



Central University of
Technology, Free State

CUT **ALUMNI** **NEWS** 3rd Edition

The word *alumnus* (single masculine) or *alumna* (feminine, plural *alumnae*) or *alumni* (plural masculine or feminine) commonly, but not always, refers to a graduate/graduates of an educational institution.



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Editorial note

Welcome to the final edition of the Alumni Newsletter for 2021. We bring you stories of success, ingenuity, participation, and big dreaming. In addition to sharing the narratives of your fellow alumni, we inform you about developments initiated and sustained by the institution from which you graduated. Seeing that the past two years presented unusual conditions, we are especially delighted to share good news with you – about resilience, progress, and reaching goals.

Please open your hearts and pockets to our alumni crowdfunding project. In this edition, we introduce the three beneficiaries to you. They are soulful and determined individuals who are deserving of your interest and investment. Thank you in advance for helping to make their journeys a little less challenging!

We also invite you to share your own stories or those of other alumni who cross your path – your involvement is highly valued, and part of what will eventually make CUT alumni an unbreakable network of support.

May you experience health and peace as you prepare for the festive season and realign your vision for 2022. As a society, we believe that the CUT alumni will trailblaze in the new year.

Be blessed!

Success
Ingenuity
Participation
crowdfunding Project
Share
Vision



Message from the Alumni Association President: We are the institution



During the past two years, ever since the greatest tragedy of a generation befell the world, not many of us would have had the opportunity to visit the hallowed grounds of our alma mater – the Central University of Technology, Free State (CUT). Even the current students, staff and faculty were largely unable to walk the lawns and halls of this great beacon of hope. To some varying degrees, many of us may have forgotten the scent of the willow trees swinging in the autumn breeze; the aroma of the chips as we patiently wait our turn in the cafeteria queues; or the dreams that the eager but unsuccessful Students' Representative Council (SRC) presidential candidates sold us.

Regardless of the many major and minor moments we may have forgotten, the sum thereof is what remains true and steadfast in our hearts. And it is there, in the deep cavity of the chest, in our beleaguered hearts, that these manicured lawns, this brick and mortar, these laboratories and libraries, classrooms and cafeterias – that CUT – ceases being just an idea but becomes an institution.

Today, I may be found in some or other social gathering, boisterous and beaming with pride when I am referred to as the President of the CUT Alumni Association. That is today. In the yesterday now buried under a heap of memories dear and bitter, a different story emerges. It is a story of a young man, without much but a view of a vista opening before him. In it he saw a life of learning, of culture, of growth.

Without us, without our many divergent stories and memories; without our individual and collective failures and triumphs, the name "CUT" is but a collected rearrangement of letters, without any meaning or significance. We are building this institution piece by piece with our words and deeds – every single one of us, consciously or not. Our failures are a blight on the institution, whilst our successes widen the vista for future generations of students, faculty, and staff.

When we first took office in the last term, when I was Deputy President of the Alumni Association, our vision was simply to build this university into an institution everyone will want to be associated with. We found that the mere mention of the university's name left a bitter taste in the mouths of many alumni. That instead of a launchpad, many viewed the university as an albatross. This could not be allowed to become the *status quo*; hence, the campaign for the release of graduates' certificates. We have carried this and other campaigns, such as the launch of regional alumni chapters, into this term of service. We have also challenged the university to hire and do business with its graduates. We will champion these and other campaigns until we achieve victory.

However, they are worth no more than the kilobytes in this message if the CUT community forgets that we *are the institution*. Without us, these plans will crumble. Without our curricula vitae (CVs) flooding the Human Resources (HR) Section; without our bids overflowing in the Procurement Unit, not much will be accomplished.

Baitumetse Moloabi wins New Breed Art Competition

The New Breed Art Competition was established in 2016 by Bloemfontein law firm Phatshoane Henney Attorneys (PHA) as a unique visual arts competition for Free State artists. Now in its fifth year, this one-of-a-kind art competition is presented by PHA in association with the Oliewenhuis Art Museum, the Art Bank of South Africa, and the Free State Art Collective. The competition provides an excellent platform for Free State artists to showcase their talent and contemporary Free State art, and to benefit from the prizes and national exposure the competition provides.

Central University of Technology, Free State (CUT) alumnus Baitumetse Moloabi was announced as the overall winner for 2021. With instances of sexual transgressions against women dominating global headlines in recent times, the judges could not agree more on the relevance and timeliness of Baitumetse's series of thought-provoking works, entitled "*Ntho tse snaXXX*", and unanimously agreed that she deserved the highest accolade in this year's competition. She was awarded R50,000 in prize money.

Baitumetse describes herself as a Black queer; Christian; and artist with a keen interest in learning as much as possible about the spaces she occupies, and sharing her experience with others, so as to aid in making society more inclusive. She is a zealous visual artist who recently obtained her Diploma in Design and Studio Art from CUT.

"My area of interest and what I look to investigate through my art is who we become and who we are through what and how we learn, how we assume roles through labels that we assign to ourselves and those that society assigns to us, identities, gender, sex, sexuality and other related topics."

Baitumetse loves arts in all its various factions, and one of her biggest achievements to date is having started a visual and performance art project, called "*Madutla*", for the children in her community. "I believe such initiatives enable self-expression and a space for young people to explore all possibilities of becoming. Born and raised in the small town of Thaba 'Nchu, I always used visual art to navigate who I am, and believe that it is important to me to create a space where children can experience what I have in creative expression."



FOTO CREDIT:
New Breed Art

CUT alumnus bags Standard Bank Rising Star award

Gama Major Cindi is the Executive Director at the Clinical Research Investigator Site Management Organisation (CRISMO), which he co-founded in 2015. During 2021, the company was selected from amongst more than 1 000 applicants as one of the top 25, and then the top 10 finalists for the inaugural Standard Bank Rising Star award, which CRISMO ultimately won in October 2021.



Gama completed a National Diploma: Office Management and Technology (2006), a Postgraduate Certificate in Education (2014), and an Advanced Diploma in Health Management (2021) from CUT. Coupled with prior work experience, he was well positioned to oversee the day-to-day running of the clinical research functions and activities at CRISMO, including human resourcing, financial management, business development, and administration. He is also responsible for implementing the strategic direction, and to drive innovation through training, the use of technology, and collaborations. He answered some questions about his journey and the lessons learned.

What is the best thing about your job?

Not doing the same thing every day. The nature of the business is agile and requires flexible skills and the ability to adapt to new concepts quickly. I enjoy the freedom to be innovative in implementing our projects, whilst maintaining the quality standards and following the industry regulations.

What is the best and worst decision you have ever made?

The best decision was investing in my personal development, and the worst decision would be starting my entrepreneurial journey so late. But I also value the preparation process that led me here.

What was the biggest challenge of your career?

Transitioning to pharmaceuticals. I did not have any science qualifications, and I realised that progressing in the field would be hard. That realisation prompted me to begin my own data management centre. I also had to relocate to Johannesburg, where there are more opportunities.

During 2020, we almost closed our doors due to COVID-19 and the regulations thereof. But COVID-19 vaccine studies helped us to keep our doors open, and we have been experiencing a steady growth in our business operations since then. However, the Standard Bank Rising Star Award came at a time when we have exhausted our personal savings in managing the steady growth, as we are self-funded. It came with a cash prize of R500 000, which is an investment in the growth of the company.

Which businessperson inspires you, and why?

I have respect for many professionals who are true to their career and destiny. And I got my hustling spirit from my mother, who believes in third-stream incomes.

What advice would you give to the 15-year-old you?

Never wait for a perfect moment to start anything. The best way to learn and to be successful is to start immediately – somewhere.

CUT's gorgeous Hotel School Building glass roof is a sight to behold



This is the newly completed glass roof in the courtyard of the Hotel School.

Photo supplied by Sebedisan Group.

It is the beginning of a new dawn for the CUT Hotel School, as it recently embarked on a journey to revamp the ancient structure that has been in existence for more 100 years. It is important that routine and preventative maintenance take place on such old buildings, to prolong their life span for generations to come. These renovations are envisaged to enhance CUT's brand and image, and potentially attract partners from industry, corporate and local communities.

The newly completed glass roof in the courtyard of the Hotel School was designed and documented by Hennie Lambrechts Architects of Bloemfontein as the first phase in the refurbishment and renovation of the historical 1912 Eunice House on the CUT Bloemfontein Campus. A research programme and detailed survey of the Republican Style building was conducted to identify structural defects, deficiencies, non-compliance of services, and insensitive additions over time.

According to Hennie Lambrechts, Principal Agent for the Hennie Lambrechts Architects, the existing courtyard is a unique feature of historical significance, a rare example of an architectural enclosure still in existence and use. The protection of this multifunctional space during adverse weather conditions determines its value. The architects designed a cost- and energy-efficient glass roof structure with integrated electrical, mechanical and audiovisual technology, to strengthen the architectural space in harmony with the scale and rhythm of the original layout.

The future construction phases will include the separation and redesigning of the substandard main kitchen and training facilities, as well as the upgrading of the lounge service area as a satellite kitchen for a new solarium, which will serve as a café venue. The extensive restoration of the existing structure and upgrading of the

interior including lecture rooms, whilst services will conclude the proposed building programme.

Ms Jaydee Snyman, Operational Manager at the Hotel School, said that the roof project has been on the cards long before she joined CUT in 2016. "The old roof really needed some TLC for us to deliver on the standards that we teach our students, and as firm believers of walking the talk, we had to lead by example. The previous roof panels could no longer be found in the market, as it is old stock that was long discontinued," she said.

Jaydee also mentioned that the CUT Hotel School is known to be one of the best in the country, where students are trained through a fine-tuned curriculum, and are well groomed for perfection. "We do not only offer services to the university, but to external clients as well. This newly renovated building will not only serve as a marketing tool, but will add the much-desired value to our teaching and learning aspects, as well as increase the number of events we host. It will further provide our students with more hands-on practical training opportunities to learn from within a protective environment, and improve their skills and understanding of the industry, and their application of the theoretical knowledge. This gives us an opportunity to groom them into the future industry leaders."

"The new roof with the bright lights really gave the Hotel School Building a long-overdue facelift that enables us to offer our clients modern events, with a history of tradition and skills instilled in one. The roof, upgraded boardroom, and smaller upgrade to kitchen and restaurant facilities will assist us to be able to market facilities to the industry partners, local communities, and corporate clients. We are looking forward to the launch of our new Hotel School look and venue facilities when this pandemic gives us the opportunity to do so," she concluded.

Dr Mantoa Molete is fulfilling her purpose



After a long and winding journey, Dr Mantoa Molete graduated with a Doctor of Communication in Language Practice from the Central University of Technology, Free State (CUT) in 2021. "I guess that was my biggest milestone," she says.

Being brought up by a single, unemployed parent in Thabong, Welkom, did not really set Dr Molete up for success. Her uncle helped to raise her and her two younger siblings while they tried to survive selling fast food at a railway station.

Against all odds, Dr Molete passed matric, and went to the Goldfields Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) College to upgrade her marks in the hope of getting university admission. "After completing the bridging course in 2008, I enrolled at CUT for my National Diploma in 2009. I fell in love with the course and never looked back. My lecturers were dedicated to my academic journey, and that evoked my passion." After graduating with a BTech Language Practice, Dr Molete was appointed as lecturer at the very same Goldfields TVET College in 2013. In 2018, she was also appointed as an external council member at the college, and joined the CUT family as lecturer in the Department of Communication Sciences during the same year.

"It took a lot from me to achieve what I have," she explains her journey so far. "I had to co-parent, study, and play the role of a financial supporter to my family." However, she is driven by a dream to influence society in any way possible. "I feel that I have a societal responsibility – especially to the community of Matjhabeng where I come from. To me, social sciences are not just about doing research, but about doing research that solves societal problems."

Dr Molete is motivated by faith, hope and music. "Faith and hope got me to where I am. I cannot live without it. And music brings life into my day." She believes that we are placed where we are for a reason and to fulfil a purpose. "What we achieve is not for us to brag about, but to use to uplift the lives of those around us. We are responsible for improving our country and communities."

In closing, Dr Molete shares her motto:
"You are capable of becoming anything you want. Yes, you."



Celebrating excellence at the annual Vice-Chancellor's Excellence Awards

The CUT Vice-Chancellor's Excellence Awards were held on 03 November 2021. The main objective of these annual awards is to recognise exceptional performance for sustained and outstanding achievements in research and innovation, teaching, entrepreneurship, and community engagement, which are aligned with the university's vision and mission. The awards also aim to stimulate ideas and innovation from employees and motivate them to exceed expectations. This year, both the 2020 and 2021 recipients in the categories Research, Innovation and Entrepreneurship; Community Engagement; and Teaching and Learning were acknowledged.

"We gather here today to honour, acknowledge and celebrate the excellence of our employees, who, amongst others, managed to demonstrate that excellence is possible amidst challenges. As an institution, we commend all your efforts towards improving society. You managed to focus on opportunities, and contributed to the communities you serve. We also know that you did not operate alone; you were surrounded by supporting families, friends and colleagues, and we thank them all for their sacrifices and support," said Acting Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Prof. Alfred Ngowi, during the event.

The recipients of 2020 included Dr L Sinxadi from the Faculty of Engineering, Built Environment and Information Technology (IT) (Early Career Teaching Award); Dr E Markus from the Faculty of Engineering, Built Environment and IT (Early Career Research Award); Prof. M Masinde from the Faculty of Engineering, Built Environment and IT (Established Researcher Award); Mr K Lebelo from the Faculty of Health and Environmental Sciences (Community Engagement Award); Dr O de Smidt from the Faculty of Health and Environmental Sciences (Innovation Award); and Prof. DY Dzansi from the Faculty of Management Sciences (Entrepreneurship Award).

The 2021 recipients are Ms N Qumbisa from the Faculty of Engineering, Built Environment and IT (Early Career Teaching Award); Prof. F van der Walt from the Faculty of Management Sciences (Advanced Career Teaching Award); Dr C Chukwuma from the Faculty of Health and Environmental Sciences (Early Career Research Award); Prof. B Awuzie from the Faculty of Engineering, Built Environment and IT (Mid-Career Research Award); Prof. K Kusakana from the Faculty of Engineering, Built Environment and IT (Established Researcher Award); and Ms IK Sebelego from the Faculty of Health and Environmental Sciences (Community Engagement Award).



One of the 2020 recipients: Mr K Lebelo from the Faculty of Health and Environmental Sciences, receiving the Community Engagement Award. He is flanked by the Acting Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Prof. Alfred Ngowi (left), and Prof. Samson Mashele, Acting Deputy Vice-Chancellor (DVC): Research Innovation and Engagement.



One of the 2021 recipients: Ms N Qumbisa from the Faculty of Engineering, Built Environment and IT, who received the Early Career Teaching Award. She is seen here with DVC: Resources and Operations, Dr Gary Paul (left), and Prof. Samson Mashele, Acting DVC: Research Innovation and Engagement (right).

From South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) to success



As a child, Dr Tshepo Godfrey Kukuni and his siblings were depended on SASSA grants for survival. Today, this extraordinary academic says that his experience at the Central University of Technology, Free State (CUT) changed his life.

Dr Kukuni was the firstborn child of his father, a security worker, and his mother, a domestic helper. Being brought up by his grandparents, he credits them for being very involved in his academic well-being. "No matter how little my grandparents had, they ensured that my cousins and my siblings and I all had the same opportunity to do something with our lives."

He calls CUT the land of dreams and opportunities, and says that meeting people from different backgrounds and cultures gave him hope that no circumstance can keep you from achieving your goal. "The spirit at CUT does not provide room for a student to feel like giving up," he says. Dr Kukuni completed a BTech, master's and doctoral degree in computer systems engineering and electrical engineering. "I have learnt a lot, and collaborated with many researchers across the globe through the wisdom and guidance of my supervisor and promotor, Dr Ben Kotze."

Dr Kukuni wants to progress to postdoctoral studies, and eventually contribute to the research ecosystem as supervisor to other students. "I started my career at CUT as student assistant, and later I did experiential training at CUT. After a period of working at Coca-Cola in Gauteng, I moved to the Innovation Hub, where I was employed as an Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Innovation Specialist, and I am currently at the same organisation as an Open Innovation Specialist." Dr Kukuni had to battle his way through periods of financial constraints, where at times he did not even have money for taxi fares. But, he says, resilience and focus kept him going.

Dr Kukuni wants to create a legacy for his children and community, and inspire people from disadvantaged backgrounds "Let us continue to inspire the future CUT alumni, and ensure that we do that by contributing our time and resources to those who deserve it, so that no student drops out or fails because of a lack of resources," he concludes.

CUT ALUMNI - Like mother, like daughter



Anne-marie van Rooyen worked at the Central University of Technology, Free State (CUT) for 29 years, and was Assistant Registrar: Assessment and Graduations before she retired in 2019. She was brave enough to begin studying again at 54 years of age, and completed a BTech in Project Management at CUT. Her daughter, Elserie Ferreira, followed in her mother's footsteps by first obtaining a National Diploma in Hospitality Management, and also completing a BTech in Project Management. Elserie is currently a teacher.

During her time at CUT, Anne-marie was responsible for the administration of assessments and graduations. These responsibilities included the administration of all assessment marks and results; the preparation and distribution of question papers; the identification of graduates; and all arrangements for graduation ceremonies at CUT.

Anne-marie enjoyed providing excellent support to students and lecturers to ensure the successful completion of qualifications. "It was so satisfying to see students graduate and knowing that the Assessment and Graduations Unit played an important role in the whole process. And it was also fantastic to be blessed with wonderful friendships with students and lecturers. Sometimes, it was a challenge to ensure that policies and procedures are in place for all processes and to get all the role players to buy in and execute all procedures as prescribed and approved."

Anne-marie believes that success can only be achieved through hard work and perseverance. "There is no such thing as instant success. You must plan carefully and execute according to plan. Reassess your plans from time to time to ensure that you are still on track and relevant." Although relying on her ability to work hard, she fully understands her dependency on her Creator.

CUT was Anne-marie's "home" for many years, and she hopes that the institution will go from strength to strength. "If I must describe CUT in one word, it is: innovation."

Elserie Ferreira is passionate about the hospitality industry, complemented by good management; hence, she opted to enrol for a programme in the field. "To succeed in the industry, you must make sure that you get enough practical experience, as well as a good knowledge of management and financial management of business." However, the best thing of her time at CUT was building friendships and relationships with others in the industry, to stay informed of all developments.

Elserie will always try to improve systems wherever she is, and will never regret the first step she took at CUT to realise her dreams. "I hope that CUT will be the home of many more students in future."

Meet the beneficiaries of the #CrowdfundCUTGraduates campaign

The Central University of Technology, Free State (CUT) has partnered with Feenix to launch the #CrowdfundCUTGraduates campaign, to help as many students with historical debt as possible to raise funds to pay off their historical debt and obtain their certificates. Meet the three beneficiaries of this great initiative!

Mihlalikazi Nyathi is currently busy with a Postgraduate Diploma in Public Management. She chose public management as a field of study because of she has a passion for working with people, and the public management field is mainly focused on rendering a service to the people and bringing a positive change to the country.

I cannot live without God and my family.
My secret weapon is perseverance and discipline; doing something even if you do not feel like doing it. This will benefit you in the future.
I always have been inspired by fellow women who have acquired high academic qualifications, and who are doing great work in their communities.
I will never leave things pertaining to my academics and academic responsibilities undone.
I hope to finish my qualification in record time and find a job, so that I can support my family.



Sharon Mathebula completed a Diploma in Information Technology (IT). She chose to study IT because it allows us to form networks around the planet and far into space. She wants to create and design reliable systems. The challenges she experienced during her studies included a lack of resources, the workload, and a skills gap.

I cannot live without my mobile phone.
My secret weapon is discipline.
I always have a positive attitude.
I will never say "I can't" to something that looks difficult.
I hope more people will do what they love.



Zintle Rafiqua Kolanise completed a BTech degree in Tourism Management. Travelling, exploring and engaging in outdoor activities have always been her first love, and she is intrigued by the heritage and history our country has to offer. "Also," she laughs, "I wasn't good in any maths or accounting, so I chose to study Tourism Management!" During her studies, finances were always a challenge, and she just tackled it day by day.

I cannot live without my daily cup of coffee, my mobile phone, my son, humanity, faith and prayer.
My secret weapon is that I am easy to get along with; I speak my mind; and I am very blunt.
I always have a pack of Orbit chewing gum, lip balm, a purse, a mirror..
I will never do anything that I am not comfortable with; anything that goes against my principles and beliefs; anything that might put someone else's life in danger.
I hope to finally get the job of my dreams; be financially stable; be debt free; and just to enjoy life and be happy with what I have.



#CrowdfundCUTGraduates – Support a CUT Graduate, Support South Africa

CUT and Feenix would like to give you the opportunity to pay it forward. Support a graduate of your choice by helping us lift the burden of study debt. Every Rand helps. Through your donation, engineers, teachers, technologists in medical fields, and entrepreneurs will be released from a crippling burden, to take their rightful place in our society as contributing members of South Africa. Crowdfund CUT graduates on Feenix's safe and secure online platform, <https://feenix.org/campaign/80>

Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) Facility launched at CUT, Welkom Campus

The Centre for Global Engagement (CGE) and the Centre for Innovation and Teaching (CILT) at CUT launched the i-Kudu COIL facility at the CUT Welkom Campus on 28 September 2021 as a way of adapting to digital learning.

COIL is a new teaching and learning paradigm that promotes the development of intercultural competence across shared mutual learning environments and across international borders. This will provide students with a study abroad experience while they are at their home universities, embracing the concept of internationalisation at home.

The Director: Welkom Campus, Prof. Solomon Makola, said that the facility was established to enhance, amongst others, the internationalisation of the curriculum, which integrates collaborative online international learning. "For this reason, the CGE, in collaboration with the University of the Free State (UFS), saw it appropriate to establish the i-Kudu COIL Facility at the Welkom Campus."

When delivering his keynote address, Mr Cornelius Hagenmeier, Director: Office for International Affairs at UFS, briefly explained the i-Kudu project as a European Union (EU)-funded Capacity Building in Higher Education (CBHE) project that is implemented over a three-year period, from 2019 to 2022. It is coordinated by UFS and the University of Antwerp in Belgium.

The consortium has been awarded € 1 million in funding to develop capacity and some facilities for COIL virtual exchanges, which are embedded in curriculum transformation and internationalisation processes. In addition to CUT and UFS, South African partners include the Durban University of Technology (DUT), the University of Limpopo (UL) and the University of Venda (Univen). European partners are the University of Siena, Coventry University, The Hague University of Applied Sciences, and Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences.

"In the collaboration we have been able to develop significant trust. We work together to empower each other, and we consider ourselves as equals. This is special, and I refer to it as the i-Kudu spirit, and I hope we can celebrate and lift the i-Kudu spirit in the collaboration between CUT, UFS and the other partner universities far beyond the lifespan of the i-Kudu project," Mr Hagenmeier expressed.



Mr Cornelius Hagenmeier, Director: Office for International Affairs, UFS delivering his keynote address virtually.



Dr Ben Kotze, Assistant Dean: Teaching and Learning, Faculty of Engineering, Built Environment and Information Technology (IT) giving a visualisation and simulation at the facility.



CUT staff members who attended the event.

CUT student golfer wins the Bloemfontein Captains Cup Competition

A CUT student and golfer, Mojalefa Xaba, together with his partner, Fatso Olifant from the Manguang Golf Association, won the 2021 Captains Cup Competition that was established in Bloemfontein in 2017.

Mojalefa, a third-year Information Technology (IT) student from QwaQwa in the Eastern Free State, is currently serving as captain of the CUT and Mangaung Legacy Team. The 27-year-old has been in the game for 18 years, with his love for the club-and-ball sport starting when he was a golf ball picker. "As time went by, I started hitting golf balls at a range like everybody else, and I never looked back. What I love most about golf, is that it is a one-man's game and, most importantly, it teaches you to be disciplined and responsible."

In 2009, Xaba ranked number one on the South African Golf Development Board for under 18s, and he was part of the Ernie Els & Fancourt Foundation for a period of three years (from 2010 to 2012). He became the first player of colour to win the overall Free State Open Tournament twice and was personally invited by Ernie Els to go watch the Honda Classic in Florida (America) in 2012.

He represented the South African Golf Development Team, playing against the Scotland team, and managed to halve the game. He also represented the Free State in different categories at the interprovincial tournaments from 2011 to date. He received the Best Player of the Tournament Award at the 2021 Kyalami Inter Club Challenge in Johannesburg and is a three-time winner of the Peter Itholeng Tournament that takes place in Bloemfontein. He is part of the team that managed to take the CUT team to the A-division at the University Sports South Africa (USSA) tournaments in Qheberha. He recently won two races in major tournaments that took place in Johannesburg and was selected by the Free State to join the A-team that will be representing the province at Elements from 9 to 16 October 2021.

Balancing golf and academics are very difficult, he says, but he tries to make time, as they are both important in his life. "I am very proud of what I have achieved so far, and I thank CUT Golf Club for the support they have given me, as well as the opportunity to study."



CUT student and golfer, Mojalefa Xaba (left) with his partner Fatso Olifant (right) from Mangaung Golf Association won the 2021 Captains Cup Competition.

CUT's Moqhaka Alumni Chapter launched

The CUT Alumni Executive Committee launched their 5th alumni chapter in the Moqhaka district, Kroonstad, to enhance the relationships and build strong networking relations with former CUT students. The chapter is envisaged to be a point of contact that will maintain a consistent presence within the district, raise the profile of the university, as well as support the university's mission and vision.

"As we are about to launch this new chapter, we have a mountain of challenges to tackle in assisting our university to reach its goal, and through us, as a collective effort, I am adamant that we can conquer. There is a lot to be done within the university, so we are banking on your continuous support to assist the university to reach its desired goals. Together we can drive this ship to its

destiny," said Prof. Percy Sepeng, Director: Vice-Chancellor and Principal's Office, in his welcome address.

He also encouraged the alumni to have programmes and activities at both strategic and operational level that would assist Management to be able to transform the university successfully. "As one of the statutory bodies of the university, you are placed in terms of governance authority to play a role that will challenge the current *status quo*."

The Deputy President of the CUT Alumni Association, Mr Lebogang Khutlang, said that as brand ambassadors of the university, they have a major responsibility and role to play in terms of ensuring that all instabilities within the university are resolved harmoniously.

He said that the purpose of launching the chapter is to get in touch with graduates, and get a feeling of what they are going through, and how they can best help each other. "We need to find ways as to how best we can contribute to the university, and how the university can assist the structure in its different endeavours."

The Moqhaka Alumni Chapter members are Thulani Klaas (Coordinator) and Vusumuzi Lwane (Convener), and Matshediso Shuping, Morena Motloung, Itumeleng Raleie, Puleng Khoarai, Thulane Mashiya, Lehlohonolo Mosebi, and Mpho Mokhathi as additional members.



The newly elected Moqhaka Alumni Chapter, with CUT Alumni Executive members.

Seated in the front row from left to right are: Ms Natasha Lethola, Thulani Klaas (elected coordinator), Lebogang Khutlang (Deputy President of the Alumni Association), Vusumuzi Lwane (Convener), and Lehlohonolo Mosebi.

In the back row from left to right are: Thulane Mashiya, Keneiloe Mogorosi, Mpho Mokhathi, Itumeleng Raleie, Mojobeng Khukutli (Treasurer), Puleng Khoarai, Marema Motloung, Matshediso Shuping, Tshidiso Sebogodi, Itumeleng Matete, and Lekhooa Seleke.

CUT celebrates cultural diversity



The Central University of Technology, Free State celebrated the vast cultures experienced at the university by hosting a celebration of Heritage at the Bloemfontein Campus on 19 November 2021.

Acting Vice-Chancellor, Prof Alfred Ngowi highlighted that the institution is gratified to

have taken a huge step towards becoming a university of technology that is centred in embracing the diverse cultures and traditions of its people and its surrounding communities.

“The 2021 Heritage Day Celebrations come as a stepping ladder for CUT to encourage inter-cultural blending in

research, teaching and learning, as well as operations of the institution. This day reminds us of the significance of embracing the transformation agenda of CUT, which has seen a shift towards realizing change through diversifying our environments and spaces we operate in, consistent with our progressive Transformation Plan 2021 – 2025,” said Prof Ngowi.



Distinguished guests included dignitaries from different embassies, including the Kenyan Education Attaché, Adan Mohamed Ibrahim, who had spent the previous day engaging with Kenyan students and staff at the university. “We gladly provided some of our cultural clothing and artefacts for Heritage Day celebrations, and we appreciated the opportunity to get to know each other through celebrating culture,” said Ibrahim.

He added that the newly approved CUT Language Policy engages with the university community as it integrates Sesotho, as one of the official languages that can be used in day-to-day practices of the institution. “It is also significant that recognising Sesotho becomes our preliminary point as we are a university of technology in the Free State Province,

where Sesotho is the predominant spoken language. That alone, is considered a step, towards becoming a university that thinks beyond! It also brings us closer to the UNESCO's goal for this decade which is to embrace and make awareness for African languages. Therefore, that is the essential key to this Heritage celebration," added Ngowi.

Guests had the opportunity to visit vast stalls to learn more about the various cultures, while enjoying various performances as part of the entertainment.



CUT staff donned their traditional outfits in celebration of their heritage.

Guests were treated to performances by various groups as part of the celebrations.

Various stalls offered guests the opportunity to further engage with the different cultures.

Self-starter poultry farmer, Malinkeng Mphutlane, says...



"I graduated with a BTech in the field of financial information systems from the Central University of Technology, Free State (CUT) in 2014.

Thereafter, I completed an internship at the Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality from 2014 to 2017 in their debt collection division, before beginning my poultry business in Lesotho at the end of 2017.

I saw a gap in the market for producing broilers (small chickens), and trained over 5 000 broiler farmers in Lesotho during 2018 and 2019. Not only did I create an opportunity for myself in the poultry industry, but I also helped reduce the unemployment rate by empowering prospective farmers. My message to CUT alumni is: Do not wait to be employed – just start a small business and see where your efforts might lead. I went from being an accounting graduate to a well-known farmer across the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region – and so can you!"



Department of Tourism and Event Management carve out success during undoubtedly difficult times for the industry



Despite the challenges faced by the industry, the Central University of Technology, Free State (CUT)'s Department of Tourism and Event Management made the most of the year. Here are some of the highlights following an eventful year:

An exciting collaboration between the department and Aalen University were initiated in 2021. For several years, honorary Prof. Ulrich Holzbaur has cooperated with the department in the field of sustainable events and tourism. Early in 2020, the late Dr Johan Hattingh and Prof. Holzbaur planned a project in geotourism, and they decided to start with research on a potential geopark around the Vredefort Dome. The Vredefort Dome is the largest verified impact crater on Earth, which is why it has been declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

On 5 May 2021, the department hosted a virtual guest lecture presented by Mischke Bosse – a well-known tourism blogger/vlogger traveling solo around South Africa in her Jeep. She provided valuable information about the world of social media and tourism, and added value to the Tourism programme at CUT.

Students, lecturers, and even an Advisory Board Member of the Tourism and Event Management Department joined hands on 16 June 2021 (Youth Day) by repainting the “Bloemfontein” sign on top of Naval Hill. Naval Hill is a unique tourism attraction, as it is the only game reserve in the world that is situated in the middle of a city.

On 1 September 2021, Ms Mkhize-Simelane virtually presented at her first international conference. After having her paper accepted by the RCS-IBC Annual International Conference, Ms Mkhize-Simelane wowed the audience with her presentation on entomophagy (edible insect) tourism. The RCS-IBC Annual International Conference attracts more than 2 000 geographers from around the world.

From 7 to 10 September 2021, staff members from the department presented at the Educator Development Programme – and initiative from the Department of Tourism, in partnership with the Federated Hospitality Association of Southern Africa (FEDHASA) and the provincial tourism departments. The objectives of the programme were to share information that would effectively empower educators who teach tourism and hospitality subjects at high school level.

In commemoration of Heritage Month in September 2021, the Department of Small Business Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs (DESTEAT) approached the department to co-host a public lecture on 17 September 2021. The purpose and theme of the lecture were to discuss and explore ways to make the South African tourism industry more inclusive for all, and to grow domestic tourism. On Monday, 27 September 2021, the department continued with their Heritage Month celebrations, and attended the World Tourism Day celebrations in Clarens, Free State.

The Department of Tourism and Event Management continues to make a local and global impact by producing skilled and knowledgeable alumni in the field.

Entrepreneurs of the future - Take note



Great business opportunity!

Calling all entrepreneurs and potential marketers.
Central University of Technology, Free State (CUT) products
CUT is offering a unique business opportunity to create a business around ready-made products.
There are three available market-ready products that just need the right entrepreneurs to sell them.

What do you need to do?

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2. Come up with a unique business solution to sell your chosen product.
3. Send your idea to ideagenerator@cut.ac.za

What's next?

- A five-week training programme to learn about:
- business proposal writing;
 - CUT commercialisation agreements;
 - marketing strategies;
 - financial planning; and
 - pitching a business.

After completion of the training and successfully pitching your plan, our new business owners will be given the go-ahead to sell the products.

Good luck in your endeavours!

The i-GYM EDP Programme 2022, is a programme hosted for students, staff members as well as alumni and all members of the community:

Entrepreneurship Development Programme (EDP) 2022

This eight workshop series hosted over several weeks during the year will kick-off in February 2022 with an information session. The aim is if you attend all the sessions and complete the assignments, you will gain the knowledge to compile a comprehensive business plan.

The workshops cover these topics:

Session 1	Session 2	Session 3	Session 4	Session 5	Session 6	Session 7	Session 8	Session 9
<i>Intro Feasability</i>	<i>Entrepreneurship</i>	<i>Environment</i>	<i>Management</i>	<i>Finance</i>	<i>Legal / Admin</i>	<i>Marketing</i>	<i>Strat Man</i>	<i>Business Plan</i>

Zoom link, date & time of this event to attend the online information session will be posted on 20 January 2022 on the i-GYM webpage:

<https://www.cut.ac.za/idea-generator>

Please also visit the above webpage for other activities e.g. events, challenges and workshops to be hosted.

For enquiries please contact us via email: ideagenerator@cut.ac.za



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Central University of
Technology, Free State

The Central University of Technology would like to wish
you and your loved ones a happy and peaceful holiday
season.

*Prof Alfred Ngowi
Acting Vice-Chancellor and Principal*

SEASON'S GREETINGS



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