business School enjoys high diversity in its MBA student profile - in career, nationality, origin and culture. Students include medical doctors, lawyers, pharmacists, engineers, managers and administrators from the public sector, entrepreneurs...

"We are proud of the demographics and diversity of our students and graduates, the majority being black and women students, with women comprising 41% of the student population," says the Director of Rhodes Business School, Professor Owen Skae.

This is in line with Rhodes University's emphasis on growing the skills of all South Africans and on growing the next generation of black and women postgraduates and academics at Rhodes and for South Africa.

The South African students are from across the socio-economic spectrum, while the international students are from a growing number of countries in Africa and the rest of the world.



Dr Chuka Onaga

Developing high-growth entrepreneurs in SA



Catherine Townshend

"The best way to grow economies and create jobs is to support and develop high-growth entrepreneurial businesses," says Catherine Townshend, the CEO of Endeavor South Africa and a Rhodes Business School graduate.

Endeavor South Africa, based in Johannesburg, is an affiliate of Endeavor Global, the US-based entrepreneurship accelerator that promotes entrepreneurship as the highest impact method to spur development and long-term job creation in emerging markets.

"At Endeavor South Africa we seek out South African entrepreneurs who have already achieved a minimum turnover of R15million per year and have the potential to break into the next level of performance," explains Townshend (nee Roberts) who completed Grade 11 and 12 at Queenstown Girls High, followed by a BSc

from Rhodes University and a Post Graduate Diploma in Enterprise Management (PDEM) from Rhodes Business School.

"We are acutely aware of the challenges they face during the growth lifecycle of their businesses, which is why we assist them to realise their growth aspirations by offering access to our network of senior professionals and MBA students for mentoring, pro-bono consulting, access to capital and access to new markets."

Through the partnership, businesses that were employing 50 to 100 people, scale up to employ 100 to 500 people or more.

"It's extremely important for entrepreneurial development and job creation in South Africa because 13% of companies in South Africa are scale-ups (businesses growing at an average of 20% Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) per annum), and they create 25% of jobs in South Africa."

One example she offers is Masana Hygiene Services, a national business with its headquarters in Gauteng created by Cynthia Makhombo who recruits female domestic workers as her team, offering cleaning services to corporate clients.

As part of its social investment, the company helps sponsor or provides access to sponsorship of tertiary education for all employees' children who achieve a university entrance matric. Makhombo joined Endeavor in 2007 with seven employees and has since grown this to over 2000 employers and a turnover of several hundred million per annum.

"I'm really interested in understanding the drivers of business and I get a thrill out of engaging with people and helping them succeed," explains Townshend who says she is "a big advocate of the PDEM and Rhodes Business School" which is committed to making a significant contribution to the development of an entrepreneurial culture in South Africa.

"The PDEM was an absolute inflection point for me and I gained much-needed skills to make a successful transition into a corporate finance career and my current position, which is all about entrepreneurial development," she adds.

The PDEM is designed to lay the foundations for students who wish to pursue the entrepreneurial route. Rhodes Business School is committed to making a significant contribution to the development of an entrepreneurial culture in South Africa.

Students can do the PDEM on a full-time basis in one year or on a part-time, modular basis over two years. At the heart of this is the understanding of how to create sustainable business models.

"The more effort we put into this, the more jobs we create. And the beauty of those jobs is that if the company is well run, those jobs are sustainable and lead to a multiplier effect on the local economy," says Townshend who is also channeling her substantial knowledge and interest in investment into understanding the key drivers of venture capital, the traditional money source for entrepreneurial businesses.

"This spectrum of funding is under-developed in South Africa and is a critical contributor to the success and health of the entrepreneurial ecosystem," she explains.

Rhodes positions itself for postgraduate studies in Africa

A new Postgraduate Studies Centre (PGSC) has been established with a focus on expanding the quality, impact and strengthening throughput of postgraduate studies at Rhodes University, headed by part-time Director Professor Heila Lotz-Sisitka.

Prof Lotz-Sisitka is helping to position Rhodes as a highly sought-after university for postgraduate studies in Africa, where the postgraduate studies experience across all faculties is recognised as being of the highest quality.

Steady increases in the number of postgraduate students are reflected in the student enrolments, which increased from 27.3% in 2011 to 28.6% in 2012. This positive postgraduate growth continued in 2013 with a 30.75% enrollment which included 348 registering for a postgraduate diploma, 553 an Honours degree, 941 a Masters degree and 460 for Phd studies.

Prof Lotz-Sisitka said the Centre has been established to respond to the growth in postgraduate studies, to develop strategy and policy for postgraduate scholars and to strengthen institutional engagement with postgraduate scholars across departments and faculties.

This Directorship is a part-time role, established for the first time and currently funded from the Department of Higher Education and Training funds. According to Prof Lotz-Sisitka, one of the first tasks will be to develop an enabling strategy for postgraduate scholars at Rhodes to address the purpose of the PGSC, followed by a series of associated activities.

"It is early days yet, so the exact contours of the strategy are not clarified as yet. It is important to note that the PGSC will not duplicate what has already been done at department and faculty level for postgraduates, but will rather seek to add value to what is already being done. Thus a key starting point will be to understand more fully what is already being done at department and faculty levels,

and amongst the postgraduate scholarly community in order to understand which initiatives could potentially be expanded in relation to the purpose of the position," she said.

Another key step in getting started, she said, would be to more fully understand the existing experiences of postgraduate scholars at Rhodes and to respond to some of the more urgent demands for postgraduate student support.

One of these is to support academic writing, and with the support of Professor Chrissie Boughey, Acting DVC: Academic and Student Affairs, the PGSC has already launched a post-graduate studies writing programme. The first workshop was attended by over 100 postgraduates in September 2014, with more requests for follow up sessions.

In addition to this support the Mellon Foundation has provided start up support for the PGS's Writing Support activities, and the Centre is working towards establishing a more sustained programme for providing postgraduate writing support from 2015 onwards.

Prof Lotz-Sisitka believes that there are many other possibilities for expanding postgraduate study interactions at Rhodes, such as through a mix of structural interventions, research methodology and research teaching engagement, and scholarly interactions that extend the voice, quality and engagement of the postgraduate scholarly community within universities.

"These insights will need to be contextualised to Rhodes University and its research plans and the institutional development plan," she said.

Prof Lotz-Sisitka who holds the Murray & Roberts Chair of Environmental Education and Sustainability in the Environmental Learning Research Centre (ELRC) has worked within the arena of environment and sustainability education for the past 20 years in Africa. She has a long standing interest in participation in education, and the relationship that exists between learning agents in the education system and institutional practices, cultures, structures and histories that enable and constrain participation in education.

A pro-active and reflexive engagement with the contextual realities and histories that shape agency for learning and research, and thus successful participation in learning at postgraduate level forms a key focus of the work of the ELRC, and Prof Lotz-Sisitka sees this as equally important for the work of the new PGSC at Rhodes.

How safe is your workplace?

Health and safety representatives play an important role in helping the employer (RU) identify hazards in the workplace.

What is a hazard?

It's anything that acts as a source of, or exposure to danger that can cause injury, illness or death. Hazards can either be unsafe conditions (part of our working environment), or unsafe acts (things that people do).

At Rhodes University, the Safety, Health and Environmental (SHE) Office requires health and safety representatives in all areas on campus to complete health and safety inspection reports once a term - in other words, quarterly.

Why regular inspections?

The Occupational Health and Safety Act (section 18) requires the health and safety representative to inspect the workplace at regular intervals, 'with a view to the health and safety of employees'. Things change over time. Changes in working conditions may be caused by wear and tear, stuff being moved, incidents, etc. Changes in working practices may come about as a result of people moving, inadequate training or supervision of staff, complacency, fatigue, stress, etc. So we need to keep checking that working conditions and working practices are still up to standard, and not a threat to our health and safety.

What to look for?

Basic checklists for different work areas can be downloaded at www.ru.ac.za/safety/checklists. Health and safety representatives should discuss their completed inspection reports with their HoD/Manager - who should countersign the inspection report and ensure that the necessary action is taken to address any

problem areas. A copy of the report should be kept in each workplace safety file for at least three years, and a copy sent to the SHE Office.

Managers and Heads of Departments are responsible for the day-to-day health and safety management within their areas of responsibility. But of course, anyone who notices that something is potentially hazardous should report it straight away. As a safety practitioner once said, "As soon as you see a mistake and don't fix it, it becomes your mistake."

A few pointers for health and safety representatives when doing inspections:

- Be thorough: Set time aside to do an inspection, and check each area carefully.
- Check all areas: Look for hidden dangers - items that are out-of-the-way or not visible.
- Look for redundant items: Report equipment or material that is not being used, so that it can be removed and/or used elsewhere.
- Be detailed: Make notes of exactly where each hazard was found. You could even take photographs. This makes it easier for follow up and repair.
- Look for root causes: A hazard is usually a symptom of a deeper root cause. You can only eliminate the hazard if you identify and eliminate the root cause. Why waste time and money repeatedly fixing a soggy, saggy ceiling board, and the wet floor beneath it, when in actual fact, the root cause is a hole in the roof?
- Prioritise: Give highest priority to dealing with hazards that pose a greater risk.
- Act immediately on urgent hazards that pose a serious threat to health and safety.

More info can be found at: www.ru.ac.za/safety or email safety@ru.ac.za

Mary Waters and Nombulelo High School scoop environmental awards

Mary Waters and Nombulelo Interact Clubs received the award in the Makana community category for their contribution to the ecological health of the Grahamstown environs by the sustained removal of invasive alien plants.

As Interact Clubs, formed under the auspices of Rotary Club of Grahamstown Sunset, they undertake projects to benefit their communities, spreading their enthusiasm to other members of their communities.

Comprised of school children aged between 12 and 18 years, the group started removing Port Jackson Willow and Black Wattle from the commonage around Grey Dam and along Mountain Drive in 2012, and have to date removed more than 13000 saplings and small trees, resulting in large areas that are now free of invasive alien plants.

Through this effort, they raised R7500 from sponsors and used this money to fund other projects such as repairing the ceiling at Luzuko Pre-School, and contributing towards a Rotary "Shelterbox", thousands of which have been distributed around the world, each able to support a family for six weeks following a disaster.

They have also undertaken other smaller projects involving the collection and re-use of domestic waste to create useful items, such as creating home-made soccer balls out of orange/onion bags filled with used paper and plastic bread bags; and making crackers and toy binoculars using empty toilet rolls - both for pre-school children; and making eco-bricks by filling empty 2-litre plastic

cool drink bottles with non-recyclable waste - a cheap and useful building material.

For former Nombulelo Interact president Sophakama Zabo heading up the group's activities inspired him as he witnessed friends and learners gaining skills. "We were adventurous and it made me happy as an individual to see other people developing outside the classroom, gaining skills that we require to be better people and in order to change the world for us and other people."

He believes the group's efforts are helping Grahamstonians who have faced severe water shortages. "We have to leave a legacy for the next generation. We can't leave this place we live in in a mess. The [alien] trees damage most of our natural environments and affect the animals too," he said.

According to Rotarians Mrs Este Coetzee and Mrs Janet Brown, the learners identified their own areas of concern and have been inspired to achieve their goal with little need for encouragement from outside.

Mrs Coetzee, Director of Youth and International Service for Rotary, took over the portfolio under the auspices of enthusiastic teacher Mrs Zoleka Boma who died tragically after having a significant impact on the learners.

She said, "From the start Nombulelo was such a vibrant club because Mrs Boma was such a strong leader. She succeeded in making the club child-driven," she said, noting that following her death the group continued their efforts.

Mrs Coetzee, who worked at Rhodes for 25 years in various capacities including academic support tutor and commerce foundation programme founder and who is a keen gardener, having been part of the millennium tree planting programme to facilitate the planting of 2000 trees in the Grahamstown location in the year 2000, has tried to continue Mrs Boma's legacy.

For Mrs Brown, "Being involved and overseeing the learners' efforts is fulfilling for us as well and I hope we are equipping them with some skills at the same time."

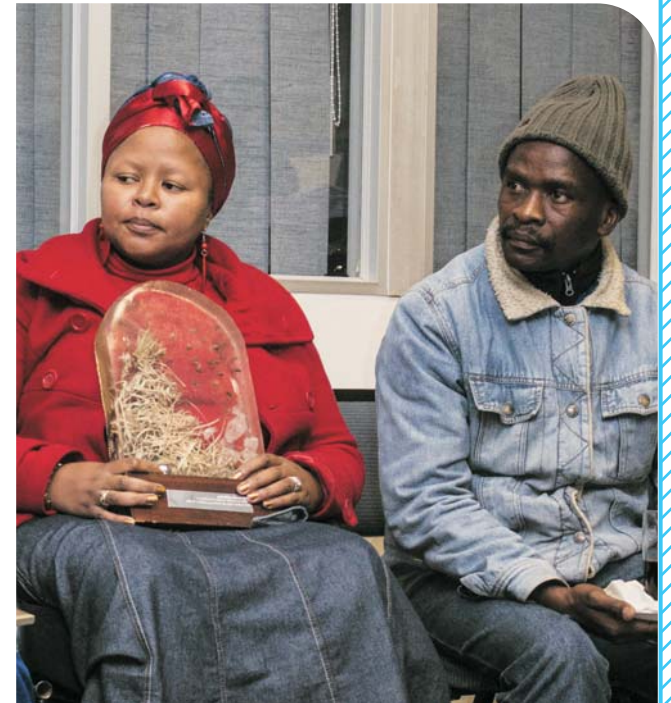


The Biological Control Research Group Receives award



Ms Nobesuthu Nkontsa receiving the Environmental Award from the new Vice-Chancellor, Dr Sizwe Mabizela.

Ms Nobesuthu Nkontsa and Mr Vuyani Ntyinkala.



The Biological Control Research Group (BCRG) Mass Rearing Programme's dynamic approach to the restoration of aquatic ecosystems has earned the group widespread accolades and acknowledgement, most recently in the form of an environmental award from Rhodes University.

According to Professor Martin Hill, Head of Entomology, the BCRG retains a focus on processes of implementation and technology transfer and works closely with members of local communities to introduce new approaches.

"We are very fortunate in that we are able to do fundamental research in a particular field, implement it through the community and it ultimately leads to some form of environmental protection," he said.

The group received the 2013 Vice-Chancellor's Distinguished Award for Community Engagement for their involvement of people with disabilities who are employed by the unit, a major focus of the group's efforts.

"This is one of the most important initiatives we have got going. There is a big drive for us as far as possible to employ people with disabilities which is more important to us than just providing someone with a salary - for us it's about how to build capacity," he said.

For Mrs Nobesuthu Nkontsa, Project Manager of the Waainek mass rearing facility, the award is a great achievement and symbolizes the impact the group's work is having on the environment and in the lives of people with disabilities in Grahamstown.

"This is a new beginning for people with disabilities in Grahamstown. This project has changed things for us and is a great achievement. I've never received an award like this before. This is a great opportunity Prof Hill has given us especially for me as I'm the only lady in the group. I believe that is

empowering to other women who might be sitting at home with disabilities. There is hope out there and I hope people realize you won't get anything sitting inside the house."

Fostering collaborative and cohesive efforts which strengthen and build community relationships is also important, Prof Hill said, referring to the group's initiatives with Working for Water, SAEON Elwandle Node in Grahamstown, GADRA, a local secondary school and a student outreach programme, WildREACH. The programme has provided practical leadership opportunities to local school children, which also ensures community involvement in environmental stewardship.

"We know it all too well here in Grahamstown that the supply, quantity and quality of water in South Africa, especially in rural areas, is going to be a pressing problem and must be given urgent attention. We need to do more here at Rhodes to make this everybody's responsibility."

We watch in horror about rhino poaching and associate rhinos with the environment and we feel completely helpless. But it is about all the steps that lead up to the end result that are important and I believe the question is whether we can take those little steps that make changes that is really important," added Prof Hill.

Established in 2008 the BCRG received the award in the category of a Rhodes University department, institute or section winner for its impressive mass-rearing facility that aims to meet the demand for biological control agents - host-specific natural enemies which are used to control waterweeds.

The BCRG has to date released close to a million biological control agents over the last six years to control common waterweeds in South Africa, helping to restore aquatic ecosystem services, increase the supply of water, and improve water quality.

Invasive aquatic weeds pose an increasing threat to national aquatic ecosystems, and to the quantity and quality of potable water, while costing the government millions of rands to control each year. Water hyacinth alone, the world's worst aquatic weed, accounts for up to 40% water loss through evapotranspiration, and threatens the livelihoods of rural communities in Africa.

Van Wyk represents South Africa at the 2014 Summer Youth Olympic Games

Cody Van Wyk joined the elite of the sporting world representing South Africa at the 2014 Summer Youth Olympic Games in Nanjing, China, in August. Van Wyk who has played the sport since he was six years old having represented Eastern Province since Under 14 has described the experience as a trip of a lifetime.

Van Wyk joined a team of eight other South African sportsmen to represent his country. The Summer Youth Olympic Games feature over 3500 athletes and are held over a 12 day period based on that of the Olympic Games with 28 sports featured.

Van Wyk and his teammates arrived in Nanjing a week before the tournament to acclimatise and participate in practice matches. South Africa competed against Mexico, Germany and Pakistan in the warm-up games.

In the semi-finals of the tournament South Africa lost against Australia. "On the day things just didn't work out for us but we had played so well in the build-up to the semi's," said Van Wyk.

Usually comprising 11 players, this version of the game only requires five players, drawn from a pool of eight, including two defense, two attack and a goalkeeper. Van Wyk knew his teammates from having played together in the qualifiers in Zambia in March, and during the test series against Australia in July in Durban.

"It is a huge change to only play in a team of five but we had trained and played together many times before so it was just a case of refreshing our memories and getting used to the new format," he says.

The Youth Olympic Games is distinct from other youth sports events as they also integrate a unique Culture and Education Programme (CEP) based around five main themes: Olympism, Social Responsibility, Skills Development, Expression and Well-being and Healthy Lifestyles.

Off the competition fields the athletes participate in a variety of fun interactive activities, workshops and team-building exercises through an integrated culture and education programme focused on discussions about education, Olympic values, social challenges, and cultural diversity.

The aim is to boost self-discovery, active participation and creativity among young people; promote understanding of different cultures; build awareness for a healthy lifestyle and protection of the environment; and boost young people's self-confidence.

Van Wyk who hails from Port Elizabeth says he was inspired to learn Spanish after relishing the exposure to a range of cultures. He is a recipient of the Old Rhodian Sports Bursary for hockey and is reading for a Bachelor of Science (Microbiology).

