



CUT ALUMNI NEWS

11TH Edition

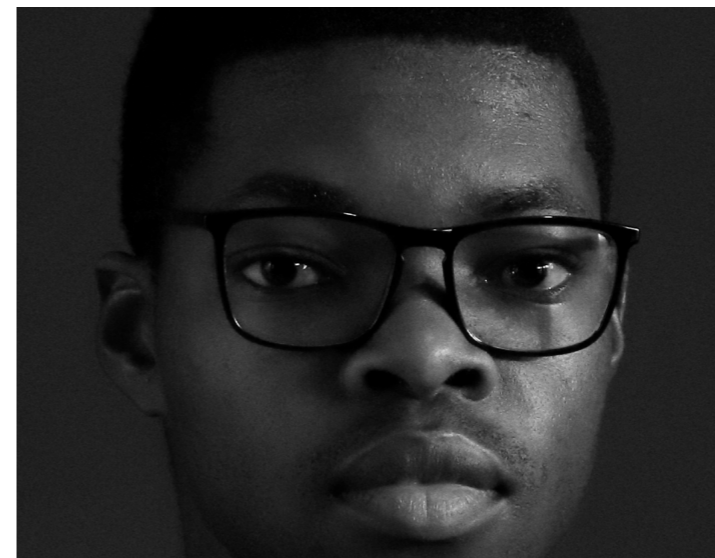
2024

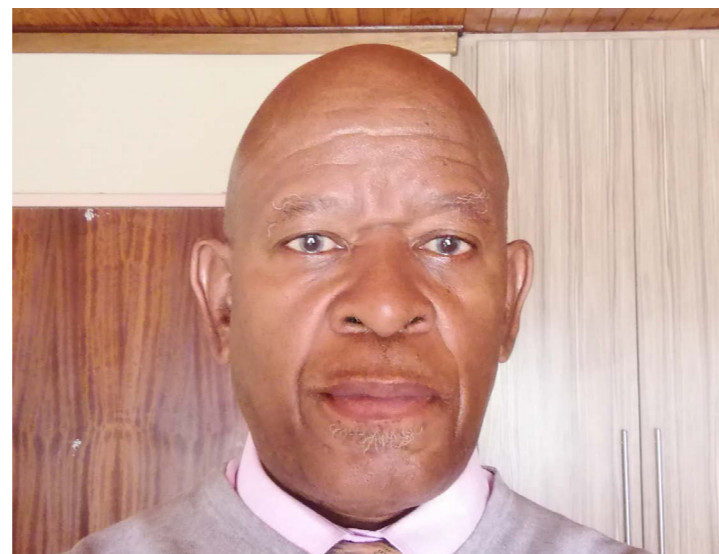


20 YEARS OF THINKING BEYOND



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Dear Alumni Community

Immersed in the pride of your achievements and the fondness of shared memories, it brings me great pleasure to reconnect with you through our newsletter, especially as we commemorate a significant milestone - the 20th anniversary of our beloved university.

The university was established in 1981, and was known as the Technikon Free State. Two decades ago, the Vista University in Welkom and the Technikon Free State merged and became known as the Central University of Technology, Free State (CUT). Our institution continued its journey to nurture and inspire minds. Over the years, CUT has remained a hub of excellence, innovation, and community. The 20-year mark is not merely a testament to the passage of time, it signifies the countless achievements, challenges conquered, and the resilience of the collective spirit that defines us.

Amongst other stories in this edition, we celebrate the remarkable achievements of our diverse alumni - from an alumna competing in France to an alumnus making strides in Germany. Their successes highlight the university's global impact. We are also excited to commend the recent launch of our university's AI Hub launch, which fosters innovation. Furthermore, we note the creativity displayed by a fashion designer and a photographer, as well as the entrepreneurial endeavours of a businessman.

Your stories, accomplishments, and experiences form an integral part of this rich history. I encourage you to share your stories with us on how the university has shaped your journey and influenced your successes. In closing, let us not only celebrate the ties that bind us together but also raise a toast to the university that has been our common ground. Here is to 20 years of excellence, shared memories, and the promise of a future filled with continued growth and success.

Thank you for your unwavering support and dedication to our community.

Warm regards,

Jacqueline Pietersen
Deputy Director: Alumni Affairs



Message from the Interim President of the Alumni Association

Allow me to use this occasion to extend a heartfelt welcome to every member of the Central University of Technology, Free State (CUT) community. In addition to marking 20 years of continuous innovation and knowledge creation at the core of the South African economy, 2024 serves as a reminder that CUT has six years remaining to finish its transformation into the leading university of technology by 2030, and that all stakeholders need to pay close attention to the university's operations in order to accomplish this incredible goal. The CUT Alumni Association Executive Committee would like to take this opportunity to encourage our alumni to participate actively in the association's initiatives and to be receptive to input.

To our new esteemed graduates, I offer my heartfelt congratulations on reaching this significant milestone in your academic journey. Your dedication, perseverance, and hard work have led you to this moment, where you stand on the threshold of a new chapter in your life. As you prepare to step out into the world, armed with knowledge and skills gained from your time here at CUT, remember that you carry with you the values of integrity, innovation, and service that are the hallmarks of our institution. May you continue to strive for excellence in all your endeavors, and may your futures be filled with boundless opportunities for success and fulfillment.

To our new students, I extend a warm welcome to our vibrant academic community. As you embark on this new chapter of your educational journey, know that you are entering an environment that fosters intellectual curiosity, encourages critical thinking, and celebrates diversity in all its forms. CUT, is committed in providing you with the resources, support, and guidance you need to excel academically and to realise your full potential. Embrace this opportunity with an open mind and a willingness to explore new ideas. I have no doubt that you will thrive in our dynamic learning environment. Once again, welcome to Central University of Technology, Free State (CUT). May your time here be enriching, inspiring, and transformative. Here's to a future filled with endless possibilities and boundless opportunities for growth and success.

Sincerely,

Lekhooa Seleke
Interim President
Alumni Association



CUT Council appoints new Chancellor



Pictured from left to right: Dr Clifford Nxomani, Special Advisor: Office of the VC, Prof. David Ngidi, Deputy Vice Chancellor: Teaching and Learning, Prof. Pamela Dube, Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Dr. Thabane Maphai, newly appointed Chancellor, Prof. Alfred Ngowi, Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Research Innovation and Engagement, Dr Sally Dzingwa, Registrar and Mr Milingoni (Mili) Nmutshili, Chief Financial Officer.

The new Chancellor of the Central University of Technology, Free State, Dr Thabane Vincent Maphai was appointed by CUT Council. Prof. Pamela Dube, Vice Chancellor and Principal, welcomed Dr Maphai at a ceremony in his honour. Dr Maphai is succeeding Madam Justice Mahube Molemela whose term concluded in December 2023.

Dr Maphai brings a wealth of experience to his new role. With a diverse background in academia and corporate governance, he has served on the boards of various companies, including the SABC, and played a pivotal role in the Presidential Review Commission, focusing on the restructuring of the public sector. His academic journey includes a two-year position at Williams College in Massachusetts, where he contributed to the academic community. His extensive international exposure includes studying and teaching at universities such as Oxford, Harvard, Princeton, and Stanford. Dr Maphai's academic pursuits have taken him from South Africa to Belgium, the United Kingdom, and the United States. In 1975, graduated from UNISA with a BA degree, marking a significant milestone in his educational journey.

Beyond his professional achievements, Dr Maphai is a man of diverse interests and passions. An avid runner and soccer enthusiast, he finds joy in physical activity. However, his heart lies in the preservation of wildlife and the African bush life, reflecting a deep commitment to environmental conservation.

In his capacity as Chancellor, Dr Maphai will serve as the ceremonial head of the University, overseeing important events such as graduations. Dr Maphai's valuable contribution as the new CUT Chancellor, combined with his leadership, dedication to academia and his diverse experiences, will undoubtedly shape the future of our university. The Chancellor's Installation and Inaugural Address is scheduled to take place on Friday, 12 April 2024.

For more information please click here: <https://www.cut.ac.za/events/details/222>



Navigating new beginnings - 2024 First Years' Orientation



Dr Sally Dzingwa: Registrar

The transition from high school to college is a pivotal moment in every student's life, marked by excitement, trepidation, and the promise of new beginnings. In this article, we explore the significance of first-year orientations, shedding light on their transformative impact on students' academic and personal journeys.

First-year orientations serve as the gateway to a student's college experience, offering a comprehensive introduction to campus life, academic expectations, and the vibrant community awaiting them. This period of adjustment not only facilitates a smoother transition but also plays a crucial role in fostering a sense of belonging and identity within the university.

Dr Sally Dzingwa, the Registrar of the Central University of Technology (CUT), welcomed the incoming students with words of wisdom. "You are joining CUT at a critical time as we celebrate 20 years of this institution. Do not compromise your academic journey for anyone, stay focused and make your families proud," she advised.

The orientation program brought together various stakeholders and organizations, each playing a vital role in shaping the students' initial experiences. Ms Martina Moss from the Centre of Global Engagement extended a warm welcome to students from near and far. She also highlighted the studying abroad opportunities offered by their office, opening doors to a world of possibilities.

Units such as Alumni Affairs the Wellness Centre, Student Academic Development Centre, Sports and the Assessment and Graduation Unit (AGU) introduced themselves to the students. The collective effort of these units creates a support system, emphasising the holistic development of students beyond their academic pursuits.

As the students embark on this new chapter of their lives, the guidance and insights shared during the orientation programme become foundational. Dr Zingwa's message resonates as a reminder to stay focused on the academic journey and to honour the legacy of the institution.

This narrative captures the essence of the first-year orientation at CUT, where students are not only introduced to academic expectations but also to a community that values their growth, well-being, and aspirations. As these students navigate new beginnings, the impact of this orientation will likely reverberate throughout their entire university experience and beyond, making their academic journey at CUT both memorable and purposeful.



Kenny Molupe's - Bringing life to Sesotho airwaves



One of the defining moments was receiving a merit certificate for his dedication during registrations in 2020 and 2022 as a student advisor. The pinnacle of his academic achievement came in 2023 when he graduated with honours – a moment etched in the memory of every student. Kenny has now transitioned from the academic world to the dynamic realm of media. As a news reader and writer at SABC's Sesotho radio station, Lesedi FM, he plays a vital role in presenting news bulletins in Sesotho on air, emphasizing the enduring relevance of radio in the twenty-first century. In an era dominated by digital media, Kenny passionately advocates for the significance of radio. Its accessibility, affordability, and ease of use make it a powerful medium, reaching audiences in cars, homes, and on smartphones, radio, often referred to as the first social media, remains a vital part of daily life, offering news, entertainment, and connection.

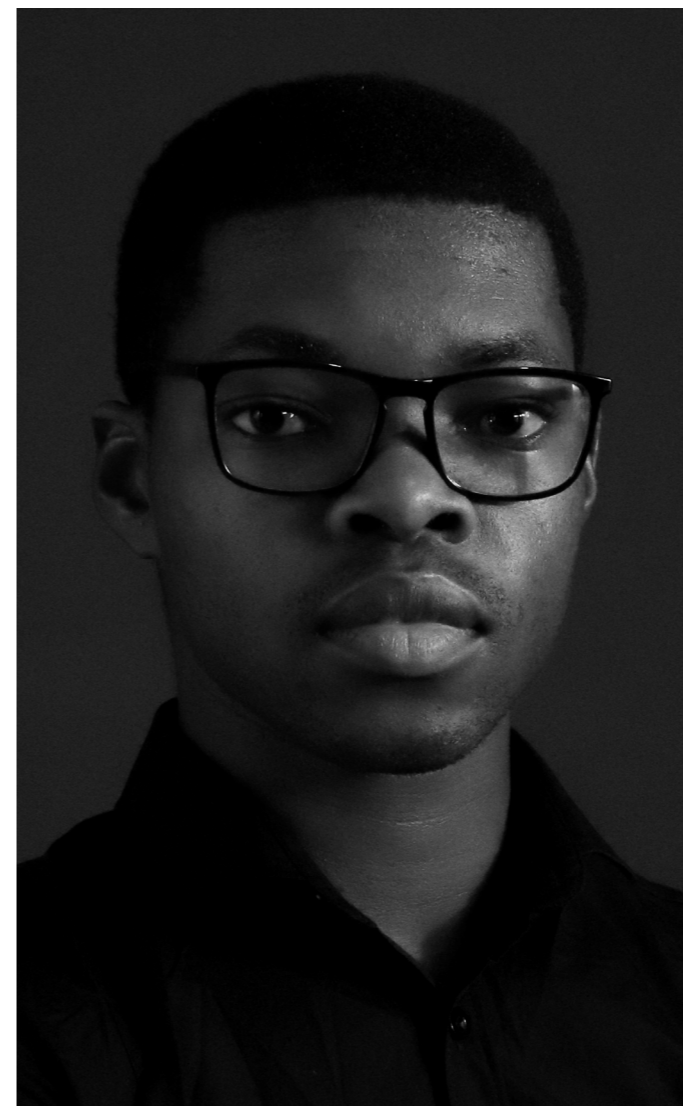
Inside the Lesedi FM newsroom, Kenny's role involves meticulous review and analysis of information. As a news writer, he skilfully translates stories from English to Sesotho, showcasing the importance of linguistic versatility in the media landscape. The fast-paced world of radio demands accuracy and timeliness, particularly for news anchors dealing with breaking news situations. Kenny's journey is deeply rooted in his disadvantaged background, serving as a powerful motivation. "I aspire to be a trailblazer in my generation, inspiring youth to pursue careers in the news industry. I implore aspiring media professionals to not try to imitate anyone. Do not be afraid to start small, you will get there. Learn every chance you get, to be always informed so that you inform the world," he says.

In the quaint township of Hlohlolwane, Clocolan, Free State, Kenny Molupe's story began. Growing up under the guidance of a strict single mother in Bethlehem, he navigated the challenges of life, paving the way for a remarkable journey that would lead him to the heart of the media industry. Kenny's educational journey started at Ruang Tsebo Primary and Kgutliso Primary School in Clocolan before the family's relocation to Parys.

Tragedy struck when his mother passed away, prompting a move back to Bethlehem, where he attended Bodikela Junior Secondary School and Tiisetsang Secondary School. Later, in Parys, he completed his high School education at Yakhisizwe Secondary School before returning to his roots to finish grades 11 and 12 at Clocolan High School. His academic pursuits brought him to the Central University of Technology (CUT), where he studied for a Diploma in Language Practice and Media Studies. Currently holding an Honours Degree in Media Studies and pursuing a Master's Degree, Kenny's academic journey at CUT has been transformative.

He considers choosing piece jobs after matric as his worst decision, acknowledging the time it consumed. However, the experience has fuelled his determination to create opportunities for aspiring journalists. He envisions opening his own media house agency to mentor and prepare young journalists for the challenges of the field. In the heart of Sesotho radio, Kenny Molupe's journey exemplifies resilience, ambition, and the enduring influence of a medium that has stood the test of time.

Neo Theku - A captivating journey from childhood sketches to international galleries



One of Neo's standout memories at CUT dates back to November 2019 when he clinched the top spot as the best artist in the Free State during the New Breed Art Competition. This achievement, as he fondly remembers, elevated him to a celebrity-like status on campus. "Both lecturers and peers treated me like a celebrity because they knew that the golden door was opened for me to enter the world of Fine Arts," he reflects with a sense of gratitude.

Post-graduation, Neo embarked on a professional journey that began with a brief stint at a marketing company. However, he knew the art world was where his true passion was and lead him to resign after just four months. The transition marked the beginning of a career guided by artistic exploration, mentorship, and a commitment to push boundaries.

Born amidst the cultural tapestry of Botshabelo, Neo Theku lived in Lesotho before he made his way to Bloemfontein, to attend high school at the Academy of Excellence in 2010. His artistic roots were self-nurtured, and it wasn't until university that he formalised his education, delving into Graphic Design at the Central University of Technology (CUT).

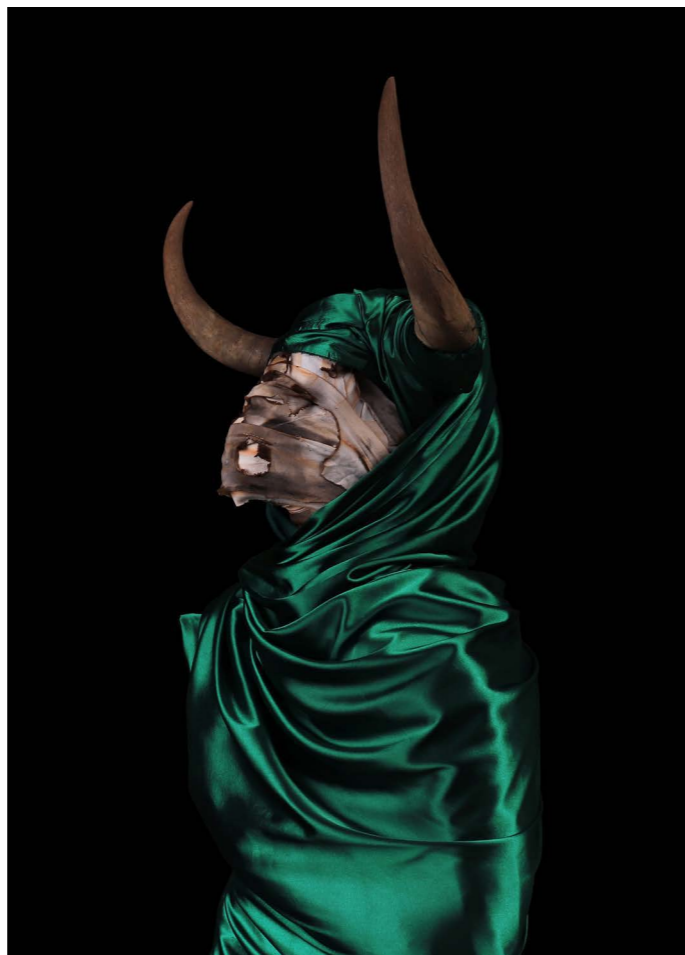
Reflecting on his formative years, Neo recalls, "I started my art career as a self-taught artist and had my first art lesson when I got to university." This unconventional start did not deter his enthusiasm. Frequent visits to the Oliewenhuis Art Museum became a ritual for research, attracting the attention of seasoned artists who would later become his mentors. Choosing Design & Studio Art (Graphic Design) at CUT was a departure from Neo's initial inclination towards Fine Arts. The dynamic and expansive world of Graphic Design unfolded before him, revealing countless opportunities within the creative industry.



I think we have time!

Leveraging his graphic design background, Neo now seamlessly integrates these skills into his photographic and videography work. His artistic trajectory has seen him participate in numerous group exhibitions alongside great artists like William Kentridge, Pauline Gutter, Mary Sibande, Justin Dingwall, and David Tlale. Represented by esteemed galleries such as the ESCAPE Gallery in Cape Town and the Free State Art Collective (FSAC) in Bloemfontein, Neo's work has transcended borders, with one of his pieces showcased in the vibrant art scene of Dubai.

The evolution of an artist is marked by the development of a distinctive signature. For Neo, it's the recurring theme of a dirty mask and green cloth in his photographs, creating an unmistakable identity that sets his work apart. "It is important to have a signature by which people should know your work from afar," he affirms. Inspired by the techniques of painters like Jean Michelle Basquiat, Zdzislaw Besinski, and Fransico Goya, Neo seamlessly translates their artistic nuances into the realm of photography. What's particularly fascinating for him is the realisation that artists, he once studied with at CUT, are now his exhibition peers.



Still Not Found ii



Quicksand In The Frame Of Love



Oobawo Bethu

Sheree Snyman - A triumph of perseverance in Human Resources (HR)



The roots of Sheree Snyman's journey can be traced back to her childhood in Pretoria. She spent her formative years at Garsfontein Laerskool and Garsfontein Hoerskool, laying the foundation for the tenacity that would define her future endeavours. Sheree's professional odyssey began in the field of Hospitality, but a pivotal moment in 2006 redirected her trajectory toward the Human Resources Department.

Taking on the role of heading the training department, she embarked on a dual journey of professional growth and academic pursuit. As she climbed the corporate ladder, Sheree confronted the challenge of balancing a full-time job with raising a family and pursuing higher education. Undeterred, she not only completed her Diploma in HR but also seized the opportunity to earn her degree through CUT (Central University of Technology) while navigating the delicate balance of motherhood and a demanding career.

Sheree's journey was not without its share of hurdles. Faced with the demands of a rigorous academic schedule, coupled with the responsibilities of motherhood, she exemplified unwavering commitment and resilience. Even a major operation did not deter her from the pursuit of her academic goals, showcasing an indomitable spirit that would inspire those around her. In the words of Joel Osteen, "Nothing happens to you, it happens for you." Sheree Snyman embodied this philosophy throughout her academic and professional voyage.

The challenges she faced were not roadblocks but stepping stones, propelling her forward in her journey of growth and self-discovery. Today, Sheree stands as the HR Head of Department, a testament to her continuous growth and unyielding dedication. Every day, her role brings new challenges and learnings, contributing to the dynamic nature of her work.

What sets her apart is her commitment to making a positive impact wherever she goes. Sheree's vision for her field extends beyond the confines of her office. She aspires to witness people grow, believe in themselves, and understand that every problem is a gift - a catalyst for personal and professional development. In the ever-evolving landscape of HR, she emphasises the importance of continuous learning as the key to growth.

In closing, Sheree imparts invaluable wisdom gained from her HR journey. She advocates for openness, honesty, and fearlessness in tackling difficult conversations. "Embrace feedback as an integral part of the learning journey. Adapt a solution-oriented mindset, and foster an environment of continuous growth," she says. Sheree's resilient spirit turned adversity into triumph, demonstrating that with determination, every challenge is an opportunity waiting to be seized. As she continues to make strides in the field of Human Resources, Sheree leaves an indelible mark as a beacon of inspiration for aspiring professionals.

Neo Ramasililo - Carrying the hopes of South Africa



From Welkom to the bustling city of Bloemfontein, Neo Ramasililo's path to success has been anything but conventional. Her story, one of determination and passion for technology, exemplifies the power of seizing opportunities and pushing boundaries.

Growing up, Neo harboured aspirations of pursuing engineering or quantity surveying, inspired by her technical education at Louis Botha Technical School. However, a chance encounter with her uncle's coding ignited a newfound curiosity within her. With no prior knowledge of coding, she embarked on a journey of self-discovery, enrolling at the Central University of Technology (CUT) to study Information Technology.

Neo's insatiable thirst for knowledge led her to stumble upon the World Skills Competition, an international event showcasing excellence in various vocational skills. Intrigued by the robotics competition, despite lacking any prior experience, Neo decided to take the plunge. "I love IT but I was so interested in robotics. I wanted to understand how my coding skills could contribute to building a functioning robot," she explained fervently.

Selected among 100 students nationwide, Neo embarked on her first competition in Lephalale, Limpopo, representing South Africa. Despite initial nerves and challenges, Neo's determination propelled her forward. Progressing to the provincial competition in Durban, Neo faced adversity when her partner withdrew. Undeterred, she persevered, fueled by her mother's unwavering support and a newfound resilience. Paired with a new partner, Neo defied the odds, advancing to the next round. Now, Neo stands on the precipice of a new challenge as she prepares to represent South Africa in the international stage in France. It marks a historic moment for her country, and Neo is determined to make her mark. "Competing with technologically advanced countries is daunting, but I see it as an opportunity to learn and bring those skills back home," she expressed with unwavering resolve.

Yet, amidst the weight of responsibility, Neo finds solace in simple pleasures, indulging in Korean dramas to unwind. Her advice to aspiring technologists echoes her own journey. "Start early, seize every opportunity, and never underestimate your potential. We're playing catch-up with advanced countries. Start learning early, seek opportunities, and never stop developing yourself," she urges. As Neo ventures into uncharted territory, she carries with her the hopes of a nation and the promise of a brighter future for South Africa's technological landscape. Her determination and relentless pursuit of excellence is paving the way for generations to come, inspiring others to dream big and reach for the stars.

Moses Nwosu - Technology across continents



These journeys were not just sightseeing tours, they became pivotal junctures in his personal and professional metamorphosis, offering him a panoramic view of the world. As the end of his exchange program neared, Moses found an unexpected offer, securing a advantageous position with a German startup. "Getting this job was a game-changer. It highlighted the transformative power of the exchange program, opening doors I hadn't dared to dream of," Moses mused.

Today, Moses resides in Aalen, Germany, a living testament to the potency of international academic initiatives. His narrative serves as a beacon for CUT students, offering inspiration to those harboring aspirations of global careers. The Centre for Global Engagement (CGE) at CUT stands proud, facilitating such journeys and emphasising the role of international exposure in shaping not just careers but global perspectives.

In the story of Moses Nwosu, students at CUT are reminded that the world is a canvas of opportunities. With unwavering determination and the support offered by CUT's global engagement initiatives, students have the potential to paint vibrant and successful futures on the global stage. Moses' journey echoes a universal truth. The world beckons, and for those willing to explore, the possibilities are limitless.

In the heart of the Central University of Technology (CUT) in South Africa, an extraordinary tale unfolds the story of Moses Nwosu, an IT whiz originally from Nigeria. Moses's narrative takes us from the halls of CUT to the tech hubs of Germany, revealing his journey through CUT's Exchange Programme. Moses enrolled at CUT in 2019 envisioning a mere academic pursuit to finalize his Bachelor of Technology in IT at Aalen University of Applied Sciences in Germany, supported by a prestigious scholarship. Little did he know that this six-month would change all his plans.

Moses reflects on this period, stating, "The exchange programme wasn't confined to textbooks, it was a kaleidoscope of cultures, friendships, and unexpected career turns. Every day felt like a new chapter, a discovery beyond the confines of traditional classrooms." His journey introduced him to a global community of peers hailing from Germany, Spain, Chile, Portugal, and beyond.

Moses' stay in Germany became not just an educational endeavour but a cultural and social expedition, a celebration of diversity that forged friendships spanning the globe. The exchange programme was Moses' passport to traverse Europe, with pit stops in the Netherlands, Italy, and France.



Unveiling the Central University of Technology's AI Hub for societal transformation



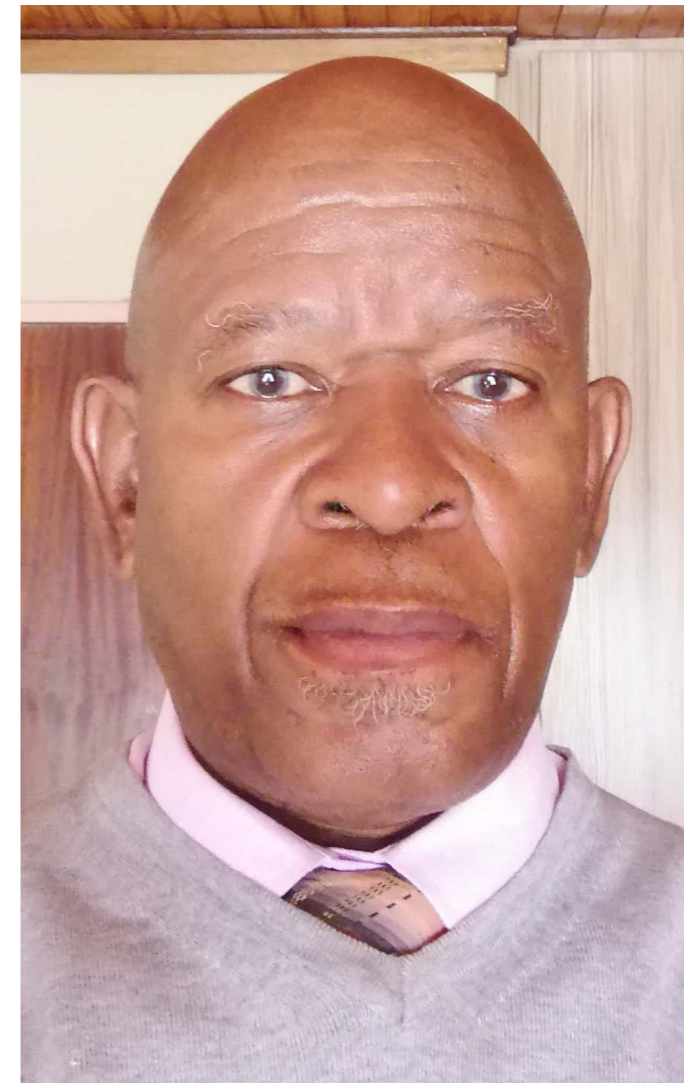
Stakeholders from DCDT, Free State government and representatives of CUT faculties at the AI Hub launch

In a groundbreaking collaboration that signifies a pivotal moment in the realm of technology and education, the Department of Communications and Digital Technologies (DCDT), the Free State Provincial Government, and the Central University of Technology (CUT) have forged a dynamic partnership. This strategic alliance has resulted in the establishment of a hub within the prestigious Artificial Intelligence Institute of South Africa (AIISA). This collaborative venture is poised to harness the revolutionary capabilities of Artificial Intelligence (AI) to bring about transformative changes in various sectors of society, with a particular emphasis on elevating agricultural practices in the central region of South Africa. The conceptual framework of the CUT AI Hub is intricately woven into the tapestry of CUT's comprehensive digital transformation strategy and roadmap, serving as the guiding force behind the operations of the AIISA-affiliated hub.

In expressing his unwavering support for this pioneering initiative, Prof. Alfred Ngowi, the Deputy Vice Chancellor for Research, Innovation, and Engagement at CUT, underscored the instrumental role that Artificial Intelligence will play in reshaping the landscape of teaching and learning, research and innovation, and the overall operational efficiency of educational institutions. Illuminating the vision for 2030, Prof. Ngowi envisions the CUT AI Hub as a trailblazing center for AI research, development, and application, with a specific focus on propelling advancements in the smart agriculture value chain, smart manufacturing, natural language processing, and smart and sustainable tourism. These focus areas not only demonstrate foresight but also underscore the institution's commitment to addressing pressing societal challenges and crafting sustainable solutions that leave a lasting impact. "The strategic selection of thematic areas, including Smart Agriculture Value Chain, Smart Manufacturing, Natural Language Processing, and Smart and Sustainable Tourism, is a deliberate and thoughtful alignment with the specific needs of our region and the nation. These pillars will not only serve as the foundation but also as the driving force upon which we will build our research, development, and innovation endeavors," Prof. Ngowi passionately asserted.

Mr. Alfred Mashishi, the Chief Director of the Department of Communications and Digital Technologies, emphasised the critical role that policy formulation plays in establishing a robust digital ecosystem that fosters collaboration between government, business, and academia. In articulating the nuanced approach required for successful AI adoption, Mashishi outlined three key aspects - the need for a systematic approach to AI data governance and connectivity to inform policymaking, the importance of international cooperation to ensure the emergence of trustworthy AI technology, and the imperative of cultivating a shared understanding of AI through the exchange of best practices and evidence-based insights. The unveiling of the CUT AI Hub by the AIISA marks a significant milestone in the evolution of artificial intelligence research and application. Notably, this hub stands as the third under the AIISA umbrella, following the Tshwane University of Technology and the University of Johannesburg, each contributing to the broader landscape of AI research and development. "This inauguration aligns seamlessly with CUT's 20th anniversary celebration, underscoring the institution's commitment to providing technological solutions that transcend academic boundaries and benefit the broader community. As the AI landscape continues to evolve, the CUT AI Hub emerges as a beacon of innovation, poised to make lasting contributions to the field and society at large," said Dr Pakiso Maakhoahle, Acting Dean: Health and Environmental Sciences.

Zonisele Andrew Mapolesa's inspiring tale



Born on 15 June 1956, at Erfdeel farm in Bothaville, Zonisele Andrew Mapolesa emerged from a family of seven siblings, carving his path as the fifth-born. His early years were marked by humble beginnings, where he attended Erfdeel combined school, walking miles to and from Misgund School for higher education. At just sixteen, he found himself working as a labourer on a farm, a pivotal moment that would shape his destiny.

In 1972, facing financial constraints and driven by the desire for a better life, he stepped into bettering his future. Walking 17 miles to the town of Bothaville with nothing but the clothes on his back, he sought opportunities that would change the course of his life. Piece jobs, determination, and the kindness of a stranger provided a foundation for his journey. Despite facing numerous challenges, Zonisele's commitment to education remained unwavering. Working tirelessly, he saved enough to enroll in Form 1 (Grade 8) in 1973, eventually completing Form 3. His persistence led him to sell fruits and sweets, work in a mine, and eventually return to complete his matric in record time.

Zonisele's teenage years hinted at his affinity for sales. Selling sweets, oranges, doves, and handmade wire cars, he laid the foundation for a career in marketing. Armed with practical experience and a desire to excel, he pursued a BTech in Marketing through UNISA, setting the stage for a remarkable journey. In 1992, Zonisele's arrival at CUT was marked by mixed emotions. The challenges were real, especially with having accounting classes in Afrikaans, but his determination prevailed. A pivotal moment occurred between 2002 and 2004 when he was invited to lecture part-time at CUT - an experience he treasures deeply.

Post-graduation, Zonisele embarked on a diverse career journey. From SpoorNet to G4S and MTN SA, he navigated roles ranging from sales representative to security manager. His foray into the property industry culminated in the establishment of his own estate agency company in 2022. Zonisele's current role as the sole director and property practitioner principal of his estate agency is a testament to his entrepreneurial spirit. Being his own boss, determining his salary, and navigating the intricacies of the property market, especially in the face of historical challenges, bring him fulfillment.

As an accomplished individual, Zonisele offers sage advice to the younger generation. "Education is of extreme importance. You will need to persevere and choose role models wisely. I hope my journey from a farm in Bothaville, to the helm of my own agency, is an inspiration to everyone. Remember that success is not measured by material possessions but by the steps taken towards one's goals," he advises. His commitment to education, resilience in the face of adversity, and entrepreneurial spirit epitomise the values of CUT.



Zonisele's animal farm in Ferreira, Bloemfontein

Dimakatso Vinolia Thipe - From small town dreamer to fashion innovator



In the bustling world of fashion, where creativity is king and innovation reigns supreme, alumna Dimakatso Vinolia Thipe, stands out. Dimakatso is from the quaint town of Jagersfontein in the Free State, and has carved her path from humble beginnings to the forefront of the fashion industry.

Dimakatso's journey began in the corridors of Boaramelo Combined School, where her innate creativity started to bloom. From an early age, she found joy in crafting, often sketching and designing outfits inspired by the world around her. Surrounded by a family of artisans, her passion for fashion was nurtured, particularly by her aunt, a skilled seamstress who ignited Dimakatso's fascination with the art of garment-making. "My aunt used to make church uniforms and she taught me how to use the sewing machine. It came so easily for me and I knew that this was what I wanted to do," she says excitedly.

Dimakatso's love for design led her to pursue her dreams. Upon completing her matric in 2015, she embarked on a journey of education at the Central University of Technology (CUT). Throughout her academic tenure, Dimakatso seized every opportunity to excel. Immersing herself in pattern drafting and experimenting with bold colour schemes, she embraced the challenges of her craft with unwavering enthusiasm.

True to her roots, Dimakatso's design ethos is a reflection of her upbringing – simple yet sophisticated, vibrant yet comfortable. Her creations exude a sense of effortless elegance, infused with playful prints and intricate detailing. From puff sleeves to pleats, each garment bears the marks of her distinctive style, capturing the essence of modern femininity.

One of Dimakatso's highlights was getting the role of student assistant for textile and surface design modules. It was a full-circle moment for her, as she imparted her knowledge and expertise to her peers, paying homage to those who had once guided her own journey. Witnessing the growth and success of her fellow students affirmed her belief in the transformative power of education and mentorship.

As the founder of her label, Vino-D, she continues to push the boundaries of creativity, designing bespoke garments that embody her unique vision. "I had the opportunity to show my work at the Durban July Fashion Show in 2022 and would like to establish my own fashion studio to grace the runways of international fashion weeks," she says.

"Success is not measured by accolades alone but by the journey taken to achieve them. With determination as my compass and creativity as my guide, I believe my spirit of innovation and ingenuity, will prove that dreams do indeed come true, one stitch at a time," she remarks.



Durban July Fashion Show 2022



Vino - D designs



CONGRATULATIONS FOR MAKING THE SOUTH AFRICAN NATIONAL TEAM



**Orapeleng
Motlhoarin**

Player



**Jason
Raubenheimer**

Player



**Donavin
George**

Manager



@sport_at_cut



CONGRATULATIONS FOR MAKING THE USSA FOOTBALL NATIONAL SQUAD



**Bokang
Lubisi**

CDM



**Simo
Ndlovu**

CB



**Katleho
Molakeng**

CDM/LWB



**Tumelo
Mothabeng**

LB/LCB

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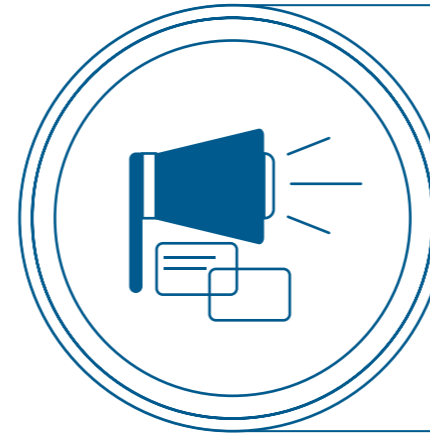
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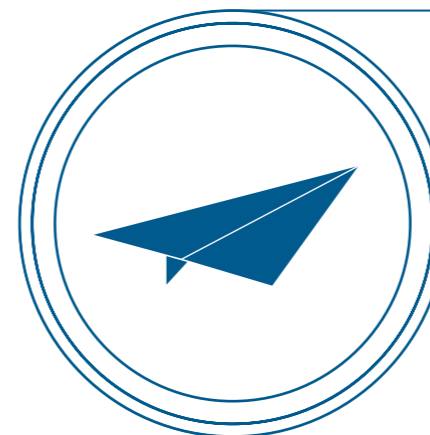
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