

NEWS



New category introduced for awards, world-renowned recipients ...

Bar raised higher at Alumni Awards

TOP South African fashion designer Jenni Button was one of several outstanding alumni recognized for their achievements by Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU) at a glittering awards function recently.

The annual NMMU Alumni Awards go to alumni who have gone the distance and beyond in their various fields, to the benefit of society at local, provincial, national and international level.

Receiving the prestigious Alumni Awards alongside Button, a graphic design graduate from the former Port Elizabeth Technikon (now part of NMMU), were Hong Kong-based Infiniti Global Limited CEO Johan de Nysschen, University of Pretoria's Prof Ernie Heath, a passionate promoter of sustainable tourism, London-based Deutsche Bank's head of global equities Garth Ritchie and well-known South African advocate Willem van der Linde.

This year also saw the introduction of a new category of awards – the Alumni Rising Stars – to celebrate the youngest generation of alumni go-getters. Recipients included textile design graduate Laduma Ngxokolo, whose Xhosa knitwear designs have graced the world's catwalks, leading ICT entrepreneur and former MXit CEO Alan Knott-Craig Jnr, London-based Prudential PLC group lead: risk and capital Achumile Majija, founder of respected building consultancy and construction firm the Elilox Group Dr Bridgette Gasas, and South African drug access program manager for the Clinton Health Access Initiative Dr Millidhashni Reddy.

For their contribution to education, Alumni special awards went to Bruce Damons, dynamic principal at forward-moving “no fee” Sapphire Road Primary School, and



ACHIEVERS ACHIEVE ... The Annual Alumni awards took place recently and recognized many alumni that have gone the distance and beyond in their various fields. Present at the awards were Director: Alumni Relations, Paul Geswindt (back from left), President: Alumni Association, Randall Jonas, award recipients Prof Ernie Heath, Adv Willem van der Linde, Bruce Damons, Director: Prof Kotie Grove, award winners Natalie Stear and Jenni Button with NMMU Vice Chancellor, Prof Derrick Swartz.

retired Eastern Cape principal Natalie Stear, previously named among the country's top 100 educators.



The recipients were selected from a wide range of outstanding nominations received by the Alumni Awards Executive Committee.

“We are extremely proud to present

awards to these deserving individuals in the spirit of NMMU's value of excellence. NMMU is proud of the achievements of all the 2012 recipients,” said Alumni Relations director Paul Geswindt.

Past recipients of the NMMU Alumni Achiever Awards include Volkswagen SA managing director David Powels, International Cricket Council CEO Dave Richardson, top legal mind advocate Kemp J Kemp and celebrated Afrikaans novelist Eben Venter.

Please check our website for more information and photos about the Alumni Achiever and Rising Star Awards @ <http://alumni.nmmu.ac.za>.

Graduate climbs tree of success

NMMU graduate and well-known businesswoman Nomkhitha Mona has been appointed as the first woman chief executive of the South African Forestry Company (SAFCOL), a division of the Department of Public Enterprises.

Mona, who recently resigned from her position as chief executive of the Uitenhage Despatch Development Initiative (UDDI), will now head the company that conducts timber harvesting, processing and related activities both locally and internationally.

Her hope is to "inspire and motivate" other women.

"It is an exciting yet challenging opportunity to demonstrate and symbolise that women are capable of holding and delivering on jobs previously reserved for males."

Mona is well known countrywide for her business eye – and was head-hunted for this position.

One of her first priorities at Safcol will be to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the company. "I am quite confident that with the team of committed, experienced and highly qualified members at Safcol, we will collectively deal adequately with any challenges the company may face from time to time."

She said Safcol was a world-class forestry management company with a solid history of professionalism and growth.

Mona was previously appointed as the first black woman in a senior managing position on the board of Goodyear Tyre and Rubber Holdings in South Africa.

Other positions include chief executive of Inkezo Land Company in Durban, chief of the Eastern Cape Tourism Board, and registrar of the Commission for Conciliation Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA) in Mpumalanga.

She holds a BA degree in Psychology and Sociology and an honours degree in Industrial Relations from NMMU, as well as an MBA and masters degree in Labour Relations and Human Resources from Rhodes University.



SUCCESS ...
Graduate and well-known business woman, Nomkhitha Mona is now the first woman chief executive of the South African Forestry Company, (SAFCOL) a division of the Department of Public Enterprises

Visit the

Alumni website

@

<http://alumni.nmmu.ac.za>

Note from the editor

GREETINGS from Alumni Relations. As the year draws closer to the end we reflect on what difference our office has made to our alumni.

With only a month left our diary still has some exciting events coming up.

The Alumni Achiever Awards have just taken place with all our recipients worthy winners. The new category, the Rising Stars, celebrated NMMU's go-getters.

The annual Alumni Executive Breakfast will be happening in November which formally closes our events for the year.

Many successful events have been held throughout the year, five successful alumni events and socials, the very first

"Reflections" discussion panel event, as well as the first PE Chapter Book Club meeting.

A new alumni constitution was also adopted this year.

In this edition you will find:

- ◆ Up-to-date alumni news and happenings
- ◆ Alumni success stories
- ◆ Alumni event gallery

Have you updated your details? We would love to stay in touch with you.

We are proud of our alumni who keep the NMMU flag flying high.

Warm regards
Liscka Hendricks



Alumni Relations

Connect & stay in touch...

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Bridgette leads the way

BUILDING sciences doctoral graduate Bridgette Gasa, the founder of respected building consultancy and construction firm, the Elilox Group, is firmly making her mark in what has traditionally been considered a man's domain.

This year, Gasa reaped success upon success.

Internationally, she was confirmed as the Visiting Fellow in the Faculty of Architecture and the Built Environment at Nottingham Trent University in the United Kingdom.

Closer to home, she was appointed by South African president Jacob Zuma as the chairperson of the Dube Tradeport, a national flagship project, in March 2012.

In another appointment by the president, she became the youngest female member of the National Planning Committee (NPC), which is chaired by Minister Trevor Manuel.

The NPC tabled the country's first ever National Development Plan and Vision 2030 in August.

As a result of her achievements this year, Gasa received a NMMU Alumni Rising Star Award, which recognises the younger generation of alumni who continue to make NMMU proud.

This year's awards was attended by more than 200 alumni and friends and saw the likes of one of South Africa's foremost fashion designers, Jenni Button also receiving an Alumni Achiever Award.



PAVING WAY ... Alumnus Dr Bridgette Gasa was one of the Alumni Rising Star Award recipients celebrating the younger generation of NMMU alumni leaders.

Offering words of inspiration, Gasa said: "Nothing can ever replace sheer hard work – work very hard towards fulfilling your purpose. A great majority of people never appreciate your dreams, let alone understand your drive towards achieving them, but the very few that do will make room for you."



News Briefs

Music travels overseas

NMMU BMus and MMus graduate Devandre Boonzaaier was awarded an overseas travel bursary for organ study.

Boonzaaier, a part-time lecturer in NMMU's Music Department and chairperson of the Feather Market Organ Society, was a semi-finalist in the ATKV Musiq competition in Stellenbosch and a finalist in the Southern Africa Church Organists' Society (SAKOV) bursary competition in Mpumalanga.

In July, he performed as a soloist with the University of South Africa (UNISA) Philharmonic Orchestra in Pretoria during the final concert of the UNISA Organ Symposium.

Alumnus receives award

BSc Honours Quantity Surveying graduate Junita Petzer received the prestigious Association of South African Quantity Surveyors (ASAQS) Gold Medal Award at the International Cost Engineering Council (ICEC) 8th World Conference, held in Durban in June.

She is the fourth student from the department to receive this award, which is made available by ASAQS on an annual basis. Criteria for the award is based on overall academic performance, leadership skills and community involvement.

Upcoming Events

Alumni Exec Breakfast

16 November

Alumni Exec Meetings

08 November

Tennis Reunion

8 November

Kiteboarder's journey abroad

SAASVELD conservation graduate Susan Kay's passion for kites has led to her becoming a professional kiteboarder for Cabrinha Kites in Asia.

Although her career path has veered away from what she studied, Kay believes her Saasveld experience led to her sporting career, which thus far spans 10 years.

"During my studies I captained the hockey team and represented Southern Cape A and B hockey sides, was secretary for the hiking club, came second in orienteering in my age group in South Africa, played second team squash and snooker, was involved in the Spartan race event and was even cricket scorer for the cricket teams."

In addition to these on-campus activities, Kay was also involved in scuba diving, surfing and paragliding, none of which she had the time to take up seriously.

In 1993, Kay was the first woman to receive the Sports Person of the Year which, incidentally, her father had received while studying forestry at the George Campus.

After finishing her studies Kay leaped at an opportunity to work in the United Arab Emirates, where she joined the local Sevens Rugby Club.

"There, I had the opportunity to play for the Qatari women's team in the Hong Kong Sevens (considered the premier tournament on

the IRB Sevens World Series). The world is full of opportunities when you participate in sport."

She returned to South Africa until the travel bug bit again in 2000 and she found herself working in the United Kingdom, where she was introduced to kitesurfing.

"I rearranged my life to relocate to New Zealand, one of the birth places of this sport, and immersed myself in it for the next decade by working in the industry in retail, instruction and manufacture."

Kay was the top female kitesurfer in New Zealand from 2005 to 2007 and ranked 15th in the world in 2006. She then retired from competitive events due to injuries.

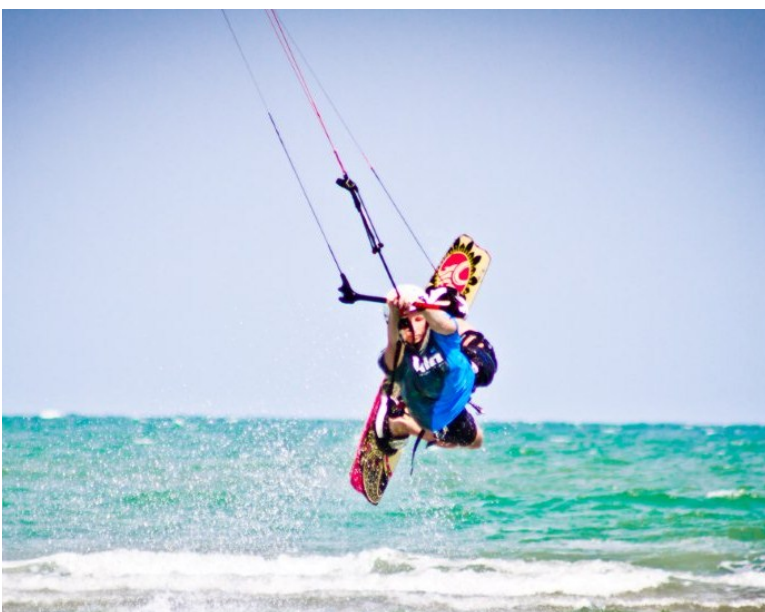
"In mid 2011 my husband was offered the top position in the kitesurfing industry worldwide for kite board manufacturing, based in Hong Kong."

During the six months it took for Kay to sell their board building and kitesports retail business in New Zealand, Kay decided to compete in the New Zealand National Championships and bid her farewells to the industry.

"To my surprise, I was the top female competitor again. At a loss as to what to do once based in Asia, it gave me the inspiration to travel and compete in the Kiteboard Tour Asia (KTA). "Once again, I surprised myself by placing second at



EXPERIENCE GALORE ... Professional kiteboarder for Cabrinha Kites in Asia, Susan Kay, is living her dream as she takes on competitors half her age and gives all gratitude to the attitude she learnt at the Saasveld campus, to persevere encourage teamwork and sportsmanship as well as making friends.



the event in the Philippines and, even though I injured my knee at the second event of the tour, I was able to retain my second place overall for the KTA 2012 season." A fair result, considering she was competing against girls much younger than

herself.

"The Saasveld attitude of perseverance, teamwork, sportsmanship and making friends through doing things together is something I will carry with me for life.

Student society promotes leadership

NMMU's Student Alumni Society (SAS) recently held their annual end-of-year breakfast function, where 2012 Alumni Rising Star Award winner Achumile Majija motivated the students to "take charge of their future today".

Outgoing SAS chairperson Thomas Terblanche, who will now hand over the reins to Curwyn Mapaling, provided an overview of what the society has been doing this year, including all their community outreach programmes.

The society's focus for the year included youth development, career planning and motivation for examinations.

Guest speaker Majija – a BCom graduate, future leader and current Group Lead: Risk and Capital Management Information (MI) for Prudential PLC in London, where he is part of a team adapting the firm to the European Union's last post-recession insurance regulations – said hard work, perseverance and taking chances had paid off for him in his career.

"While studying, I was fortunate to have many opportunities to travel and experience other countries, but always returned home with more experience, knowledge and a thirst for making a difference."

He encouraged students to "start now and prove that you are leaders indeed".

"You have to pave your own way and ask yourself what difference you can make. Reflect and live beyond your limitations; it is not about age but about what you put in at the end of the day."

He encouraged the students to go out and make a difference and be a solution in the world. "You are able to do great things, so make use of your opportunities, meet great mentors and shape yourself to be an individual that stands out from the rest. Don't wait for tomorrow to follow your dreams; if you fail, you have your degree to fall back on."

Majija urged students not to take campus life too lightly and



FUTURE LEADERS ... SAS 2012 Executive Members Curwyn Mapaling (back from right), Shinay Terblanche, Thomas Terblanche, Baakier Abrahams (Student Officer) Azharuddin Mohamed, Stewart Nyabereka along with Alumni Rising Star award recipient, Achumile Majija who was the guest speaker at the SAS 2012 end of year breakfast recently.

to take advantage of the opportunities on offer in the forms of sports and societies. "The country owes you nothing, take charge of your situation and become a great leader." He ended by quoting former South African president Nelson Mandela: *There is no passion to be found in playing small- in settling for a life that is less than the one you*

are capable of living. The new executive members leading SAS in 2013 are Curwyn Mapaling (chairperson), Azharuddin Mohamed (vice-chairperson), Shinay Terblanche (secretary), Lee-Angus Rennie (treasurer), Simeon van Jaarsveld (public relations officer) and Welcome Kupangwa (projects coordinator).

Engineering alumnus nabs top US tyres position

NMMU Industrial Engineering graduate Craig Baartman has been named plant manager of Continental Tire the Americas' (CTA's) new manufacturing facility, being constructed in Sumter, South Carolina.

Baartman, who was director of manufacturing at CTA before his new appointment, will be responsible for the overall leadership of the facility, which will open its doors in 2013.

"We are excited to welcome Craig to his new role," said CTA's chief executive officer Jochen Etzel. "His business acumen and extensive project management experience here in Sumter are strong assets, and we are confident in his leadership for this exciting project for CTA."

South African born and bred Baartman, who has more than 18 years' experience in global automotive, manufacturing and supplier industries, has been with Continental for 12 years. His past positions include being industrial engineer, area manager and production manager at the company's plant in Port Elizabeth.

"I have thoroughly enjoyed working with Continental for the past 12 years and am excited to lead the Sumter team as we embark on this new journey," said Baartman.

He has also held engineering and leadership positions with automotive suppliers in South Africa and the United Kingdom.

Baartman holds an MBA from the University of Wales, Cardiff and a degree in Industrial Engineering from the former Port Elizabeth Technikon, now Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University.

Continental is among the leading automotive suppliers worldwide with over €30.5 billion in sales last year.

The company, which has 169,000 employees in 46 countries, contributes to enhanced driving safety, being a supplier of brake systems, systems and components for powertrains and chassis, instrumentation, infotainment solutions, vehicle electronics, tyres and technical elastomers.



LEADING ENGINEER ... Alumnus Craig Baartman has been appointed as the plant manager of Continental Tire the Americas (CTA) in Sumter, South Carolina.

Alumni Awards Gallery Photos



EDUCATION FUNDIS ... Special Award recipients Bruce Damons (from left) and Natalie Stear were awarded Special Awards for their contribution to education locally, nationally and internationally.



YOUNG LEADERS ... This year the Alumni Relations Office recognised the younger generation of ge-getters doing alumni proud. Among the recipients of the Rising Stars Awards were, Dr Millidhashni Reddy, Alan Knott-Craig Jnr, Dr Bridgette Gasa and Achumile Majija



SUPPORTING ... Challen, Muriel, Jenni, Tony, Charmaine and Ronnie Button celebrate Jenni Button's (centre) Achiever Award with her. (Pic 3).

SPORT ATTENDEES ... Quinton Snyman, Michael Louwrens, Kevin Paul and Amy Stege attended the alumni awards recently. (PIC 4)



NAMIBIAN ALUMNI ... NMMU Alumni Relations Projects and University Shop Manager Baakier Abrahams (from left) met up with NMMU alumni in Namibia, Hilaria Shikongo, Peter Hiwilepo, Penexupifo Shidiwe, Nangula Haufiku Sabrina Jacobs, Director: Alumni Relations, Paul Geswindt and Monica Haufiku.



LAW ACHIEVERS ... The NMMU Law Department celebrated at the Alumni Awards this year, as one of their own graduates Adv Willem van der Linde received an Alumni Achiever Award. Present at the awards, Dean of Law: Prof Lawack-Davids, Lizelle Pretorius and Prof Andre Mukhebie.



SHARING EXPERIENCES ... Some of the guest speakers who shared their varsity stories and experiences at the "Reflections" event were Ken Ramjee and Jackie Luck with Marla Ramjee.



YOUNG ALUMNI... 2012 SRC International Officer Mothusi Mboleand and BA graduate Balisa Ntloko both shared their experiences at the "Reflections" event held recently.

LAUNCHED ... Professor Helize van Vuuren and Alumni Association vice president Evert Knoesen attended the PE Chapter's first book launch this year. The book called "Summertime" written by J M Coetzee, was the highlight of the evening where Prof van Vuuren read passages of the book to the attendees.



CHAPTER INVOLVEMENT ... Lungiswa Bobi and Alumni PE Chapter Chairperson Adv Shuaib Rahim were present at the chapter's first book launch recently.

HELPING SCHOOLS ... NMMU Alumni Relations office held a workshop to assist schools in setting up past pupil associations. Past pupils can assist schools in various ways by sharing skills and expertise and helping to improve infrastructure. Higher education can benefit from an improved schooling system. Attendees at this workshop were Richard can Briesies, Bernard Petersen, Ian Pringle, Thobeka Minnie and Lester Cunningham.





GATHERING ABROAD ... A London dinner attended by more than twenty alumni and several smaller group meetings were held in London during August. Present at the dinner was Director: Paul Geswindt, Jackie King, Achumile Majija, Director: Legacies Kotie Grove, Krynauw Kruger and Siphe Madoda. London alumni are in the process of establishing a UK charitable trust to benefit NMMU. (pic 1) Also present at the Alumni Dinner with Prof Kotie Grove (Second from left) were Max Jordaan, Shanene Olivera and Anthea Jordaan (pic 2).



GOLF DAY ... The NMMU Trust hosted its annual Johannesburg Golf Day at the Wanderers. Present at the Golf day were Ayanda Mjekula, Lungisa Mbuli, Zandile Jakavula and Stan Mphahlele.



Over 50 soccer alumni, who studied between 1965 and 1990, attended the NMMU Trust's alumni function recently at the South Campus Xerox stadium clubhouse, including (from left) Frank Thomson, Richard Ludwig, Antony Jennings, Robbie Barnard, Mike Vermaak, sponsor ABSA's Johann van der Watt, Daron Momberg (Mann), brothers Kevin and Gavin Golightly and Human Movement Science's Vernon Oosthuizen.