

ZR MAHABANE BUILDING

CUT ALUMNI NEWS2022



Central University of
Technology, Free State

4th Edition

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Editorial note

Welcome to the latest edition of the Alumni Newsletter packed with stories about our alumni who continue to contribute to society. May they also inspire you during difficulty and encourage you to share your story with us it might just be the hope needed by someone to pull through.

In this edition we learn that teaching can be a calling and how a degree can result in more than just career success. You will also be happy to know that careers initiated later in life can be successful and fulfilling. It is exciting to see more CUT Alumni Chapters being established around the country, and we celebrate these, and other achievements related to the university. We also discover interesting careers in sport and art.

Thank you to all our alumni supporters know that your efforts make a difference. Please continue to contribute in any which way that you can. And please stay in contact with us, we would love to hear from you.

Best wishes for the last quarter of the year.

Regards

The Alumni Team.

Changing the world one school at a time



Having a good support system always gives one the courage to be themselves. This has been true for Clayton Andries who was born in Botshabelo and later moved to Bloemfontein. Clayton got bullied a lot because of his homosexuality, but always kept his head held high and stayed positive. Besides focusing on academics, he took part in athletics, hockey and his high school newspaper where he developed his love for reading and writing.

Clayton enrolled at CUT in 2013 to study Education (B.Ed Languages). "I got consumed by the party lifestyle and failed my first year. I was very fortunate to have had lectures who helped me find my way back. I am currently pursuing my Hounors in Education." His passion for teaching was inspired by his high school teachers who instilled a love for learning in him. Being a teacher is not easy these days.

They deal with unruly learners and unsupportive parents. The biggest challenge teachers face is that of illiterate high school learners. This is enough to drain the energy out of teachers, but not Clayton, he remains positive and hopeful.

Clayton took part in a 6-week course by Activate Change Drivers, a youth development organization. This inspired him to start the Heatherdale Book Club Buddies at Heatherdale Secondary School where he is a teacher. His goal is to expand this club to his local community.

"I would like to make an impact that is positive, I would like learners to know that hard work, dedication and being authentic and true to yourself brings success. I would also love to shed light on the inclusiveness of all learners, especially the ones who are part of the LGBTQIA+ community who are often left out of the school policies."

Clayton is motivated by his passion and love for people. He dreams of bringing a positive change to his school, community and country. He is always willing to learn and grow. His greatest joy comes from seeing children succeed in life. He encourages students to have fun and enjoy the university experience while setting their priorities straight, working hard and walking with God.



Alumni Association Executive Committee, together with the newly elected Tswelopele Alumni Chapter Leadership.

Tswelopele Alumni Chapter

A Central University of Technology, Free State, CUT Alumni Chapter was successfully launched on 4 December 2021 at the Tswelopele Local Municipality. The newly elected members will run for a tenure of three years under the leadership of Mr Thabang Namusi as the Coordinator and Daniel Doyi as the Convener. Other supporting members of the Chapter include Pinky Masiteng, Masabata Khosa, Dibolelo Marala, Mpho Kemme, and Selina Blom.

When welcoming the members, Alumni Association President, Mr Mbuyiselo Frans, said that amongst other tasks, theirs is to combine all CUT graduates and bring them close to their alma mater. It is also to build a second layer of leadership from launching alumni chapters and to advocate for an institution that grows its own timber.

We also advocate for an institution that is building and growing its own timber. We are saying CUT

should mould its graduates and trust in their quality. What is also important is for us to have a second layer of leadership and what will empower us to prepare this layer of leadership is to launch chapters."

The newly elected Chapter Coordinator, Mr Thabang Namusi said that he hopes and believes that they will be able to reach the rest of the CUT graduates within the municipality to expand on the different programmes. "If we were to expand our programmes to them, they might have ideas which will fit the three year tenure in which will be beneficial to the image and the progress of the very same institution that made us."

Embracing Se-Moshoeshoe in Curriculum Renewal, Africanisation and Decolonisation



Prof Alfred Ngowi, Acting Vice Chancellor and Principal, Central University of Technology, Free State.



Prof Alfred Ngowi, CUT Acting Vice Chancellor and Principal, Prof Tefetso Mothibe the Vice-Chancellor, National University of Lesotho and Dr. Sally Dzingwa Institutional Registrar, CUT.

The legacy of King Moshoeshoe I is enriched with ethical leadership and resources of knowledge that are highly relevant in today's context when discussing curriculum renewal, Africanisation and decolonization. Delivering the keynote address at The King Moshoeshoe I Memorial Lecture, held at CUT on Thursday, 7 April 2022, Prof Tefetso Mothibe, the former Vice-Chancellor of the National University of Lesotho stated that CUT should embrace the Se-Moshoeshoe philosophy to advance curriculum renewal, Africanisation and decolonization.

Prof Mothibe said that when talking about curriculum renewal, the wealth of knowledge that was created by our ancestors should be acknowledged and applied as the current education system does not do so. "I really appreciate, acknowledge, recognise and promote the positive and constructive African knowledge, heritage, and contribution of the African ancestors created before the period of destruction.

The current education system hardly recognizes that this rich knowledge, science, and technology heritage ever existed. They are hardly included in the curriculum, and it is about time we appreciate this positive heritage/data and include it systematically in the curriculum of all African schools as well as colleges and universities."

He added that African history contains rich resources of knowledge that are highly relevant for today and tomorrow and that is why this positive heritage, history, and data must be resurrected.

"This is the knowledge that all Africans must be exposed to and grow up with. This can be achieved by systematically putting the knowledge and values in the curriculum. Morena Moshoeshoe bequeathed us with the legacy of education. In it, he saw many benefits that through education, his beloved Sesotho language would be preserved."

Prof Mothibe highlighted the importance of including African knowledge and heritage in designing new models that prevent dependence and encourage creativity and innovation among students and academics. "It is thus very essential that knowledge production is built on the foundation and values that Africans have left behind," he concluded.



Prof Alfred Ngowi, CUT Acting Vice Chancellor and Principal, Dr. Moleboheng Mohapi Director, National Museum of National History and Dr. Sally Dzingwa, CUT Institutional Registrar.

Getting more than a degree



Mothepane received all her qualifications Cum Laude (B. Tech, Honours, and Master's degrees). In 2015 she received the award for the best first-year student in the Faculty of Management Science. "I acquired a prestigious and merit award for four consecutive years.

I also got involved with student bodies such as the Human Resource Management Society as a general member, and the Deputy Chairperson of the International Office". Mothepane was a tutor, a lecturer's assistant, a medical aid consultant, a departmental administrator, and a project coordinator.

"I studied Human Resource Management because of my love for working and serving others. Most employees go through a lot psychologically and emotionally and when employees suffer, productivity suffers and ultimately the organisation itself suffers. This is likely to lead to reduced profits or even retrenchment and recruitment costs.

Therefore, it is crucial to best ensure employee well being amongst other many HR responsibilities. I can never change the world, but I can definitely be a pillar to someone next to me and make a positive impact."

Mothepane plans to continue studying and one day become a professor. She also wants to honour her mother with her success." She has been my biggest cheerleader and forever preached education above everything else. I trust that she wanted more for me because she never had the opportunity. Even in her absence, I still want to make her proud, I mean how can I not be motivated by her memory.

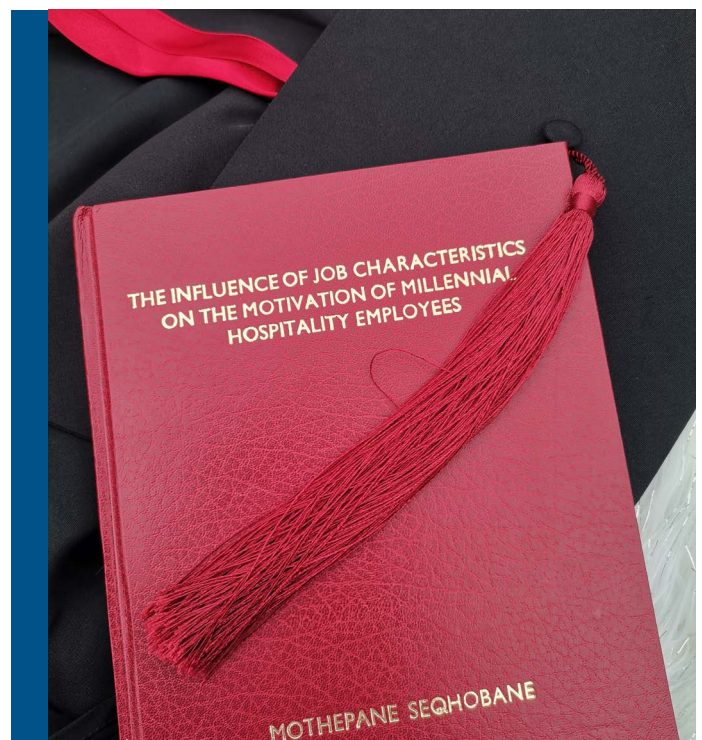
"She encourages students to rise above societal pressures and pursue their journey. "I believe in you because you believe in yourself."

Mothepane Seqhobane, originally from Lesotho, completed her matric certificate at Christian de Wet High School in Dewetsdorp. "This certificate unlatched gates for me and I was accepted into the Central University of Technology, Free State."

As a CUT first year in 2014, Mothepane approached her course in Human Resources Management with enthusiasm. "My study years at CUT were honestly phenomenal. There were efficient student support measures such as psychologists or therapists and infrastructures like libraries and labs.

The support was, and still is there. We as students just need to put it to good use." She excelled in her studies and performed well throughout. "Today I am a wife and mother married to Mr Danny Bokaba whom I met at the CUT International Office during my study years.

It is then safe for me to say, CUT did not just yield student and academic opportunities for me, but I was able to also meet a lifelong partner as well."



Gideon van Zyl - better late than never!



Gideon van Zyl's journey with the Central University of Technology, Free State started when he was 34 years old. Before enrolling for Clinical Technology with specialisation in Cardiology, he obtained an Honours Degree in Agricultural Management as well as a PGCE at the University of the Free State (UFS).

Being a first year student at 34 was rather a unique experience for him. "My fellow students were great and many of us became a close-knit community through our studies. The lecturers in my field of study were superb and I learned a great deal from them."

Gideon van Zyl was born in Barkly East, a small town nestled in the foothills of the majestic Southern Drakensberg. "Growing up on a farm in the area I had a carefree childhood and loving parents as well as two younger brothers. I only realised later in life what a great privilege it was being able to grow up so close to nature in such a picturesque landscape."

He completed his Work Integrated Learning (WIL) at the Cardiology Department of Universitas Academic Hospital under the guidance of Mrs Van den Heever before obtaining his B. Tech degree. Gideon went on to work in a Private Cardiology Practice under Dr Mundell in North West.

"He specialised as a Cardiologist in New Zealand, and I gained extremely valuable skills and knowledge while working with him and will forever be grateful to him." Gideon recently relocated to Bloemfontein and is currently with the practice of Dr's Bester and Bosch at Life Rosepark Hospital.

Gideon strives to make a difference in the lives of patients through the diagnostic tests and procedures he performs that aim to help diagnose and prevent cardiac disease. "When a patient leaves me with a smile, it makes me happy. I also believe in continuous learning and development to improve my knowledge and skills."

His faith in God anchors and directs him and he encourages CUT students and alumni to work towards their dreams. "Education is a powerful tool in developing and enriching yourself. Use the experiences and knowledge you gain at CUT to make a difference in the lives of people crossing your path. Be inquisitive, keep learning, learn from mistakes, and strive to be better each day."

Dr. Sandile Philling Koko - Certified as one of the best



Dr Sandile Phillip Koko, a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Electrical, Electronic, and Computer Systems Engineering at the Faculty of Engineering, Built Environment and Information Technology (FEBIT), recently presented a paper at the second International Conference on Power Engineering (ICPE 2021) that was held in Nanning, China (from 9 to 11 December 2021).

After the conference presentations, his oral presentation was selected as the best of the conference, as certified by the Board of Directors. He presented a paper entitled "Optimal battery sizing for a grid-tied solar photovoltaic system supplying a residential load: a case study under South African solar irradiance". The paper has been recommended to be published in the high impact Scopus Journal Energy Reports.

"It is such a great honour and pleasure for me to receive such a recognition at an international level. This inspires me to put an enormous amount of time and effort into innovative research activities. I would like to thank the office of the Assistant Dean: Research and Innovation, for the great financial support to participate in the conference. I would also like to thank the Head of Department, Professor Kusakana, for bringing such a valued international conference to our attention," said Dr Koko.

Frances Baard Alumni Chapter



Frances Baard Alumni Chapter Leadership

The Frances Baard Alumni Chapter was successfully launched in the Northern Cape on 12 February 2022. These chapters are intended to deepen a lifelong relationship between alumni and the university through opportunities that promote interaction and engagement. CUT will use these chapters to encourage their graduates to identify with the university and give back to their alma mater. Each chapter is expected to develop a programme of action that will maintain and sustain alumni interest and participation in the university's affairs.

"As a University of Technology, we must also be able to bring solutions to some of the problems faced by our graduates and the university and not be part of the problem. Our responsibility is to raise funds as part of the third-stream income to assist the university. This body will serve as a career-building tool to assist our graduates with employment challenges. This university belongs to all of us as the CUT graduates, and I believe that together we can prosper," said the Alumni Association Deputy President, Mr Lebohlang Khutlang.

The newly elected coordinator, Mr Thabo Ramabina, sent a message of appreciation to the CUT Alumni for gracing Frances Baard District in the Northern Cape province with their presence, and for acknowledging them as CUT graduates. "I would like to thank the Alumni Association who saw the importance of launching a chapter in this district. This has inculcated some sense of belonging amongst all of us here."

"As a collective, we will do our best to build this chapter in the district and work together as leaders to ensure that we deliver on our responsibilities. We also understand our role in ensuring that our university fights for its rightful spot at the top to be among the best and most attractive universities for generations to come," he concluded.

Emely Tembe building herself



Emely Tembe hails from Odendaalsrus (Kutlwanong) in the Free State. She joined the Central University of Technology, Free State family in 2015 when she enrolled for Design and Studio Art. Before that, she completed studies in visual arts at the Motheo College.

While studying at CUT, she not only developed her creativity, but also discovered her physical potential. She captained the CUT female rugby team and went on to play for the Free State Cheetahs, before playing in the University World Cup in Namibia in 2018. "I fell in love with physical activities that challenged me, and also decided to join a gym."

Today, Emely works as a personal trainer and participates in bodybuilding competitions. "I love to impact the lives of people from different walks of life. I get the opportunity to not just work on my clients' physical appearance, but also on their self-esteem and mental abilities. I get to teach my clients about fitness, help them to reach their physical goals, and to believe in themselves. Often, I am helping my clients to fall in love with the body that they have while they strengthen it to carry them through life. I have learnt that through fitness I am not only working on my physical image and mental strength, but I am building me. I am accepting my body for what it is and exploring its capabilities."

Emely was a first-generation student who was lucky enough to be awarded a bursary when she commenced with her studies at CUT. "In the beginning, I did not have the funds to register, pay for accommodation, or cover my day-to-day costs." She hopes to be a role model for her younger siblings and others who may experience similar difficulties. "I understand how blessed I am, and I hope that every Black female child who sees me thinks that 'Hey, if Emely from Odendaalsrus can do it, so can I.' For them to know that if they put their mind to it, they can accomplish anything."

Emely believes that you must be who you have been created to be – not a clone or imitation of someone else. Although she knows that our country's unemployment rate is high, she says that an entrepreneurial mindset can get you far. "Believe in yourself; failures are lessons and learning curves that drive us to do better or try a different angle. Closed doors should be viewed as opportunities to explore other avenues, learn new skills, and keep trying."

Reuben Masithela flourishes in the world of art

Reuben Masithela is a 34-year old Bloemfontein born artist, from the streets of Batho location and Heidedal. He matriculated at Brebner High School and enrolled for Graphic Design at the Central University of Technology, Free State CUT. Reuben is currently living in Johannesburg, Sandton, where his career in Graphic Design and the digital space has developed to its full potential. "I took it upon myself to learn as much as possible in the workspace, taking on freelance jobs and researching as much as possible in my spare time, with the aim to be the best in my profession. I now work for a global company as a contractor and continue to network and build my portfolio on an international level."

Art has always been an expressive and therapeutic medium for Reuben, and he never realised that it was a talent. "After high school, I decided to study IT because it seemed like a better career move financially, but that only lasted a year. The following year I decided to study Graphic Design, because I knew that my passion was in Art and Design." While studying, Reuben worked part-time to learn from the real world. Although it was hard to land these jobs as someone who has no experience, he kept knocking at any door that looked like an opportunity and finally became a junior designer at a print shop.

After his studies, Reuben moved to Johannesburg in 2013 to start his career. He had less than one year experience on his CV, but his relentless spirit had him apply pretty much everywhere in Johannesburg until he got his first job at the end of 2013 at an IT and Marketing company as a junior designer. Then, he worked his way up in the field.

His art career only started at the end of 2020 during the global pandemic. "I spent a lot of time alone at my apartment, which was frustrating. Then I decided to get myself a sketch pad and started drawing again. One thing led to another, and I started exploring with different mediums. I found joy and peace again in the process of creating." He shared his work on social media and friends and family encouraged him to continue with art. His first solo exhibition in November 2021 was a great success, and more opportunities followed.

One of the highlights in his career is working on big brands like NBA Africa, Old Mutual, Momentum, Neotel, Nando's, and FNB, as well as becoming the head of design at a respected PR agency in Johannesburg. "Another breakthrough is having an international footprint in the digital design realm when I officially started working remotely for overseas brands in America, Europe, and other parts of the world." Reuben is a proud CUT alumnus, and he continues to raise the flag of his alma mater up high.



Masello Mokhoro - putting females back into farming

Masello Mokhoro was born in Bultfontein, a small town in the Free State, about 100 kilometres north of Bloemfontein. She attended Magakgajane Primary School and matriculated at Rainbow High School in 2016, before joining the Central University of Technology, Free State CUT to study Agricultural Management.

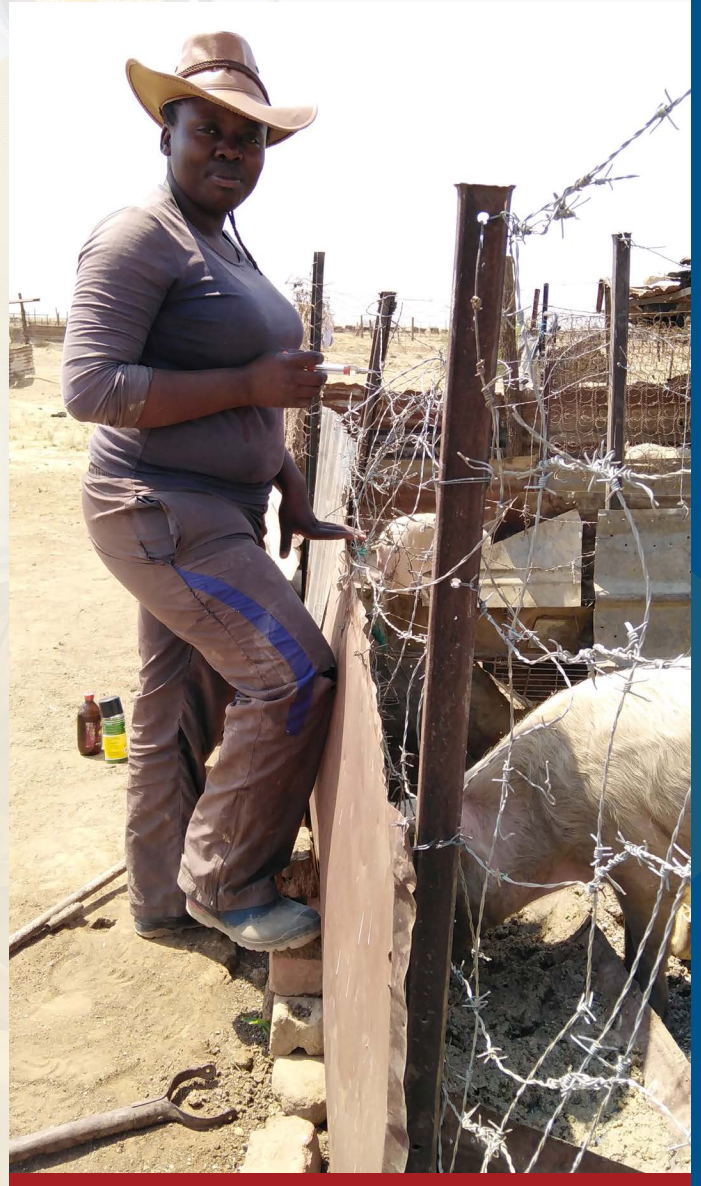
As a naturally quiet and introverted person, Masello says CUT has helped her to grow beyond that. "I was part of AgriSO (Agricultural student organisation) in 2017 and started out as a voluntary peer mentor in 2019, which was when I started breaking out of my shell." Masello received an award for excellent performance and most involved peer mentor in the Faculty of Health and Environmental Sciences. She was also Chairperson of AgriSO and received the runner-up award in the Vice-Chancellor's Leadership Awards.

With the help of an Idea Gym business proposal writing programme, Masello started Starlicious Enterprises in 2019. "The aim was to raise pigs for slaughter and grow from there. As time passed, broilers were included in the mix." The COVID-19 pandemic adversely affected her enterprise, but operations are recovering.

Masello has some additional accomplishments, including obtaining both her qualifications cum laude, and being the only South African to have been selected as part of the Anzisha Prize for the top 26 young African entrepreneurs. She hopes to contribute to the field by showing people that women are just as capable as men.

"My mom is my biggest supporter. Growing up, I had seen all that she sacrificed to take care of me and ensure that I have everything that I need to have a bright future. Now having grown up and being able to help her where I can, brings me the greatest joy and just motivates me to keep on striving for more."

Masello encourages students to make use of the many CUT resources to grow as an individual and a professional. "You can be a cut above the rest. The future is what you make of it. Go out there, dream big and never stop learning. There's still a lot to discover."



Contact the following people to join an Alumni Chapter in your area

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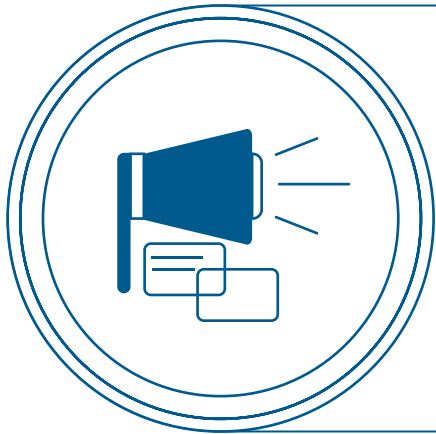
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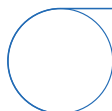
SHARING IS CARING

Share your own (or fellow alumni's) achievements/journey to success with us.

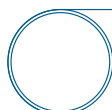
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