

Mail & Guardian



Young South Africans
you have to take to lunch ...

300 Young South Africans | Editors' note



Nic Dawes

Editor-in-chief,
Mail & Guardian

Compiling the *Mail & Guardian's* annual *300 Young South Africans* *You have to Take to Lunch* list is tough, not so much for who we put in, but whom we leave out.

And that doesn't mean the people whose PR consultants beat their fists bloody on our doors.

Take, for example, the media section. Where is Rapule Tabane, deputy editor of this newspaper, and one of the more thoughtful political commentators you are likely to read anywhere? Ineligible, I'm afraid, on the grounds that, like Caesar's wife and public officials, the maker of the list must be above suspicion and must therefore exclude *M&G* employees.

Adriaan Basson, investigative journalist and scourge of the powerful, is out for the same reason, even though at 29, and garlanded with the most prestigious awards in the industry, he is an obvious candidate. So is Jason Norwood-Young, an online guru who is helping to shape the way you will be consuming news in 10 years time, and Percy Zvomuya whose gently left-field culture writing is an increasingly essential read.

Niren Tolsi is not on the list for his brilliant profiles, nor is Lloyd Gedye for his probing of cartels. Mandy Rossouw, Matuma Letsoalo and Mmanaledi Mataboge go unmentioned despite their sharp political reporting, as does Sello S Alcock for his dispatches from the battle for the soul of the legal system. Yolandi Groenewald gets no recognition here for her robust investigations of environmental scandal, and Lynley Donnelly's delicate touch with business stories is ignored. Phathisani Moyo and Lucky Sindane are not profiled here for rebuilding the sports pages of our avowedly political newspaper.

Our photographic team — Paul Botes, Lisa Skinner and Oupa Nkosi — are represented only by their work as seen in Jacqueline Steeneveldt's layout of these pages.

They deserve recognition, and all of them make age cut, if only barely, but they really don't need to be included here, because they have a showcase each week in the *M&G*, a newspaper powered to an extraordinary degree by the energy and commitment of young South Africans; people for whom a prosperous, democratic future is an urgent, living demand, not a fantasy.

Frankly, we have left lots of other such people out. Some we've never heard of — and we know you will remind us to include them next year — others just weren't young enough anymore. To keep the list meaningful we've been a bit stricter this year about excluding the young at heart and tried as hard as possible to leave out anyone over 35, but we buckled in few cases for some really starry leaders.

Still others seemed like tedious lunch companions to us, so we excercised our discrimination, and spared you the expense account query. On the other hand, we included a few people who weren't born here, but who have made South Africa their home.

The point of such a list is not to be complete. On the contrary, it is meant as a starting point, perhaps even a provocation, but in any event the opening of a conversation about a generation that is truly beginning to shape our possible futures.

Ours is a young country in just about every sense: demographically, democratically and in its developing identity. This list is a cross-section of the present, but it is also a map to the future and it cheers us up no end.

Nic Dawes
Editor-in-Chief

Ferial Haffajee
Founding editor



Ferial Haffajee

Founding editor,
Young South Africans

300 Young South Africans June 2009

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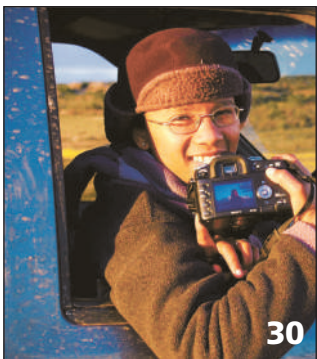
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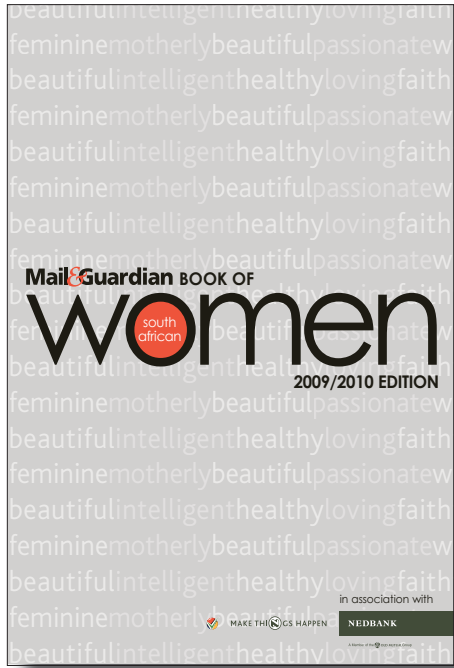
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Science & Education:
Enrico Olivier



DO YOU KNOW AN EXCEPTIONAL WOMAN?

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Now in its fifth edition, the *Mail & Guardian Book of South African Women* is quickly taking its place as a key networking tool for South African and global organisations.

Send your nominations to Desme Schutz at desmes@mg.co.za or call 011 250 7300

All nominations must be submitted before 22 May 2009



Zinhle

DJ

It's hard for a female DJ to break into the male-dominated ranks of DJs, but that's exactly what Zinhle has done.

She was the resident DJ for SABC1's dance show *Jika MaJika*, and has a permanent Saturday afternoon slot with DJ Oskido on Yfm. She performs regularly at clubs and private functions and has moved into producing.

She began DJing on the equipment that her brother hired out. Her first gig was foisted on her when setting up for a late DJ. She discovered that mixing came naturally and her brother ended up expertly managing her.

Zinhle went on to open a DJ school, Fuse Academy, with her childhood friend Nomdeni Mdakhi. It opened in February this year and is targeted solely at girls. Aspirant DJs are taught information Zinhle wished she had when starting out: branding, marketing advice, mental skills training and media. DJ Zinhle's album *The Feminine Touch* will be out on the July 20. — Eamon Allan

Lunch spot: Coco Brazil, Midrand



Photo: Lisa Skinner

Lira

Singer

Lira doesn't seem like the accountant type. But before the award-winning singer made history with her album *All my Love*, which featured the most-played song to hit the South African Hot 100 Billboard Chart, that's exactly what she planned to be.

Her mother pushed her, telling her to pursue the dream of being a singer. It's a dream that has certainly been realised.

Lira was nominated for four South African Music Awards for her album *Soul in Mind*, which was released at the end of 2008, and her band was nominated for two more.

And now that she's one of South Africa's hottest role models, she takes her job — every part of it — quite seriously.

"I wear South African designers," she says, indicating her support through her ensemble of the day, an impeccable outfit of a pale brown blouse, skinny jeans and gold, strappy sandals with a kitten heel.

There are parallels between Lira and another South African style icon, Miriam Makeba. Lira has performed alongside Makeba and recently posed for a local magazine in a recreation of a *Drum* cover, which featured Makeba.

"I saw in her what I wanted to become," says Lira.

The young singer explains her work is not just about the music.

The musicians who work with her in the studio are not musicians with the traditional connotations of irresponsibility. This is their job, she says, they have mortgages, they need security. The practical part of her advises fellow artists to do a course in law or business, and friends who are accountants and lawyers to explore something creative. It's all about balance.

— Eamon Allan

Lunch spot: Orient, Johannesburg

I saw in her what I wanted to become ...



Dylan Valley

Documentary filmmaker

Being the only coloured kid in his neighbourhood pushed Dylan Valley towards a passion for hip-hop, the music that formed his identity. He combined this music genre with another passion: documentary filmmaking. Now he uses the two to create movies that tell stories about real people.

His talents were first noticed when he co-directed his varsity film *Lost Prophets*, which was screened at the Encounters Film Festival. Later he was invited to direct six episodes of the SABC documentary series *Headwrap*, which he calls his big break.

Valley is working on a documentary about a gang member who becomes a gospel rapper. He has also started work on a theatre and multimedia production on the history of Afrikaans, told through hip-hop. When he's not making movies, Valley is the guitarist in Cape-town based funk/hip-hop/fusion band, Stereotypes.

— Ilham Rawoot

Lunch spot: Ethiopian Kitchen, Cape Town



Jonathan Boynton-Lee

Film director

Jonathan Boynton-Lee is probably one of the few 28-year-olds who can say he's a director, producer, writer, actor, model and businessman.

His first love was the theatre, but now he "lives and breathes film".

Boynton-Lee has written, produced and directed everything from commercials and films to music videos for Danny K and Johnny Clegg. He has shot award-winning corporate videos for the University of South Africa, Audi, South African Airways and RTT.

He is also as talented in front of the camera and is easily recognisable in local commercials for Exclusive Books, Absa and Steers. He has modelled for Woolworths, Nike, GQ, Hugo Boss and Calvin Klein, and graced the runways at local and international fashion shows.

— Qudsiya Karrim

Lunch spot: Service Station, Melville, Johannesburg



Joost Bosland

Curator, Michael Stevenson Gallery

At 25, Joost Bosland is already considered one of the country's art experts. Bosland is a curator for the Michael Stevenson Gallery in Cape Town, which regularly shows artists such as Nicholas Hlobo, Pieter Hugo, Nandipha Mntambo, Youssef Nabil and Penny Siopis.

Bosland says, although he was dragged to galleries in his youth, he didn't enjoy it much. He studied various subjects at Duke University in Durham, North Carolina, but it wasn't until an exchange year at the University of Cape Town that he landed an internship at the National Gallery in Cape Town — and that was when he knew exactly what he wanted to do.

— Eamon Allan

Lunch spot: The Kitchen, Woodstock

300 Young South Africans | Arts & Culture



Matthew Brown

Film director

Brown wanted to be a director from the time he was eight years old. His first short film, *Clowns*, made at the age of 21, was the first South African film to be included in the New York International Independent Film Festival. Brown worked as an editor and a director of commercials before joining Octagon, where he headed up its fledgling team and created the country's first half-hour cartoon, *URBO: The Adventures of Pax Afrika*. The team grew from six to 54 and ran two seasons and 104 episodes under his leadership.

Brown now heads the group's development team, producing international service jobs. Last year Brown produced a major Bollywood feature, *Eight by Ten*, for Percept Pictures. There was also the pilot episode of *Z-News*, a political satire with puppets based on Zapiro's characters. He is currently directing an animated feature film based on Rob Van Vuuren's one-man play *Electric Juju*. — Eamon Allan

 **Lunch spot: Diaz Tavern, Cape Town**



Photo: Delwyn Verasamy

Batana Vundla

Screenwriter

This University of Cape Town dropout didn't allow unfinished degrees to hold him back. Instead Batana Vundla followed in his family's footsteps and forged a career in film and television. Vundla's grandfather, Ephraim Batana Tshabala, owned Eyethu Cinema in Mofolo, Soweto. Vundla's mother eventually took over the reins. Perhaps that's why the 31-year-old is proud to call himself a feminist. Apart from working for Urban Brew, Vundla also forms part of Joziwood Films, a production company started in 2007. Joziwood specialises in low budget films made straight to DVD. So far the company has produced three,

with the latest, *Friends in Need*, released in May. Vundla says the highlight of his career was being nominated for a South African Film and Television Award for *Kiep Kiep and Sporro* — a social satire animation he wrote and produced. — Karabo Keepile

 **Lunch spot: Assagi, Illovo, Johannesburg**



Athi-Patra Ruga

Artist and fashion designer

Being a woman chef in a professional kitchen speaks volumes. But that Diane Kay represented South Africa at the prestigious Bocuse d'Or competition held in Lyon, France, in January 2009 says far more. Kay trained for three months straight to prepare for the trials and she was the first female South African entrant in the long history of the country's participation. Kay is a graduate of the Prue Leith Chefs Academy in Centurion, south of Pretoria. She is based in McDonald Frimley Hall Hotel and Spa in Camberley, just outside London. She has worked in some of the best hotel kitchens in the country including the Arabella Western Cape Hotel and Spa in Hermanus and Sandton's Michelangelo. She was also a member of the national culinary team that represented South Africa at the Culinary Olympics held in Germany in 2004. She has won a number of accolades, including the Nestle Mini-Plated Salon Culinare (junior section), the 2000 Jeune Commis Rotisseurs (first place in the Johannesburg regional finals) and the Easigas Young Chef of the Year (first place). Her plans for the future? "Just to keep cooking." — Eamon Allan

 **Lunch spot: French Laundry, Yountville, California**



Diane Kay

Chef



Goldfish

Musicians

Athi-Patra Ruga began his career in fashion design, but it is his art that has truly captured people's attention. After winning an Elle New Talent Award at the Sanlam South African Fashion Week in 2004, the 25-year-old, has since stormed the local art circuit. He is garnering international interest for his work, which is difficult to categorise, bounding from performance art to fashion illustration. Ruga interrogates images and people's reaction to them, and is on a constant quest to subvert them. The body's juxtaposition against structure, ideology or politics lies at the heart of much of his work. In 2007 and 2008 he exhibited in Italy, Germany, Switzerland and China. He lectured at the University of Art in Berlin in May 2009 and will give his third solo exhibition in August this year entitled *Mr Floating Signifier and the Dead Boyz*. Raised in East London, he now lives and works between Cape Town and Johannesburg. — Lynley Donnelly

 **Lunch spot: Poza, Cape Town**

What's left to do for the band who were nominated for eight South African Musica Awards; voted number one live act in South Africa by 24.com; invited to perform for Nelson Mandela and his charity 46664 at Ellis Park; performed alongside Fatboy Slim and have had a residency at Pacha? According to Dominic Peters he and his bandmate, David Poole, are just getting started. Look out for them breaking into the market in the United States on the tails of the KIA hamsters advertising campaign, which features their song *Fort Knox*. The successful jazz musicians are taking South African electronic music to the next level, using tube samplers, a groove box, keyboards, funky upright bass and saxophones to create a unique Goldfish sound. The Fishies, as they are affectionately known by their fanbase, will spend the year touring extensively: about half their time in South Africa and the other half abroad, including Brazil and Ibiza. — Eamon Allan

 **Lunch spot: The Food Barn, Noordhoek, Cape Town**

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Photo: Sam Reinders

Toast Coetzer

Musician, poet, photographer and journalist

Toast Coetzer says the thing that makes his mother most proud is that he works for the travel magazines *Go!* and *Weg*. But his fans will know him as the front man of cult music outfit Buckfever Underground, whose four albums have been lauded by critics.

But Coetzer’s printed word is spreading fast. He is the co-editor of *Ons Klyntji*, an erratic zine, with Erns Grundling and Drikus Barnard. And he’s one of South Africa’s finest poets, published in several collections, including the recently released *Groot Verseboek*.

His novella *Naweeek* — completed during his creative writing master’s at the University of Cape Town — will be published in August this year and *Key to Cape Town*, a guide to the mother city, which he collaborated with photographer Sam Reinders, was recently released. — *Lloyd Gedy*

 **Lunch spot: Da Gama Tavern, Green Point, Cape Town**



Photo: Lisa Skinner

Sticky Antlers

Musicians

The Sticky Antlers are Pretoria’s best-kept secret. They formed when bassist Martinique Pelser and guitarist Andreas Schonfeldt lured guitarist Damon Civin and drummer Jaco Amino into forming an improvisational band a few years back.

Influenced by the DIY process, outsider art, films and subversive comics such as *Bitterkomix* and a wide range of musical influences such as The Fall, Sonic Youth and The Boredoms, the Antlers recorded a slew of Sticky CD-Rs and have now completed their debut multi-track album, which is set to become a South African cult classic.

Distributed by local music legend Paul Riekert’s One F music label, 2009 is shaping up to be the breakthrough year. Check out their independent label KRNGY, which releases a whole host of independent CD-Rs from Pretoria. — *Lloyd Gedy*

 **Lunch spot: Oni’s Pizza, Deerness, Pretoria**

One of Africa’s hottest designers — who came off an impressive showing at New York’s Fashion Week earlier this year — didn’t start out in fashion. Nkhensani Nkosi was touring Africa as the host of M-Net’s *Face of Africa* modelling competition when she saw a gap in the market. Her mission: to harness the energy of Africa in a luxury lifestyle brand.

And ever since that first show at South Africa’s Fashion Week in 2000, her company, Stoned Cherrie has done just that. Along with the flagship store in Rosebank, they’ve moved big into Woolworths and have hit the African eyewear market hard, selling Stoned Cherrie glasses across the continent and in a few select locations in Australia and Canada as well. And the design house has finally begun their move into home furnishings with their line of designer upholstery, which launched at the recent Design Indaba.

— *Tanya Pampalone*

 **Lunch spot: Orient, Melrose Arch, Johannesburg**



Nkhensani Nkosi

Designer



Photo: Lisa Skinner

BLK JKS

Musicians

Currently on tour in Europe and the United States, the BLK JKS are South Africa’s rising stars. With a new EP produced by Secret Machines’ Brandon Curtis at Electric Lady studios, the international press are clamouring for a piece of the JKS.

Formed a few years ago by guitarists Linda Buthelezi and Mpumi Mcata from Spruitview, it wasn’t long before bassist Molefi Makananise and drummer Thsepang Ramoba from Soweto came on board to create the powerhouse four-piece band.

They recently signed to

international label Secretly Canadian and acquired a New York-based manager — it seems the world is their playground.

Their new EP, dubbed *Mystery* sees the band venturing into more experimental territory, which is best described as free jazz meets art rock. Curtis has managed to capture some of the mayhem that is the BLK JKS live, which is something the band has struggled with in the past.

— *Lloyd Gedy*

 **Lunch spot: Akhalawayas Mayfair, Johannesburg**



Joey Rasdien

Comedian

The smart guys over at the local NGO arm of Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health knew what they were doing when they signed up Joey Rasdien as the wise-cracking voice of Victor in their Scrutinize campaign.

Designed to combat what they call “Aids fatigue” the creators of the animated skit woke up the young to the epidemic by combining a South Park cartoon-style with a uniquely South African township attitude that Rasdien was perfectly poised to embrace.

One of the coolest cats on the stand-up circuit with his uncontrollable afro, Rasdien’s performance in *Bunny Show* — the surprise hit that premiered at the Toronto Film Festival a few years back — catapulted him into the comedic big time.

Rasdien is working on his own sitcom *Rasdien* for SABC2, a stand up comedy documentary with Anant Singh, and two movies. — *Tanya Pampalone*

 **Lunch spot: Bismillah, Fordsburg, Johannesburg**

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Photo: Timmy Henry

Kesivan Naidoo

Musician

Drummer Kesivan Naidoo’s love affair with music started at the age of 10. But it wasn’t until 1994 that he made his professional debut. He played at the Hoggback Jazz Festival 1994 in the Webster jazz quintet, with top international musicians. He was the only South African to perform with the Kennedy Centre Jazz Ambassadors. Naidoo, who won the 2008 Standard Bank Young Jazz Artist of the Year, is now 29. He plays locally with the Restless Natives, Closet Snare and Tribe, who he performed at the North Sea Jazz Festival in Holland. He completed his honours degree in performance and composition at the University of Cape Town. And after winning the 1999 South African Music Rights Organisation’s Scholarship, Naidoo studied the tabla in Kolkata. He says living in India confirmed exactly “how Indian I’m not and how South African I am”. — Percy Mabandu

 Lunch spot: Balducci’s, V&A Waterfront, Cape Town



Photo: Oupa Nkosi

Natalia Molebatsi

Poet

Natalia Molebatsi says she can’t remember when she started writing poetry because “it has always been in the blood”. The editor of *We Are... A Poetry Anthology* brought together work written by local poets Lebo Mashile, Napo and others in the collection. Molebatsi has had her work translated into Italian and Dutch in academic literary journals such as *Kuma* and *Les Simpledadi*. She has also contributed to more than 10 anthologies, including the bilingual

I nostri semilPeo tsa Rona and *The Goddess Awakened*. But it is her work coordinating marketing activities at Unisa’s library and facilitatating workshops on sexuality, human rights and creative writing in schools and universities around South Africa and Italy that is helping to transform the next generation. — Karabo Keepile

 Lunch spot: Queen of Sheba, Sunnyside, Pretoria

Architect Mokena Makeka believes he can change the world with design. With his own architecture company, Makeka Design Laboratory, which he started while studying at the University of Cape Town, he’s off to a good start. His company was awarded best performing young business in the architecture industry in 2005. Makeka is one of two architects in Africa who have been selected to design luxury villas in China, with some of the hottest emerging architects in the world; he was also selected vice chair of the Cape Town Heritage Trust in 2006. — Percy Mabunda

 Lunch spot: Peppenero, Mouille Point, Cape Town



Mokena Makeka

Architect



Lindiwe Matshikiza

Actor

Lindiwe Matshikiza is a beauty. Men go weak around her — or at least the two who casually disturb our conversation to talk to her at a Newtown coffee shop certainly do. Even underneath oversized blue perspex sunglasses, there is no denying she is her father’s child. “I’m in love with that era’s fashion and music,” says the daughter of writer and actor John Matshikiza, who died suddenly late last year. “A lot of exciting things came out of [the Seventies].” In addition to acting, writing and directing, Matshikiza works in educational theatre, performing and facilitating workshops. Her work on the controversial and critically acclaimed *Bafana Republic* earned her three award nominations and a Best South African Comedy Award. — Karabo Keepile

 Lunch spot: Mong Kok, Cyrildene, Johannesburg

Visual artist Nandipha Mntambo says she doesn’t keep pictures of herself. Well, except those of her performances. Her artworks explore and offer challenges to stereotypical ideas of femininity and the female form. Mntambo’s work makes use of shaped and stiffened cowhides as well as bones, beads and other materials. This 27-year-old was born in Swaziland but lives and works in Cape Town. She graduated with a master’s in fine art at the Michaelis School of Fine Art at the University of Cape Town. Mntambo’s works have been exhibited both locally and internationally to acclaim. She was one of five young artists selected for the MTN New Contemporaries exhibition in Johannesburg in 2006. In 2008, she was part of the *Apartheid: The South African Mirror* at the Centre de Cultura Contemporania de Barcelona exhibition. This 2005 Brett Kebble Art Awards Curatorial Fellow should be watched closely. — Percy Mabandu

 Lunch spot: Nzolo Cafe, Cape Town



Nandipha Mntambo

Visual artist

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Formed in 2003, this Afrikaans punk band has single-handedly changed the landscape of Afrikaans rock music. Consisting of Francois Van Coke (vocals), Hunter Kennedy (guitar), Johnny de Ridder (guitar), Wynand Myburgh (bass) and Jaco Venter (Drums), their first EP *As Jy Met Vuur Speel Sal Jy Brand* struck a chord with disenfranchised youth stifled by conservative religious Afrikaans culture. Their first single *Hemel op die Platteland* made history when it became the first Afrikaans song to be playlisted on 5fm. The band made national headlines in April 2006 when Myburgh wrote the words “fok god” on the wallet of a fan while they were discussing religion.

Two more albums followed before the band called a hiatus to focus on musical side projects such as Van Coke Kartel, aKing and Die Heuwels Fantasties. But the band has continued to play a number of high-profile gigs and released a new EP *Antibiotika* last year. — Lloyd Gedye

 **Lunch spot: Beluga, Cape Town**



Mika Stefano

Front-of-house manager, Old Mutual Theatre on the Square

Mika Stefano’s nomination raised the bar for future nominations to the *Mail & Guardian’s* 300 Young South Africans. His submission included a glossy folder with scented pages and a badge, an introduction by his mom and testimonials from his boss, Daphne Kuhn of the Old Mutual Theatre on the Square. There was a petition with 100 signees and a certificate from the Rotary Club of Johannesburg for his outreach work. He was variously described as “determined”, “interesting”, “glamorous” and, well, “gay”. What was clear above all, is that

Stefano was impossible to ignore. Stefano is marketing and front-of-house manager of the Old Mutual Theatre on the Square and works closely with Kuhn, the owner and producer of the theatre, as a theatre activist. According to Kuhn “his incredible marketing efforts and creative graphic skills as marketing manager have served as an enormous contribution toward securing the new title sponsorship for the theatre”. We believe it. — Eamon Allan

 **Lunch spot: Schwarma Co, Norwood, Johannesburg**

Fokofpolisiekar

Musicians

Anyone who wants to go out to lunch with writer Nthikeng Mohlele may have to drag him. He doesn’t go out a lot because “of my writing”. *The Scent of Bliss*, his debut novel, came out last year to critical acclaim; he’s already busy on a second, which he says is almost finished.

He was born in 1977 in Polokwane and grew up in Thembisa, in the east of Johannesburg. The Wits University-educated writer now lives in Pretoria with his partner Kholiswa Kleinbooï and son, Miles, named after his musical hero, Miles Davis. — Percy Zvomuya

 **Lunch spot: Grill Club, Pretoria**



Photo: Lisa Skinner

Nthikeng Mohlele

Writer



Photo: Lisa Skinner

John Vlismas

Comedian

John Vlismas is regarded by his contemporaries as the Godfather of South African stand-up. But Barry Hilton says the tattooed, ringed wundercomedian is more like the “rep for Red Bull.” Okay, so maybe he’s a little of both. Vlismas was the SA Comedy Award Winner for stand-up of the year in 2007 and a 2008 finalist for Yuk Yuk’s Great Canadian Laugh Off. But now the mad man who started up Whacked Management — an entertainment agency that handles some of the top names in the comedy business — can also add *artiste* and director to his list of comedic

accomplishments. In April Vlismas showcased his much-hyped art exhibition *Off The Reservation*, which featured 20 oil on canvas works at the Obert Contemporary Gallery in Melrose Arch. He is currently co-directing (and is part of the cast) for a comedy documentary, produced by Anant Singh. But if you are more interested in his stand-up stuff, check out his next show *Pow!*, which kicks off this month in Johannesburg and Durban. — Tanya Pampalone

 **Lunch spot: Red Chamber, Hyde Park, Johannesburg**



Euphonik

DJ

Themba Nkosi’s stage name means a “pleasant sound”. The self-taught DJ began his love affair with the turntables at the age of 14, sneaking into clubs to catch DJ’s Fresh and Mbuso. Since then he has warmed up the stage for international artists such as Missy Elliot and Blu Cantrell. One of the many career highlights for the House DJ was his 2006 nomination for Best Club DJ at the Metro FM Awards. *For The Love of House* was released last April — it was Euphonik’s first solo project as a producer. Within the first month of its release it sold 15 000 units and has now achieved gold status, selling more than 20 000 copies. Euphonik can be heard on 5fm on Sundays between 7pm and 10pm with his dance show *My House*. “The show gives me the opportunity to share music, thoughts and opinions on issues that affect young people in South Africa,” he says. Apart from being a DJ and producing, Euphonik also owns Euphonik Productions, a marketing events company. — Karabo Keepile

 **Lunch spot: Fifteen, Alexandra, Johannesburg**

300 Young South Africans Arts & Culture



Khwezi Gule

Curator

Art Curator Khwezi Gule says he dreams of becoming an evil genius and taking over the world. So he co-founded Third Eye, a collective of artists hosting art events outside mainstream institutions. That was back in Durban, fresh after getting his BTech fine arts from the Durban University of Technology (DUT). The curator of contemporary collections at the Johannesburg Art Gallery, Gule started out as a trainee curator with the Brett Kebble Art Awards in 2004, after a brief spell of teaching Art Theory at the DUT. Now he writes regularly on art matters for different publications around the world and was recently appointed to co-curate for the City of Johannesburg's 2010 Fifa World Cup exhibition. Gule is also part of a collective of creative intellectuals, the Dead Revolutionaries Club, which produces exhibitions, offers art classes and puts out their own website, deadrevolutionariesclub.co.za. — Percy Mabandu

 Lunch spot: Lapa Fo, Greenside



Photo: Paul Botes

Lebo Mashile

Poet

It's hard to nail a specific title to Lebo Mashile. She's an author, executive producer, actress, record producer and a television series presenter. But she's mostly known for her role in the literary community as the sweet-lipped, funkadelic poet who infuses passion and politics into every word. Mashile has performed everywhere from Thabo Mbeki's presidential inauguration to the Yarri Yarri Phambari Writers Conference in New York City with African-American writers such as Maya Angelou and Alice Walker. Mashile was born in the United States to South African parents who

lived in exile, and returned home in 1995. In 2005 she released a CD of her poetry *Lebo Mashile Live* and in 2006 won the Noma Award for Publishing in Africa. Last year she self-published her second book *Flying above the Sky*. Mashile is the host of the SABC2 ethics game show *Drawing the Line* and is currently in rehearsal for *Threads*, a poetry and dance production she is performing in Grahamstown in July with Sylvia Glasser of *Moving into Dance Mophatong*. — Tanya Pampalone

 Lunch spot: Bismillah, Fordsburg, Johannesburg



Maxine Case

Curator

When she was young, Maxine Case didn't want to be a writer. Her mother, Diane Case, and her sister Bonita were both writers. "I felt that it was almost expected of me," she says. "And part of me even thought that my school teachers only thought I could write well because of my mother." But in 2005 some of those early fears were finally laid to rest. Her first published work, a short story *Homing Pigeons*, was included in *African Compass: New Writing from Southern Africa*, a compilation that was the result of a short story competition adjudicated by JM Coetzee. Two years later, Case's *All We Have Left Unsaid* won the Commonwealth Writer's Prize for Best First Book Africa. Case works as a senior writer and webmaster for the NGO Cape Town Partnership. — Eamon Allan

 Lunch spot: Caveau, Cape Town

... a sweet-lipped,
funkadelic poet ...

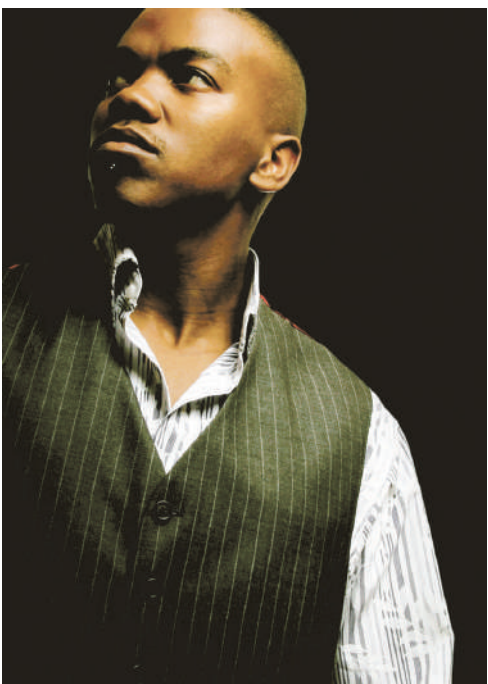


Ntshieng Mokgoro

Director

Ntshieng Mokgoro graduated with a diploma in cosmetology from Alexandra Technical College in Johannesburg in 1992. She hated her new career. Fortunately, she soon got work as an assistant librarian and one of her tasks was to tell stories to primary school kids. She would ask the kids to dramatise the stories as they read. Fast forward to 2009 and Ntshieng is the current Standard Bank Young Artist winner for drama. In between, she has been cementing her reputation as a writer and director. In 2001 Mokgoro contributed to the script of *Gazlam 1*, a drama for SABC1. In 2004 she was a trainee director for the controversial *Hotel Rwanda*. In 2005 she wrote and directed a Naledi award-nominated residence project at the Market Theatre Laboratory and in 2007 Mokgoro wrote and directed *Thursday's Child*, which won an award at the Market Theatre's Zwakala Festival and was performed at the Youth Festival in Vienna. Mokgoro is director of the Publik Kreativiteit Drama Krew in Alexandra. Just don't ask her to give you a manicure. — Eamon Allan

 Lunch spot: Lumberjacks, TKTK



Loyiso Bala

Singer

Loyiso Bala says the only time he has time for reading is when he is sitting on a plane. Between his performances, his work behind the scenes on ad jingles, documentaries, shows such as *Takelane Sesame*, scores for *Tshasha* and his South African Music Award-nominated work with producer Kryton on arrangements for Gang of Instrumentals, there isn't much free time. It might surprise fans of his Sama and Metro FM award-winning albums *Wine, Women and Song*, *Blow your Mind* and *Amplified*, to learn that Bala was the youngest conductor of the National Youth Choir in 2000 at the age of 19, and was head of the Drakensberg Boys' Choir. This year he presented the Samas, an experience he says was really cool. "It was the first time that I was in control," he says. Bala is preparing to perform at Madison Square Gardens in New York at the 46664 concert. Maybe then he'll get some reading in. — Eamon Allan

 Lunch spot: Santorini, Hyde Park, Johannesburg

300 Young South Africans | Arts & Culture

He slouches a bit when he stands, his hair looks as if it's been ruffled and he's still growing into his features.

But when Andy Petersen speaks, he doesn't spout the expected "likes," "dudes" or "whatevers". This 16-year-old writer of fantasy novel *Daniel Fox and the Jester's Legacy* has a maturity and confidence that belies his age.

"I am like other 16-year-olds in my school," he says, looking down at his St John's blazer, his shirt slightly coming out on one side.

"But the difference is I have published a book and that's because of my hard work."

Petersen worked on his manuscript between his unpredictable and demanding school schedule, fitting it in between sports or drama rehearsals. He says that it was during the school holidays in December that he got most work on his book done.

"When I had free time I wrote, in periods of productivity, a page a day," he says. "Other times nothing for three weeks."

Fantasy is not a typical South African genre, so he set the first part of the book in New York. "South African literature has a certain style, I didn't want that. I wanted my book to be more universal."



At the moment Petersen is working on a sequel, which he began writing in April; his first work will form part of a planned trilogy, which is sure to make his fans happy. — Eamon Allan

Andy Petersen

Writer

Lunch spot: Nice, Parkview, Johannesburg

South African literature has a certain style
... I wanted my book to be more universal

Music and urban living inspire Nontsikelelo Veleko's work. Far from her hometown of Bodibe, in the North West province, and her humble beginnings not so long ago as a photography student at the Market Photography Workshop, Veleko has made her mark on both the local and international arts scene. Her brazen, urban-inspired photography, filled with inner street scenes, graffiti and fashion forward individuals, is defining urban Africa through her lens for the rest of the world to see.

Veleko's solo exhibitions have been held everywhere from the Goodman Gallery in Johannesburg to the Kuppel in Switzerland. Her work has also appeared in group exhibitions in the Kyle Kauffman Gallery in New York, the Kunsthaus in Austria and the Palazzo delle Papesse in Sinea, Italy. — Jane Steinacker



Nontsikelelo Veleko

Photographer

Lunch spot: Kaldi's, Newtown, Johannesburg

This man will bless you with his bold and powerful voice. What he does well is mix old-school gospel with more a modern version. In the early 1990s Sechaba left home in the Free State to seek employment in Johannesburg. But on his arrival things didn't go the way he had hoped and he was forced to live on the streets, under a bridge in Balfour Park.

He and his street mates would often sing together through the cold nights of Johannesburg to comfort themselves. In 2003 Sechaba got his breakthrough when he joined the multi-award winning gospel group, Joyous Celebration. He released his debut album in 2005, which sold multi-platinum copies. He hasn't looked back. — Lucky Sindane



Sechaba

Gospel artist

Lunch spot: Lekgotla restaurant, Nelson Mandela Square, Johannesburg



Megan Godsell

Theatre director

Megan Godsell decided early on that she wanted to study drama. Back in high school, the daughter of Bobby Godsell was already immersing herself in the dramatic arts. At the University of the Witwatersrand — where she studied drama from 2002 to 2008 — she built a reputation by writing and directing *Not the Princess*. The play was selected as the official Wits School of Art's entry into the National Festival of Student Drama. Godsell's short film, *Valentine*, won the Best Cinematography award at the 2007 Horrorfest.

Godsell is taking three plays to the Grahamstown Festival this year, one of which she wrote and directed herself. "It's mostly bilingual and it's about the loss of language ... a mixture of poetry and dialogue," says Godsell of *Why We Left*, which has won praise from critics and audiences.

"The rhythms and sounds of poetry evoke emotional feelings in the audience." — Eamon Allan

Lunch spot: Stelle, Parkview, Johannesburg



Nicholas Hlobo

Artist

Nicholas Hlobo has an affinity for non-traditional materials. Rubber inner tubes, leather, ribbons, soap and found objects make frequent appearances in his works, which explore Xhosa traditions, homosexuality and "anything that people find embarrassing in society".

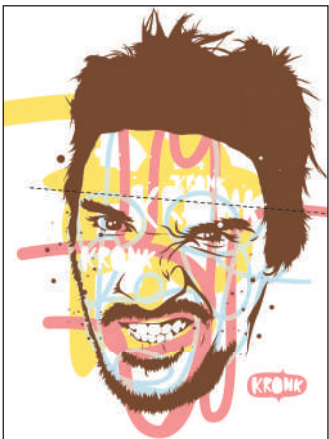
The Standard Bank Young Artist for Visual Art in 2009, Hlobo will embark on a national exhibition, which begins at the National Arts Festival in Grahamstown from July 2 to 11.

Hlobo, who holds a BTech degree from Wits Technikon, has been a hit

on the international art scene over the past few years; he took up a two-month Ampersand Foundation residency in New York in 2007. In 2008, he showed at the Boston ICA as part of the Momentum series, and in 2007 he had solo exhibitions at the Extrapazio in Rome and the Pei Ling Chan Gallery at the Savannah College of Art and Design in Georgia. — Jane Steinacker

Lunch spot: Soulsa, Melville, Johannesburg

300 Young South Africans | Arts & Culture



Kris Hewitt aka Kronk

Toymaker

Imagine a gingerbread man that's partly the happy cookie from the story your mom used to read to you and partly the rabbit from Donny Darko, icing sugar dripping from its eye and mouth and "EAT ME" emblazoned across its back. That's exactly what illustrator turned toymaker Kris Hewitt did when he hand-painted a pair of 20-inch dunny toys for the annual Red Cross Children's Hospital Art Auction. They eventually sold for R55 000, which went straight to building a new wing for the hospital. Hewitt — also known as Kronk — has a day job illustrating and designing with the Ami Collective, the award-winning Cape Town-based creative house that has worked with the world's top brands, including Red Bull, Coke and Microsoft. But it's his freelance work making borderline creepy designer art toys and character-based artwork is what really got the art world talking. The 27-year-old Hewitt has an eclectic design style; his influences are everything from Miro to Banksy, Fifties pin-up girls or the purely psychedelic. — Eamon Allan

 **Lunch spot: Diaz Tavern, Cape Town**

It's not every T-shirt company in South Africa that can count local fashion and trend guru Dion Chang among their fans. Bradley Kirshenbaum trained as a graphic designer at Bezalel Academy of Art and Design in Israel and then came back to South Africa to work in advertising and for Blue Moon, a below-the-line agency. In April 2005, he launched Love Jozi, going into his home-brewed clothing venture full-time in 2007. Born in Johannesburg, Kirshenbaum's feeling for the city come through not only in the title of his company but in T-shirt designs, which reflect the imagery and issues that permeate South Africa. With images from barbed wire to taxi signs and skyline sketches that call out everything from "Donderdag", "Previously



Bradley Kirshenbaum

Designer

Advantaged", "Host City" and "Hungry and Scared", Kirshenbaum has Jozi all sized up. — Eamon Allan

 **Lunch spot: Narina Trogan, Braamfontein, Johannesburg**



Michael MacGarry

Visual artist

It was a big year for visual artist/designer/author Michael MacGarry. Despite holding down a full time job at Fever Identity Design, in 2008 MacGarry exhibited his solo work and the work of visual art collective Avant Car Guard at a national and international level; was nominated for the MTN New Contemporaries Awards; designed and illustrated a design-reference book titled *A Primer in South African Graphic Design* and co-

published *The Pavement Special*, a tri-annual magazine dedicated to independent South African music. But it was MacGarry's solo exhibitions *When Enough People Start Saying the Same Thing* at the Brodie/Stevenson gallery in Johannesburg and *True/Story* at the KwaZulu-Natal National Art Gallery in Durban that really identified MacGarry as one of the important young visual artists in South Africa today. His solo work — which sees MacGarry working in various media including sculpture, large-scale photography and editioned bronzes — explores his overarching concern with the machinations of imperialism in Africa. MacGarry moved away from his conceptually-based dogma, dubbed "All Theory No Practice", in which he wrote about ideas, concepts, artworks, themes, film treatments, which he never produced or exhibited as material objects. But his new work sees him creating a series of props, sculptures and large-scale stills from these unrealised works. MacGarry's tongue-in-cheek work with his fellow Avant Car Guards Zander Blom and Jan-Henri Booyens has also created quite a stir, with their punk, nothing-is-sacred attitude towards the South African Art world that had the trio throwing dirt on artist Kendall Geers's grave and turning William Kentridge into Frankenstein. — Lloyd Gedye

 **Lunch spot: Sophia's in Rosebank, Johannesburg**

His work explores the overarching machinations of imperialism



Jacques Imbrailo

Theatre director

Anyone from Henneman will tell you that the closest they come to culture is agriculture. So, when Jacques Imbrailo found himself auditioning for the Drakensberg Boys Choir (DGC) as a result of a dare at 10 years old, he didn't know that this would put him on the path to becoming a Standard Bank Young Artist award winner for jazz in 2009. Imbrailo stayed with the DBC from 1990 to 1993 and then put his singing on the back burner while he studied law at Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education. Then, spurred on by his parents and a supportive professor, he completed a music degree on the back of an audition at the Royal College of London where he landed a full scholarship in postgraduate opera studies. Imbrailo also auditioned for the Jette Parker Young Artist Programme at the Royal Opera House Covent Garden in London and was one of four out of more than 200 applicants worldwide that landed a two-year training contract. — Eamon Allan

 **Lunch spot: Le Quartier Français, Franschhoek**



Thabo Rapoo

Dancer

Thabo Rapoo has big plans for the South African dance scene. The 31-year-old, who won the Standard Bank Young Artist for Dance this year, would like to open a channel between Africa and Europe in much the same way that he has begun to work with the Indonesian Embassy — selecting dancers to study and work in Indonesia and form a cultural exchange. Rapoo, who was born and raised in Ga-Rankuwa in Pretoria, joined a Pantsula group called aMajita in 1987. In 2002 he was awarded a scholarship at the Johannesburg

Dance Foundation to complete a three-year diploma. He entered the FNB Vita Dance Umbrella that year and went on to perform his solo, *Umdudo*, at the FNB Vita Dance and the Grahamstown National Art's Festival. He was later invited to join Moving Into Dance Mophatong, where he still performs and serves as a dance teacher and lecturer. Earlier this year, Rapoo was promoted to resident choreographer. — Eamon Allan

 **Lunch spot: MacDonald's, anywhere**

300 Young South Africans | Business & Law



Photo: David Harrison

Amelia Vukeya-Motsepe’s legal passion is health law. Her time spent at the Constitutional Court and with the Aids Law Project taught her that human rights and health go hand in hand. She believes if a person’s health can be fixed, then everything around them will be able to improve.

She interrupted her articles to be a researcher to Justice Kate O’Regan in the Constitutional Court of South Africa between 2004 and 2005. After completing her LLM at Georgetown she interned at the American Bar Association, their Section of Individual Rights and

Responsibilities project on HIV and Aids.

She doesn’t see her employment at Bowman Gilfillan as a corporate sell-out, but instead says she’ll be able to make a larger impact and extend her influence. Next month, Vukeya-Motsepe will visit the University of Connecticut — she was selected from 700 applicants — to attend the Unesco’s 5th annual leadership training programme.

— Jane Steinacker

Lunch spot: Wangthai, Nelson, Mandela Square, Johannesburg

Amelia Vukeya-Motsepe

Senior associate,
Bowman Gilfillan

Arie Fabian runs Fabiani, the national menswear retailer that suits up some of the country’s best dressed.

Founded in 1978 by his father, Jeffrey Fabian, in St George’s Mall in Cape Town, Fabiani has expanded to seven branches across the country — the latest in Soweto’s Maponya Mall.

Fabiani stores stock the Fabiani label as well as a limited number of international high end designer collections, with former clients that include Robbie Williams and Samuel L Jackson.

Fabian prides himself on attention to detail. He says every item in the Fabiani range can be distinguished by its exceptional quality and innovative design. His clientele would agree.

— Qudsiya Karrim

Lunch spot: Wangthai, Nelson, Mandela Square, Johannesburg



Arie Fabian

Director,
Fabiani



Anthony Prangley

Manager,
Dialogue Circle, Gordon Institute
of Business Science

There is a lot of talk going on at the Gordon Institute of Business Science (Gibs). At the regular Gibs dialogue circles, everyone from chief executives to high school scholars are actively exploring ways in which can help our country make it through these complex times.

Facilitating all of this heady conversation is 32-year-old Anthony Prangley, whose passion for South Africa inspired the creation of the circles about five years ago. Prangley wants to not only help South Africa in its transition from the past to the present, but from its complex present to a prosperous future.

The Gumboots foundation is another one of Prangley’s visionary initiatives; it creates an opportunity for South Africans living abroad to still play a part in developing our country by contributing to grassroots community projects.

— Jane Steinacker

Lunch spot: Joe’s Butcher, Roosevelt Street, Alexandra, Johannesburg



Anthony Miller

Founder,
Lightstone Risk Management

Lunch spot: Brass Bell, Kalk Bay, Cape Town

It’s not what you would expect from the head of an insurance company. Because getting your corporate inspiration from a party in the middle of the Black Rock Desert in Nevada isn’t, well, very corporate at all.

But it was at Carel Nolte’s first Burning Man festival in the United States three years ago that his philosophy about how to work with people crystallised. The sense of community coupled with the safe environment that facilitates openness and conversation created at the festival, inspired the way in which he now manages his portfolio.

Nolte is astounded that people would think his job boring. For him, no two days are ever the same — he endeavours to support his colleagues and allow them to quite simply be themselves.

— Jane Steinacker

Lunch spot: Darkies Café Johannesburg



Carel Nolte

Human resources and
marketing manager,
Etana Insurance



George Glynos

Managing director,
ETM

George Glynos is finally getting his honors degree in economics from Unisa. Which is really weird because he should actually be teaching the course. Glynos is managing director of ETM, the real-time financial market analysis group that launched five years ago while he was with Econometrix, the economic industry giant.

Seems that Glynos, who started out working for Econometrix’s Dr Azar Jammine in 1996 fresh out of university with a BCom in hand, got a bit distracted. He liked his work so much, and was so good at it, that going back to school never made the agenda. He got even busier when he decided to launch ETM; it quickly came to dominate the market, supplying all the top banks and financial institutions with their constant information feed. It’s only recently that Glynos has been able to take some time to get his papers in order. And soon he’ll have the same qualifications as all the analysts who work under him.

— Tanya Pampalone

Lunch spot: Espresso Café, Parkhurst, Johannesburg

300 Young South Africans | Business & Law



James Wanjohi
Managing director
Branson School of Entrepreneurship

Trailblazer James Wanjohi is the first to set up an institution that entrepreneur Sir Richard Branson has lent his name to. His vast and varied experience in the field of developing entrepreneurs includes the establishment of the South African Breweries Kickstart programme, which he spent five years managing. His skills have been sought after around the globe in countries such as Botswana, Tanzania and India. He’s was nominated as a Young Global Leader by the World Economic Forum in 2009, has been a member of the Endeavor — the US-based international non-profit organisation that nurtures high-impact entrepreneurs — and been a volunteer judge on the Technoserve and Enablis business plan competitions. — *Jane Steinacker*

 **Lunch spot: Anywhere in Rosebank or Melrose Arch, Johannesburg**

When a cargo ship packed to the brim with arms destined for Zimbabwe wanted to dock in Durban’s harbour, it was Nicole Fritz from the SA Litigation Centre in Braamfontein who made sure that this did not happen. Fritz doesn’t punch above her weight — she is a heavyweight. And one with an impressive selection of academic credentials behind her name including a bachelor of arts degree, an LLB, a diploma in international criminal law from Antwerp and a master’s degree in law from New York University. This is not a caftan and leather sandal wearing woman, but probably one of the most stylish activist attorneys. In fact, she says, she would love to be the editor of *Vogue*. — *Jane Steinacker*



Nicole Fritz
Director, South African Litigation Centre

 **Lunch spot: Moemas, Parktown, Johannesburg**



Schalk van Rooyen
Managing director,
Media Contact

When Schalk van Rooyen was 25, he walked out of his perfectly good graphic design job to start his own business. Van Rooyen had just bought his first apartment and his parents flipped. Fast-forward five years and paying his bond is the least of his worries. Now van Rooyen is more concerned about how to handle anywhere between 10 and 20 projects at a time for his company, Media Contact. The group, which produces 3D perspectives and graphic animation for some of the top property developers in the country, recently secured the revamp project for a New York airport and a new rail system in Nigeria. — *Tanya Pampalone*

 **Lunch spot: Orient, Melrose Arch, Johannesburg**



Alan Knott-Craig Jnr

Managing director,
iBurst

The son of former Vodacom’s chief executive Alan Knott-Craig Snr, Alan Jnr is a major player in the ICT space in his own right. He is the managing director of iBurst, formerly known as WBS. But he recently announced that he will be resigning from iBurst as soon as it can find a suitable replacement. Knott-Craig Jnr says that he has decided to resign from iBurst because he wants to move with his family to the Cape. “My wife is from Stellenbosch and my whole family is down in the Cape so I have decide to choose my family over my work”.

He added that he would be looking at potential business opportunities once he has relocated with his family. Knott-Craig Jnr was appointed as managing director of iBurst in the beginning of 2006 when Blue Label Investment bought a share of the company. With iBurst’s chief executive Thami Mtshali, they have turned the wireless broadband operator into a major player. — *Lloyd Gedye*

 **Lunch spot: Col’Cacchio’s, Benmore, Johannesburg**



Dario Milo

Partner,
Webber Wentzel

Dario calls himself a “journalist trapped in a lawyer’s body”. He developed his passion for media as an article clerk, and has represented Zapiro in cases against Jacob Zuma and the ANC. He has defended the *Mail & Guardian*, *Carte Blanche*, *Avusa* and *The Star* against the bare teeth of those who attempt to limit free speech. Satire, he feels, is fundamental in our society. Milo sees his job as protecting the Constitution and expects lawyers to protect the media, which in turn informs the electorate. Occasionally he gets called on to write opinion pieces and chat on radio talk shows. — *Ilham Rawoot*

 **Lunch spot: Moema’s, Parktown North, Johannesburg**

Managing director of amaAmbush Productions, Ross Johnson, has successfully combined his musical talent and his aim to “make a difference to as many lives as possible for the better” into a serious business proposition. The company, through its three arms — the academy, the band and amaAmbush products and services — promotes and teaches African music, specifically the music of African marimbas; performs to a global audience; and finally makes and manufactures the instruments themselves.

Passionate about Marimba music, Johnson believes wholeheartedly in its ability to transcend the cultural boundaries that divide South Africa, calling it a “catalyst for unification”.

Johnson began busking with other musicians in Cape Town as a 10 year old and it was during his five years of street performing that he was exposed to the marimba. By the age 16, he had formed the band amaAmbush and by his matric year he had begun teaching marimbas to schools around Cape Town. He has since expanded his work to include courses for teachers.

Johnson graduated with a degree in music from the University of Cape Town in 2006 and has travelled to Malaysia, Italy and the United States to lecture on music teaching techniques and African music.

amaAmbush has played with the likes of the Soweto String



Photo: David Harrison

Ross Johnson

Managing director, amaAmbush

Quartet and SnowPatrol, as well as performed for international celebrities such as Jamie Oliver and Richard Branson.

In 2008 he received an award for his contribution in the field of Youth in Arts and Culture from the premier of the Western Cape and was a finalist in Cape Talk/ Nedbank Small Business Awards.

Being young in South Africa “means you are excited about the country and aware of the opportunities created by the fluidity of our current state rather than put off by the challenges,” says Johnson. — Lynely Donnelly

Lunch spot: The Foodbarn, Noordhoek

... to make a difference to as many lives as possible for the better ...

On a Friday six years ago the three-month pregnant Sarah Rice was retrenched from her position as an account manager for a technology public relations agency. The following Monday, she opened her own agency.

Rice started Sentient with two people, two laptops and one dial-up connection. Soon she was celebrating the birth of her healthy baby boy, a thriving business and a newfound love for the malarkey that comes with being an entrepreneur. No stranger to the challenges faced by being a business owner, Rice has survived it all. Clients such as Gartner, Mimecast and Technology Concepts are all recipients of the talent her agency offers, yet her biggest accomplishment to date is doing “what other agencies say they can do.” — Jane Steinacker

Lunch spot: Manna Epicure, Cape Town



Sarah Rice

Managing director, Sentient Communications

Vishal Koojee can be described as something of a Renaissance man. Either that, or doing just one thing bores him.

At 28, he made parter at Deney's Reitz, where he developed expertise on the narrow and lucrative field of competition law.

This knowledge helped him launch Salsa, an outbound tour operator that focuses on supplying global land arrangements, in October 2006. Currently Koojee is a director at Cliffe Decker Hofmeyr in the firm's competition practice, using his extensive experience in all areas of competition law, in particular merger regulation.

Koojee once had opportunities for another career as well. He played keyboard for the Silhouettes, the band that played for the ANC's electoral campaign. He still dabbles, and is working on an album with a prominent South African producer. — Eamon Allan

Lunch spot: Trumps, Sandton, Johannesburg



Vishal Koojee

Director, Cliffe Decker Hofmeyr



Nontwenhle Mchunu

Founder, Ezulwini Chocolat

Nontwenhle Mchunu plans to create Africa's first world-class chocolate brand using local products. And she's well-poised to do just that.

She became interested in chocolate on a cooking course in KwaZulu-Natal, which focused on desserts.

Mchunu eventually made her way to one of Europe's top culinary institutes, Leatherhead International, where she learned from the world's leading fine-chocolate makers. Then she came back home to see if she could make her own batch of top-notch chocolate.

In 2008, Mchunu won South African Businesswomen's Association Regional Business Achiever Awards in the social entrepreneur category for her newly established company, Ezulwini Chocolat. Already, South African supermarket chains and hotels, such as Pick n Pay and Protea Hotels, have begun to retail her products. — Eamon Allan

Lunch spot: Jardine, Cape Town



Karen Loxton

Personal shopper, Famous Fox

Karen Loxton has every woman's dream job: she's paid to shop.

After exploring careers in psychology, IT and photography, Loxton worked as a port shopping guide in Miami from 2004 to 2006. Her job was glamorous; she shopped for rare gem stones, Swiss time pieces and jewellery. When she returned to Johannesburg in 2007, she found that the personal shopping industry was almost non-existent and decided to launch her own company.

Loxton took business lessons over coffee and the phone from friends and acquaintances in the fashion industry and soon Famous Fox, her personal shopping agency, was born.

She has established herself as a “shopping sensei”, with a huge and diverse range of clients from all races and age groups.

She is also interviewed fortnightly by CNBC Africa on all things fashion-related. — Qudsiya Karrim

Lunch spot: Allora, Sandton, Johannesburg

300 Young South Africans | Business & Law



Sylvester Chauke

National marketing manager, Nando's

We will get the change we want from Nando's." With these words from the mouth of a puppet effigy of Julius Malema, Sylvester Chauke was propelled out of the advertising drawing room right smack into the political ring. His advertisement, which appeared on television in the run up to the 2009 elections, had the Youth League demanding the offending piece of advertising be

removed from the airwaves. In response, Nando's blanked out Malema's face and disguised his voice, granting the Youth League a pyrrhic victory. If anything, the controversy added to the campaign's success, says Chauke, who worked with advertising heavyweights FCB and Ogilvy before joining Nando's. The ad was intended to inject the elections with a sense of fun and energy and put the Nando's brand squarely in the middle of any dinner table conversations prior to the poles. Chauke says the Youth League's reaction was unfortunate because it made "them appear more emotional than rational".

But the experience left Chauke — who lives by his personal motto "stand against bland" — upbeat about South Africans, the majority of whom he says have a great sense of humour. "We need to laugh at ourselves," says the University of Johannesburg graduate who has lectured at UJ, Varsity College, AAA and Bond University. Ultimately Chauke managed to get the Youth League to do just that. The catering of choice for their election party: none other than Nando's. — Lynlely Donnelly

 **Lunch spot: Nambitha, Orlando West, Johannesburg**

We need to laugh at ourselves



Sacha Matulovich

Co-founder, Republic Media Group

In 2005, Sacha Matulovich and his partner Pepsi Pokane made their big break when they won the contract to produce *Afro Café* for SABC2. No small feat for two guys who had never produced a television programme before. About 200 episodes later, the phenomenal success of the production speaks for itself. And now their work has spread

across the continent. The music video Matulovich produced for Motorola, using seven of Kenya's top artists, won the award for best collaboration at their 2007 Kisima awards, equivalent to South Africa's South African Music Awards. The business has now diversified into audio and advertising ventures as well. The secret to their success? Matulovich says the young creatives who are always a part of their ventures is what makes their work pop. — Jane Steinacker

 **Lunch spot: Koi, Sandton, Johannesburg**



Brandt Botes

Design group head, The Jupiter Drawing Room

If you can't find Brandt Botes behind his desk, you'll probably find him taking pictures of abandoned buildings. "I love the creepy factor of it," he says. After a BA Fine Arts degree at the University of Stellenbosch, Botes started his career as a graphic designer at Orange Juice Design. Now he's group head of graphic design at The Jupiter Drawing Room in Cape Town. The internationally award-winning design department has clients such as Musica, Design Indaba, Sanlam and Windhoek Breweries. In his free time, Botes hones his craft as an illustrator, and his works have appeared in magazines and books such as *Creative Review*, *Print* and *A Decade of South African Design Excellence*. Botes was invited to be a judge at the 87th Art Directors Club of New York last year and he recently participated in the 2036 group exhibition at the 2008 Saint Etienne Biennale in France. — Karabo Keepile

 **Lunch spot: Brewers & Union, Heritage Square, Cape Town**



Vuyo Jack

Chief executive, Empowerdex

In March 2009, Vuyo Jack was chosen as one of the Young Global Leaders by the World Economic Forum. He has been a long-time adviser to government on the architecture of black empowerment laws and codes, and is the co-founder and chief executive of Empowerdex, the BEE advisory and verification company. A chartered accountant by training, he formerly lectured at the University of the Witwatersrand. Jack recently started a media company and has authored two books. He's also involved with The Children of Fire charity whose aim it is to help young survivors of burn injuries in Africa. — Eamon Allan

 **Lunch spot: Primi Piatti, Rosebank, Johannesburg**



Tsakani Matshazi

Financial director, Izingwe Capital

At 33, Tsakani Matshazi is one the coveted few young, black chartered accountants in the country and she has made it her mission to make sure that the number grows. Matshazi runs the finances at one of the country's empowerment investment companies, Izingwe Capital. She completed her BCom degree at the University of Cape Town and passed her qualifying examinations during her first year of training in 1998. She has worked at the Eastern Cape Development Corporation, a company that assists black economic empowerment and small, medium and micro enterprises. She serves on the board of the South African Institute of Chartered Accountants and is chair of the Chartered Accountants Charter Council, mandated to grow the number of African chartered accountants to reflect the country's population demographics. She is also a director of a BEE rating agency, Empowerdex (Pty) Ltd. — Mmanaledi Mataboge

 **Lunch spot: Home sweet home**



Tracy Cohen

Head of regulatory affairs, Neotel

She was a councillor at South Africa’s information, communication, technology and broadcasting regulator where she helped to set the national agenda. Now Tracy Cohen is heading up regulatory affairs for Neotel.

While at Icasa, Cohen was at the forefront of attempts to liberalise and regulate the information technology communication sector, where she looked at key policy issues such as interconnection, facilities leasing and developing the competition framework for the Electronic Communications Act.

As the new kid on the tele-communications block, Cohen will play a huge role in ensuring the landscape is conducive for the second network operator to take on Telkom and provide South African consumers with real competitive options.

She has previously held teaching posts at the University of the Witwatersrand and research posts at New York’s Columbia University, the University of Toronto and the London School of Economics.

— Lloyd Gedye

 Lunch spot: Salsa, Illovo, Johannesburg



Mpumi Mazibuko

Legal manager, Fifa

He has worked in some of the foremost legal firms that deal in copyright, trademarks and intellectual property such as Spoor and Fisher. So it seem appropriate that Mpumi Mazibuko is working to protect the Fifa brand and the rights of its commercial affiliates in the run up to the 2010 soccer world cup.

South Africa, says Mazibuko, is one of the few countries to host the world cup, with laws already in place to protect intellectual property.

After finishing his LLB in 2004, Mazibuko was fascinated by intellectual property rights and the work it takes to build up brand equity, to establish the goodwill of a brand and to protect it.

For Mazibuko the challenges for young South Africans “are vast and brutal, but the opportunities are immeasurable.”

— Lynley Donnelly

 Lunch spot: Sophiatown, Newtown, Johannesburg

From her humble beginnings as a waitress at Cape Town’s Café Africa, Yolanda Cuba has become one of the youngest chief executives at the Johannesburg Stock Exchange.

Her interests include architecture, interior décor and ballroom dancing, so you have to wonder how she finds time to run Mvelaphanda Group Limited — one of South Africa’s leading listed black-owned investment companies.

Cuba is a chartered accountant by profession and holds a BCom honours degree in accounting.

In 2006 she was recognised as the Top Empowered Businesswoman of the Year. In 2007 she received the Youth Excellence Award from the Black Management Forum. A year later she was selected as one of the Young Global Leaders, an initiative of the World Economic Forum. — Karabo Keepile

 Lunch spot: Mastrantonio in Illovo, Johannesburg



Yolanda Cuba

Chief executive, Mvelaphanda Group Ltd



Linda de Klerk

Marketing manager, Apple

Linda de Klerk heads up Apple South Africa’s marketing strategy.

She’s also the woman chatting to customers in local Apple stores on random Saturday afternoons and crawling on the shop floor to move around merchandise.

It might be daunting to some 25-year-olds to walk into a boardroom of 50-year-old men in suits but De Klerk says it’s not as bad as it seems.

“If you’re confident and you know what you’re talking about, its fine,” she says.

And clearly, she does. She started at Apple as a trainee and moved up through the ranks to her current position, all within the space of three years.

— Ilham Rawoot

 Lunch spot: Tasha’s, Atholl Square, Johannesburg

A disagreement with his parents had Ahmed Kajee fending for himself at 19. He had a boss for about six months, but quickly chose to define his own destiny.

Twelve years later, Kajee who started with nothing, boasts a string of entrepreneurial successes in his wake. He’s dabbled in everything from coin-operated machinery to property but now Kajee is focusing on his full service mobile marketing agency, Cellsmart. He also recently bought into Autotracker, a vehicle tracking company.

Kajee vehemently maintains that he is not in business for the money but rather for the freedom and learning it brings. — Jane Steinacker

 Lunch spot: Fork, Cape Town



Ahmed Kajee

Managing director, Cellsmart

300 Young South Africans | Business & Law

After fifteen years in the advertising industry, 35-year-old Tom Cullinan is tipped to be the next executive creative director at the Jupiter Drawing Room. This will place him at the helm of the largest creative department on the continent.

Cullinan says he chose advertising because it's the perfect medium between commerce and art. His favourite part of the job?

"The tangible moment when you see your work being made," he says. "It's like giving birth."

Cullinan is passionate about forming good relationships with suppliers and clients to make better advertising. He's won a number of awards including the Loerie Grand Prix and has also been a judge for the Loerie Awards and the New York Festivals. — Ilham Rawoot

 **Lunch spot:** Pappachino's, Crowthorne, Johannesburg

Tom Cullinan

**Creative director,
The Jupiter Drawing
Room**



Adria Greene

**Founder,
Lawpoint**

The founder and chief executive of Cape Town-based Lawpoint, Adria Greene provides outsourced legal services in English, French, German and Portuguese to leading corporations, law firms and financial institutions around the world.

Greene holds a bachelor's in international relations from Wellesley College and a law degree from the University of Michigan, where she served on the editorial board of the *Michigan Journal of Gender and Law*. For more than eight years, Greene split her time between the United States and South Africa, but chose Cape Town as her new home in 2007.

Earlier this year, Greene was named a young global leader by the World Economic Forum alongside 230 leaders from 71 countries, including the founder of Facebook, Mark Zuckerberg, as well as Jo Leadbeater of Oxfam Great Britain, German F1 Racer Michael Schumacher and Chris Martin of the UK band Coldplay. — Jane Steinacker

 **Lunch spot:** no time to eat lunch!



Zibusiso Mkhwananzi

Entrepreneur

Zibusiso Mkhwananzi says one of his major achievements is starting his information technology company Csonke Solutions with just R2 000 seed capital.

The 25-year-old is also founder and rector of the Mkhwananzi Academy for Christian Entrepreneurship in Vooslorus and the chair of the advertising agency ARM Advertising & Design KRAZYBOYZ digital.

Mkhwananzi heads up the group's board and oversees strategy coordination in its Johannesburg and Cape Town offices.

In 2007, Mkhwananzi received the Black Business Quarterly's Young Business Achiever award. He was also named Top ICT Individual in Africa and Top ICT Young Entrepreneur in Africa at the 10th annual African Achievers awards in 2008.

He holds a national diploma in information technology and a post graduate diploma in corporate law. — Karabo Keepile


 **Lunch spot:** Mzitho's Kitchen, Braamfontein, Johannesburg

Terri Botha never dreamed she would become a co-owner of an internal brand activation company.

After studying fashion design and getting a degree in communications at Unisa, Brown found herself in a dead-end job. She literally did not want to get out of bed in the mornings.

A friend introduced her to her current business partner one Wednesday 10 years ago. The following day she resigned from her job and Friday that same week Botha began her new career as an internal brand activator.

From the humble beginnings in that small company, she now boasts a portfolio including big brands such as Standard Bank, MTN and Transnet. — Jane Steinacker

 **Lunch spot:** The Attic, Parkhurst, Johannesburg

Terri Botha

**Strategist,
Actuate**



Graunt Kruger

**Head of operations,
community banking, mobile banking,
Standard Bank**

What kind of person abandons the inanities of status updates and tagging on Facebook and instead uses the social networking site to organise a collection of blankets and money for the underprivileged in the run up to winter? Graunt Kruger — that's who. Kruger is a self-professed corporate activist.

For his day job he works at the Standard Bank, trying to expand the frontiers of banking by giving people who were previously denied access the opportunity to participate in the formal economy. But for his side gig, he goes online to get those who do have to give back, by shoring up goods for the poor.

Kruger, who completed a master's in new media, information and society, has an MBA from the University of Witwatersrand. He researched strategy processes in IT-intensive businesses. In 2005, he won a Nelson Mandela Scholarship to study at the London School of Economics. — Eamon Allan

 **Lunch spot:** Bismillah, Fordsburg, Johannesburg



Photo: Sarah Depind

Sian Elliot and Adam Hoets

Designers, co-founders
Willowlamp

The ah-ha moment for Willowlamp came while Sian Elliot and Adam Hoets were stuck in traffic. Hoets, an architect by training, had been toying with the idea of using the ball chain that Elliot used in her jewellery designs to form a woven cover for a lamp. They had already tried to hang the chains using a traditional fastening clip but they were unhappy with the result. That day in the car, Elliot came up with the idea of making their own fastener using a technique of laser-cutting that she had been using in her jewellery. It worked. Ever since then,

Willowlamp’s success has been growing exponentially. They took the Elle Décor Lighting Design of the Year Award for 2006-7 and 2007-8 and were the Elle Décor Designers of the Year for 2009. Now their designs are sold in South Africa, the United States and Britain and will soon be in Germany, Austria and Switzerland. What did you do in the traffic this morning? — Eamon Allan

 **Lunch spot: Romy’s Ethiopian Canteen, Bez Valley, Johannesburg**

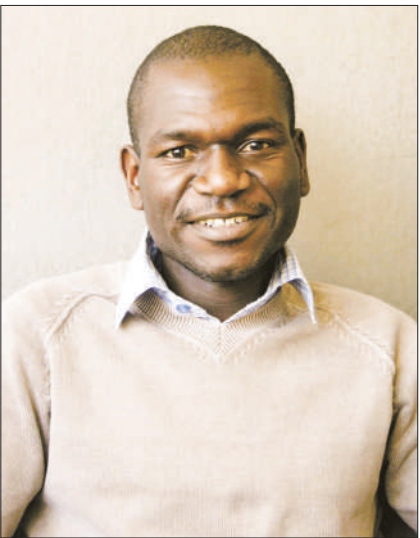


Andile Mazwai

Chief executive,
BJM

Andile Mazwai spent his formative years tending cattle in rural Transkei. How does that translate into big business? It doesn’t. Mazwai says he harbours some nostalgia for his days as a herdboy but points out that this kind of hindsight can only be seen from the luxury of his current position as a successful businessman. Mazwai’s career began with Barnard Jacobs Mellet Securities where he was equity-sales trader. He went on to found Mazwai Securities in October 2001. Just two years later, his company merged with Barnard Jacob Mellet in a Black Economic Empowerment deal in which the Mazwai Consortium bought 10% of BJM Holdings. He is chief executive of BJM, listed as South Africa’s largest independent stockbroker and rated number one in the 2008 *Financial Mail* survey of stockbrokers. — Eamon Allan

 **Lunch spot: Espresso, Parkhurst, Johannesburg**



Errol Masinga

Transformation coordinator,
Alexander Forbes

Errol Masinga didn’t start out as a panelbeater. After completing his marketing qualification at the Vaal University of Technology, he joined the Chamber of Commerce and Industry Johannesburg as part of their learnership programme. It was there that Masinga’s passion for the development of small and medium-size enterprise was fostered. Seeing a gap in the automobile repair market in 2003 he spearheaded the Alexander Forbes’s Adopt A Panel Shop project. The project selects disadvantaged black-owned panelbeating business and helps them upgrade their infrastructure and facilities so they are able to qualify for the necessary grading and approvals. But it’s a bigger challenge than merely providing equipment and facilities. Qualifying as registered paintless dent repairers, non-structural repairers or major-structural repairers — the various grades required to receive business from the insurance industry — requires intensive skills development as well as management and systems upgrades. — Jane Steinacker

 **Lunch spot: The Butcher Shop & Grill, Nelson Mandela Square, Johannesburg**

When she finished school, Nontsikelelo Biyela was a domestic worker. Biyela grew up in the small village of Kwavuthela in KwaZulu-Natal, and she says that after matriculating, there were just not many options open to her. But in 1999, that all changed. She was offered a bursary to study viticulture at Stellenbosch University based on her matric results. It was then that she began her foray into the white, male-dominated wine industry. Biyela says that she can count the black wine makers in the country on one hand. It’s testament to her tenacity that when she began her studies she could no speak Afrikaans, the medium in which her course would be taught. She apprenticed at Delheim and in 2004, she got a job at Stellegaya winery in Stellenbosch where she has been ever since. Now her work has taken her to the US, Germany, Sweden and the UK and her wines are being exported to France and Holland. — Eamon Allan



Nontsikelelo Biyela

Winemaker

 **Lunch spot: 95 Keerom, Gardens Cape Town**



Rudo Botha

Co-founder,
REX Creative

If Rudo Botha could have it any other way he would opt to be a teacher or a performing artist. If you had to ask his peers, they’d tell you he’s a rare blend of artist and strategist. But to the guys who are paying the bills, his clients, he’s the guy with a solid reputation for delivering iconic branding and design solutions. Botha, whose clients range from Coca-Cola to South African Breweries and a niche independent record label based in Belgium, says he’s doing what he loves: building his own design business using his creative flair. And when he’s not designing brands, he’s working on the redesign of an indigenous ecosystem in the Cradle of Mankind. — Jane Steinacker

 **Lunch spot: The Local Grill, Hurlingham, Johannesburg**

300 Young South Africans | Business & Law



Mfundo Thango
Founder,
KwaZulu-Natal Youth in Business
Cooperative

When Mfundo Thango started Mpilede Foods, his food production and processing company, and his food distribution and warehousing business, Bantu Batho Management Services, he faced a lot of challenges. That's exactly why Thango decided to pass on what he learned to other micro enterprises.

In April of 2007, Thango started up the KwaZulu-Natal Youth in Business Cooperative. It now boasts a 500-member strong following, in which all types of businesses from cattle, chicken, maize and goat farmers to security and cleaning

groups go to for assistance in building up their own businesses. They come away with everything from business plans to marketing material and mentorship from Thango. This work landed Thango the *Black Business Quarterly's* Young Visionary Achiever Award for 2009. — Jane Steinacker

 **Lunch spot: Europa, Village Walk, Johannesburg**



Silas Howarth
Director,
Sexpo

'Sex sells, and the success of Sexpo proves it,' Silas Howarth says.

In 2006, Howarth and his two younger brothers, Cairo and Calvin, realised that South Africa was lacking a fun and entertaining expo aimed exclusively at the adult market. They researched adult expos around the world and chose Sexpo — an internationally recognised health, sexuality and lifestyle event that originated in Australia.

The next year, the brothers brought the event to

Johannesburg. Sexpo, Howarth says, broke exhibition records with over 32 000 people attending just the premier that first year, with more than 100 000 coming through the doors. Now the brothers have added events in Cape Town and Durban making Sexpo one of the fastest growing expos in the country, with over 150 exhibitor stands and various sexual wellbeing workshops. — Eamon Allan

 **Lunch spot: La Campagnola, Bryanston, Johannesburg**

What do you get when you cross a lawyer and an activist? Pria Chetty has been pioneering the field of technology and innovation law. She helps non-profit organisations, government and companies create new legal frameworks that encourage more open and collaborative approaches to business and content.

At the sprightly age of 30 she has gained the respect of her peers with an understanding of how the law can be used to enable access to knowledge, education and technology. She is part of numerous research projects to review copyright and intellectual property in Africa, and her firm, Chetty Law, practices law in an innovative, progressive way.

In the near future Chetty and Dirk Visser will host "Our Generation Will Deliver," which is a gathering of leaders in business, government and civil society with the intention of brainstorming South Africa's leadership challenges. The product of the unlikely pairing of lawyer and activist, Chetty is a dynamic package. — Eamon Allan

 **Lunch spot: Primi Piatti, anywhere**



Pria Chetty
Founder,
Chetty Law



Dumisani Gumbi
Director,
Anamazing Workshop

Isabelle Rorke got into animation almost by accident. After editing a children's nature conservation magazine and working in broadcasting on *Morning Live*, Rorke noticed the potential for animation to reach a broad audience and, at the same time, be culturally relevant in South Africa.

Meanwhile, Dumisani Gumbi was looking at making a Shaka Zulu cartoon. He dropped out of Harvard University and went to film school instead.

The two met through a mutual friend and found that they had a common purpose: to produce animated features that are reflective of South Africa and the continent. In 2000, they joined to form Anamazing Workshop.

Backyard Shorts — their production of 13 five-minute short animations, each with African characters and narratives — went on to win Best Animation at the South Africans Film Awards.

Anamazing received the Africa Growth Institute's SMME award for most innovative company in 2008 and the company was recently selected as high-impact entrepreneurs with the US-based Endeavor programme, alongside heavy hitting entrepreneurs such as Nkhensani Nkosi and Vinny Lingham, for their potential to make some serious cash out of cartoons. — Eamon Allan

 **Lunch spot: Bayleaf and Sage in Blue Bird Centre, Atholl; Orient, Melrose Arch, Johannesburg**



Isabelle Rorke
Director,
Anamazing Workshop



Oran Cohen

Imagineer

At 28, the Johannesburg “imagineer” has travelled to more countries than many people can name. He exudes entrepreneurial skill and does what makes him happy. Cohen represents South Africa on

the World Spirit Youth Council, a United Nations NGO. He is passionate about peace in Palestine and has worked with the Interfaith Encounter Association in Israel, which brings children of different faiths together. Cohen works with Geniuslab, which runs workshops to inspire innovation and creativity. He is the founder and creative director of Fizzy, which develops online holistic marketing strategies for companies, and the creator of the Imagineering Academy, which helps to develop problem solving techniques for corporates. He’s also the vocalist in his self-titled band and is writing an animated feature film. How does he do it? “I just believe things don’t have to be so hard,” Cohen says. — Ilham Rawoot

Lunch spot: The Ant, Melville, Johannesburg



Marisa Fassler

Economist

She couldn’t have chosen a career much different from her own mother’s. After studying for an honours in economics at Stellenbosch University, Marisa

Fassler — daughter of fashion designer Marianne Fassler — read for an MPhil in development studies at Oxford. Although banking was not her first career choice, she worked for HSBC, ABN Amro Bank and JPMorgan Chase, where she was a senior South Africa economist. Since then, she’s made the top three in Reuters’ Economist of the Year competition three years running and won the award in 2006. Fassler then moved from the private sector to her current post as chief director of macroeconomic policy in the national treasury’s economic policy unit. She says she’s wanted to work for treasury since she graduated from Oxford. “It’s important that there’s a growing pool of skilled technicians giving advice to policymakers,” says Fassler. — Faranaaz Parker

Lunch spot: The Service Station, Melville, Johannesburg



Photo: David Harrison

Chaeli Mycroft

Co-founder, Chaeli Campaign

Chaeli Mycroft isn’t sure what to do next. She’s already started up a non-profit, been featured on *Carte Blanche* and most recently won the Youth Category for the South Africa’s Social Entrepreneur award. At the age of 10, Mycroft was nominated as a finalist in the Social Welfare category of the Shoprite Checkers / SABC2 Woman of the Year Award — the youngest finalist in the 11-year history of these prestigious awards. Her non-profit, the Chaeli Campaign, was started up in 2004 by Mycroft, her sister Erin and their

three close friends Tarryn, Justine and Chelsea Terry — all of whom were between six and 12 at the time. The girls started the campaign to raise R20 000 for Mycroft’s motorised wheelchair. Just seven weeks later, they reached their goal. But after they saw how quickly the money rolled in, they decided to keep going and ever since, the Chaeli Campaign has been raising cash for those suffering from physical and mental impairment and doing outreach work in various communities. “Our relationship is what makes our story awesome and what makes it work,” says Mycroft, who has cerebral palsy. The 14-year-old has had a hard time trying to overcome people’s prejudices. She says people treat her differently and it is something that she has just had to get used to. Changing perceptions towards the differently abled can be a challenge, she says, but fortunately she has four fellow activists and growing support from the public. In March, the Chaeli Campaign was named as winner in the Youth Category in the South African Social Entrepreneurs Awards. Mycroft says that winning was a great honour and she is grateful for the many doors that have opened for their organisation because of it. But she’s still not sure which door to enter once school’s out. “I have a lot of different ideas, so it’s hard to decide,” Mycroft says. “But I’m thinking of journalism, advertising, events or motivational speaking. I haven’t really made up my mind yet.” — Eamon Allan

Lunch spot: Mugg & Bean, anywhere

I have a lot of different ideas, so it’s hard for me to decide ...



Judith February

Manager, Institute for Democracy in South Africa

Judith February has been working at the Institute for Democracy in South Africa (Idasa) since June 2000, where she is the manager of the governance unit in the Political Information and Monitoring Service. The unit is tasked with monitoring performance of South Africa’s political institutions, with a focus on government, including corruption and its impact on governance, parliamentary oversight, constitutional law monitoring and institutional design. Members of the unit, including February, also write general political analysis for a number of publications. February does consultative work for a New York-based group as part of the stability index on 25 developing countries and she is a member of the Council for Higher Education task team on academic freedom. She sits on the boards of the Goedgedacht Forum for Social Reflection and the Parliamentary Monitoring Group. — Eamon Allan

Lunch spot: 2Go, Tokora, Stellenbosch



Dirk Herman

Deputy general secretary, Solidarity

Dirk Herman is the deputy general secretary of South Africa’s largest independent trade union, Solidarity. A largely white, Afrikaans trade union, Solidarity has its roots in the Transvaal Miner’s Association, which formed over 100 years ago and later became the South African Mineworkers Union (MWU). Herman joined Solidarity in the late 1990s as a sector organiser. Having done his doctoral thesis on the influence of affirmative action on the alienation of the non-designated group in South Africa, Herman is a vocal critic of the ANC government’s affirmative action policies, particularly in the face of South Africa’s ballooning skills shortage. He has written three books, the most recent of which, *The Naked Emperor: Why Affirmative Action has Failed*, was published in 2007. Born and raised in Heilbron in the Free State, Herman studied law at Potchefstroom University, now called North West University. — Eamon Allan

Lunch spot: Die Werf, Pretoria

300 Young South Africans | Civil Society



Judith Mtsewu

Manager, Southern Africa Gender Protocol Alliance, Gender Links

A passionate human rights activist, Judith Mtsewu’s work in civil society aims to give a voice to the marginalised, particularly women and children. She is especially interested in the country’s response to the care work and gender aspects of HIV/Aids. Nearing the completion of her master’s in public policy management at the University of the Witwatersrand, Mtsewu works for Gender Links. Prior to this she was project coordinator of the Empowering Children and Media programme at the Media Monitoring Project. There she developed the university accredited “Reporting on Children” course in partnership with the Wits School of Journalism, aimed at sensitising and training journalists on how to better cover children and child’s rights issues. — Lynley Donnelly

 Lunch spot: Soi, Melville, Johannesburg



Daksha Gaman Kassan

Activist

With aspirations of becoming a top-notch lawyer in a high-profile firm, Daksha Gaman Kassan’s career took a drastic turn after working for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Now she’s the project coordinator of the Children’s Rights Project at the Community Law Centre at the University of the Western Cape. So instead of backing big money corporate clients, Kassan now fights for child justice and the rights of children across South Africa. With her LLM (*cum laude*), she is also an admitted attorney of the High Court of South Africa. — Liesl Venter

 Lunch spot: Nando’s, Nando’s and more Nando’s

Doron Isaacs has been a busy man. This 28-year-old holds both a business science degree and an LLB from the University of Cape Town and spent much of his time at varsity as an activist and working in student and civil society organisations. He has been general secretary of the Jewish youth movement, Habonim; an organiser at the Treatment Action Campaign; and co-founder of Students for Law and Social Justice — one of the largest student organisations in the country. Last year, Isaacs was one of the people who planned a delegation of South African human rights leaders — such as Barbara Hogan and Nozizwe Madlala Routledge — to Israel and the occupied Palestinian Territories, to draw attention to the work of Israeli and Palestinian activists. Equal Education, Isaac’s current project, is a Khayelitsha-based social movement that aims to better South African education, through research, media, law and grassroots activism. — Ilham Rawoot



Doron Isaacs

Co-founder and organiser, Equal Education

 Lunch spot: Frangipanis, Woodstock, Cape Town



Zunaid Khan

Founder, Urban Walkabout

So you thought you knew the city? Well, nobody’s really seen Joburg unless they’ve been on Zunaid Khan’s Urban Walkabout tour. It’s a favourite on the international NGO circuit and takes people walking through the heart of Hillbrow as well as the manicured concrete of Melrose Arch to display the city’s diversity, its history, its people and its politics, all the while revealing how Joburg has taken — and is taking — shape. The city planner who trained at Wits first took to the streets with one of his lecturers who made it part of the curriculum to see the city from the pavement up. Khan got so into it that he started taking visiting urban planning students through different neighbourhoods on weekends as a hobby. Now his hobby is his business — at least one of them. The 31-year old also owns a Primi Piatti and a bustling little town planning operation to boot. — Tanya Pampalone

 Lunch spot: Primi Piatti, Melrose Arch, Johannesburg



Thami Floyd Nkosi

Activist

Thami Nkosi says his path to activism was prompted by feelings of hopelessness. After reuniting with his father in 1998, he lost him to the HIV/Aids epidemic just a few months later. “I wanted to care for him but couldn’t, because [as a boy] I wasn’t taught how to,” he says. Since then, Nkosi has joined forces with other men to build a society free of HIV/Aids — and free of gender stereotyping. The last two years have seen him actively involved in national, regional and international advocacy work, particularly for sexual and reproductive health rights. In 2008, he was part of South Africa’s youth team at the third Africa Conference on Sexual Health and Rights. He was also a panellist at the 53rd Commission on the Status of Women session, held at the United Nations in New York. — Karabo Keepile

 Lunch spot: Primmi Piatti, anywhere



Imraan Buccus

Researcher

Imraan Buccus is the man to talk to when it comes to poverty, civil society and public participation. His work in empowering civil society is driven by, he says, “the spirit embodied in ordinary people, despite the difficulties they face.” And lots of people care what he thinks. Most recently, he was on the team of SABC’s election analysts. Buccus is also a journalist with a weekly column in *The Mercury* and writes for the *Sunday Tribune* and the *Mail & Guardian*. He is the editor of the progressive Muslim

publication, *Al Qalam*, which promotes plural coexistence in South Africa, and he is managing editor of the public participation journal *Critical Dialogue*. But his proudest achievement was drafting the strategy document on public participation for provincial legislatures. — *Ilham Rawoot*

 **Lunch spot: Yum-Thai, Durban North**

At just 21 years old, Anele Wondo is the epitome of a young activist. Her initially small voice becomes very powerful when she describes her work. She has already done time with Love Life, the Treatment Action Campaign and Equal Education, where she was involved in youth and community development, career guidance and providing support for people involved in gangs as well as pregnant teenagers. Through her job at the Social Justice Coalition, she has worked closely with Andrew Feinstein, Zackie Achmat and Mamphela Ramphela. Her passion comes from the history classes she took at school. “I learned how democracy is supposed to work, and people don’t seem to understand the word,” she says. Next year, Wondo will take her mobilisation skills to UCT, where she intends to study politics and media. — *Ilham Rawoot*



Anele Wondo

Branch coordinator, Social Justice Coalition

 **Lunch spot: Royale Eatery, Cape Town**



Emile Jansen

Hip-hop teacher and activist

Emile Jansen is considered by many as a godfather of South African hip-hop, having co-founded one of the country’s first hip-hop groups — Black Noise — in 1988. Jansen is an MC, B-boy and graffiti artist. He grew up, and still lives on the Cape Flats, where he is passionate about encouraging people to seek knowledge. “It’s an African tradition that those who know, pass information to those who don’t,” he says, and he tries to do his part in this cycle by rhyming about issues and solutions. He has created landmark projects such as the African Hip-Hop Indaba and youth development organisation Heal the Hood. Emile authored the 2004 book, *My Hip Hop is African and Proud*. He is currently touring the country with Black Noise, running hip-hop workshops with schoolchildren, including discussions on identity, a topic very close to his heart. — *Ilham Rawoot*

 **Lunch spot: Freshstop, Tokai, Cape Town**



Photo: Joi Ito

Heather Ford

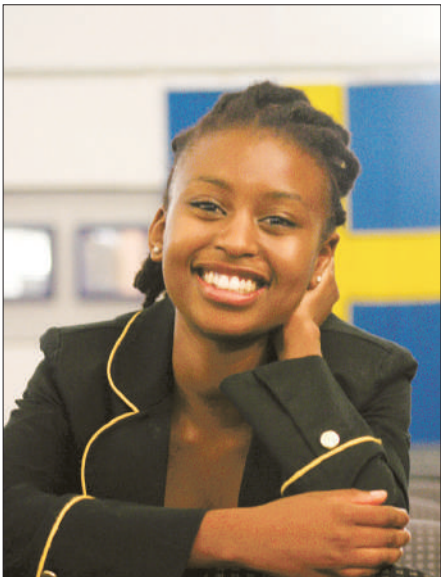
Open Source activist

Heather Ford is seen as something of an Open Source guru in South African technology circles. But understated in her jeans and T-shirt, blonde hair brushed back off her face, it’s easy to forget that this is a woman who counts Jimmy Wales of Wikipedia among her high-tech friends. A few years ago, Ford was awarded the Benetech scholarship to work as a fellow in the Reuters Digital Vision Fellowship Programme at Stanford University. It was there, in California, that she started volunteering for Creative Commons, which she describes as a “non-profit organisation devoted to expanding the range of creative works available for others to build upon legally and to share.” In 2004, Ford returned to South Africa to start Creative Commons South Africa and has worked in areas of internet policy, law and management. She also co-founded the African Commons Project and serves on the advisory board of the

Wikipedia foundation. Ford has the qualities of a good teacher too, expressing herself simply without being patronising or offhand when she explains the ins and outs of her work. She has delivered seminars on blogging for iCommons and on issues related to heritage through iHeritage. Technology and development, she says, are the focus of her work. “The beauty of the internet is seeing development projects. There is an opportunity to lower the barriers without needing a lot of funding.” Ford plans to begin a master’s in information science systems at the University of California, Berkley in August. But before she does that she’s hosting a meeting of the 50 top internet entrepreneurs right here in South Africa. — *Eamon Allan*

 **Lunch spot: Assagi, Illovo, Rosebank, Johannesburg**

There is an opportunity to lower the barriers without needing a lot of funding



Kopano Matlwa

Student health activist

Kopano Matlwa’s beautifully nuanced portrayal of two very different young women growing up in the new South Africa in her novel, *Coconut*, won her the 2007 European Union Literary Award at the tender age of 21. But Matlwa’s gifts do not end with all things literary. Since primary school she has wanted to become a doctor and is in her final year of medicine at the University of Cape Town. During her varsity stint Matlwa established Waiting Room Education by Medical Students (WREMs), an organisation that educates patients on health issues in student-run mobile clinics. She now sits on the WREMs board in preparation for a new executive after she leaves university. In 2005 she represented South Africa as part of the Goldman Sachs Global Leaders programme. — *Lynley Donnelly*

 **Lunch spot: Anywhere I haven’t been**

300 Young South Africans | Civil Society



Abigail Knox

Leader,
Green Police, University of Cape
Town

Abigail Knox might only be 23, but she's been through more than most young people her age. But the biggest challenge she faced was her mother's confinement to a wheelchair after her father's death in 1995. Instead of focusing her energy on self-pity, Knox decided to help others wherever she can.

In December 2008, she used an inheritance she received to assist five Zimbabwean families with food, building materials and machinery to help them build new lives for themselves. In between her undergraduate and post-graduate degree, Knox spent seven months volunteering at Makaphutu Children's Village in the Valley of a Thousand Hills in KwaZulu-Natal.

She is the leader of the Green Police, a green campus initiative at the University of Cape Town, where she assists in creating awareness on climate change, recycling and sustainability. — Jane Steinacker

 **Lunch spot: Starlings, Rondebosch, Cape Town**

Bongani Ndlovu lives his passion for community development. As the manager of media interventions for the Soul City Institute — the innovative multimedia health promotion and social change project — Ndlovu is responsible for the production of the *Soul City* television and radio drama series.

Through drama and entertainment the programme, and it's message, reaches more than 16-million South Africans.

Ndlovu is a regular guest on television talk shows, talking about the challenges faced by the youth. He's also an associate member and deputy chairperson of the Soweto Youth Organisation and has started a book club in the area to encourage a culture of reading among young people in his community. — Jane Steinacker



Bongani Ndlovu

Manager of media interventions,
Soul City Institute

 **Lunch spot: Moyo's, Zoo Lake, Johannesburg**



Donna McCallum

Fairy Godmother

Donna McCallum sold up her shares as the managing director of iKineo, the marketing activation company she founded, to take a year-long sabbatical in South America. Five months into the trip, she found herself on a night bus in Argentina. And that's when she decided on her destiny: to become South Africa's first Fairy Godmother.

McCallum, who was one of the founders of Studentwise Media Services, which started magazines such as *SL* and *Ymag* and was on the founding team of a Silicon Valley dot com in the late Ninties, started up Fairy Godmother Inc., which helps individuals and organisations get "clear, inspired and focused on their vision, dreams and goals" and it assists them to make that dream a reality.

Since she started up her company a few years ago, McCallum has delivered her 12-week programme to over 1 300 individuals and has done talks in South Africa, England, the United States and Germany. — Eamon Allan

 **Lunch spot: Gypsy Lounge, Illovo, Johannesburg**



Photo: David Harrison

Nobahle Mangcu-Lockwood

Advocate,
Cape Bar

Nobahle Mangcu-Lockwood is spellbound by the cut-throat nature and challenges offered by the legal profession. Mangcu-Lockwood is an advocate at the Cape Bar and was in the centre of one of the most controversial challenges the legal system has faced in recent years.

In May last year, she was a member of the counsel representing political parties — the African Christian Democratic Party, DA, Independent Democrats and the United Democratic Movement

— in a bid to prevent the Scorpions from being disbanded.

Prior to that, Mangcu-Lockwood was an attorney at Cheadle, Thompson & Haysom, where she specialised in labour law and general public policy work.

She's an LLB graduate from the University of Cape Town. — Jane Steinacker

 **Lunch spot: Radisson SAS Hotel, Cape Town**



Simangele Mabena

Gauteng regional representative,
Community of Mandela Rhodes
Scholars

It was her work in Vancouver, Canada in 2006 as a special needs youth worker that Simangele Mabena began using the arts as a way to teach disabled youth. On her return to South Africa the following year, she began volunteering with the deaf youth in Soweto using drama processes to help learners better understand English literature.

Mabena, who completed her honours in dramatic arts at the University of the Witwatersrand University in 2005, received the Mandela Rhodes Scholarship last year and has gone on to study towards her

master's in dramatic arts.

She serves as the Gauteng regional representative of the Community of Mandela Rhodes Scholars, an organisation made up of present and past recipients of the prestigious scholarship.

— Jane Steinacker

 **Lunch spot: Mugg & Bean, Killarney, Johannesburg**



Paula Proudlock

Child rights programme manager, Children’s Institute

As a child rights programme manager at the University of Cape Town’s Children’s Institute, Paula Proudlock facilitates access between social workers, teachers and various children’s organisations and Parliament. Her work has broken down the barrier between government and the agencies working on the ground. She has managed civil society campaigns on laws aimed at children’s rights on social security, healthcare services, social services and protection from abuse and neglect.

Proudlock, who already has a law degree, is completing her master’s degree in public law at the

University of Stellenbosch. She is a founding member of the Alliance for Children’s Entitlement to Social Security and serves on its board. Proudlock was also the manager of the Children’s Bill Working Group, the civil society network that actively participated in the making of the Children’s Bill in Parliament from 2002 to 2008. — Jane Steinacker

Lunch spot: Olympia, Kalk Bay, Cape Town

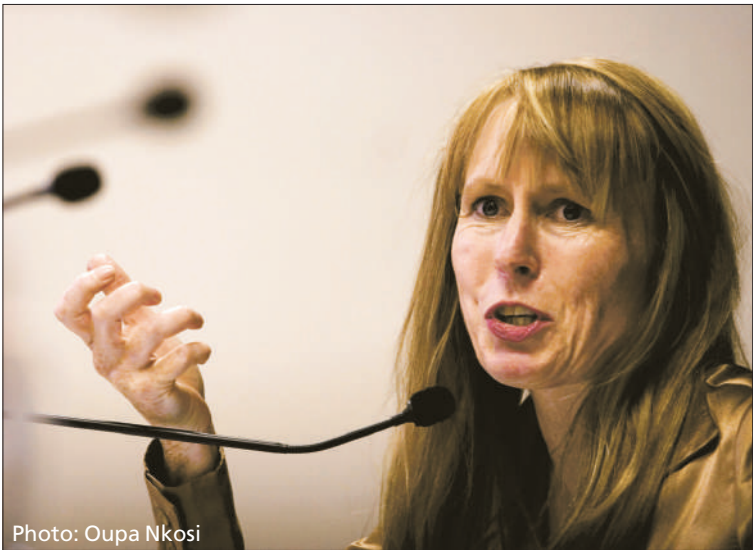


Photo: Oupa Nkosi

Jane Duncan

Executive director, Freedom of Expression Institute

As the executive director of the Freedom of Expression Institute (FXI), Jane Duncan is a very public persona — especially considering the strife that the SABC has found itself in over the past few years. Duncan worked her way up the ranks through the FXI, joining the group in 1994 as a receptionist. Since then, she has held positions as the publication education coordinator, the head of policy and research and was acting director

before she was appointed to her current position in 2001. While she has spent much of her career defending the right to free speech — she was also a coordinator for the Anti-Censorship Action Group. Duncan began her career in the arts, where she worked with the African Institute of Art’s Funda Centre in Soweto and, later, at the Afrika Cultural Centre in Newtown. This month, she will be leaving the FXI to join Rhodes University as the Highway Africa Chair and a professor of media and information society. — Lloyd Gedye

Lunch spot: Doppio Zero, Bedfordview

Marc Anthony Zimmerman recently discovered that broccoli doesn’t actually taste that bad and reckons his mum would be proud of this realisation. Since leaving the University of the Witwatersrand with a BSC degree in electrical engineering, Zimmerman has worked everywhere from coffee shops to technology firms. Now, as head of The Broccoli Project, Zimmerman works with NGO’s, retailers and suppliers to design rewards programmes that encourage attendance of skills development workshops, staying in school and preventing disease. The attendance is tracked through biometrics and reward vouchers are dispensed for those who make the effort. The project was nominated by the City of Cape Town to participate at the HiT global entrepreneurship in Barcelona. — Jane Steinacker



Marc Anthony Zimmerman

Founder, The Broccoli Project

Lunch spot: Beluga, Cape Town



Bronwyn Lace

Co-founder, SAarts Emerging

Creativity and beauty abound in Bronwyn Lace’s work: she uses space and scale as her tools and investigates the links between art, physics and nature. Lace is an installation and performance artist whose work is based on the role of art in the development of communities in South Africa.

She participates in national and international community artwork projects and runs an education and exhibition programme at The Bag Factory in Newtown.

Lace also lectures part-time at the AAA School of Advertising and is an assistant to the curator of the SABC art collection. She also co-founded www.saartsemerging.org — a website for showcasing South African artists. — Qudisya Karrim

Lunch spot: The Fat Olive, Muldersdrift, Johannesburg

In February this year, Clement Scholtz came out. In a piece for the Mail & Guardian’s Democracy 2009 series about youth in South Africa, Scholtz wrote about the discrimination and persecution of gay men in his community. No small feat for a 19-year-old from Orange Farm who has been hiding his sexual identity from his friends and family since he was a child.

But for the past three years, things in Scholtz’s life have started to shift. He joined the Democracy Begins in Conversation project at Constitution Hill, which brings more than 60 young people from across Johannesburg to talk with constitutional court judges and democracy activists. Every Saturday, the youth gather to learn about the Constitution and find out exactly how it relates to everyday life. Scholtz, who is also a facilitator and manager for the Children in Conflict Project, recently began working towards his media studies degree at Rosebank Collage. — Jane Steinacker



Clement Scholtz

Activist

Lunch spot: Moyo, Zoo Lake, Johannesburg

300 Young South Africans | Civil Society



Cherith Sanger

Attorney,
Women's Legal Centre

Cherith Sanger grew up in a politically active household, which was rich with debate on human rights issues. Now she dedicates her life to the struggle against gender-based violence. Sanger believes that even though the apartheid system has been abolished, the effects continue to reel through society today. Just because the law has been changed, she says, it doesn't mean that the mindsets have followed suit. Sanger says work done by NGO's such as the Women's Legal Centre is more important now than ever in fostering a culture of human rights consciousness. She works to litigate cases to advance women's rights and produce briefs to assist courts in constitutional cases that concern women's rights and gender equality. — Jane Steinacker

 **Lunch spot: The Chai Yo, Little Mowbray, Cape Town**



Ntombi Sefularo

Co-founder,
The Ikageng Project (TIP)

When the going gets tough, Ntombi Sefularo hangs around. As a co-founder of the Ikageng Project in Potchefstroom, Sefularo and many others chose to help children in the area get an education by providing career guidance and life skills lessons. The idea was that education will break the cycle of poverty into which many of these children are born. The project, which has been in operation since 2007, lost many of its founding members when they pulled out for personal reasons, but Sefularo stayed on. She has almost single-handedly kept the

organisation afloat by developing learner development material and providing life skills lessons at Ikageng township's high schools. The organisation operates with little funding and Sefularo has been working as a volunteer for the past two years. She plans to stay with the project until 2011. — Jane Steinacker

 **Lunch spot: Mugg & Bean, Potchefstroom**

For four years, Francois Viljoen has been part of dynamic NGO Open Africa, helping communities from across Southern Africa to create and develop their own local tourism routes. These routes, hosted on the organisation's website, give travellers from across the globe a grassroots experience of the region, while simultaneously granting residents the agency to uplift their communities. With a master's degree in geography and environmental studies, Viljoen began his work at Open Africa as a route developer. Now he is the operations manager and supervises other route developers and networkers. The best part of the job, says Viljoen, is giving people hope, seeing communities realise their potential and understanding that what they have to offer is in no way second-class. — Lynley Donnelly



Francois Viljoen

Operations manager,
Open Africa

 **Lunch spot: The Brass Bell, Kalk Bay, Cape Town**



Mmpaseka "Steve" Letsike

Activist

Mmapaseka "Steve" Letsike believes that the personal is political. Letsike describes herself as "young black lesbian woman, a feminist, a Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) and women's rights activist, and a human rights defender." An active advocate of gender transformation in South Africa, Letsike is project manager at OUT (LGBT), a non-profit organisation that promotes the rights of the LGBT community. OUT provides physical and mental health services to this community, including targeted HIV/Aids work, counselling and workshops. She's passionate about human rights and the elimination of stigma and homophobia and advocates for more stringent legislation on the constitutional rights of women and members of LGBT communities in order to protect and empower them. — Qudsiya Karrim

 **Lunch spot: News Café, Johannesburg Civic Theatre**



Photo: Delwyn Verasamy

Anneke Meerkotter

Executive director,
Tshwaranang Legal Advocacy
Centre

Being a single mother for Anneke Meerkotter isn't easy. But, she says, it helps her understand what other women are going through. "It also helps me appreciate children and their vulnerable position," says Meerkotter, the executive director of Tshwaranang Legal Advocacy Centre, a multi-disciplinary centre that promotes the right of women to live lives free of violence through research, advocacy, litigation and the provision of legal services. Meerkotter is a human rights lawyer who focuses on the areas of HIV/Aids, gender-based violence

and sex work. She completed her LLB Degrees at the University of the Western Cape and later worked at its Community Law Centre where she focused on gender and children's rights. She also coordinated the South African Young Sex Offenders Programme until 2003 and lectured law students. Before joining Tshwaranang she practised as an attorney at the Aids Law Project at the University of the Witwatersrand. — Karabo Keepile

 **Lunch spot: Bambanani, Melville, Johannesburg**



Patrick Kabuya

Senior financial management specialist, World Bank (Africa)

Raised by his grandmother in the rural areas of Kenya, Patrick Kabuya made a decision when he was young. He was going to make sure he obtained a good education. In 2008, this decision helped earn him a master's in commerce from the University of Johannesburg. Before moving to the World Bank as a senior financial management specialist for their African arm, Kabuya worked for Ernst & Young in Kenya and South Africa. His job now includes partnering with different stakeholders in many countries throughout the

continent, including governments, regulators and professional accounting bodies in order to enhance financial reporting and accountability. Kabuya is a strong believer in education and leadership, which he says is lacking in Africa. And now he's perfectly poised to help shape a bit of both. — Karabo Keepile

 Lunch spot: Col'Cacchio, Benmore, Sandton, Johannesburg



Photo: Lisa Skinner

Carina du Toit

Attorney, Centre for Child Law, University of Pretoria

Since 2005, attorney Carina du Toit has spent her time fighting for children's rights at the Centre for Child Law based at the University of Pretoria. She was an attorney for the centre's most important case to date, where they are seeking to declare sections of the Criminal Law (sentencing) Amendment Act 41 of 2007 unconstitutional. The sections under scrutiny allow the imposition of minimum sentences, including life imprisonment for children who

are as young as 16 or 17 when they commit the offence. The matter was referred to the Constitutional Court and was heard on March 5 this year. Judgment was reserved. — Jane Steinacker

 Lunch spot: Tribeca, Brooklyn Design Square, Pretoria

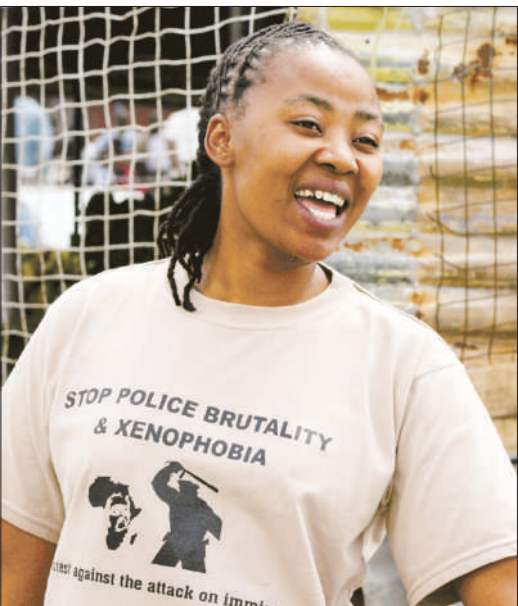
Nadia Sanger has been studying for the past 13 years and has every intention to continue for as long as she can. Sanger believes everybody should study for at least 20 years. She holds an honours degree in psychology as well as a master's degree and doctorate in women and gender studies from the University of the Western Cape. The focus of Sanger's studies is to investigate the issues surrounding gender and sexuality and how these are represented in contemporary media and film. She is concerned that men and women are limited in the way that they are being portrayed, and that the emphasis on heterosexual roles impacts heavily on the development of youth. — Jane Steinacker



Nadia Sanger

Researcher

 Lunch spot: Crush, St George's Mall, Cape Town



Vuyiseka Dubula

General secretary, Treatment Action Campaign

Vuyiseka Dubula has spent her career working in public health policy, social and youth development and human rights law. She started her career at the Treatment Action Campaign (TAC) as a literacy coordinator in 2002. Since then, she has worked with the National Association of People Living With HIV/Aids and Medicines sans Frontiers, returning to the TAC as general secretary last year. "There are so many inequalities in our society," says the 31-year-old, who received her BA in social health and social services from Unisa in 2008, "especially among poor people. From my own experience of living with HIV/Aids I know that the right of access to healthcare doesn't come easily, especially if you are poor and don't have money." — Eamon Allan

 Lunch spot: Obs Café, Observatory, Cape Town

Vivienne Lalu gives a voice to the voiceless. Before moving to the Sex Worker Education and Advocacy Taskforce (Sweat), which promotes human rights for sex workers and campaigns for their decriminalisation, she was rural coordinator at the Western Cape Network on Violence Against Women, and a counsellor at Nicro and a centre for child abuse. Lalu also spent some time in the United States, where she worked with a domestic abuse project and a women's drug treatment centre. She says while people always assume that she feels burdened by her work, the strength of the women she meets makes it much easier. "Women are incredible; they learn to live and thrive in the most creative ways," she says. Lalu says she does what she does because she feels that the position of the most marginal women, affects all women in society. — Ilham Rawoot



Vivienne Lalu

Advocacy programme coordinator, Sweat

 Lunch spot: The Olive Station, Muizenburg

300 Young South Africans | Civil Society



Natalie Simons-Arendse

Facilitator,
Face to Face/Faith to Faith

Anglican reverend Natalie Simons-Arendse has the potential to change the world. So says the World Economic Forum, which selected Simons-Arendse as a Young Global Leader in 2007.

Simons-Arendse’s work focuses on facilitating interfaith dialogue between youths from different backgrounds.

“The idea is to help young people develop peace and understanding,” she says.

One of the youngest priests in the Anglican Church in Southern Africa, Simons-Arendse has a MTh in pastoral care and counselling from the University of Stellenbosch. She is the chaplain at St Cyprian’s School for Girls, her alma mater, where she teaches divinity, and is involved in Face to Face/Faith to Faith, an international multi-faith youth leadership programme. — Faranaaz Parker

 Lunch spot: **Chai Yo, Mowbray, Cape Town**



Noluthando Ntlokwana

Activist

Noluthando Ntlokwana describes herself as “a feminist and womens rights activist.” In 2006, Ntlokwana was admitted as an attorney of the high court and now works as an attorney for the Women’s Legal Centre, based in Cape Town.

The non-profit centre, which is independently funded, was started by a group of women lawyers to advance women’s rights by conducting constitutional litigation and advocacy on gender issues. Ntlokwana holds an LLB and, in 2002, completed her clerkship at the Legal Resources Centre. She is now completing a master’s degree in constitutional litigation, with a thesis focusing on customary law and women’s rights. — Karabo Keepile

 Lunch spot: **Marcos, Cape Town**

Thokozile Budaza is an award-winning activist who is passionate about children’s and women’s rights. The 26-year-old became involved in activism at university; she now speaks publicly about her experiences of child molestation and rape as an adult, and has dedicated her life to fighting against gender violence.

Budaza has worked for a number of international organisations such as Civicus, Action Aid and Engender Health. In 2006, Women Demand Dignity lobby group acknowledged her with a White Ribbon Award for her contribution in the area of violence against women and children.

Budaza is based at the Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa and serves on the board of Sonke Gender Justice. She is also part of an international youth network aimed at building youth leadership and highlighting youth and HIV/Aids issues. — Qudsiya Karrim

 Lunch spot: **F!sh, Rosebank, Johannesburg**



Thokozile Budaza

Activist



Leigh Meinert

Managing director,
TSiBA Education

Leigh Meinert started making an impact early. At 15 she founded an NGO called Youth With Vision: For Young People Who Want To Make a Difference.

While still in school at Stellenbosch University, she ran her own accelerated learning centre teaching learning and life skills. Since then she has convened young people from around the world at the Parliament of the World’s Religions, worked as a strategic project facilitator in the corporate environment, and facilitated the Brightest Young Minds conference for four years.

With three co-founders, she started the Tertiary School in Business Administration (TSiBA), a private, not-for-profit business school in 2004. Two years later, at 27, Meinert was appointed managing director of the school. — Jane Steinacker

 Lunch spot: **Birds Café, Cape Town**

When Sholom Ncala was diagnosed HIV positive on December 12 2000, she did not fade into the woodwork. Instead, she went on television and hosted *Siyayinqoba* on SABC1, sharing her life story and experiences with others who are HIV positive.

Now, Ncala, who works as a receptionist for the Aids Law Project, also lends her profile to companies such as Liberty Life to help them create informative screenings on HIV and the use of antiretrovirals.

Ncala says there is still a lot of stigma attached to those affected by the virus and she plans to keep her message going out to those living with HIV.

Her next wish for disseminating the good word? A radio gig. — Jane Steinacker



Sholom Ncala

Aids Activist

 Lunch spot: **Primi Piatti, Melrose Arch, Johannesburg**



Claire Janisch

Co-creator, Genius Lab

She has a master's degree in environmental process engineering, but Claire Janisch doesn't build dams. Instead, she focuses on how to produce things that don't make a mess in the first place. Janisch is the co-creator of Genius Lab with art therapist, Amanda Gifford. They have created an innovation hub, which offers everything from environmental workshops for curious kids to seminars for businesses in innovative thinking. Janisch is also an independent consultant on projects for big business: at Eskom she looked at ways of cleaner production of the Duvha power station and

at Nedbank, she completed an environmental products and services feasibility study. She tries to help different types of organisations — from factories and mines to conventional and organic farms — seek new ways to solve old problems, always integrating what she learns from one place to another. For example, it turns out that there's a lot a cow can teach you about ingenious factory design, such as eat green grass, make white milk with zero waste. It's this kind of holistic thinking — and making connections in different fields with different organisations and people — that genius solutions is all about. But Janisch is taking this all one step further. She's researching ways to design systems that are actually good for the environment.

She recently started on her second master's degree with the Biomimicry Institute in the United States, in which she is one of 16 people in the world who are studying solutions adopted by nature with the aim of imitating these designs and processes to solve mankind's biggest problems. As part of her studies, she's just returned from the Amazon. Soon, she'll be packing her bags for a trip to Costa Rica. Lucky for us, Janisch will be coming back to impart her genius back home. — Jane Steinacker

 Lunch spot: Piggly Wiggly, Natal Midlands

There's a lot a cow can teach you about ingenious factory design



Makgabo Seema

Public relations officer, EnviroServ Waste Management

Makgabo Seema was born in rural Makgalong village (Moletjie) in Limpopo province. She graduated with an honours degree in dramatic arts from the University of the Witwatersrand, taught drama at the National School of the Arts and worked as a voice coach for the tour guides at Constitution Hill. But it was after working for the NGO ARA: Be Your Best Rock Challenge, that she found her way into the environment. She went on to head up the corporate social investment projects for her employer, EnviroServ Waste Management, as its public relations officer. There is no shortage of challenges for Seema as a woman working in the male-dominated waste management sector, with the threats of global warming increasing. She is tasked with both internal and external communications but she says the greatest opportunity she's been given is the ability to give back to "mother earth". — Eamon Allan

 Lunch spot: Simply Asia, Gardens, Cape Town



Peet du Plooy

Trade and investment adviser, WWF

An erstwhile Eskom employee, Peet du Plooy crossed over to the greener side of life to become trade and investment adviser to the local arm of the World Wildlife Fund in 2004. The mechanical engineer with a master's in public policy works to promote economic policy for sustainable development and engages directly with various South African multinationals on corporate sustainability strategies. He has served on various advisory bodies that consult with government as well as national business on issues including climate change. Du Plooy is developing an online corporate sustainability reporting platform, as the basis for an investment index. This will include an ecological footprint in its valuation to help drive sustainable portfolio investment decisions. He is passionate about solar power, electric vehicles and, "digital divide" solutions. — Lynley Donnelly

 Lunch spot: Saffron, Strathavon, Johannesburg



Lauren Waller

Conservationist

supplied, since most of the guano was scraped from the island in the 1900s. This helps our tuxedo-clad friends to breed underground, out of the sun and away from predators. — Eamon Allan

Lauren Waller stays on Dyer Island for a few weeks at a time when she's working. There are only two other inhabitants on the island but there is no roughing it. In fact, there are many houses left over from the days of guano (bird poo) collecting and seal hunting; power comes from a generator and water from saline distillation. "I love it," she says of her second home, which she shares with seals, penguins and birds. "I love seeing the interaction of animals. But what's sad is that you might think that because it's an island it's pristine but there is still pollution, there are still birds that get caught in nets. It's not as pristine as you might think." As part of a programme between Cape Nature and the Dyer Island Conservation Trust, Waller's job is to oversee burrows that have been

 Lunch spot: Savannah Café, Hermanus



Nicholas McLean

Partner, Roots Landscape Design

Nicholas McLean has been interested in plants since he was a teenager. From the age of 13, he started keeping his first bonsai and this sparked a passion that grew into his current occupation. McLean is a partner and landscaper for Roots Landscape Design. As part of this position he works with a group of specialists to offer sustainable energy, food and waste solutions, which all fits well into his other job. McLean is also a yoga teacher at Grace Yoga Studio in Highlands North who trained at the Patanjali School of Yoga in Himachal Pradesh, India. — Eamon Allan

 Lunch spot: Sai Thai, Cyrildene, Johannesburg

300 Young South Africans | Environment



Melumzi Nontangana

Head of research and development, Waste department, Cape Town

Melumzi Nontangana believes in reincarnation. He also likes to use refuse dumps as landmarks when giving directions. It's a good combination for the head of research and development at Cape Town's waste department. He spends his days trying to find ways to create renewable energy from rubbish and how to change the lives of the poor and save the earth while he's at it. A tall order from trash. But renewable fuels, Nontangana says, have the power to change the planet, to stop wars and to give the poorest of the poor a decent life with electricity and the services they deserve. And you thought it was just a pile of rubbish. — *Hendri Pelser*

 **Lunch spot:** News Café, anywhere



Tessa Mackay

Project leader, Hatch

Being the daughter of a diplomat meant that Tessa Mackay grew up all over the world. And for the next year, she'll be in Vancouver for the Hatch group as the project leader for sustainable development in the design group. She says her job is a perfect marriage between her love for the environment and engineering. With a BSc in civil engineering from the University of Cape Town, the outdoor enthusiast explains

that an engineer will always find a solution to a problem. In essence, Mackay's day-to-day problem is finding the fine balance between the environment and the budget when it comes to large engineering projects or building mammoth plants. — *Hendri Pelser*

 **Lunch spot:** Contessa, Rivonia, Johannesburg

Vicki Penfold never dreamed she'd end up as an environmental advocate. After post-graduate studies in politics at Rhodes University and a successful career in marketing and media, she became a mother. She tried in vain to find non-disposable nappies for her baby, but failed. That's how she came to design, test and launch Bio-baba, a range of eco-friendly cloth nappies. Penfold now runs the business from home and recently launched an online Bio-baba store. Although the product won *REAL SIMPLE* magazine's Green Innovation Award in the household category this year, the market for cloth nappies in South Africa is small. So Penfold has been attending workshops and antenatal classes to educate midwives and mothers about the cloth nappy alternative. She's also been speaking to waste management experts about the environmental and health risks associated with disposable nappy use. — *Faranaaz Parker*



Vicki Penfold

Creator, Bio-baba

 **Lunch spot:** Café Mosaic, Lakeside, Johannesburg



Lena Lukhele

Land restitution manager, SANParks

Lena Lukhele clearly remembers her first big land claim in Mpumalanga. During an old chief's retelling of how his community was forced off their land, the farmer's grandson and current landowner, started crying. Land ownership is an emotional issue and during the process Lukhele has to be a friend, councillor and shoulder to cry on. But, it's worth it, she says, because land restitution is about power and dignity. Lukhele believes land means freedom to the disenfranchised. Lukhele has been a public servant for nearly 12 years and the SANParks land restitution manager is adamant that she will stay in the public sector for some time to come. She started off her career specialising in urban food security at the Gauteng agriculture department but realised that land reform was her forte. Her real motivation is not the salary. It's about making a direct difference in people's lives. — *Hendri Pelser*

 **Lunch spot:** Mug & Bean, Menlyn, Pretoria



Pavs Pillay

Communications officer, Marine Research Institute, UCT

Pavs Pillay gave up the sunshine of Pretoria to heed the call of the ocean. She's now scientific and communications officer for the Marine Research Institute and Africa Centre for Climate and Earth System Science at the University of Cape Town (UCT). Pillay attained her honours degree in marine biology from Wits University. She then added a master's in fisheries management at UCT. But "pure academic life" didn't hold her for long. Pillay felt "a need to communicate ocean and marine issues to the public". Now she has found her niche, bridging gaps between scientific research outcomes and popular publications. Pillay is also passionately involved in the Green Auditing of Schools project. She hopes such initiatives will help people change their behaviour and start living environmentally sustainable lives. She believes it's not enough just to create awareness. — *Percy Mabandu*

 **Lunch spot:** Wild Olive, Observatory, Cape Town

300 Young South Africans | Environment



Melumzi Nontangana

Head of research and development, Waste department, Cape Town

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 **Lunch spot:** News Café, anywhere



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Being the daughter of a diplomat meant that Tessa Mackay grew up all over the world. And for the next year, she'll be in Vancouver for the Hatch group as the project leader for sustainable development in the design group. She says her job is a perfect marriage between her love for the environment and engineering. With a BSc in civil engineering from the University of Cape Town, the outdoor enthusiast explains

that an engineer will always find a solution to a problem. In essence, Mackay's day-to-day problem is finding the fine balance between the environment and the budget when it comes to large engineering projects or building mammoth plants. — *Hendri Pelser*

 **Lunch spot:** Contessa, Rivonia, Johannesburg

Vicki Penfold never dreamed she'd end up as an environmental advocate. After post-graduate studies in politics at Rhodes University and a successful career in marketing and media, she became a mother. She tried in vain to find non-disposable nappies for her baby, but failed. That's how she came to design, test and launch Bio-baba, a range of eco-friendly cloth nappies. Penfold now runs the business from home and recently launched an online Bio-baba store. Although the product won *REAL SIMPLE* magazine's Green Innovation Award in the household category this year, the market for cloth nappies in South Africa is small. So Penfold has been attending workshops and antenatal classes to educate midwives and mothers about the cloth nappy alternative. She's also been speaking to waste management experts about the environmental and health risks associated with disposable nappy use. — *Faranaaz Parker*



Vicki Penfold

Creator, Bio-baba

 **Lunch spot:** Café Mosaic, Lakeside, Johannesburg



Lena Lukhele

Land restitution manager, SANParks

Lena Lukhele clearly remembers her first big land claim in Mpumalanga. During an old chief's retelling of how his community was forced off their land, the farmer's grandson and current landowner, started crying. Land ownership is an emotional issue and during the process Lukhele has to be a friend, councillor and shoulder to cry on. But, it's worth it, she says, because land restitution is about power and dignity. Lukhele believes land means freedom to the disenfranchised. Lukhele has been a public servant for nearly 12 years and the SANParks land restitution manager is adamant that she will stay in the public sector for some time to come. She started off her career specialising in urban food security at the Gauteng agriculture department but realised that land reform was her forte. Her real motivation is not the salary. It's about making a direct difference in people's lives. — *Hendri Pelser*

 **Lunch spot:** Mug & Bean, Menlyn, Pretoria



Pavs Pillay

Communications officer, Marine Research Institute, UCT

Pavs Pillay gave up the sunshine of Pretoria to heed the call of the ocean. She's now scientific and communications officer for the Marine Research Institute and Africa Centre for Climate and Earth System Science at the University of Cape Town (UCT). Pillay attained her honours degree in marine biology from Wits University. She then added a master's in fisheries management at UCT. But "pure academic life" didn't hold her for long. Pillay felt "a need to communicate ocean and marine issues to the public". Now she has found her niche, bridging gaps between scientific research outcomes and popular publications. Pillay is also passionately involved in the Green Auditing of Schools project. She hopes such initiatives will help people change their behaviour and start living environmentally sustainable lives. She believes it's not enough just to create awareness. — *Percy Mabandu*

 **Lunch spot:** Wild Olive, Observatory, Cape Town



Rhoda Malgas first became interested in the environment on visits to her family's farming community in the Overberg. She would take walks with her uncle in the mountains as he explained to her the names of different plants and what they were used for.

Now Malgas is responsible for a project working with small-scale farmers in the Swartland region, which looks at how they are adapting to climate change in order to draw on their combined experience for future planning. Her employer, Indigo Development and Change falls under an umbrella group, 90x2030, formed after a series of dialogues on climate change inspired the staff of the Goedgedacht Trust to establish the project two years ago. Their vision is that South Africans from all sectors will do their bit to save the planet by reducing their carbon footprints and commit to changing the way we live by 90% by the year 2030.

— Eamon Allan

 **Lunch spot: Col'Cacchio, Cape Town**

Rhoda Malgas

Environmental consultant



Lindela Mjenxane

Environmental educator

Lindela Mjenxane is the founder of the Beyond Expectations Environmental Project, a grassroots undertaking to help township youths connect with the environment. Mjenxane, who left his childhood home near Lady Frere in the Eastern Cape for Phillippi in Cape Town, understands the "disconnectedness" young people growing up in townships can feel.

On a two-day mountain trip, Mjenxane points out plants and animals, coaxes learners into speaking about the difficulties they face back home and encourages them to "look beyond the challenges" they face. "Many of them are trapped

in an environment dominated by poverty. We afford them an opportunity to reflect on their lives," he says.

When the children return to their communities, they take with them lessons on water and environmental conservation, and are encouraged to start food gardens and environmental clubs.

Mjenxane has won a number of awards for his philanthropic and environmental work, including a Premier's Award for Service Excellence. — Faranaaz Parker

 **Lunch spot: Mugg & Bean, Century City, Cape Town**

Bridget Ringdahl is the national coordinator of Wessa/WWF Eco-Schools Programme in South Africa. Now in its seventh year, the programme provides support for environmental learning and management at over a thousand schools.

After completing an honours degree in environmental and geographical science at the University of Cape Town, Ringdahl won a scholarship to study a master's in environmental sciences at Lund University in Sweden.

Ringdahl has also coordinated environmental education projects in five Southern African Development Community countries, developed resource material for Wessa and volunteers at the Duzi Umgeni Conservation Trust.

But Ringdahl is better known as the *Blonde on a Bike*, following the success of two volumes of her traveller's tales about her epic cycling trips through Asia and South America. She downplays the challenges of the months she spent pedalling through remote regions of the world. "The most scary thing about it, is deciding to do it," she says.

— Faranaaz Parker

 **Lunch spot: Café Blom, Mooi River**



Bridget Ringdahl

National coordinator, Wessa/WWF eco-schools programme



Photo: Oupa Nkosi

Mandla Tshabalala

Manager, Siyakhana Food Garden

Mandla Tshabalala is truly committed to his work. Tshabalala resides right smack on site at the Siyakhana Food Garden, in Bezuidenhout Park, Bez Valley. Here he is manger, herbalist and resident permaculturist.

Siyakhana, a joint project between the Health Promotion Unit at the University of the Witwatersrand and several local NGOs, not only serves as a food garden, supplying nine organisations with fruit and vegetables, it also works to educate communities about organic food production, good health and nutrition practices, environmental management and provides education and work to vulnerable groups such as street children.


Tshabalala has been with Siyakhana since 2005 bringing with him his passion and knowledge for local herbs and their therapeutic properties. His work he says "brings change everyday" and "fills the soul". — Lynley Donnelly

 **Lunch spot: Siyakhana Food Garden, Bez Valley, Johannesburg**

Many people think archaeology is just about digging up dinosaur bones, but for Thabo Kgomommu it's also about cultural heritage. As manager for cultural heritage at SANParks, Kgomommu advises on heritage issues and directs visitors' attention towards the cultural value of a site, so they don't "just focus on the animals".

He has done research on the Batswana culture at the Lichtenburg Museum, planned exhibitions at Robben Island Museum and coordinated heritage activities for the Mogale City municipality. He also served as coordinator of provinces for the South African Heritage Resources Agency where, among other things, he facilitated the management of national heritage sites.

Kgomommu serves on the board of the Northern Flagship Institute, which oversees the running of three Gauteng museums and is an occasional lecturer in museum studies at the University of Pretoria's department of historical and heritage studies. — Faranaaz Parker

 **Lunch spot: Smoke Café and Grill Lounge, Groenkloof**



Thabo Kgomommu

Cultural heritage manager

300 Young South Africans | Environment



Samantha Peterson

Manager,
WWF Sustainable Fisheries
Programme

Samantha Petersen doesn't have an easy job. As head of the combined sustainable fisheries programme for WWF, Petersen deals with some of the most vulnerable parts of the world's ecosystem each and every day.

She says what keeps her going is the belief that we are in a better position to address environmental problems because of our technological advances and collective increased knowledge of the marine habitat. This is ironically

at a time when marine conditions are in the worst degraded state. Petersen, who trained as a veterinary nurse, went on to obtain a BSc in zoology from Unisa as well as a PhD from the University of Cape Town focusing on the bycatch of vulnerable species in longline and trawl fisheries. — Eamon Allan

 Lunch spot: Blowfish, Blouberg



Simon Gear

Meteorologist

Simon Gear doesn't just talk about the weather. He uses his opportunity as the nation's weatherman to advocate for environmental issues at every chance he gets.

Earlier this year, Gear published *Going Green: 365 Ways to Save the World* — a list of daily tips that's helping South Africans live a little greener every day. He also started up SDG consulting, which provides expert input on a wide range of environmental and development projects.

Gear has been producing weather bulletins for the SABC since 1999

and he is now senior broadcasting meteorologist. He also works as the environmental correspondent for Primedia and provides daily weather bulletins. He has appeared as the commercial face for the Food and Trees for Africa's climate change campaign. — Eamon Allan

 Lunch spot: Nuno's, Melville, Johannesburg



Rosemary Noge

Environmental consultant

Rosemary Noge quickly moved up the ranks at Goldfields to head up the group's strategy formulation for sustainable development. But there was one aspiration this dream job could not fulfil: to own a business. At 11, she remembers telling her serial-entrepreneur grandmother that she wanted her own flower shop one day. She went on to study international relations in the United States before joining one of the biggest gold producers in the world. But it was last year that her dream became a reality and Bloom was born in Rosebank. The lifestyle boutique and flower shop is distinct in its approach and all the goods and flowers on sale are locally sourced from socially responsible initiatives. Noge continues to consult on environmental issues but says that her dream shop now allows her to spend more time with her young family while she decides on the next challenge. — Hendri Pelser

 Lunch spot: Cilantro, Parkhurst, Asara, Stellenbosch

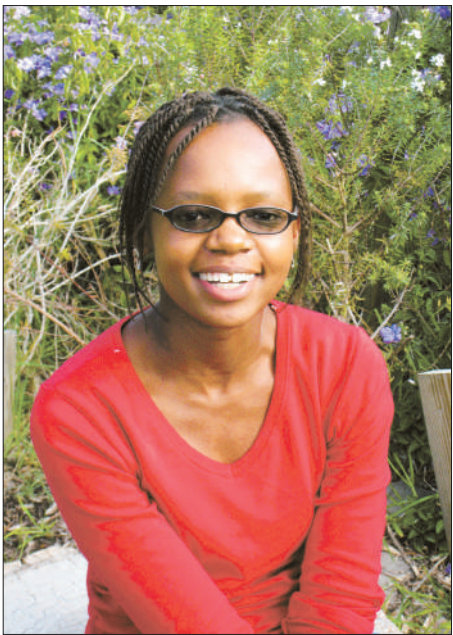
To have a species of insect named after you turns out to be quite an honour. And Duncan MacFadyen deserves it. He's so passionate about jewel beetles that two have taken his name, in recognition of his contribution to research on the insects, which he did while working in scientific services in Kruger Park. MacFadyen has a national diploma, BTech and a master's degree in nature conservation with an MSc in entomology and zoology and is presently busy with a PhD. He recently launched a book, *Tuggy's Busy Day*, about a dung beetle and human recklessness. The dedicated conservationist has been curator of mamology at the Transvaal Museum of Natural History. He is the manager of research and conservation for E Oppenheimer & Son and sits on the De Beers biodiversity and environmental peer group committees. — Tanya Pampalone

 Lunch spot: Wombles, Parktown North, Johannesburg



Duncan MacFadyen

Research manager,
E Oppeheimer & Son



Xoli Funyani

Environmental educator

Xoli Funyani started a marketing diploma at Cape Technikon but left in her second year. That's when she decided to join the Mission Antarctica team travelling around South Africa raising environmental awareness and she hasn't looked back. Born and raised in Gugulethu, Funyani has been involved with the eco-schools programme that works with 11 primary schools in Gugulethu. She also volunteered with Pride of Table Mountain and led excursions on the mountain with young people to encourage interest and knowledge about the environment. She works as environmental education coordinator with Earth Child Project, which reaches out to local schools to help improve the environment and, with it, the lives of local children. And after only one year the schools have organic vegetable gardens, are recycling and their tuckshops sell healthy food. — Eamon Allan

 Lunch spot: Moyo, Cape Town

300 Young South Africans | Health



Zameer Brey

Doctor, process analyst,
Groote Schuur Hospital

Zameer Brey doesn't waste time. After qualifying as a medical doctor, he plunged into an MBA with the single-minded purpose of improving healthcare. His master's thesis evaluated public-private partnerships in local healthcare and won him an international award as the Young Researcher in Africa to boot. He took the award a second time for his PhD research in healthcare operations management. A staunch unionist, Brey joined the Junior Doctors Association of South Africa as a provincial representative four years ago; he is now the group's vice-chairperson. His day job is as a process analyst for Groote Schuur Hospital, where he tries to come up with innovative ways to improve hospital efficiency. In one project he cut patient waiting time at the pharmacy from four hours to 55 minutes, using no additional resources or funds. The new target? Reduce the waiting period to a mere 20 minutes. — *Faranaaz Parker*

 **Lunch spot: Blowfish, Bloubergstrand**

Infectious diseases — and understanding how complex systems interact — is why Dominique Pepper chose medicine. It's also what landed this 28-year-old with first-class honours from the University of Cape Town at the Infectious Diseases Unit at GF Jooste Hospital in Maneberg. He wants to understand why patients infected with HIV and TB in Khayelitsha are not responding to treatment. He also wants to find out how their lives can be improved by strengthening the broader social systems that directly affect them. Nothing works in isolation, Pepper says. It's all interrelated. Even after eight years of studying, Pepper seems nowhere near done yet. The 10-year plan includes completing an MBA, a master's in public health and a PhD. — *Hendri Pelser*



Dominique Pepper

Medical doctor,
Infectious Diseases Unit,
GF Jooster Hospital

 **Lunch spot: Primi Piatti, Canal Walk; Nova, Cape Town**



Mdu Mntambo

Senior project coordinator, Wits
Reproductive Health and HIV
Research Unit,
Chris Hani Baragwanath

Mdu Mntambo knew that his future lay in biology and medicine. But after completing his BSc, he started working as a medical microbiologist in a commercial laboratory. Mntambo soon realised that he wanted to be involved in the prevention of sexually transmitted infections (STIs), especially HIV. As a senior project coordinator at Wits' Reproductive Health and HIV Research Unit at Chris Hani Baragwanath Hospital in Soweto, he now spends his days studying STI prevention methods. It's an intellectually stimulating job, but he admits that it is difficult to see healthy people participating in his trials who, all too often, become infected with HIV. Disheartening as that is, it hasn't slowed him down. Mntambo recently applied for a research grant towards a PhD within a fortnight of completing his master's dissertation. — *Hendri Pelser*

 **Lunch spot: Capellos, Newtown, Johannesburg**



Photo: Delwyn Verasamy

Francois Venter

Clinical director,
University of Witwatersand's
Reproductive Health and HIV
Research Unit

Dr Francois Venter is afraid of the future. The head of the Wits' Reproductive Health and HIV Research Unit fears that the HIV prevention battle is being lost. One recent study shows about 1 000 South Africans die of Aids every day and there is a crisis of treatment because only 40% of South Africans who need antiretrovirals are able to get treatment. That's why Venter spends his days trying to find ways to fight, monitor and contain the virus. He was involved in the national and provincial department of health's 2003 antiretrovial roll-out working groups to develop guidelines on opportunistic illnesses and antiretroviral treatment. — *Hendri Pelser*

 **Lunch spot: Doppio Zero, Greenside**



Vikash Sewram

Director,
Medical Research Council

Vikash Sewram wants to find a cure for cancer. And though he understands quite clearly that this might never happen, that won't deter him. You just need to dream big, he says. The thing is, he might just do it. Sewram has done more than most people accomplish in several lifetimes. He has two doctoral and two master's degrees under his belt. When he was 29, he developed a non-invasive way to detect cancerous agents using people's hair. Now, he's the youngest director at the Medical Research Council, heading up the MRC's Oncology Research Unit. Science, to the Hindu spiritualist and philosopher, is about delving in the unknown, he says. It's about truth, changing the way people think and improving people's lives. Lucky for all of us, that's right smack in the realm where Sewram dwells. — *Hendri Pelser*

 **Lunch spot: Jewel of India, Durban**

300 Young South Africans | Health



Photo: David Harrison

Luyanda Ngcobo

HIV/Aids activist

Remember Nkosi Johnson? Actually, how can we ever forget? Nine years after his poignant speech at the International Aids Conference in 2000 and his death the following year, he remains a powerful inspiration to South Africans living with the pandemic. Being the brave face of HIV/Aids in a country where stigmas abound and government policy is still inadequate was no easy task, but Nkosi personified hope and courage instead of a death sentence. At this year's South Africa's Aids Conference, 16-year-old Luyanda

Ngcobo displayed that same steely bravery while delivering the Nkosi Johnson Memorial Lecture. Like Nkosi, Luyanda was born HIV positive but is determined to not let the virus get in the way of his dreams. "HIV can never be an excuse for not becoming what you want to become in life," he said, receiving a standing ovation from the audience and Archbishop Desmond Tutu. Ngcobo has been frequenting hospitals since the age of 5. He still remembers the taste of TB medication, which he took for six months during 1997 after getting infected with the bacterium. He started school in 1999 but a constant fever and diarrhoea kept him at home most days. He had to drop out around June and fell terribly ill in December.

Despite spending a huge part of his childhood in hospital beds and on medication, Ngcobo enjoys his life to the full. He resumed school in 2001, and excels in his subjects, especially English. "I always want to be a leader, not a follower," he says. He finds time every day for homework, video games, quality time with his mother and, most importantly, his antiretroviral medication. Ngcobo knows that he will have to continue taking them every day for the rest of his life. "That's my only challenge," he says confidently. — Qudsiya Karrim

 **Lunch spot: Spur Steak Ranch, Waterfront, Cape Town**

HIV can never be an excuse for not becoming what you want to become



Patience Mavata

Co-founder and manager, Ikhaya Lobomi

Patience Mavata is an experienced nurse, HIV/Aids counsellor and caregiver. In 2000, spurred by her love for medicine and her sister's struggle with HIV, Mavata and her husband founded Ikhaya Lobomi, a community support centre offering holistic care to the sick. The centre provides nutritional, volunteer, and educational services for the community. Since 2001, HIV/Aids related deaths of her patients have decreased from 90% to 10% a year. In 2003, she initiated the development of Inochi, a herbal

supplement for the treatment of HIV/Aids. Case studies have shown the supplement to be successful in increasing patients' CD4 count and decreasing their H1 viral load. Mavata is also an avid researcher, and has presented to the Harvard Institute of South Africa and the National Nursing Association of Southern Africa. She received the Unilever 100 Women Award in 2003 and the SAFM Women Otherwise Award in 2004. — Qudsiya Karrim

 **Lunch spot: Ile Maurice, Umhlanga, KwaZulu-Natal**

In the last few months the health profession has had to deal with some controversy: Schabir Shaik being released from prison on the grounds of ill health and the doctor's strike to name but a few, but Advocate Boyce Mkhize sees his job as keeping his organisation on track as a credible regulator. Mkhize started his career at the Community Law Centre in Durban as a human rights lawyer and was later appointed by the Constitutional assembly to manage the drafting of the constitution for KwaZulu-Natal. He joined the Health Professions Council of South Africa as chief executive and registrar in 2000. He is also the author of two books ... and the Two Shall become One: 10 Marriage Commandments and Life Principles and South African Constitutional Values. — Eamon Allan



Boyce Mkhize

Chief executive, Health Professions Council of South Africa

 **Lunch spot: Cynthia's Indigo Moon, Brooklyn, Pretoria**



Photo: Oupa Nkosi

Safiya Vachiat

Medical officer, Chris Baragwanath Hospital

Working in a public hospital is a gruelling job, but Safiya Vachiat loves it. She's surrounded by her passion — kids — every day at Chris Hani Baragwanath Hospital, where she works as a medical officer in the paediatric surgery department. The hours are exhausting, the pay is bad and the hospital has its fair share of horror stories, but Vachiat can't imagine doing anything else. She admits to sleeping more nights at the hospital than in her own bedroom, which made her a deserving winner of the Intern of the Year award at Bara in 2007. — Qudsiya Karrim

 **Lunch spot: 2Go, Fordsburg, Johannesburg**



Sarah Laurence

Research analyst, Health and Development Africa

Sarah Laurence spends much of her time on the road. She travels to and from communities as a research analyst for Health and Development Africa, providing technical assistance to NGOs and governmental departments on HIV prevention. She's a project manager for the John Hopkins Health and Education in South Africa. Laurence is a trained physiotherapist and has worked at both public and private hospitals. Recently she completed a postgraduate diploma in management at Wits Business School. She is studying for a master's in public health and sees a PhD somewhere in her future. — Hendri Pelser

 **Lunch spot: Espresso, Parktown, Johannesburg**

300 Young South Africans | Media



Photo: Rogan Ward

Talking to Azad Essa is confusing. After congratulating him on winning Best Political Blog at the South African Blog Awards, he says he actually doesn't really like blogs at all.

In fact, he thinks of his Thought Leader blog as his very own column which, in the competitive media industry, is a valuable platform.

Essa, who has a master's from the Global Studies Programme, interned at the BBC, lectures in labour and globalisation at the University of KwaZulu-Natal and lectures critical context at Vega, became interested in the media through his father, an armchair journalist and avid letters-page correspondent.

"At first it was about the thrill of getting my name in print," says the 27-year-old Durbanite, "but now it's moved on. Maybe I have something important to say."

The public seems to think so.

Essa's accidental academic blog is highly rated on Thought Leader. Still, he's surprised his blog has been so well received, but says the reason they are popular may be because they offer a unique perspective.

Essa tries his best to stay away from allegiances, party politics and rhetoric, which is not such a simple thing to do when talking politics. After all, isn't that what it's all about? Confusing.

But there is clarity when he talks about the goal of his blog. Essa plans to take the skills and knowledge he has gathered in his online role and use them to effect change and make a contribution to society.

"The revolution, if there is such a thing, is on the ground."

— Eamon Allan

 **Lunch spot: Caminetto's Pizza, Durban**

Azad Essa

Blogger

The revolution — if there is such a thing — is on the ground



Redi Direko

Talk show host, Talk Radio 702/ 567 Cape Talk

Who doesn't love Redi Direko? As one of the country's top talk show hosts and a popular news anchor, Direko has charmed her way into our hearts with her feisty brand of journalism and her generous smile and makes us think while she's at it.

Direko, who grew up in Soweto and got hooked on journalism when she was a child, has interviewed everyone from Desmond Tutu to Julius Malema with a kind of measured grace that won't let anybody off the hook.

That she was the recipient of Vodacom's Rising Star Award last year was no surprise. The 31-year-old host of the *Redi Direko show*, which is broadcast on Talk Radio 702 and 567 Cape Talk, is also one of the main anchors for eNews and was the producer of a controversial documentary on former president Thabo Mbeki.

Direko studied journalism and communications at the then Rand Afrikaans University and holds honours degrees in literature as well as in social sciences.

— Tanya Pampalone

 **Lunch spot: Wang Thai, Sandton Square, Johannesburg**



Renée Bonorchis

Financial journalist, Bloomberg

You have to be more than just another hot blonde to anchor two of the country's top business shows. Bronwyn Nielsen is the business babe with brains who interviews corporate mavericks every night on CNBC Africa's *Closing Bell* and *Business Tonight*.

Nielsen worked her way up the broadcast ranks, doing time on Highveld's (94.7 Highveld Stereo) news desk, reading e.tv's news bulletins and anchoring for Summit TV before joining the CNBC Africa's news team in June of 2007.

But she's not all talk. Nielsen, who also produces investigative shows for the top-ranked *Carte Blanche*, took home the 2006 Telkom award for ICT Journalist. And, in order to keep her brand going, she says, and to keep her off Verimark ad's punting "big green clean machines", Nielsen also does media training for corporate executives. But it's the TV adrenaline rush that she loves so much about her night job. "It's like having an exam every night," she says. "Once your show is going, there is nothing you can do but get through it. And when it's over, you put it bed."

— Tanya Pampalone



Bronwyn Nielsen

Senior anchor, CNBC Africa

 **Lunch spot: Bellini's Illovo, Johannesburg**

As editor of South Africa's national Afrikaans Sunday newspaper, *Rapport*, Liza Albrecht is one of the most powerful women in South African media. With a readership of over 1.6-million, Albrecht's paper is distributed all over South Africa and in Namibia.

She began her career as editor of Student Newspaper *Die Maties* at Stellenbosch University in 1996. After her studies, she worked at *Die Burger* and then went on to work at *Rapport* as a reporter.

With Albrecht's schedule, she doesn't have much time to relax with her children of 15 and 10, or her Siberian wolf dog. But, despite all the heavy hitters she talks to on a daily basis, she says her children are the most interesting people in the world and her best time is spent sitting and talking with them.

— Eamon Allan

 **Lunch spot: Theo's, Sea Point, Cape Town**



Liza Albrecht

Editor, *Rapport*

Renée Bonorchis intends to be extremely busy when she retires. There are many items on her personal to-do list but work takes precedence at the moment.

Bonorchis recently moved to Bloomberg where she is a financial services reporter. The last word in this title is quite important, as her previous position at *Business Day* was editor at large.

But the former Zimbabwean seemingly does not stand on ceremony much – besides she says it's a step forward for her at one of the world's biggest financial information services providers.

With several prestigious awards under her belt, Bonorchis is now considered one of the foremost financial journalists in the country, perhaps best known for her investigation into executive corporate remuneration.

Driven to find the next big scoop, learning to play the saxophone, to speak Afrikaans "properly", master photography and developing her wine palate will have to wait a while longer. — Hendri Pelser

 **Lunch spot: Tuscany Beach Restaurant, Camps Bay**

300 Young South Africans

Media



Toby Shapshak

Editor,
Stuff magazine

Toby Shapshak is all things tech. As the editor of *Stuff* magazine — a geek’s publication paradise that comes complete with scantily clad girls holding the latest must-have gadgets — he reigns supreme as the major talking head for everything and anything tech.

Shapshak regularly appears on CNBC Africa, writes a technology column for *The Times* and is a contributing editor for *Business Day’s Wanted* magazine. But this former contributing editor at *GQ* magazine is not all glamour and gadgets. He cut his teeth at Sapa, where he covered the Truth and Reconciliation Commission hearings. Still, Shapshak is a nerd at heart — he’s a known collector of *Star Wars* memorabilia and Nelson Mandela kitsch. Albeit the kind of nerd that runs the sexiest technology magazine on the market. — *Tanya Pampalone*

 **Lunch spot: La Cucina di
Ciro, Parktown North,
Johannesburg**

Pabi Moloi just sent a Tweet. She’s stuck in bumper-to-bumper traffic on the way to the community TV station in Soweto to put the finishing touches on the first show she’s ever produced, *eBiyo*, a movie review programme.

She says Twitter seems a natural fit. “I’m a broadcaster,” says the 25-year-old 94.7 Highveld Stereo host. “I like to broadcast my opinions. And I love the instant reaction and interaction.”

Moloi, who has a face for the big screen, has been on TV since she was a child. She was a favourite K-TV presenter, moving into radio after winning the 94.7 Hot Jocks competition when she was 18. From there, Moloi did stints on Metro FM and Yfm, returning to 94.7 Highveld Stereo in July of 2008 to take up the 12 to three daytime slot.

And while producing television shows is something she wants to do more of, she loves radio as much as she loves her Tweets. “I like how immediate, and how intimate, it is,” says Moloi. — *Tanya Pampalone*



Pabi Moloi

Presenter

 **Lunch spot: Espresso Café,
Parkhurst, Johannesburg**



Kevin Bloom

Writer

Writer Kevin Bloom recently came out with his first book *Ways of Staying*, a non-fiction narrative that unravels South Africa’s landscape through the eyes of a white South African — and it’s quickly shot to the top of the bestseller list. Bloom tells the story of the nation from the inner city of Johannesburg to Polokwane through the murder of his cousin Richard Bloom in Cape Town.

He may be young, but Bloom has been on the media block for a while. He was the founding editor of *The Media* magazine, editor-at-large of *Maverick* magazine and a co-editor for *Empire*. Married to folk singer Laurie Levine, Bloom is a Writing Fellow at the Wits Institute of Social and Economic Research in Johannesburg. — *Tanya Pampalone*

 **Lunch spot: Radium Beer Hall,
Orange Grove, Johannesburg**



Masechaba Lekalake

Presenter,
Weekend Live

Masechaba Lekalake is a multi-talented television news and current affairs presenter who has experience in research, production and scriptwriting for several programmes including *Into Africa*, an SABC Africa travel show that established her as one of the best-known presenters on the continent.

Into Africa took her to Ethiopia, Egypt, Uganda, Ghana and Nigeria. The 25-year-old is also a voice-over artist, directs music videos and hosts entertainment events. She has been the face of the Old Mutual Vukani Fashion Awards since 2006. A product of exile, Lekalake was

born in Zambia and she has also lived in Zimbabwe and the United States. At the age of seven Lekalake was writing children’s short stories that were published in children’s magazines in California.

She holds a media studies certificate with emphasis in journalism, video broadcasting and public relations.

— *Mmanaledi Mataboge*

 **Lunch spot: Moyo, Zoo Lake,
Johannesburg**



Precious Kofi

Presenter

Precious Kofi talked a lot as a child. That’s when her mother told her: “You should be on TV.” Kofi started her trajectory young, growing up in Mandela Park next to Hout Bay. She did her first catalogues at age 11 and her first commercial at age 13. By the time she was 17, Kofi was presenting *Hip2B2*. At 18, she conceptualised and pitched her own show and the following year she was presenting the *Precious Show*, which ran for two seasons.

She is working with Urban Brew and at her own production company, Kofi Productions, on a new SABC1 series *Precious Africa*. She envisages it as a reality documentary experiencing the lives of different people in Africa. Oprah, watch your back.

— *Eamon Allan*

 **Lunch spot: Rhodesia,
Fourways, Johannesburg**

300 Young South Africans | Media



Photo: Lisa Skinner

Nikiwe Bikitsha

Senior news anchor,
e.tv

Nikiwe Bikitsha always wanted to be a journalist — ever since she read her distant relative’s Doc Bikitsha’s column in the *Sunday Times*. She says she had romantic notions of becoming a famous and reclusive writer but her teachers soon noticed that she had a voice for radio.

Bikitsha studied journalism at Rhodes University, working later as a trainee news reporter at 567 Cape Talk and Talk Radio 702. Since then, she has co-hosted *AM-Live*

with John Perlman and been an anchor for CNBC Africa. Now she is senior news anchor for *Newsnight* with Jeremy Maggs on e.tv, and is completing her honours degree in journalism at the University of the Witwatersrand.

For now, her literary dreams are channelled into occasionally writing about Jane Austen in her *Mail & Guardian* column. — Eamon Allan

 **Lunch spot: Allora, Sandton, Johannesburg**



Photo: Lisa Skinner

Katy Katopodis

Group editor-in-chief,
Eyewitness News

Katy Katopodis is one of a handful of editors who sets the country’s news agenda.

As the group editor-in-chief for the Eyewitness News team, which runs across all Primedia-owned stations as well as their recently launched Eyewitness News website, she leads some of the best broadcast news journalists in the country, keeping abreast of every breaking news story both here and abroad and filling in the blanks for the rest of us.

Katopodis started her career at a Greek community radio station in Bedfordview and was snapped up by Primedia in 1996. Since then, she’s interviewed everyone

from Muammar Gaddafi to Bill Clinton and was the last journalist to interview ANC stalwart Walter Sisulu before he died.

But it was her clash with the Forum of Black Journalists (FBJ) that placed Katopodis in the news herself. In April last year the Human Rights Commission upheld her complaint against the FBJ for holding an Africans-only news briefing with ANC president Jacob Zuma. Chances are it’s not going to be the last time Katopodis makes headlines. — Tanya Pampalone

 **Lunch spot: On the beach (eating grilled octopus and sipping white wine)**



Alon Skuy

Photographer,
The Times

Zodwa Kumalo-Valentine always loved magazines — since she bought her first copies of *Blush* and *Seventeen*. To satisfy her lifelong interest, she studied journalism at Rhodes University for a while but soon realised that the genre she wanted to tackle wasn’t hard news at all.

Instead, she wanted to get into the “sticky, tricky, salacious, trendy, sexy, juicy, uncomfortable, hard-hitting, serious and entertaining issues.”

Kumalo-Valentine says that magazines such as *Marie Claire* — where she is Johannesburg bureau chief — encompass all of those things as well as the other subjects she likes: gossip, debate and style.

The 31-year-old, whose sister Zanele Kumalo is Johannesburg bureau chief of *Elle* and another of our 300 Young South Africans, started out at Independent Newspapers in the Cape as a sub-editor and a reporter and moved to *Drum* and then to *Elle* as a features writer. She joined *Marie Claire* as senior editor in 2006 and was later appointed the Johannesburg bureau chief. — Eamon Allan

 **Lunch spot: Tasha’s, Atholl Square, Johannesburg**

This award-winning photographer does what he does because it allows him to merge aesthetics with people’s day-to-day lives and enables him to work in what he calls “the pinnacle climate”.

The 28-year old spent three New Year’s Eves in a row working in Hillbrow, where he finally snapped the picture that won him a Mondi Shanduka award for News Photograph of the Year in 2008. He also won the Ruth First Fellowship for Photography that year for his “Inside the Bridge” series.

What scares him most in his work is the mob mentality he sees, which culminated in the 2008 xenophobic attacks. He ultimately wants to photograph conflict, not a surprise with photographers such as Don McCullin and Joao Silva at the top of his idols list. Skuy’s work on last year’s xenophobic attacks is on exhibition at the Constitutional Court until the end of July. — Ilham Rawoot

 **Lunch spot: Bowling Club, Zoo Lake, Johannesburg**



Zodwa Kumalo-Valentine

Johannesburg bureau chief,
Marie Claire

Tsepiso Makwetla is the face of SABC’s prime time news broadcasts. The journalist started her career in 1995 at community radio station, Cani FM, spending the next five years at Primedia before moving to the SABC in 2001.

Makwetla has been at the public broadcaster ever since, working as a writer in the news department and as a presenter on Safm.

In 2003 Tsepiso moved to SABC Africa to co-host its flagship current affairs show *60 Minutes Live*. In 2006, she returned to Safm to co-host the drive-time current affairs show, *PM Live* with Jeremy Maggs. They both later moved to the breakfast show *AM Live*.

She now hosts the Safm breakfast show on her own, while also presenting SABC’s Sunday current affairs programme *Interface*. — Eamon Allan

 **Lunch spot: Fratellis, Greenside, Johannesburg**



Tsepiso Makwetla

Broadcaster

300 Young South Africans | Media



SThembiso Msomi

Political editor,
The Times

SThembiso Msomi grew up in KwaZulu-Natal during a volatile political time in South Africa's history. So it's only natural that he became interested in politics, he says. The main difference between Msomi and his friends was that he went to the public library to find out what the different political parties had to say. He found what he was looking for in the newspaper. Msomi started out as a cub reporter at the *Natal Witness*. Over the years, the award-winning journalist made his way through several newsrooms, including those of the *Sunday Times*, *Business Report* and *City Press*. Now he's the political editor for *The Times*. Msomi says that it has been a while since he was bored. In fact, not since the ANC's Polokwane conference. Political commentary is all about opinion and his column, *Politics in Command*, generates quite a few responses from readers who love him and hate him. — *Hendri Pelser*

 **Lunch spot: Adeg, Bedfordview, Johannesburg**



Andy Davis

Editor,
Mahala

Back in 2002, Andy Davis was the frustrated Joburg-based editor of *Student Life* magazine. All he wanted to do was surf. To quench his thirst for waves, he started up the Mahala Surf Company to hook up young children with surf equipment that they wouldn't otherwise have access to. Now that original concept has gone mainstream. In May, Davis launched a music, culture and reality magazine with the hopes that *Mahala* will become a gathering place for young writers, photographers and all kinds of creative types based on the belief that "all the good stuff in life is free." The magazine is online now at mahala.co.za and Davis hopes to

have a free print version out by August "available at cool outlets". He thinks advertisers will jump on the free band wagon, giving away their goods in the name of good brand advertising. Davis is funding the venture through Jingo, his content creation company that created FNB's new teen magazine and the *Levi's Original Music* magazine. Davis is also a contributing editor to *Zig Zag* and writes for the *Sunday Times*, *Marie Claire*, *GQ* and *Men's Health*. — *Tanya Pampalone*

 **Lunch spot: Empire Café, Muizenberg, Cape Town**

Iman Rapetti is known best for her historic on-air confrontation with former president Thabo Mbeki. The doorstep moment took place on October 2 2007 when Rapetti questioned Mbeki about reports of a warrant of arrest that had allegedly been issued for National Police Commissioner Jackie Selebi, which led to the suspension of National Prosecution Authority boss Vusi Pikoli. Mbeki refused to answer. For Rapetti, now an e.tv news anchor, this is what her job is all about. She believes that as a journalist, she does not just hold the mirror that reflects on society, but rather that she gives it a voice. Rapetti is a journalism graduate from Durban and has also worked in television news in Iran, for the SABC, *Business Day* and Talk Radio 702. — *Jane Steinacker*

 **Lunch spot: Masala, Northcliff Corner, Johannesburg**

Iman Rapetti

News anchor,
e.tv



Stephen Grootes

Political reporter,
Eyewitness News

As the results poured into the Independent Elections Commission centre in Pretoria late April this year, Stephen Grootes sat at one of the long desks in the reporter's den, broadcasting results throughout the day to Eyewitness News listeners on Talk Radio 702 and 94.7 Highveld Stereo. Everybody listened. Even the other journalists who sat right next to him. Because we all knew that whatever Grootes was reporting was spot on and we, like the rest of the nation, take serious note of his breaking analysis to help us better understand what's unfolding. Grootes is a Rhodes University journalism graduate who worked as a radio news editor and reporter in London before coming back home and getting a job at Talk Radio 702. He was named the regional Vodacom Journalist of the Year for two years running in 2005 and 2006; in 2007 he won the Webber Wentzel Bowers Legal Journalist of the Year Award for electronic journalism. — *Tanya Pampalone*

 **Lunch spot: Radium Beer Hall, Orange Grove, Johannesburg**



Zanele Kumalo

Beauty editor,
Elle

While still in her teens, Zanele Kumalo remembers wanting to be a creative director for a magazine. She even designed a glossy with some school friends. Kumalo shelved the idea when she studied fine art and language at Rhodes University, pursuing a fantasy of being a fashion designer and training in clothing sales. But after landing an internship at the *Sunday Times*, she was approached to join the start-up team for *Top Billing* magazine and later went to *O, The Oprah Magazine*. And the rest is South African magazine history, which happened to land two sisters from KwaZulu-Natal at the top of the local magazine heap. Her sister Zodwa Kumalo-Valentine, another of our 300 Young South Africans, is the Johannesburg bureau chief of *Marie Claire* while Zanele is beauty editor and Johannesburg bureau chief at *Elle*. — *Eamon Allan*

 **Lunch spot: Cnr Café, Craighall Park, Johannesburg**

300 Young South Africans

Media



Photo: Dorothy Nzimande

Ndamiso Ngcobo

Writer

Ndamiso Ngcobo is the kind of writer that makes other writers cry. That’s because he’s one of those guys who was born with it. He doesn’t have to slog away like the rest of the hacks. Ngcobo just writes and what he produces is some seriously funny, achingly smart, stuff. It was back when he was a lowly food scientist at the food processing company, Unilever, that he started writing emails. You know those occasionally hysterical ones amid the stack of annoying riffs that are forwarded around the planet? A few of Ngcobo’s emails made the Gauteng rounds and landed on the desk of a local DJ, who read Ngcobo’s stuff on air. That’s all the encouragement he needed. He put together all those emails — along with a stack of writing that he had done over the years — and sent his compilation to a few publishers. Two Dogs put out his first book, *Some of My Best Friends Are White* in August of 2007. By then Ngcobo had already started blogging. His Resident Zulu Spear-

chugger blog became a favourite on the Thought Leader website, and got Ngcobo a huge following. “It’s a play on the US racial slur for African people ‘spear-chucker’ and my notoriety as a beer chugger of note ... kind of, ‘I’m so mean I chug spears’,” he says. His second book, *Is It Coz I’m Black?*, was released in April. Ngcobo quit his food scientist gig a while back, taking up writing full-time. He is now a screenwriter for several shows, including SABC2’s *Drawing the Line* and is head writer for the channel’s *Late Night with Kgomo*. His favourite part about the new job? “The writing,” he says. “It sounds ridiculous but seriously, it is the moments spent at 3am with fingers on the keyboard and a cold, fermented beverage lurking close by ... and then the release.” — Tanya Pampalone

Lunch spot: Rapsody, Centurion

... moments spent at 3am with fingers on the keyboard and a cold, fermented beverage ...



Xolani Gwala

Broadcaster

Just listening to Xolani Gwala makes smart girls swoon. The former supermarket shelf packer has been talking up everything from politics to education, sports and the arts since he started his career as a newsreader on Ukhozi FM — the biggest radio station in the country, based in Durban. Since then he’s worked at every broadcast outlet from Talk Radio 702 to SABC3, where he hosted the flagship English current affairs programme, *News Hour*. Gwala recently returned from the Middle East where he was a news anchor for Ramfm — Primedia founder Issy Kirsch’s brainchild — until it shut down last year. Gwala co-hosts Safm’s *PM Live* and presents and produces SABC1’s evening discussion programme *AsikhulumelLet’s Talk*. — Tanya Pampalone

Lunch spot: Sakhumzi’s, Soweto, Johannesburg



Phillip de Wet

Freelance writer

Phillip De Wet is a journalist’s journalist. He not only knows how to make the driest financial and technical subjects interesting but readable, with a distinct voice that pops right off the page. The former deputy editor of *Maverick* magazine and co-editor of *Empire* — both of which he launched alongside media mastermind Branko Brkic — reigned over the business and media landscape with a distinctly *Maverick* voice until they closed in late 2008. De Wet started out early, working for a community newspaper in Pretoria after studying journalism at Tshwane University. Later, he joined IT Web as a reporter and by the end of that year, at 22, was the news editor — later joining the ill-fated *This Day*. De Wet writes on business and technology for the *Sunday Times*, *Mail & Guardian* and *Stuff* magazine. Now the 30-year-old is on the brink of transforming the South African media universe once again with a soon-to-be launched revolutionary online daily. — Tanya Pampalone

Lunch spot: Barry’s Grill, Rosebank, Johannesburg



Nkepile Mabuse

Correspondent, CNN

Nkepile Mabuse doesn’t like to spend her free time with other journalists. When you are working journalist’s hours as the local CNN correspondent, downtime is better spent thinking about things that aren’t all news all the time. But Mabuse does love her work. “It’s the greatest job in the world,” she says. Based in Johannesburg, Mabuse covers stories around the continent. Before joining CNN, she worked for e.tv as executive producer for *Third Degree*. Mabuse has won the CNN Multichoice African Journalist of the Year award and received a merit award in the Vodacom Journalist of the Year award for bright young stars. — Eamon Allan

Lunch spot: Bottega, Parkhurst, Johannesburg



Siphiwe Mpye

Associate editor, GQ

When Siphiwe Mpye wondered what he would do with his life, it was a toss up between arts and culture and media. Fortunately, he found a way of combining them. Mpye became a writer, editor and a media communications consultant. Since he started out, Mpye has written for the *Sunday Times*, the *Sunday Independent* and *The Star*. He’s has worked as head of communications for Yfm and as a co-editor and columnist for *Y Magazine*. Mpye is also a partner in Baobab TV Productions and is founder and director of The Off Ramp, a talent management company. He has been associate editor of GQ since 2008. — Eamon Allan

Lunch spot: Cilantro, Parkhurst, Johannesburg

300 Young South Africans | Media



Luiz DeBarros

Publisher,
Mambaonline

Luiz DeBarros says Mambaonline stemmed from his frustration with the state of gay media in South Africa. So in 2001 he launched his own website to ensure that gay men between 18 and 45 could access gay community news, information, entertainment and online dating — all in one local site. Now Mambaonline, and its sister site Mambagirl — launched in 2007 to conquer the local lesbian community — rules the highly coveted niche market with more than 50 000 unique visitors a month and 18 000 members just in the Meet Market database of single profiles. DeBarros, who has worked in film and television and works extensively in the gay community in various capacities, has garnered a Loerie for Mambaonline for design and, more importantly, for grabbing the attention of his target market. — Eamon Allan

 **Lunch spot: Cnr Café, Craighall Park, Johannesburg**



Zintle Sithole

Mobile blogger

Lukhona Lufuta

Mobile blogger



Zintle Sithole and Lukhona Lufuta are mobile reporters for a grassroots project called Afrigadget. Founded by Erik Hersman, it's a website showcasing African inventions, developments, events and stories by those who live on the continent. While in matric last year, they were selected to be part of a team of Afrigadget bloggers, who report from the ground on "stories of African ingenuity" using digital and mobile technology. The two love technology and their country, and believe that Afrigadget is the

ideal platform to showcase their communities. The site was listed as one of *Time* magazine's 50 best websites in 2008. Zintle and Lukhona are now studying at the University of the Western Cape, but are still passionate about mobile reporting. They always keep their phones on in case they spot something weird or wonderful that's worth sharing with the rest of the world. — Qudsiya Karrim

 **Lunch spot: Spier, Stellenbosch**



Sotiris Moldovanos

Station manager,
UJFM

The consensus is that the playlists on UJFM kick ass. But who's responsible for all this great music blasting out of a student radio station? Sotiris "Sot" Moldovanos is the music manager and interim station manager of UJFM. He compiles weekly charts and plays music he picks up from demos of emerging local artists. Maldovanos has a solid understanding of music and he has the ability to recognise potential, using business and managerial skills to keep the place running. He did a BTech in fine art at Pretoria Technikon — now known as Tshwane University of Technology — and he's also exhibited in numerous group exhibitions in South Africa and Europe as well as two solo exhibitions in 2001 and 2007. — Eamon Allan

 **Lunch spot: His mom's house**

Identifiable merely by her crisp, loud voice, Masechaba Gloria Moshoeshoe has become one of the country's household names when it comes to talk shows. Moshoeshoe started out as a sports presenter on former TV1's (now SABC1) *Junior TopSport*. But she's transformed into an influential host on both radio and TV addressing everything from education and poverty to health and housing. Just 34, Moshoeshoe is best known for hosting *The Big Question* on SABC2 and her radio show, *Kaya Talk*, a current affairs and lifestyle talk show on Kaya FM. If she wasn't in media, Moshoeshoe says she probably would be playing the role of a barefoot housewife in the kitchen. — Mmanaledi Mataboge

 **Lunch spot: Darkies Café, Johannesburg**



Masechaba Moshoeshoe

Presenter



Mondli Makhanya

Editor,
Sunday Times

Mondli Makhanya, who has been the editor of *Sunday Times* since 2004, has had his share of controversy over the past few years. There was his looming arrest in 2007 over the use of former health minister Manto Tshabalala-Msimang's medical file for a *Sunday Times* article that alleged that she was an alcoholic and kleptomaniac. Then the firing of columnist David Bullard and a series of front-page articles were later called into question — one resulted in an apology ordered by the Press Ombudsman. The former editor of the *Mail & Guardian* started out as a journalist for the *Weekly Mail* in 1990 as a business writer and has since been deputy news editor of *The Star* and an associate editor of *Sunday World*. Although the newspaperman's colleagues around the world are facing a shrinking industry, Makhanya remains upbeat. "Technological advances have changed the nature of journalism," he says. "We just have to adjust to the nature of the way people are consuming news. In South Africa we are not doing badly in terms of representing advances, but we are behind in terms of how many South Africans are connected." — Eamon Allan

 **Lunch spot: The Grillhouse, Rosebank, Johannesburg**

300 Young South Africans | Politics



Hannah Moosa

Secretary general,
Model United Nations

Hannah Moosa is one of the youngest South Africans involved in politics on a global scale. She is serving as secretary general in the Model United Nations (MUN) — an academic simulation of the UN — while she completes a PhD in international relations and comparative developing politics at the University of Toronto. Moosa began debating in the Model UN when she was in Grade 11, after her team won the KwaZulu-Natal provincial competition in July 2001 and was placed third in the national round. Moosa went on to represent KwaZulu-Natal as a member of the South African delegation at the Model UN Conference held at the UN in New York in 2002. She has also served as a delegate at numerous university level conferences in South Africa, Canada and the United States as well as serving as tutor, trainer, staff member and organiser for various high-school and university-level MUN simulations. — Eamon Allan

 Lunch spot: A braai in the Drakensberg



Photo: David Harrison

Ian Ollis

MP,
Democratic Alliance

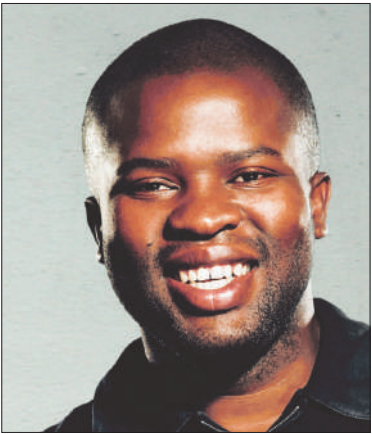
The day Ian Ollis was sworn in as one of the newest members of Parliament, his mother gave him some advice. “Make sure you don’t get thrown out in the first week,” she said. Her snide suggestion wasn’t unwarranted. Back in February of 2000, just before turning in his master’s thesis on the Bible’s view of homosexuality, the then-ordained minister was tossed out of the Baptist Church; it had no interest in having an openly gay man among them. But the DA didn’t seem to mind his sexual orientation. In 2005, they approached Ollis, who was running his own real estate agency and

doing of skills training, to run for office because of his experience in front of big crowds. Ollis took on Joburg’s Ward 90 (which includes Hyde Park, Dunkeld and Rosebank) representing one of the country’s wealthiest areas right up until his time in Parliament began in May. It’s a place that, six months ago, Ollis wasn’t so sure he’d be. Last year he lost the DA leadership of Gauteng by four votes to Victor Penning. But he quickly bounced back. After Deloitte was brought in by the party to conduct evaluations of its top politicians, Ollis scored at the top of the class. All the earnest

experience of talking to people paid off in mock interviews and various presentations and the party decided to take him to Parliament, where he is the new deputy spokesperson on labour. But don’t expect Ollis to deliver like every other politician. “I don’t shut up and I don’t tow the line,” he says. “I say what I believe.” Let’s just hope that’s not what gets him tossed out this time. — Tanya Pampalone

 Lunch spot: Doppio Zero, Rosebank, Johannesburg

I don’t shut up and I don’t tow the line. I say what I believe



Lebogang Maile

Chairperson,
Gauteng Youth Commission

Lebogang Maile’s popularity as a leader grew during his time as president of the Congress of South African Students (Cosas). From 1995 he led the organisation’s team presenting proposals to Parliament’s portfolio committee on education during the formulation of the South African Schools Act. Maile’s term as Cosas president was, however, marred by continued stand-offs with government, most notably around education officials. But he continued to grow, becoming the first chairperson of the Gauteng Youth Commission, a government body responsible for the formulation of the youth development policy framework. One of the programmes initiated by the commission under his stewardship is the Izimbizo programme, aimed at promoting dialogue and ensuring that government is in constant contact with young people. The 29-year-old is now the Gauteng provincial secretary of the ANC Youth League as well as head of social transformation for the league’s provincial executive committee, working closely with NGO’s focusing on youth development. — Mmanaledi Mataboge

 Lunch spot: The Meat Co, Melrose Arch, Johannesburg



Photo: Oupa Nkosi

Buti Manamela

National secretary,
Young Communist League of
South Africa

The first national secretary of the South African Communist Party’s youth wing Buti Manamela is known for being outspoken and fearless in politics. A determined political activist, Manamela started recruiting members for the ANC Youth League and the Congress of South African Students when he was only 12. He studied towards an electronic engineering diploma at Mamelodi College, but abandoned his studies when he was elected after the re-establishment of the Young Communist League of South Africa in 2003. He has since become the face of the organisation and was part of the young leaders and its tripartite alliance partner, the ANC Youth League, who played a major role to ensure that Jacob Zuma won the ANC presidency in 2007. Manamela is now an ANC MP. — Mmanaledi Mataboge

 Lunch spot: Marco’s African Place, Cape Town



David Masondo

Chairperson,
Young Communist League

David Masondo is the most powerful youth politician that you probably have not heard of. That’s because the chairperson of the Young Communist League of South Africa is more academic than politician. Known for his soft-spoken, down-to-earth and approachable nature, this extremely low-profile politico, has lectured in political studies at the University of the Witwatersrand, and is now working towards his PhD at New York University. Masondo first became politically active as a child in Limpopo when he mobilised, with members from his village, against corrupt chiefs who embezzled money intended for community projects. Masondo has been a member of the National Youth Commission and served as chairperson of the ANC Youth League in Limpopo. — Monako Dibetle

 Lunch spot: Mzitho, Braamfontein, Johannesburg

300 Young South Africans | Politics



Lindiwe Mazibuko

MP,
Democratic Alliance

The first time Lindiwe Mazibuko gave serious thought to politics was when she was writing a dissertation for her political communication honours degree at the University of Cape Town. DA leader Helen Zille’s tenure as mayor of Cape Town as well as the party’s policies and programmes were part of Mazibuko’s research in 2007. Straight after university, she started working for the party. Two years later, the 28-year-old is now one of the newest members of Parliament and doubles as the party’s national media liaison officer. Although she is new to the political game, she has been tasked with defending the party’s policies. — *Mmanaledi Mataboge*

 **Lunch spot: Willoughby & Co., W&A Waterfront**



Alex Matthews

Political commentator

Alex Matthews started blogging in 2007. And for the next two years, his blog Afrodisident — political commentary on “Africa and beyond” — was a runner-up in South Africa’s annual blog awards for both the best politics blog and the best original writing. Matthews writes about everything from human rights and governance to poverty and corruption, attempting to cover issues ignored by the mainstream media. That’s exactly what’s landed him and his political opinions on some of the most heavy-hitting political pages in the world, including *The Huffington Post* and the *Foreign Policy Journal*.

In April, Matthews launched *The Soapbox* (thesoapbox.fm), an online platform that he hopes will become a place to fight political and cultural apathy and foster tolerance and a culture of intelligent debate among his peers. Since January 2007, Matthews has been head of public relations for Panda Security South Africa and he’s finishing his BA in communications management at Vega, the brand communications school. — *Jane Steinacker*

 **Lunch spot: Loading Bay, Greenpoint, Cape Town**

Early May this year, Cornelius Jansen van Rensburg was suspended from his post as the national youth leader for the Freedom Front Plus. His offence? He told everyone who would listen that he would push for a vote of no confidence against the group’s leader after Pieter Mulder took the position of deputy minister of agriculture, forestry and fisheries in the ANC-led government. Jansen van Rensburg believes that you should stick to your principles; especially when it least suits you. And this was his time to do just that. Prior to his suspension, he was actively involved in seeking creative ways to shine a light on the issues important to the political party’s youth. “Mix a party with a party,” he says. Jansen van Rensburg is in his final year of study as a MCom financial management student. He is a part-time councillor with the City of Tshwane’s metropolitan municipality and a broker at a leading financial services company. — *Jane Steinacker*

Lunch spot: Cappuccino’s, Brooklyn, Pretoria



Cornelius Jansen van Rensburg

Suspended national youth leader,
Freedom Front Plus



Photo: Oupa Nkosi

Fikile Mbalula

Deputy minister of police

Until 2004, Fikile Mbalula was a non-factor in the country’s political discourse. The former youth league firebrand was thrust into the limelight after he was elected ANC Youth League president. His key task — albeit not as easy as he might have thought — was to make sure Jacob Zuma would become the next president of the ANC and the country. It was Mbalula’s hard work as head of ANC’s election campaign that won him a position in Zuma’s Cabinet as deputy minister of police.

Known affectionately as “Vutha” in ANC circles, Mbalula is a larger-than-life character is one of the most influential politicians in the country. And the youth league has big plans for their former leader; they expect him to take over as ANC president someday and ultimately become the country’s president. — *Matuma Letsoalo*

 **Lunch spot: Pigalle, Sandton, Johannesburg**



Ebrahim Fakir

Political commentator

Ebrahim Fakir heads a research programme that focuses on political parties, local government, Parliament and institutions that protect democracy at the Electoral Institute of Southern Africa. He has researched politics for the Institute for Democracy in South Africa and the Centre for Policy Studies. He’s read for a degree in English Literature (BA Hons) at the University of the Witwatersrand and during his time there he served on the South African National Students Congress, the Muslim Students Association and the *Wits Student* newspaper. Fakir was also a visiting fellow at the Institute of Development Studies at the University of Sussex. — *Mmanaledi Mataboge*

 **Lunch spot: The Ant, Melville, Johannesburg**

300 Young South Africans | Politics



Paseka Letsatsi
Spokesperson,
ANC Youth League

Paseka Letsatsi was introduced to the business of explaining and defending political decisions at the age of 16 when he was appointed media liaison officer for the ANC Youth League (ANCYL) in Sebokeng. The 35-year-old joined the ANC 20

years ago when he was a teenager, serving on the national executive committee of the South African Students Congress while studying towards a BA in Education at the University of the Western Cape. During his career as a spokesperson, he worked in ministry of home affairs and defended challenges such as poor service and corruption, fake identity documents as well as immigration laws. Now his responsibilities include justifying controversial statements from ANCYL leaders and sustaining the hope that young people would like to join the league. Letsatsi also doubles as the national spokesperson for the South African Social Security Agency, tasked by the department of social development to enhance the quality of service delivery by making sure that social grants are accessible. — *Mmanaledi Mataboge*

 **Lunch spot: The Meat Co, Melrose Arch, Johannesburg**



Mduzi Manana
MP,
African National Congress

He's just 25 years old. And that makes Mduzi Manana South Africa's youngest member of Parliament. His political activism began at the age of 14, when he joined both the Congress of South African Students (Cosas) and the ANC Youth League in his hometown of Ermelo in Mpumalanga. Manana demonstrated his belief in peace and human rights when, in 2003, he joined a group of 33 other South Africans to be human shields in Iraq when the United States invaded the country. Manana was elected to the ANC

Youth League's national executive committee last year and sits on the board of its investment arm, Lembede Investment Holdings. He has a BA in political science and sociology from the University of KwaZulu-Natal.  **Lunch spot: The Butcher Shop & Grill, Nelson Mandela Square, Sandton, Johannesburg**



Photo: Oupa Nkosi

A founding member of Congress of the People (Cope), Anele Mda was the youngest person on the steering committee, who worked towards the national convention that resolved to form the new political party. The fiery 30-year-old became the voice of reason for young people in politics when she took a centre stage with other former ANC national leaders to resign from the ruling party, following the recall of former president Thabo Mbeki. She's also an entrepreneur of

note. Mda's networking and fundraising skills first came to the fore in her one-woman campaign to raise money to start NGO's in Bizana and Port St Johns. She opened an HIV/Aids information centre at the age of 17 and started the Growing Girls Group as well as Creative Young Women, intended to address the needs of young women. — *Mmanaledi Mataboge*

 **Lunch spot: Ocean Basket, Melrose Arch, Johannesburg**

Anele Mda
President,
Congress of the People Youth
Movement



Mcebo Khumalo
Board member,
National Youth Development Agency


Mcebo Khumalo was so determined to contribute to youth development that a shooting accident that left him blind in 2004 couldn't stop him. The 29-year-old deputy national chairperson and general secretary of the Disabled Youth South Africa started off by raising awareness on HIV/Aids and opened a driving school to equip young people with driving skills. Just over a year after his shooting accident, Khumalo passed matric and enrolled for two degrees at the University of KwaZulu-Natal: one in political science and one in economics. He serves on the South African

Youth Council, the SABC's Youth Advisory Panel, is the general secretary of Disabled Students Organisation and a board member of the National Youth Development Agency. Khumalo has also been involved in the drafting of policies and programmes advising government on how to ensure that HIV/Aids awareness programmes benefit people living with disabilities. — *Mmanaledi Mataboge*  **Lunch spot: Spur Steak Ranches, Sun Coast Casino, Durban**



Mandla Mandela
MP,
African National Congress

The 35-year-old grandson of South Africa's former president, Nelson Mandela, Mandla gave up the glitz and glamour of the big business life in Johannesburg to take up a position of an "inkosi" (traditional leader), at the Mandelas' home village of Mvezo in the Eastern Cape. For the past three years, the Rhodes University politics graduate has been listening to grievances of villagers at a tribal court as Chief of the Tembu clan at Mvezo. He doubles as an MP for the ANC, so

the young Mandela travels to Mvezo every Friday to spend the weekend with his tribe. As part of improving the quality of his people's lives, Mandela successfully urged health officials to set up mobile clinics in the impoverished village for locals to test and receive treatment for HIV/Aids. One of his biggest concerns is the country's deteriorating human rights record. He publicly criticised the government when it rejected a visa application from the Tibetan spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama. — *Mmanaledi Mataboge*  **Lunch spot: Traditional food cooked by helper Xoli Ndoziya**

300 Young South Africans | Politics



Photo: David Harrison

Julius Malema

President, ANC Youth League

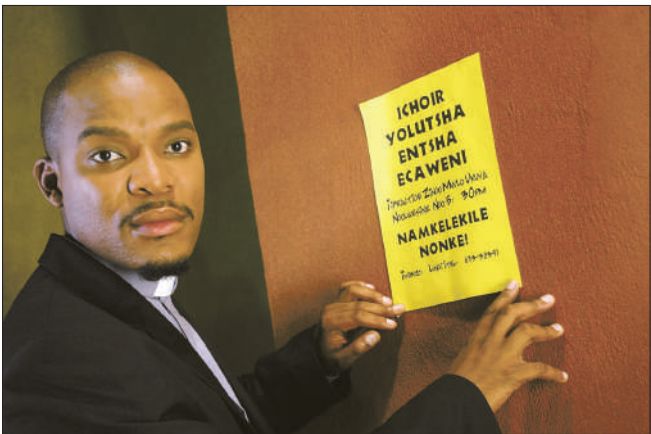
Love him or hate him — and many just love to hate him — Julius Malema just had to make our list of 300 Young South Africans you have to take to lunch. It's not a popularity contest but even if it was, Malema would probably win. Because any way you slice it, you can't argue with the fact that, at 28, he is one of the most powerful politicians in the country and one of the youth who will be leading us into the next generation. Malema's gaffes have provided fodder to columnists and talk show hosts and his uncompromising attitude feeds the frenzy. Although he is seen as the ANC court jester who should not be

taken too seriously, he is used by the ANC to flight controversial ideas. His pledge to "kill for Zuma" landed him in trouble with the Human Rights Commission, whose members at first hesitated at how to deal with him. He was sent home with an "understanding" that he would not use that phrase again because it incites violence, but was not punished in any way and not asked to apologise. Malema hails from rural Limpopo, and he passed his matric exam with a double GG in woodwork and an H in maths; another embarrassing public relations disaster for the youth league when these results

were leaked to newspapers. Basic Education Minister Angie Motshekga came out in support of his poor matric record, proclaiming that academic qualifications are not important when you want to become a South African leader. He might be billed as unsophisticated and his outbursts may provide journalists with unbeatable quotes and headlines, but Malema's most impressive legacy is how he has managed senior leaders and organisations to dance to his tune. — Mandy Rossouw

 Lunch spot: Panyaza, Soweto, Johannesburg

Malema's most impressive legacy is how he has managed senior leaders to dance to his tune



Hlomla Dandala

Political activist

Although Hlomla Dandala is an actor, his role as political activist is not just another performance. He seems really interested in the issues. The son of Congress of the People leader Mvume Dandala appeared on national television to endorse the breakaway party from the start, becoming the urbane face of the group's youthful audience. A television presenter, Dandala first appeared on Channel-O in 1998, just after graduating from the

University of Witwatersrand with his honours in drama. He became a household name as the character Derek Nyathi on SABC's *Isidingo*, going on to direct the show in 2001. He also presented the popular reality show *All You Need Is Love* and has worked on international movies including *Lord of War* and *Red Dust*. — Percy Mabandu

 Lunch spot: Kitchen Bar, Design Quarter, Fourways, Johannesburg

A staunch community worker, Thabiso Teffo's political activism started with the South African Students Congress during his first year as a BCom Law student at the Turfloop campus of the University of the North. Teffo ventured into community upliftment programmes by voluntarily conducting extra lessons for high school learners on weekends and during the university's winter school. The 26-year-old board member of the National Association of People Living with HIV/Aids started raising awareness about the virus as a volunteer in 2005, working with local clinics on community awareness programmes. He also served on the university's Aids committee from 2003 and was selected to represent South Africa at the 15th World Aids conference in Thailand in 2004. Teffo works for the Limpopo Youth Commission

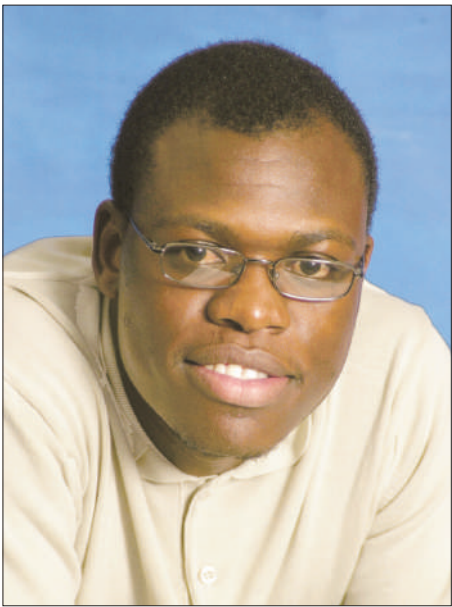


Thabiso Teffo

Community leader

as a programme officer and was one of the first local leaders of the ANC to break away and form the Congress of the People. — Mmanaledi Mataboge

 Lunch spot: Ocean Basket, Savannah Mall, Polokwane



Vusi Gumede

Policy analyst

Vusi Gumede has an impressive list of honours. He's featured in the American Biographical Institute's *Great Minds of the 21st Century* and recognised by the Institute for African Development at Cornell University as a distinguished Africanist scholar. But his most recent honour came earlier this year when Yale University made him a Yale World Fellow. Not bad for a government worker. But then, Gumede, who has worked as an advisor, economist and analyst, is no small player. With a PhD in economics, he is the chief policy analyst for the presidency's policy coordination and advisory services. Before that, he was with the ministry of trade and industry and the National Institute of Economic Policy. Gumede also lectures at the Graduate School of Public and Development Management at Wits University and writes for international and local journals, drafts working papers and policy briefs and has a popular blog on the *Mail & Guardian's* Thought Leader website. — Jane Steinacker

 Lunch spot: Greenfields, Pretoria



Nkhumeni "Khume" Ramulifho

National youth leader, Democratic Alliance

He looks like any other career-driven young South African. But community development is a top priority for Nkhumeni "Khume" Ramulifho, the 30-year-old national leader of the DA's youth wing. He broke with tradition at the age of 20 by joining the party when it was still called the Democratic Party and widely considered as a

"white people's political party". He and other young people realised that the party lacked activism at student level and they founded the DA Students' Organisation. This former councillor for the City of Johannesburg served on several community policing forums including the groups in Hillbrow, the city centre and now in Riverlea, Langlaagte. Ramulifho has also worked with the South African Police Services' career management section in Soweto, encouraging young people to collaborate with the police to contribute to the crime-fighting initiatives. He represents the DA on the Gauteng provincial executive committee as well as the federal council, the party's supreme policy-making body. Ramulifho is also the DA's member in the Gauteng provincial legislature. — Mmanaledi Mataboge

 Lunch spot: Mzitho, Braamfontein, Johannesburg

300 Young South Africans | Politics



Photo: Oupa Nkosi

Andile Lungisa

Deputy president, ANC Youth League

Having entered politics at 14 through the South African Students Congress, Andile Lungisa credits the discipline and experience he learned there for the position he now occupies as deputy president of the ANC Youth League. One of the country's most

stylish politicians, the 30-year-old demonstrated his organisational skills when he founded an ANC Youth League branch in City Central, in the western suburbs of Port Elizabeth. Lungisa describes himself as a free thinker and being a playwright and a poet allows him space to express himself outside the political platform. Lungisa takes to heart matters that affect the lives of young people such as HIV/Aids and makes his contribution by organising Aids benefit concerts to raise awareness about the disease. He was recently appointed chairperson of the board of the new National Youth Development Agency, which seeks to advance youth development in the country. — Mmanaledi Mataboge

Lunch spot: Makhosini, Green Point, Cape Town

Lorato Tshenkeng ventured into the communications industry by chance when he joined South African Airways (SAA) in 2001. Tshenkeng had abandoned his studies towards a BSc degree in microbiology at the University of the Witwatersrand to work as an air traffic controller for the South African Air Force. The national airliner trained him in internal communications and eventually Tshenkeng worked his way up and became the group's internal communications manager. After SAA, he worked for public relations consultancy companies Simeka TWS and FNP Communications, where he served clients such as the African Monitor and the SABC board. In the latest election campaign, the 30-year-old was tasked with selling the Congress of the People's presidential candidate, Mvume Dandala, to the public. He is also a founding member of the Friends of Democracy, a website created to support former president Thabo Mbeki after he was recalled. — Mmanaledi Mataboge

Lunch spot: Kitchen Bar, Fourways, Johannesburg



Lorato Tshenkeng

Communications strategist, Congress of the People

which lambasted the South African government for neglecting gender as a category in the economic analysis of poverty, growth, inequality and the concentration of wealth. A committed community worker, Phoko interacts with community-based organisations and NGOs in the United Kingdom and Southern Africa in the areas of refugee and immigrant rights, human rights, economic justice and gender equality. After completing degrees in political studies and sociology as well as an LLB in London, she worked briefly at Amnesty International's office in that city. She studied public policy at the University of the Witwatersrand. Phoko provides political, gender and trade policy analysis for both local and international media and is the co-founder of Trade Collective, where she works as a policy and advocacy director. — Mmanaledi Mataboge

Lunch spot: Sophia's, Rosebank, Johannesburg



Lebohang Phoko

Political analyst

When many young women were reluctant to publicly criticise the president, Lebohang Phoko took it upon herself to speak out. She co-authored *Letter to Thabo Mbeki from African Women*,



Photo: Alan Greig

Mazibuko Jara

Co-managing editor, Amandla Publishers

His peers in politics describe him as an independent thinker who takes risks and lets people know what he really thinks, even if it goes against the grain of authority. At 35, Jara is a former South African Communist Party spokesperson who fell out of favour with the leadership after questioning the party's support for ANC president Jacob Zuma on corruption charges. Jara holds an engineering degree from the University of KwaZulu-Natal and is writing a mini thesis towards a master's degree on land and agrarian studies at the University of the Western Cape. He has been the national director at the Lesbian and Gay Equality Project, and a board member of the Aids Consortium and the Treatment Action Campaign. He founded the Employment Equity Alliance, a lobbying group of various NGOs in support of the Employment Equity Act, which legally supports homosexuals, HIV-positive people and the disabled from unfair discrimination in the workplace. — Mmanaledi Mataboge

Lunch spot: His kitchen with Indian curries prepared by his wife, Nolene Morris



Malusi Booi

National coordinator, Congress of the People Youth Movement

The soft-spoken but influential co-founder of the Cope Youth Movement, 31-year-old Malusi Booi, cut his teeth in student politics in the late Eighties when he joined the Congress of South African Students. Booi held several positions including secretary and president of the student representative council at the Durban University of Technology, with the aim of improving both studying and living conditions at the university. This professional quantity surveyor frankly admits that he was influenced by the socialist content of the rival student body, the PAC-aligned Pan

Africanist Student Movement, mainly because of its stance on land ownership. Booi returned to active politics with the formation of Cope and became the national coordinator of its youth movement. He is a director of a Johannesburg-based logistics company, Cyoyo Logistics. — Mmanaledi Mataboge

Lunch spot: Ten Bompas, Dunkeld West, Johannesburg

300 Young South Africans | Politics



Pat Lebenya-Ntanzi

MP, Inkatha Freedom Party

Pat Lebenya-Ntanzi has been vocal about the need for a fully fledged youth ministry so that issues affecting young people are not treated as secondary by different government departments. The 32-year-old honed her political skills through the structures of the Inkatha Freedom Party's Youth Brigade, which she now chairs. She also serves on the IFP's national executive committee.

Lebenya-Ntanzi was one of the party's youngest MPs at the age of 30 and has been a foot soldier for poverty eradication by helping to mobilise communities through the youth brigade and create projects that create an income for families. — *Mmanaledi Mataboge*

Lunch spot: Daruma, Elangeni, Durban

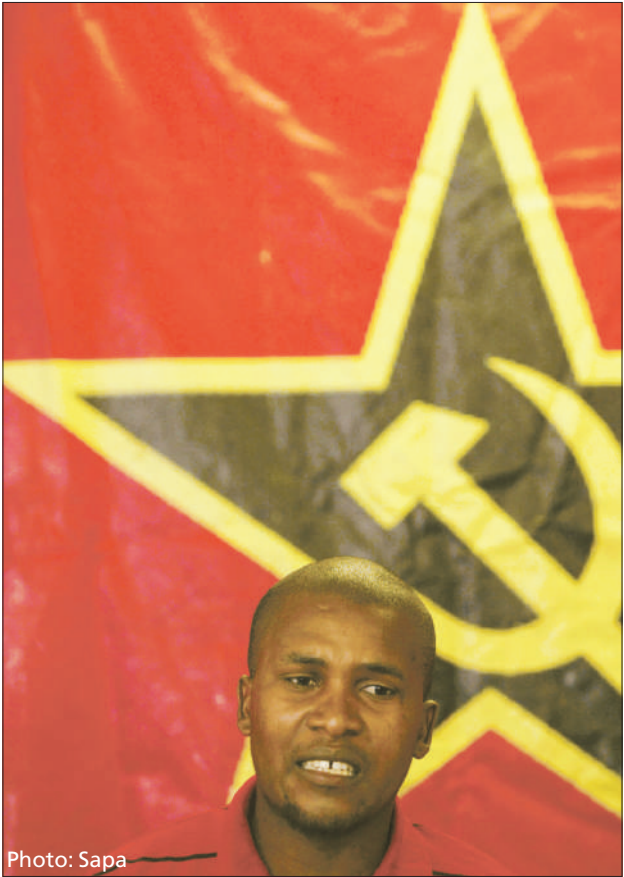


Photo: Sapa

Nkosiphendule Kolisile

Chairperson, Gauteng SACP

The new member of the provincial legislature in Gauteng on an ANC ticket, Nkosiphendule Kolisile entered the world of politics at the age of 18. That's when he signed up for both the SACP and the ANC. His experience in labour politics, while working as a security guard, equipped him with the organisational skills that helped him rise through the party ranks. He was a shopsteward at mining company, Gold Fields, and at the security company, Group 4 Securicor, a position he was fired from in 2001 for

leading a strike action. Kolisile's rise to political power began with the SACP's regional leadership in the West Rand and then deputy national organiser, a position that raised his profile nationally and gave him the support to be elected Gauteng chairperson. He was also on the SACP team that led Khutsong's successful four-year struggle for the reincorporation of the Merafong Municipality back into Gauteng from the North West. — *Mmanaledi Mataboge*

Lunch spot: Spur Steak Ranches, anywhere

The 29-year-old treasurer general and chairperson of the ANC Youth League's investment arm Lembede Investment Holdings, Pule Mabe is also an established businessman. He's a shareholder in TaxiProp, the retail development arm of the South African National Taxi Association and owns KG Media, publishers of a public transport newspaper called *Hamba Nathi*. Charged with keeping the ANC Youth League's finances in order, Mabe started in politics as a member of the Congress of South African Students at the age of 15. Besides being strict with the purse, the youth league also relies on Mabe to talk for the young people, thanks to his experience as a spin doctor.

When he got bored with journalism, he worked as media liaison officer for the Gauteng provincial government and was the spokesperson for Metrorail. — *Mmanaledi Mataboge*

Lunch spot: Shot Left-Macnose, Soshanguve



Photo: Oupa Nkosi

Pule Mabe

Treasurer general, ANC Youth League



Photo: Oupa Nkosi

Sipho Nghona

National spokesperson, Congress of the People Youth Movement

Sipho Nghona came into the public eye as the national spokesperson of Congress of the People's Youth Movement, when he represented the party's youth at public debates in the run-up to this year's general election. A lawyer by profession, he is a partner of Mindcor Executive Search, a recruitment company focused on sourcing high calibre executives, senior and middle management. Nghona is a founder member of the Black Management Forum's young professionals and served as its inaugural deputy chairperson in 2007. In the same year, he served in the Gauteng youth legislature. Nghona was on the team that discussed and finalised the establishment of the National Youth Development Agency before the draft was presented to the National Assembly. He was also a member of the African Youth Front against Xenophobia, a youth body spearheaded by the ANC Youth League consisting of youth from various political formations, business and entertainment to fight xenophobia. — *Mmanaledi Mataboge*

Lunch spot: The Grill House, Rosebank, Johannesburg

Zwelethu Jolobe is known for providing an analytical voice on the country's political happenings for the media. He completed a master's degree in international relations at the University of Cape Town (UCT) with distinction. His fascination with the different and often complex ways in which power relations in society manifest, was key to his choice of political science. Jolobe started his career as a policy researcher for the Centre for Development and Enterprise, a policy think tank in Johannesburg, before taking the academic route and specialising in the area of comparative politics. At 31, he is a PhD candidate in political science at UCT and his thesis focuses on the theory of political negotiations. — *Mmanaledi Mataboge*

Lunch spot: Ocean Basket, Cape Town CBD



Zwelethu Jolobe

Political scientist



Marlon Parker

Technology lecturer,
Cape Peninsula University of
Technology

By the time he had finished high school, Marlon Parker had never touched a computer. In fact, his first job was pushing shopping trolleys. Today he is completing his doctoral research in information technology, following on from his bachelor and master's degrees (*cum laude*). His thesis is centred around a project he spearheaded in the Cape Flats in which rehabilitated gang members and drug addicts use social multimedia technologies to council people around the country. Parker grew up on the Cape Flats and was a heavy drinker by the time he was 17. He has a brother in jail for drug possession and dealing. Your circumstances do not determine your destiny, Parker says. He personally trains recovered and reformed drug addicts on how to use technology such as MXit to do a form of peer-counselling using cellphone-based IM and social network. His work is ground-breaking and he manages to do this with no corporate or government funding. — *Hendri Pels*

Lunch spot: Azure, Twelve Apostles, Cape Town



Photo: David Harrison

Simone Abramson

Inventor

S hoprite Checkers Woman of the Year Finalist, Glamour Magazine Woman of the Year, HIP2B2 Brand Ambassador and a high school student. Huh? Doesn't seem to add up. Well, unless you are Simone Abramson. At the tender age of 16, Abramson made a major breakthrough when she invented an alternative to the current human identification methods. The Cape Town schoolgirl invented a photographic system based on the internal properties of the eye, which can't be forged or changed. The inspiration for the project came when her grandfather was diagnosed with diabetes, which was confirmed using fundus photography. This is a common technology that photographs the back of the eye, or the "fundus", revealing the health of the optic nerve, vitreous, macula and retina. With her method in place, Abramson entered Eskom's Expo for Young Scientists in 2007, using her grandfather's medical records as inspiration for her project. But now that she's all famous, do her teachers and students treat her differently?

"Not really," says Abramson, who is now 18. "It's like a job I do. I don't let it worry me." Her ground-breaking project is in its final developmental stage. She has patented her idea but has not yet sold the rights because she hasn't received interest from the "right kind of people". And finding the right kind of people is not going to be easy, considering who her idol is. "Nelson Mandela," she quips, "because he was so determined to do something that nothing could

Lunch spot: Primi Piatti, anywhere

It's like a job I do ...
... I don't let it worry me



Nonhlanhla Mokoena

Nuclear physicist,
Koeberg Nuclear Power Station

Nonhlanhla Mokoena is a poster-child for perseverance. As a girl, she sold sweets at school and later worked as a domestic worker to supplement the household income. At 15, Mokoena fell pregnant and decided to keep the baby. With dogged determination and the help of an encouraging grandmother and supportive teachers, she went on to matriculate, and continued to university. She is currently working towards a master's in science. Now a nuclear physicist at Koeberg Nuclear Power Station, Mokoena is also in demand as a motivational speaker and mentor. When talking to learners from disadvantaged backgrounds, Mokoena urges them to think broadly and keep their eye on the goal. "It's not about riches," she says, "it's about the mind." — *Faranaaz Parker*

Lunch spot: Moyo, Stellenbosch



Lebogang Mokwena

Researcher,
Centre for Policy Studies

Lebogang Mokwena is already carving a name for herself in research and academic circles, historically dominated by men. She is well read and travelled. Her academic achievements include a master's degree in poverty and development from the Institute of Development Studies at the University of Sussex. She also completed studies in law and politics at the University of the Witwatersrand. In 2004 Mokwena was the first black female student at Wits to receive the Yusuf Dadoo prize, which is awarded annually to the top undergraduate student in the department. She was later awarded the Joe Ebrahim Prize for the top honours student by the same department. Mokwena, the youngest of six, grew up in a single-parent household in Diepkloof, Soweto. She has a keen interest in literature and writes a column on South African politics for a Johannesburg-based daily newspaper. — *Hendri Pels*

Lunch spot: The Salvation, Melville, Johannesburg



Albert Modi

Chief executive,
Moses Kotane Institute

Albert Theminkosi Modi's mother is illiterate. But she instilled a passion for learning in her son. Following a scholarship to study horticulture and crop science at the University of Fort Hare, Modi went on to complete his master's and PhD. The latter qualification was made possible through the prestigious Fulbright Scholarship. Modi believes crop science is one of best ways to develop rural communities and most of his research looked at indigenous agricultural systems and making these commercially viable. An initiative he spearheaded now supplies Woolworths with certified organic wild African potatoes. He recently joined the Moses Kotane Institute as chief executive, in which he aims to address the shortfall of science, engineering and maths leaders. His vision for the institute is to "orchestrate innovative interventions that render efficient and sustainable service delivery". He believes that the only sustainable way to alleviate poverty is through education. — *Hendri Pels*

Lunch spot: Pizza Hut, Pietermaritzburg

300 Young South Africans | Science & Education



Fikiswa Majola

Chemical engineer,
MTN Sciencentre

Fikiswa Majola is a girl who loves to “blow things up”. She studied chemical engineering at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology but decided not to take the obvious career path. While studying, she tutored students at a Nyanga school in maths and science, and worked as a volunteer at the MTN Sciencentre. After graduating, she took up a full-time post at the centre. These days Majola works as a facilitator at the Sciencentre, where she not only wows young audiences, but also demonstrates the laws of science and chemistry; she has taken her show on the road, attending SciFest and Sasol TechnoX, and she has won a silver medal for “Most Wow Show”. Majola also mentors learners who’ve received the Walter George Mostert Scholarship. She intends to study education part-time while continuing her work with the Sciencentre and taking her show to kids in rural areas. — Faranaaz Parker

 **Lunch spot: Gourmet Burger, Cape Town**



Irma du Plessis

Researcher,
Wits Institute for Social and
Economic Research

Irma du Plessis does not describe herself as a natural student. But with five degrees under her belt — nearly all *cum laude* — it’s a bit hard to believe. She obtained her BA from the University of Pretoria in 1993. She then completed an interdisciplinary honours in philosophy and Afrikaans from the same university and was awarded an Abe Bailey Overseas Scholarship. This was followed by a second honours degree in Industrial Sociology at RAU in 2000 and an MA in Literary Theory through the University of Pretoria in 2002. But what’s interesting about this social and cultural analyst is

not only her impressive academic record, it’s what she studies. Du Plessis is on a quest for of the kind of understanding of the self that is often hidden. She examines aspects of contemporary South African society to try to make sense of the time and place we inhabit. Now a researcher at the Wits Institute for Social and Economic Research (Wiser), where she examines aspects of contemporary South African society to try to make sense of the time and place we inhabit. — Hendri Pelser

 **Lunch spot: La Rustica, Houghton, Johannesburg**

Nothing is impossible for Ndivhuwo Luruli. Born in a rural area in Limpopo, she is a firm believer you can do anything — if you want it bad enough. Luruli studied her BSc in Conservation Ecology at Stellenbosch University. And with a personality thriving on a challenge, she not only passed it with distinction but also went on to get a master’s degree (*cum laude*). Investigating the large and small-scale distribution of the invasive Argentine ant in South Africa, her love of research led her to the National Research Foundation before being appointed, at the age of 27, a deputy director in the department of education. — Liesl Venter

 **Lunch spot: Doppio Zero, Rosebank, Johannesburg**



Ndivhuwo Luruli

Deputy director,
Department of education



Nomakwezi Mzilikazi

Lecturer,
department of zoology,
Nelson Mandela Metropolitan
University

Regarded as Africa’s first black Revolutionary physiologist, Nomakwezi Mzilikazi has already left her mark in the world of science. Raised in the dusty village of Idutywa in the Eastern Cape — where there was not even a laboratory at her local school — she found herself excelling in the field of biology. An expert on the behaviour of small animals such as the elephant shrew and bush babies, the first microscope she saw was when she arrived at university. With a PhD in hand Mzilikazi was the winner of the first African Women Scientist Fellowship at the department of science and technology’s Women in Science Awards in 2003 and was also the first black woman appointed at the department of zoology at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, where she lectures. — Liesl Venter

 **Lunch spot: The Blue Water Café, Port Elizabeth**



Jennifer de Beyer

Scientist

A lack of excellence is what inspires one to action. It is this belief that drives 24-year-old Jennifer de Beyer whose love of science has seen her excel in the field. Currently studying for a DPhil in systems biology at the University of Oxford, with funding from the Commonwealth Scholarship Commission, she is also one of a handful of students who presented at the 13th Workshop of the International Study Group for Systems Biology in 2008. Raised in Pinelands, in the Western Cape, De Beyer was raised with a passionate interest in the world, in which learning and exploring everything became instinctual. Coupled with her belief that exploration and an appreciation for creation draws one closer to God, she is living her dream researching biological questions. — Liesl Venter

 **Lunch spot: Hillcrest Berry Farm, Stellenbosch**

300 Young South Africans | Science & Education



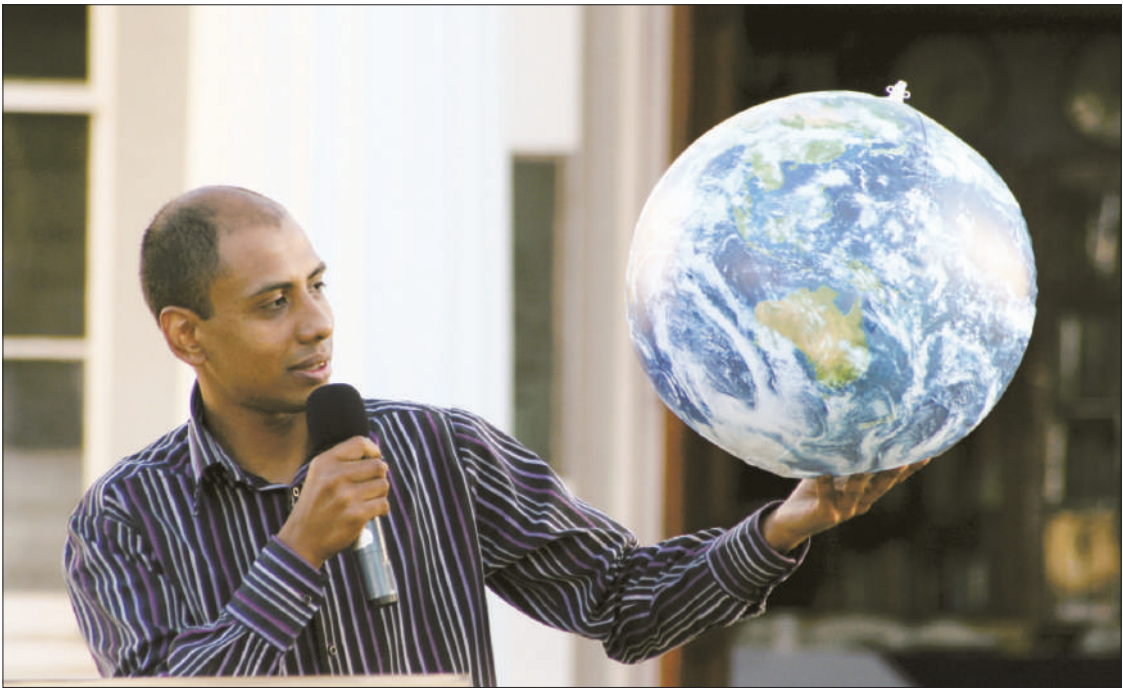
Janice Limson
Head of Biotechnology,
Rhodes University

Her contemporaries describe her as one of Rhodes University's most flamboyant lecturers. And having hand-raised a wild caracal kitten to adulthood and considering saying "yes" as one of her greatest achievements, it is easy to understand why.

Currently a senior lecturer and head of biotechnology at Rhodes University, as well as editor of *Science in Africa* magazine, she is also the winner of the Highway Africa New Media in Journalism and a National Science and Technology Forum Award. Raised in the windy city of Port Elizabeth, she is continuously amazed by science's "wow" moments that goes with discovering a new process or pathway.

— Liesl Venter

 **Lunch spot: Yellow Piano, Grahamstown**



Enrico Olivier
Astronomer,

For Enrico Olivier, the stars really are the limit.

An astronomer with the South African Astronomical Observatory in Cape Town, his interest in science was sparked at a young age by his parents, who would encourage visits to the local library where he would often lose himself in books.

With a PhD in astronomy and astro physics, this easy-going scientist's research interest lies in the area of stellar structure and evolution, in particular the late evolutionary stages of low to intermediate mass stars and the numerical modelling of stellar pulsation (star oscillations).

He also participates in projects on galaxy evolution.

— Liesl Venter

 **Lunch spot: Curry Quest, Cape Town**



Marietjie Venter
Lecturer

Dr Marietjie Venter is a woman who loves viruses. Having published the first study on the molecular epidemiology of the Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) as a cause of lower respiratory tract disease in children in South Africa, she has received much acclaim locally and abroad. She was finalist in the department of science and technology's Women in Science Awards in the Best Emerging Woman Scientist category. From 2002 to 2005 she was a member of the Special Pathogens Unit and received her postdoctoral training on the West Nile Virus at the National Institutes of Health in the United States. She is co-author of several papers that have been published in international accredited journals. She is a senior lecturer and medical scientist in the Department of Medical Virology at the Faculty of Health Science at the University of Pretoria.

— Liesl Venter

 **Lunch spot: Alsume, Hennopsriver Valley**



Rangan Gupta
Associate professor,
Department of economics,
University of Pretoria

At only 33, Rangan Gupta is an associate professor and his work in economics and finance is recognised around the world. Born in India with an inherent love for travelling, he settled in South Africa after receiving a PhD in the United States.

He's been published in some of the world's leading journals and has won the Exceptional Young Researchers Award. He is a member of the Economic Association of South Africa, the African Econometric Society, as well as the African Institute for Economic Modelling and Economic Research Southern Africa. Gupta admits to being a disciplined scholar who gets much joy from his work.

He's quite a catch for the University of Pretoria, where he lectures on monetary theory and policy.

— Liesl Venter

 **Lunch spot: Anywhere on the campus of the University Pretoria**



Vinny Naidoo
Professor,
Veterinary science,
University of Pretoria

At 32, Professor Vinny Naidoo is the youngest South African veterinarian to obtain a PhD in Veterinary Science to date. But it's his research into vultures that has given him recognition as one of the top veterinary researchers in the country. He serves on the Veterinary Clinical Committee of the Medicines Control Council of South Africa and medicines committee that advises the South African Veterinary Association on matters pertaining to the veterinary use of medicinal products.

His day job, though, is with the Department of Paraclinical Sciences in the faculty of Veterinary Science at the University of Pretoria.

— Liesl Venter

 **Lunch spot: John Dory, Pretoria**

300 Young South Africans | Science & Education



Photo: Delwyn Verasamy

Andrew McKechnie

Associate professor,
department of zoology,
University of Pretoria

Awarded for his work with a prestigious President’s Award by the National Research Foundation, Andrew McKechnie is driven by a fascination with animals and a desire to understand them better.

As an associate professor at the Department of Zoology at the University of Pretoria, this 34-year-old admits to being at his happiest studying animals in remote places — preferably a desert.

McKechnie grew up on a farm in Polokwane and spent a large part of his childhood surrounded by nature.

His current research focuses on the physiological and behavioural traits that shape the ways in which birds and other vertebrates interact with physical environments and the consequences of variation in these traits for their evolutionary fitness. He aims to make a significant contribution to biology and to train others to generate knowledge that will address conservation questions.

— Liesl Venter

 **Lunch spot: Under a camelthorn tree, somewhere in the Kalahari**

Paul Holden is a young academic completing his master’s at the University of the Witwatersrand. And it was his thesis topic that inspired him to write *The Arm’s Deal in Your Pocket*, as a way of unpacking the long and complicated arms deal issue for ordinary South Africans.

That the book went into three print runs is positive proof individuals want to know how the deal unfolded.

This creative mind is also a DJ and musician and he’s been working on his follow up book due for release later this year. It’s based on a research project done for the Institute of Security Studies on the pre-history of the arms deal.

— Eamon Allan



Paul Holden

Historian

 **Lunch spot: Barrington’s, Killarney Mall, Johannesburg**



Naadiya Moosajee

Civil engineer, co-founder of
SAWomEng

Mabohlale Mapuru

Civil engineer, co-founder of
SAWomEng



Colleagues and friends describe them as women who make things happen.

Naadiya Moosajee (24) and Mabohlale Mapuru (23) started the non-profit organisation SAWomEng in 2006 while studying at the University of Cape Town. Aimed at celebrating, empowering and educating women in the field of engineering, the organisation is also about attracting and retaining women to engineering — a field in which women are still under-represented.

Passionate and dedicated the two are more than just colleagues, they are friends who compliment each other and bringing various strengths to the organisation. With Moosajee heading up the organisation from Cape Town and Mapuru in Johannesburg they continue to exceed expectations and are making a difference on the way to the top where they are destined to be.

— Liesl Venter

 **Lunch spot: Mountain View Café, Cape Town**



Thabo Msibi

Lecturer,
University of KwaZulu-Natal

Born in the rural village of Ntabamhlophe in Estcourt, KwaZulu-Natal, Msibi realised the value of education at a young age.

Nicknamed Thishomkhulu (meaning principal) by the villagers because of his love for gathering children in the neighbourhood to play school with him, he seemed destined for a life of teaching. Msibi received an honours degree in education (*cum laude*) but this was just the first step for this 26-year-old in attaining his goals.

He was awarded a Fulbright Scholarship to pursue his master’s at Columbia University and he received the Gates Cambridge Scholarship to pursue a PhD at Cambridge. He also founded the Community Development Association, a student-driven community outreach project that has over 11 different projects reaching hundreds of schools across KwaZulu-Natal. And that puts him one step closer to improving the quality of education in the country.

— Liesl Venter

 **Lunch spot: Anywhere will do as long as they serve prawns and no vegetables**



Loren Landau

Director,
Forced Migration Studies
Programme, Wits

Loren Landau is fascinated with movement and assimilation, having been born into a family of Polish immigrants in the United States.

Landau came to South Africa in 2002 after working on immigration and refugee issues at institutions such as Human Rights Watch and Refugees International and teaching courses on refugees at Oxford.

His literary contribution to the field reads like a bibliography in a thesis, including countless books and journal articles; not to mention the two master’s degrees and a PhD in Political Science from Berkeley.

But it’s his work at Wits that has placed forced migration — and its effects, such as the xenophobic attacks across the country last year — high on the local agenda.

But the most fun he’s had since he made South Africa his home? The time he challenged Jesse Duarte on a television debate and the wrath that ensued.

— Ilham Rawoot

 **Lunch spot: La Parreirinha, Rosettenville, Johannesburg**



Olihile Sebolai

Research capacity developer,
University of the Free State

Olihile Sebolai made headlines when he discovered a lubricant that could allow nano-robots to travel through the body and unblock clogged arteries. His research on the yeast in which the lubricant was found earned him an MSc in microbiology and his work was published in scientific journals and presented at conferences.

But the applications of his research are futuristic and could be in development for years, says Sebolai. After completing a PhD in microbiology, he decided to pursue a path that would have more concrete results: research development.

With the old guard of academia heading for retirement, Sebolai hopes to help “replenish and build a new generation of academics”. He is the manager for research capacity development at the University of the Free State, where he focuses on recruiting dedicated young academics and helping them to pursue their research. — Faranaaz Parker

Lunch spot: New York, Westdene, Johannesburg

Poetry makes nothing happen,” WH Auden wrote in his tribute to WB Yeats. This is a line Wits theatre arts lecturer Tsepo wa Mamatu, who describes himself as an “activist through and through,” would have problems with.

Wa Mamatu has written and staged a few political plays. In 2006, he wrote *100% Zulu Boy*, an activist piece. He followed this with *Stormpie*, a play based on the life of Winnie Mandela. At the moment he’s working on a piece called *Mbeki and Other Nitemares*.

Wa Mamatu, born in 1979, is collaborating with a similar minded rabble-rouser, columnist and scholar, Andile Mngxitama, on a book, which examines the representation of blackness in post-apartheid South Africa.

Wa Mamatu is a PhD candidate at Wits and his thesis is concerned with the question — posed since



Photo: Oupa Nkosi

Ghana’s independence from Britain in 1957 — about the capacity of Africans to govern.

Wa Mamatu says the intellectuals of this country “must resist the temptation to be bought to dance in the king’s court”.

It’s not likely he will be tempted to the new king’s court because he has been chosen as this year’s Johannesburg Repertory Fellow and will be spending more time in New York. — Percy Zvomuya

Gramadoelas, Newtown, Johannesburg

Tsepo wa Mamatu

Drama lecturer,
University of Witwatersrand

... resist the temptation to be bought to dance in the king’s court



Claire Reid

Inventor

Claire Reid can’t get enough of sushi. Or veggies. When she was 22 years old, she invented reel gardening: the vegetable planting method that saves 80% of water during seeds’ germination phase.

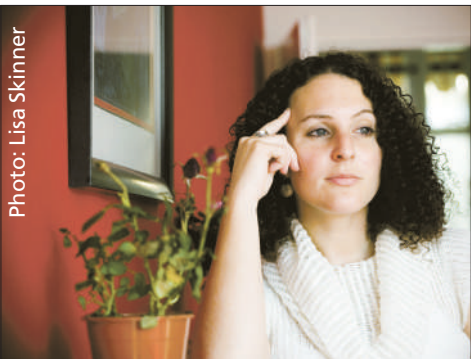
She became the first South African to win first place for the Junior Water Prize at the World Water Week in Stockholm, beating contestants from 23 other countries. That was back in 2003, right after she won the South African leg of the same competition.

Reid graduated with a BSc architecture in 2007 at the University of Pretoria and is completing her honours degree.

In 2008, she was able to explore her other passion: housing, through an internship with the Johannesburg architecture firm TPSP. Her focus there was on developing environmentally friendly low-income housing.

Reid is now starting her own company, Claire Reid Reel Gardening, with the help of the Anglo Zimele Small Business Start Up Fund. — Percy Mabandu

Lunch spot: Tsunami, Rosebank, Johannesburg



Margot Rubin

Development consultant

Urban environments, especially cities and the hustle and bustle of the multitude of people that occupy the same space, fascinate Margot Rubin.

The urban specialist says that it’s not just urban development that gets her out of bed in the morning but all aspects of living in a city. Formerly a researcher and coordinator with the Centre for Urban and Built Environment Studies at Wits, Rubin is now studying towards her PhD in urban planning and politics. She wants to look at the role of the legal system in urban governance and how that will effect the distribution of scarce resources and larger questions around democracy.

In the meantime, Rubin acts as a development consultant for various government departments and private institutions to ensure that the engine of her banged-up Nissan Sentra keeps ticking below its rusting bonnet. — Hendri Pelser

Lunch spot: Doppio Zero, Greenside, Johannesburg



Gina Ziervogel

Researcher,
department of environmental and geographical science, UCT

The world needs more people like Gina Ziervogel. She holds a doctorate in geography from Oxford, but more importantly she understands how changing weather patterns affect African food systems.

Ziervogel has worked with the Malawi Red Cross Society exploring the link between climate change and the communities living along Lake Malawi. She documented how these communities responded to the flooding and advocated for improved response should it happen again.

For the past six years, she has been based at the Climate Systems Analysis Group of the University of Cape Town where she helps provincial water resource managers access climate information more effectively.

Ziervogel has also helped develop some of South Africa’s climate change policies, including reporting on Cape Town’s food security and climate change for the Western Cape. — Percy Mabandu

Lunch spot: Queen of Tarts, Observatory, Cape Town

300 Young South Africans | Science & Education



Fred Swaniker

Founder, African Leadership Academy

Fred Swaniker has big ideas for Africa’s transformation. And with \$4-million in donations from the upper echelons of the Silicon Valley (including an infusion from Cisco Systems and former Hewlett-Packard head Carly Fiorina) he’s well on his way to achieving his dreams. The Ghanaian-born Swaniker recently launched the African Leadership Academy, a pan-African secondary school that aims to develop future generations of African leaders. A former McKinsey consultant, he’s on a mission to keep Africans in Africa by offering a world-class education. He’s well-suited for the job. He has an MBA from Stanford University, where he was an Arjay Miller Scholar, a distinction awarded to the top 10% of each graduating class. He’s lived and worked across the continent. And he’s only 32 years old. Just watch as he leads us all into a serious African Renaissance. — Percy Mabandu

 Lunch spot: The Fat Olive, Muldersdrift

Melinda Griffiths grows pond scum in a lab, although the technical term for it is “microalgae”. If all goes according to plan, this microalgae could be used to produce biodiesel in a more efficient way. Although passionate about algal biofuels, Griffiths believes a switch to electric transport is inevitable. So, in future, she’d like to study artificial photosynthesis, or as she explains to the not-so-scientifically minded, “getting plants to turn sunlight into electricity”. This consummate academic has a BSc in cell biology, an MPhil in bioscience enterprise, and is working on a PhD in bioprocess engineering. She’s worked on preventing malaria at a lab in Canada, researched the marketability of a Dengue Fever vaccine and helped start a company that develops coatings for heart stents. In addition to tutoring undergrads at university and editing science textbooks for Heinemann Publishers, Griffiths volunteers with TeachOut, teaching English and biology at township schools. She also serves on the committee of South African Women in Science and Engineering. — Faranaaz Parker

 Lunch spot: Table Mountain Café, Cape Town



Melinda Griffiths

Molecular biologist



Julian Sithembekile Peters

Researcher

Julian Sithembekile Peters is serious about science. She is pursuing a master’s degree in clinical immunology with the University of Cape Town. She got her honours (cum laude), in biotechnology in 2008 and was awarded the prestigious South African Women in Science and Education scholarship; the Golden Key International Honour Society counts her as a member. In 2007, Peters undertook an internship as a research assistant in the Institute of Microbial Biotechnology and Metagenomics (IMBM) Laboratory where she focused on the immune system’s response to disease and is hoping to concentrate specifically on HIV soon. — Percy Mabandu

 Lunch spot: Fish of the Rocks, Hout Bay, Cape Town



Stephen Morris

Chef

Stephen Morris heads up the Skills Kitchen, a Johannesburg-based non-profit that operates through the Southern Sun Centre for Culinary Excellence, under the auspices of the South African Chefs Association. The 16-station state-of-the-art kitchen cost about R5-million to build and is aimed at developing skills in the industry, particularly focusing on junior cooks, kitchen attendants and chefs from taverns and B&Bs in the townships. The group offers one, five and 10-day courses with prices well below the industry average. Morris creates course material, gives demonstrations, lectures and works with sponsors who donate equipment and funds. Morris completed certificate and diploma level courses in professional cookery and culinary arts at City & Guilds in London, both of which he passed with distinction. — Eamon Allan

 Lunch spot: Brown’s, Rivonia, Johannesburg



Nonhlanhla Dlamini

Researcher

Small is beautiful for Nonhlanhla Dlamini. In fact, the smaller the better. Dlamini has always been fascinated by microorganisms. She has a BTech degree from Natal Technikon and her master’s research project was used by the national department of minerals and energy to establish a standard for paraffin in 2004. Dlamini is a PhD candidate investigating the potential of African traditional medicine to treat Kaposi’s sarcoma — a type of cancer affecting almost 40% of HIV-infected people. The 29-year-old from Durban went to Paris this year to receive a Unesco and L’Oreal sponsored Fellowship for Young Women in Life Science — only conferred on 15 women scientists around the world. Dlamini hopes her research will “raise African traditional medicine to the status enjoyed by Western medicine”, and also “close the gap between traditional healers and scientists”. — Percy Mabandu

 Lunch spot: Mugg & Bean, Musgrave



Photo: Getty Images

Adrian Zaugg

Race car driver

Forget Lewis Hamilton, South Africa has its own behind-the-wheel boy wonder. He took to the track like a duck to water at 13. By the time he was 16, Adrian Zaugg had taken part in the Formula BMW license and made his car-racing debut on the Formula BMW Championship. Zaugg graduated to the A1 Grand Prix for Team South Africa during the 2006-2007 season at the revered Silverstone circuit in England. He is back in the World Series by Renault this year with the Interwetten.com team. — Phathisani Moyo

 **Lunch spot:** Anywhere in South Africa

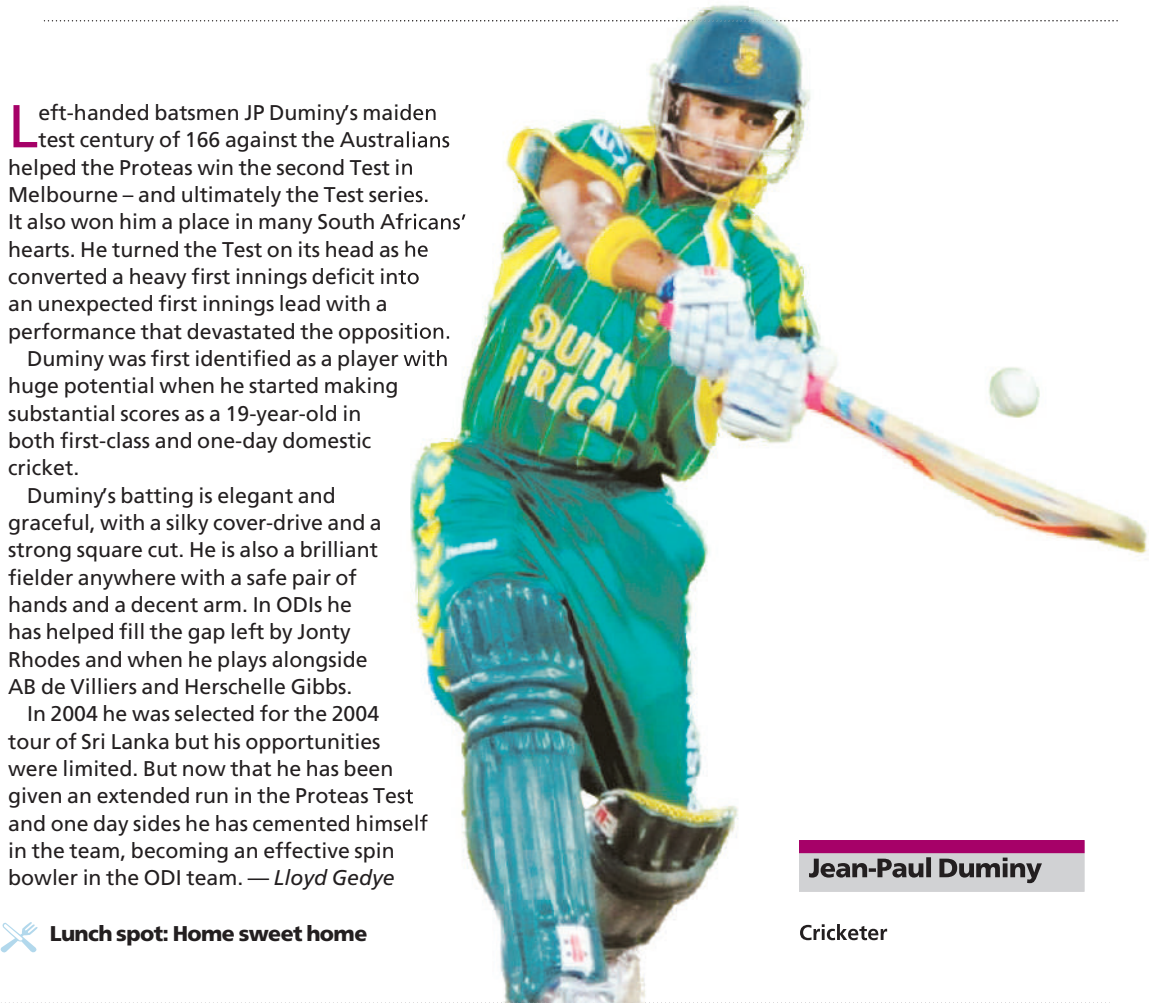


Kgothatso Montjane

Wheelchair tennis player

This 22-year-old from Seshego in Limpopo is an amazing wheelchair tennis player. Kgothatso Montjane, who had her leg amputated in 1999 because of an infection, is ranked number one in the country and number 50 in the world. Montjane’s solid and accurate shots — and her scintillating speed on the court — makes wheelchair tennis look easy to play. She is physically strong and can move her wheelchair far better than any other local female opponents. She made a clean sweep of all the tournaments across the country between 2005 and 2006. Last year she earned a wild card entry into the 2008 Paralympics in Beijing. — Lucky Sindane

 **Lunch spot:** McDonald’s, anywhere



Jean-Paul Duminy

Cricketer

Left-handed batsmen JP Duminy’s maiden test century of 166 against the Australians helped the Proteas win the second Test in Melbourne – and ultimately the Test series. It also won him a place in many South Africans’ hearts. He turned the Test on its head as he converted a heavy first innings deficit into an unexpected first innings lead with a performance that devastated the opposition. Duminy was first identified as a player with huge potential when he started making substantial scores as a 19-year-old in both first-class and one-day domestic cricket.

Duminy’s batting is elegant and graceful, with a silky cover-drive and a strong square cut. He is also a brilliant fielder anywhere with a safe pair of hands and a decent arm. In ODIs he has helped fill the gap left by Jonty Rhodes and when he plays alongside AB de Villiers and Herschelle Gibbs.

In 2004 he was selected for the 2004 tour of Sri Lanka but his opportunities were limited. But now that he has been given an extended run in the Proteas Test and one day sides he has cemented himself in the team, becoming an effective spin bowler in the ODI team. — Lloyd Gedy

 **Lunch spot:** Home sweet home



Photo: Gallo Images

Tendai ‘The Beast’ Mtawarira

Rugby player

Although Tendai Mtawarira may be the 23-year-old fresh-faced Springbok rugby hero, fans in Durban have been singing his praises for years. The Zimbabwean-born front row prop has been delivering consistently strong performances for the Sharks franchise since he debuted against the Lions in the 2007 Currie Cup. Hence the crowd baying his nickname “The Beast” whenever he gets hold of the ball or makes one of those crunching tackles. Mtawarira started his career as

a flank, but has matured despite his young age, into a strong scrummager, big tackler and powerful ball carrier. Now that he had made the step up to the Springboks, a lot is expected of this scrummaging powerhouse, especially in the British Lions tour and Tri-Nations tournament. With 10 Springbok caps at the age of 23, Mtawarira could go on to be one of South Africa’s greatest rugby players. — Lloyd Gedy

 **Lunch spot:** Home sweet home

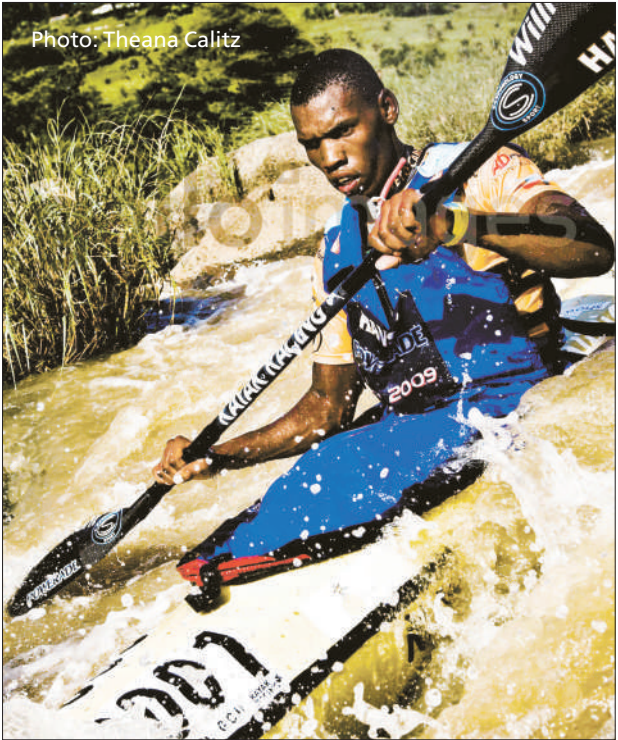


Photo: Theana Calitz

Michael Mbanjwa

Kayaker

His hope of becoming a football star was washed away in 1997 at Nagle Dam when he climbed into a canoe. The 25-year-old Mbanjwa from the Valley of a Thousand Hills in KwaZulu-Natal made history last year when he became the first black African to win the Hansa Powerade Dusi Canoe Marathon. Mbanjwa and his teammate Martin Dryer beat more than 2 000 participants in the K2 (double kayak) race and broke the marathon record by seven minutes. Early this year Mbanjwa finished second in the K1 (single kayak) Dusi race. It’s only a matter of time before he re-writes the history books because of his passion for the sport. — Lucky Sindane

 **Lunch spot:** Spur Steak Ranges, anywhere



She is the newly crowned queen of African football. Noko Alice Matlou's milestone is a first for South Africa. Great players such as Benni McCarthy and Portia Modise may have been nominated for the biggest Confederation of African Football accolade in the past but that's the closest South Africa got until Matlou.

The bustling Banyana Banyana forward was recognised as the best African female player for 2008 at a colourful ceremony in Lagos, Nigeria. She was crowned on the same night Arsenal and Togo striker Emmanuel Adebayor was named the African Footballer of the Year in the men's category.

An avalanche of 23 goals in 20 games for Banyana in 2008 was enough proof that the 19-year-old Matlou, who plays for the Limpopo-based Brazilian FC team when at home, is a world-class player.

Her devastating form catapulted Banyana to their first ever African Women's Championship final last year. Her class was evident in the tournament when she banged in

six goals, including a hat-trick in the semifinal and a goal in the final to share the Golden Boot Award with her fierce rival Genevova Anonma of Equatorial Guinea.

She was also the shining star of Basetsana, the national under-21 team. Matlou led the young South Africans to a Women's Championship of the Council of Southern Africa Football Associations victory in Angola. She scored an incredible 12 goals in five games in that tournament. Needless to say, the queen of African football finished as the top goalscorer and won three Player of the Match awards.

Matlou is set to leave her home in Limpopo for a lucrative contract in Europe to play professional football in Iceland. — Phathisani Moyo

 **Lunch spot: McDonald's, anywhere**

Queen of African football is set for a lucrative contract in Europe

Noko Alice Matlou

Football player



Cameron van der Burgh

Swimmer

He is Africa's first home-trained swimming record holder and the youngest at the age of 20. After the Olympics debacle, there is hope for South Africa's water babies. Cameron van der Burgh, a Pretoria University law student, broke the world 50m record at South Africa's national championships this year and in so doing collected his third world record. He set the 50m and 100m short-course breaststroke records last year. He also clinched the overall points awards in the Fina Arena Swimming World Cup circuit in November — the Sport's World Cup title. He took home a US\$100 000 cheque that comes with the award. — Phathisani Moyo

 **Lunch spot: Bicc's, Waterkloof, Pretoria**

He calls himself a "genius" and lets his hands do the talking in the ring. The 26-year-old from Meadowlands in Soweto is arguably the best technical knockout boxer the country has produced. The hard puncher has a record of 12 knockouts in 13 fights since turning professional in 2006.

The highlight of his career came in 2006 when he won the Commonwealth amateur welterweight championship and become South Africa's first black boxing champion at the games. His skeletal physique can be very deceiving and maybe that's the reason he leaves his opponents crawling like babies in the ring. — Lucky Sindane

 **Lunch spot: Anywhere where good food is served**

Bongani 'Cyclones' Mwelase

Boxer



Gift Ngoepe plays for Pirates. Not the Soweto football giants, but a team that is as foreign to South Africans as the sport. Ngoepe became the first black South African to sign as a professional baseball player when he sealed a seven-figure deal with American Major League Club, the Pittsburgh Pirates in October last year.

The 19-year-old has been touted in the American media as a prospect worth following, given his potential. This is hardly surprising because Ngoepe started training with the senior team at the age of 10. He was introduced to the sport almost from birth after his mother took up the job of caretaker at the Randburg Mets when he was just two years old. His impressive talents at the World Baseball Classic early this year further cemented the confidence of the Pirates in the young protégé. — Phathisani Moyo

 **Lunch spot: KFC, anywhere**



Gift Ngoepe

Baseball player



Dale Steyn

Cricketer

Although Dale Steyn has been on the South African cricket scene for some time, it's only in the past 18 months that he has really exploded on to the Test cricket arena. Steyn's bowling netted him 74 Test wickets in the 2008 calendar year, only six behind Allan Donald's South African record of 80.

This cemented Steyn as the backbone of the Proteas bowling attack, which for too long has been solely reliant on Makhaya Ntini and the ageing Shaun Pollock. Steyn's extreme pace, coupled with his ability to swing the ball away from right-handers, has destroyed opposition batting line-ups around the world.

Steyn secured his place in history as the quickest South African bowler to achieve 100 Test wickets and to reach the 150 Test wickets mark in the shortest time. The young Titan's bowler won three successive man-of-the-series awards against New Zealand, the West Indies and Bangladesh and the fact that he took 38 wickets in his three Test series on the sub-continent underlines his ability to bowl under all conditions.

He was named Test Cricketer of the Year for 2008 at the ICC awards following his selection as Mutual & Federal SA Cricketer of the Year and SA Test Cricketer of the Year. — Lloyd Gedy

 **Lunch spot: Allora, Sandton, Johannesburg**



Photo: Gallo Images

Teko Modise

Football player

Nicknamed “the General” or simply “Ace”, Teko Modise is the driving force behind Bafana Bafana and Orlando Pirates’ engine room. The diminutive midfielder has had an impressive season in both national team colours and at club level and deservedly retained the Footballer of the Year accolade. Who can forget his two devastating goals against the mighty indomitable Lions of Cameroon when Bafana upstaged the former Africa Champions 3-2 during the Nelson Mandela Challenge in November? The Buccaneers will fly the country’s flag in the Africa Champions League thanks, largely, to the industry of Modise. Fast food chain McDonalds have cashed in on Ace’s popularity by appointing him their 2010 Fifa World Cup ambassador – and they couldn’t have chosen a more colourful player in the Bafana line-up in both the Confederations and World Cup campaign. — Phathisani Moyo

Lunch spot: McDonald’s



Photo: Getty Images

Ashleigh Simon

Golfer

At the age of 20, Ashleigh Simon is by far the best female golfer. She was the youngest player to win the ladies’ South African Amateur Stroke Play and Match Play double and the first player in 101 years to win the Ladies South African Open title three times. Simon turned professional at the age of 18. She won the 2007 Catalonia Ladies Masters, which was her third event as a professional. She became the youngest-ever professional winner on the Ladies European Tour. Simon also won the Ladies Club Championships in 2001, 2002, 2003 and 2004 as well the Champion of Champions Tournament in 2002,

2003 and 2004. Simon won her first ladies club championships at Royal Johannesburg Kensington Golf Club at age 12 in 2001 and has gone on to win it for four years in a row. In 2001 she won the Junior Club Championships, the Ladies Club Championship, the top 16 knock out and the singles knock out and has since gone on to win these events more than once. — Lucky Sindane

Lunch spot: Home sweet home

The Blade Runner is the world’s fastest man with no legs. The double-leg amputee is the world record holder in the 100m, 200m and 400m, with the aid of artificial carbon-fibre limbs. Oscar Pistorius is a fierce competitor and firm believer that disability does not mean inability. He took the International Association of Athletics Federation to court last year when they refused to allow him to race against able-bodied athletes on the basis that his prostheses gave him an unfair advantage. He won the legal battle and was able to compete for a place in the South African team for the Beijing Olympic Games. Although he did not make the final team, he achieved a personal best time of 46.25 seconds in the 400m. Undeterred, he took part in the Paralympics Games where he won gold in the 100m, 200m and 400m for his country. — Phathisani Moyo



Oscar Pistorius

Athlete

Lunch spot: Anywhere that serves good lasagne



Photo: Gallo Images

It would be unjust to overlook the contribution the Morkel family has made to the Proteas cause. Albie and Morne Morkel became the first brothers in 56 years to be named as annual Cricketers of the Year in the same season. The Morkels won the prestigious award for 2008 with three other recipients: Johan Botha, Dillon du Preez and fast bowler Mondi Zondeki. Athol and Eric Rowan were the last set of siblings to receive the honour in

the same year back in 1952. Albie is a gifted all-rounder and is one of the leading candidates to replace the retired Shaun Pollock and Lance Klusener. The younger Morne has matured over the past year to a fine fast bowler. He was the top wicket taker when he claimed 15 scalps as South Africa demolished England last year. — Phathisani Moyo

Albie and Morne Morkel

Cricketers

Lunch spot: Crawdaddy’s, Menlyn, Pretoria

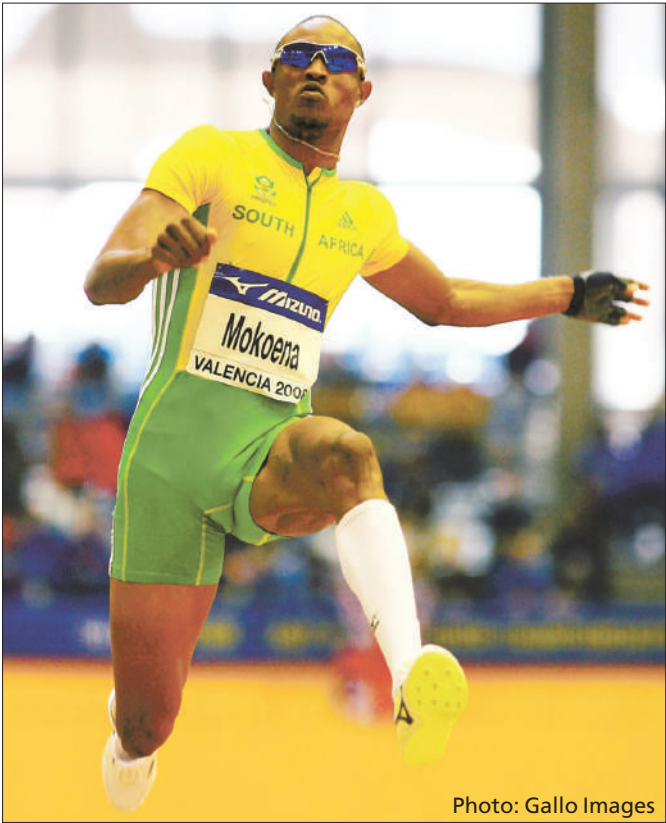


Photo: Gallo Images

Khotso Mokoena

Long jumper

The long jump and triple jump king was the silver lining in the dark cloud that hovered over the South African Olympic team in Beijing. Khotso saved the country the blushes when he captured the only medal at the Games — a silver. A superb 8.24m leap on the tenth day at the magnificent Bird’s Nest Stadium ended the medal drought for the bloated South African team. He has also won medals at the All Africa Games, brought home a silver from the 2006 Sydney Commonwealth Games in Australia for his triple jump and won gold at the World Indoor Championships in long jump. All this, and he is only 24 years old. — Phathisani Moyo

Lunch spot: Anywhere that serves great chicken



Photo: Gallo Images

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Photo: Getty Images

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Oscar Pistorius

Athlete

Lunch spot: Anywhere that serves good lasagne



Photo: Gallo Images

Albie and Morne Morkel

Cricketers

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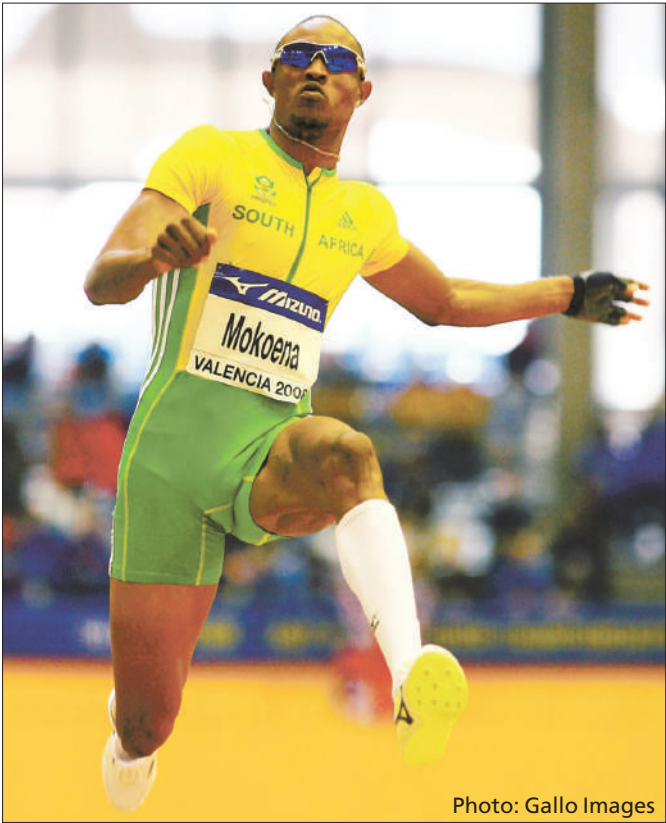


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Lunch spot: Anywhere that serves great chicken

300 Young South Africans | Sport



Photo: Oupa Nkosi

Sello Maduma

Fencer

In his second international event Sello Maduma gave a sterling performance against Seung Gu Kim of South Korea at the Beijing Olympics. Maduma lost 13-14 to Gu Kim who is the world's number one in fencing. But despite all this, his future in the sport is, sadly, bleak. The talented fencer from Mamelodi has missed several international events, which could have helped him grow and possibly win a medal at the Olympics. Maduma doesn't have a sponsor to help him buy the necessary kit and to pay for his international events. He was initially pulled into the sport after a school's exhibition in Mamelodi arranged by Ephraim Mabhena.

— Lucky Sindane

 Lunch spot: Anywhere where good food is served



Photo: Gallo Images

Johan Botha

Cricketer

 Lunch spot: Blue Orange Garden Café, Port Elizabeth

Known as "Stone", Malcolm Klassen gave the performance of his life last month and became the first fighter to stop Cassius Baloyi in the seventh round to regain the IBF junior lightweight title.

He simply outclassed Baloyi who had six belts. The 28-year-old had Baloyi in trouble from the first round and the veteran was saved by the bell. Klassen was a virtual unknown in the boxing world until he challenged and defeated Gairy Saint Clair for IBF world junior-lightweight title in 2006.

He lost his belt in his first defence against unheralded Mzonke Fana.

— Lucky Sindane

 Lunch spot: Anywhere in South Africa



Photo: Gallo Images

Malcom Klassen

Boxer



Photo: Gallo Images

Mzwandile Stick

Rugby player

Sevens rugby has always been the poorer cousin of the 15s. But Boks Sevens captain Mzwandile Stick teamed up with his coach Paul Treu to briefly hog the limelight this year — at least for a moment.

Stick led the South African team to two consecutive championships in Dubai as well as the home series that tipped the scales. Fittingly, the 2007 Sasol Springbok Player of the Year scored the winning try in the 12-7 victory over a tough All Blacks. The Stick-inspired Boks announced their dramatic ascendancy to the top by also upstaging other traditional Sevens powerhouses such as Samoa and Fiji.

— Phathisani Moyo

 Lunch spot: Spur Steak Ranch, Stellenbosch



Photo: Gallo Images

Rik de Voest

Tennis player

Rik De Voest is the top-ranked South African tennis ace and has just led the Davis Cup to a resounding 5-0 whitewash of Belarus. South Africa's victory has qualified the team for a place to compete in the world group playoffs for a return to the top rung of men's team tennis.

This would end South Africa's 11-year wait to join the elite playing nations. The South African star engineered the 10th successive Davis Cup victory over Belarus. On the individual front, De Voest proved his mettle when he stormed to the final off the inaugural Soweto Open last month although he lost to Italian veteran Fabrice Santoro.

— Phathisani Moyo

 Lunch spot: Primi Piatti, anywhere



Photo: Gallo Images

The South African Rugby Annual 2009 writes: “Given that he probably scores one every three games, everyone should have their favourite Jean de Villiers intercept try by now”.

The Stormers captain and Springbok outside centre’s forays for both club and country saw Jean de Villiers named the 2008 Absa Player of the Year. His ability to read the game placed him as a favourite for the title ahead of other exceptional talents such as Beast Mtawarira, Bismarck du Plessis, Adrian Jacobs and Ryan Kankowski. The fact that he was also voted the Players’ Player of the Year confirms that the decision was unanimous in the rugby fraternity. — Phathisani Moyo

 **Lunch spot: Lemon Butta, Willowbridge, Belville**

Jean de Villiers

Rugby player

In only his third game for the Springboks, the Free State Cheetahs wing Jongikhaya “Jongi” Nokwe ripped apart the Australian rugby team’s back line last year. He became the first Springbok player to score four tries against the Wallabies in a Test match, which lead to a 53–8 victory at Ellis Park in Johannesburg.

The Wallabies must have breathed a sigh of relief when Nokwe was forced off the field by a leg injury, which he suffered when scoring his last try. The injury kept him out of the game for almost four months. — Lucky Sindane

 **Lunch spot: Nando’s, anywhere**



Photo: Gallo Images

Jongikhaya Nokwe

Rugby player



Photo: Gallo Images

Natalie du Toit

Swimmer

Natalie du Toit led the South African Olympic and Paralympics teams in Beijing. And she restored some national pride after dismal performances by South Africans.

The swimming sensation was the star of the games after she won five gold medals in all five events she entered: the 100m butterfly, 200m individual medley, 50m freestyle, 100m freestyle and 400m freestyle. She was named the female winner of the Whang Youn Dai Achievement Award for the 2008 games. — Lucky Sindane

 **Lunch spot: Fournos, Woodmead, Johannesburg**

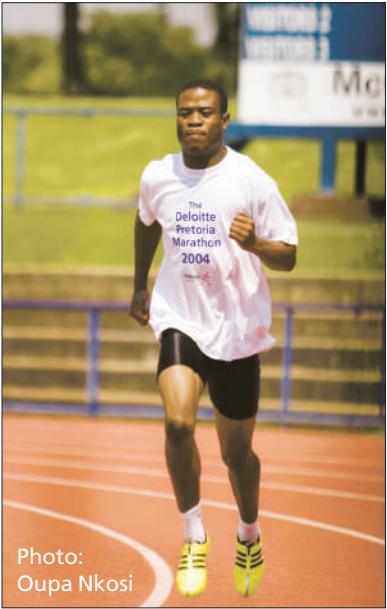


Photo: Oupa Nkosi

Simon Magakwe

Sprinter

He has been called the accidental athlete. An injury while playing social football forced him to turn to the track. The poor boy from Carletonville arrived in Stellenbosch for the South African Championships with his makeshift kit in a Shoprite-Checkers bag, including a pair of hand-me-down spikes.

But the little known sprinter literally hit the big time when he clocked 10.21s — an International Association of Athletics Federations “A”-standard qualifying time — to win the 100m and become South Africa’s fastest man. Today, Magakwe is preparing to catch his first flight. He will be the country’s medal hopeful at the World Championships in Germany later this year. — Phathisani Moyo

 **Lunch spot: McDonald’s, anywhere**

Sharing a name with a legend is no easy feat. But Imraan Khan has not disgraced the Pakistani cricket hero since the chance meeting when he was just 10-years-old.

“I remember being asked to present him with a gift when he visited our school because I happened to share the name with him,” Khan told the Mail & Guardian recently.

Still, the South African opening batsman never imagined being the next Imraan Khan. He became the second South African of Indian decent, after Hashim Amla, to make the Test squad. In the 2008–09 season, the 25-year-old amassed over 800 runs, knocking five centuries to leave him one short of bettering the record for the most 100s in a season held by Barry Richards, Mike Procter and Peter Kirsten. But to have equalled it is a remarkable achievement in itself. — Phathisani Moyo

 **Lunch spot: Spur Steak Ranch, anywhere**



Photo: Gallo Images

Imraan Khan

Cricketer

300 Young South Africans | Sport



Photo: Oupa Nkosi

Lebo and Lebogang Phalula

Middle distance runners

It is not easy to conduct an interview with the Phalula twins. They are exact replicas of each other. They look alike, often dress in matching outfits, run the same way, wear the same hairstyle, share the same likes and dislikes and often think the same way. When asked a question they respond in unison, as though they are singing. Although the twins, who run barefoot, missed out on the 2008 Beijing Olympics, they are regarded as the country's top two women middle-distance runners. They have been winning most of the country's 800m and 1 500m races since 1999, finishing first and second on many occasions. The fastest of the two is Lebogang. She is ranked first in both the 800m and 1 500m in the country with Lebo ranked second and fourth in the 800m and 1 500m respectively. — *Lucky Sindane*

 **Lunch spot: McDonald's, anywhere**



Photo: Gallo Images

Refiloe Mochaka

Netball player

Refiloe Mochaka, know as Nnana by her teammates, always has something to say. And maybe that's the reason why she was given an award for good sportsmanship against Malawi in 2007. At the age of 22 Mochaka, the attacking centre, is already making waves in netball circles with her impressive performances. Mochaka is shorter than many netball players, but can perform

wonders when given the chance. She made her international debut against England in 2006. She still has a long way to go, but if her talent is nurtured she could become the country's best centre attack. — *Lucky Sindane*

 **Lunch spot: Spur Steak Ranch, anywhere**

Boy Soke's hopes of conquering the London 2012 Olympics are well on track. The middle-distance runner from the Free State is the national champion of the 5 000m, 10km and 12km cross-country races. Experts in running circles say athletes have to start with short distances to prepare themselves to be good marathon runners. South Africa's Hendrick Ramaala, winner of the 2004 New York City marathon and one of the top marathon runners in the world, best illustrates this. He was a short-distance runner before switching to marathon running. Soke has already cracked it as a half-marathon runner. He came eighth at the last Two Oceans marathon and second in Stellenbosch. He will now shift his focus to the marathon. — *Lucky Sindane*

 **Lunch spot: Spur Steak Ranch, anywhere**



Boy Soke

South African 10km champion



Sifiso "Skizo" Nhlapo

BMX cyclist

Sifiso Nhlapo booked his spot to the Olympics when he finished third in the elite men's race at the 2008 BMX World Championships in Taiyuan, China. He had prepared well for the games and was set to claim his first Olympic medal. But it was not meant to be. Nhlapo crashed at the Olympic Games BMX final, dashing the 22-year-old's hopes of winning a medal. He was very emotional and distraught after the race, which took him four years to prepare for. But he did the country proud with his brave performance. Nhlapo has won the National Championships (five times), World Junior Championships in 2005 and also finished in the top 16 during the Elite Men Cruiser World Championships in 2007. Watch out for him in London 2012. — *Lucky Sindane*

 **Lunch spot: Boston Barbeque, Montecasino, Johannesburg**

The Blue Bulls skipper is arguably the best line-out jumper in the world. He has been an integral cog of the Springboks team from the time he made his debut in 2001. Victor Matfield formed the mainstay of Jake White's World Cup winning team of 2007. He was also one of the five short-listed candidates for the International Rugby Union Player of the Year after another great season in 2005. Matfield is a respected leader and has captained the national team in the absence of John Smit. He led the Bulls to a memorable Super14-title in 2007 and his return from a year in France ensured the Pretoria-based side lifted the Super14 crown again this season. — *Phathisani Moyo*

 **Lunch spot: Crawdaddy's, Menlyn, Pretoria**



Photo: Gallo Images

Victor Matfield

Rugby player

At the age of 22, Itumeleng Khune is arguably the best goalkeeper in the country, who is often let down by his defenders. Khune always puts up a great fight when he dons the number one jersey.

In his first Premier Soccer League season last year Khune played a big role in the Kaiser Chiefs' defensive prowess and his contribution was recognised when he was named the players' player of the season, goalkeeper of the season, 2007-8 Telkom Knockout player of the tournament and goalkeeper of the tournament. He has since shown remarkable maturity and with his talent, confidence and courage Khune certainly has a great future ahead of him. — Lucky Sindane

 **Lunch spot: Spur Steak Ranch, anywhere**



Photo: Gallo Images

Itumeleng Khune

Football player



Photo: Gallo Images

Tsakane Mbewe

Netball player

Netball is not a professional sport and players rely on match allowances, which makes it difficult for them to make ends meet. As a result talented players quit the game and look for permanent employment. But because of Tsakane Mbewe's passion for the game, the thought of quitting has never crossed her mind. Instead she focuses on keeping her shooting average between 85% and 90%. Mbewe, who is 1.79m tall, is undoubtedly the country's best goal shooter at the moment. She was recently named the best shooter in a series against the Barbados in Cape Town. — Lucky Sindane

 **Lunch spot: Steak Spur Ranch, anywhere**

Ironically this rugby star was named after Manchester football greats Bryan Robson and Gary Bailey. Bryan Gary Habana abandoned his love for football after he witnessed the Springboks win the 1995 rugby World Cup. Since then his love for the oval ball has grown to be complemented with some fine moments in both national team colours and for his beloved club, the Blue Bulls. The Boks' wing scored eight tries in 2007 to equal the record set by All Blacks' Jonah Lomu in 1999 for most tries in one World Cup. He was subsequently named the International Rugby Board's 2007 player of the year. Habana is known for his great speed and is arguably the best finisher in the world. — Phathisani Moyo

 **Lunch spot: Pachas, Hazelwood, Pretoria**

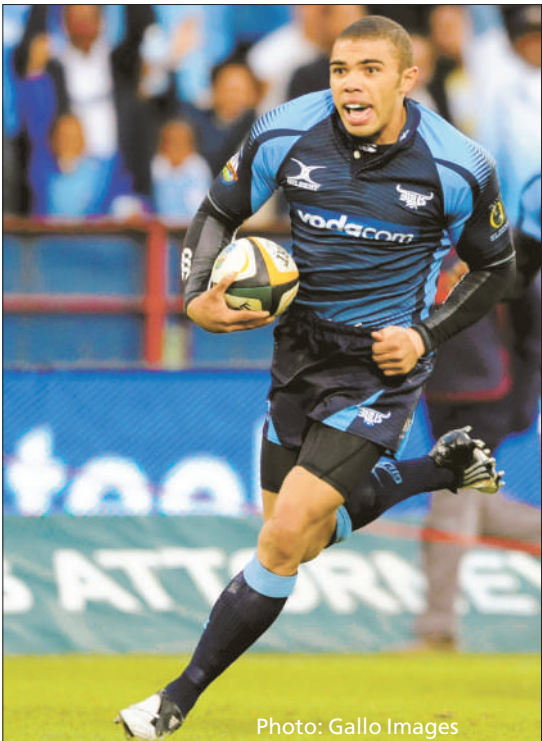


Photo: Gallo Images

Bryan Gary Habana

Athlete



Photo: Getty Images

Thabang Moeketsane

Swimmer

He left it to the last qualifying event in Durban and unfortunately flu cost him a spot at the Beijing Olympics. Thabang Moeketsane, 21, who had been training for the Beijing Olympics since 2003 will now set his sights on the 2012 London Olympics. Moeketsane specialises in 100m, 200m breaststroke and 4x100m medley relay.

He made a name for himself when he came second during the 2004 Commonwealth games in the 100m and 200m breaststroke. He

won a silver medal in the 2005 short course competition in the 100m and 200m breaststroke, a bronze medal in the 100m event and a gold medal in the 4x100m medley relay. He could become South Africa's first black swimmer at the Olympics. — Lucky Sindane

 **Lunch spot: Anywhere where good food is served**



Photo: Gallo Images

Graeme Smith

Cricketer

Captain Courageous! In January this year Graeme Smith received a standing ovation in Australia, a place he was vilified in 2005-6, for batting with a broken hand in an attempt to save the Third Test. It was one of those selfless acts that will be forever remembered in the sport.

The Proteas skipper also marshalled the Proteas to a top finish in the International Cricket Council One Day Internationals for the 2008-9 season. South Africa also came within a whisker of wresting the number one Test status from Australia under the captaincy of the fluid Smith. In a dream season the Proteas defeated India, walloped England and handed the Aussies their first loss at home in 16 years. — Phathisani Moyo

 **Lunch spot: Caveau Wine Bar and Deli, Newlands, Cape Town**

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Photo: Oupankosi

Zodwa Maphanga

Table tennis player

Few athletes get to be mentored by Haile Gebrselassie. Zodwa Maphanga is part of the privileged G4S 4teen programme that boasts the services of the Ethiopian world record holder as its ambassador. Recognised by the South African Table Tennis Board as a player with immense potential, Maphanga has been playing table tennis since she was 12 years old. Gebrselassie’s task is to help Maphanga and her international group of promising young athletes qualify for the 2012 Olympic Games in London. The 18-year-old Africa under-21 doubles silver medalist participated in the African Seniors Cup in Congo Brazzaville, Commonwealth Youth Games and the ninth All Africa Games and took the bronze medal in both the doubles and mixed doubles at the South African senior championships last year.

In her spare time, the talented ping-pong ball player hosts training sessions for orphaned children from SOS Children’s Village in Mamelodi. — Phathisani Moyo

 Lunch spot: Capellos, Hatfield



Photo: Gallo Images

Tandi Cuningham

Golfer

South African golfers have left an indelible mark on the professional mens’ circuits around the world. Tandi Cuningham seems to be on a mission to prove that what men can do, women can do — maybe even better.

The 22-year-old became an instant star of the game when she beat a classy field to win the South African Open at Parkview Golf Club early this year. Cuningham tore into the Parkview greens with the


dominance of a seasoned player when she took an eight-stroke lead into the third and final round.

Yet, her victory in the SA Open was her first in only her third appearance as a professional. She has now set her sights on Europe where she hopes to have the same impact. — Phathisani Moyo

 Lunch spot: Moyo, Zoo Lake, Johannesburg

At 19 years old, Wayne Parnell is the youngest player to be awarded a Cricket South Africa contract and there is enough justification for the confidence in the left arm swing pace bowler. He captained the South African U19 team to the finals of the ICC U19 World Cup, took 4-25 in his one day international, which was against none other than the mighty Aussies. And he holds the bat quite well down the lower order too.

Many will remember that the last Under 19 captain, Graeme Smith, went on to lead the national side. The all-rounder is a definite Proteas asset for years to come not only as a player but a future leader on the field. — Phathisani Moyo

 Lunch spot: Casa Bianca, Kings Beach, Port Elizabeth



Wayne Parnell

Cricketer



Ryk Neethling

Swimmer

Ryk Neethling is one of South Africa’s most successful swimmers. He holds the South African record in five different events and ranks in the top 10 in the world in the 50m, 100m, 200m freestyle and individual medleys. Neethling won a gold medal in the 4x100 freestyle relay at the 2004 Athens Olympics and he’s also the first South African to compete in four successive Olympic games.

Neethling will mostly be remembered for turning down the multimillion-dollar offer to swim for the Qatar in 2005. But the biggest disappointment of his career came last year at the Beijing Olympics when he crashed out of the first round of the 100m freestyle after finishing last in his heat. — Lucky Sindane

 Lunch spot: Home sweet home



Sibusiso Zuma

Footballer

You will not have to worry about the bill if you can land a lunch date with Mamelodi Sundowns star, Sibusiso Zuma. The former Bafana Bafana striker is the highest paid player in the South African Premier Soccer League.

The player is reportedly on a cool R200 000 monthly salary. You may ask why so much? Well, a glimpse of his CV will tell you that this could be a bargain price for a player good enough to be placed 29th in the Fifa World player of

the Year award in 2001. German Bundesliga club Arminia Bielefeld had to fork out €1-million for the player known as “Zuma the Puma” to the South African fans. Naturally, the Brazilians had to break the bank to lure him away from Europe. — Phathisani Moyo

 Lunch spot: Anywhere in South Africa

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Lauren Beukes

Ebook author

Indie publisher Electric Book Works promises that if you've never wanted to read a book on screen before, the ebook version of Lauren Beukes' novel *Moxyland* will change your mind. It's got scalable pages for easy reading, embedded music controllers, suggested tracks and electronic bookmarks. Not to mention the toy available on Moxyland.com. But if that's not enough to get you e-reading, you should know that *Moxyland* garnered acclaim from none other than Andre Brink and is set to be published internationally by Angry Robot/ HarperCollins. Beukes' previous book, *Maverick: Extraordinary Women from South Africa's Past* was nominated for the Sunday Times Alan Paton Award. Beukes also writes animated TV shows, short stories and columns. Her work with animation studio Clockwork Zoo has brought new shows to South African TV, particularly *Urbo: The Adventures of Pax Africa*, which has had a profound effect on South African animation. — Eamon Allan

 Lunch spot: Boo Radley's, Cape Town

Often seen on SABC's *3talk* and as an occasional guest on *Special Assignment* Ramon Thomas is best described as a researcher with an uncanny knack for spotting global trends and translating them into meaningful insights in South Africa.

Thomas focuses his time and energy researching the psychological and emotional impact of technology on people's lives. He believes it a complete misnomer that technology makes lives easier and that the pervasive nature of new products on to the market adds several complexities that creates social anomalies.

The largest impact he promotes is the strong link between a person's increased dependence on technology and their subsequent desensitisation when it comes to human interaction. Thomas believes that there is a fine line between being alienated or liberated by technology. He's no technophobe but does advocate strongly for moderation. — Jane Steinacker

 Lunch spot: Moyo, Zoo Lake, Johannesburg



Ramon Thomas

Online behaviour expert



Rob Stoke

Chief executive, Quirk eMarketing

Tired of being a pizza delivery guy and a waiter, Rob Stoke wanted to make some extra cash to fund his wild student ways. Ten years down the line, the business he created to earn extra money, Quirk eMarketing, is a complete online marketing consultancy that offers everything from e-mail and viral marketing to search engine optimisation. In those early years Stoke would probably have made more money waiting tables and delivering pizza, but now is reaping the benefits of his years of hard slog. Stoke's business started small and with its focus on simply "doing a good job", which he believes is a trait often overlooked by businesses such as Telkom. He started with servicing small tourism businesses, and soon he was ready to approach SA Tourism, an account he won. Now his professional portfolio includes BMW, FNB, Sun International and none other than the search engine market leader, Google. — Jane Steinacker

 Lunch spot: Beluga, Cape Town



Shana Kassiem

Chief executive Maxxor Software

From the time Shana Kassiem started helping out at her uncle's technology company in high school, she was hooked. It marked the beginning of her lifelong love affair with technology. Kassiem has worked a range of jobs in this space including web design and development, programming and project management. Her most recent position as chief executive of Maxxor software — a software services company based in Cape Town — is testament to how, when this 31-year-old sets her mind on something, she will not give up until she succeeds. A self-confessed "techno-chick" she can be tracked at any time on one of her three blogs or other social networking sites such as Twitter, Plaxo and LinkedIn. — Jane Steinacker

 Lunch spot: Willoughby & Co. V&A Waterfront, Cape Town



Eric Edelstein

Creator, Springleap.com

Even T-shirts are getting democratic. Every week, T-shirt designs go head-to-head and are voted for by the public on the Springleap.com website. Started up by Eric Edelstein, Springleap was created to provide a platform for young designers to gain exposure and credibility for their work. The winning design earns its creator a R7 000 prize — half in cash, the other in T-shirts. But if you are looking for the boring T-shirts churned out by mall shops, don't bother logging on. All these looks are seriously original. Edelstein is a serial entrepreneur who has headed up many successful businesses. Incubator, a former venture, was bought by Mark Shuttleworth's investment company. Springleap.com employs 10 bright young minds that Edelstein has been mentoring. — Eamon Allan

 Lunch spot: Any of the awesome spots in Woodstock less than four minutes walk from my office

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Photo: Delwyn Versamy

Vincent Hoffman

Digital research analyst, Submarine

Vincent Hoffman has a half-completed master's degree in sociology from the University of KwaZulu-Natal sitting on his desk and a year of full-time drinking and part-time studying in Grahamstown behind him. But it's his obsession with the development of local music that has led to his success. His genre: heavy metal.

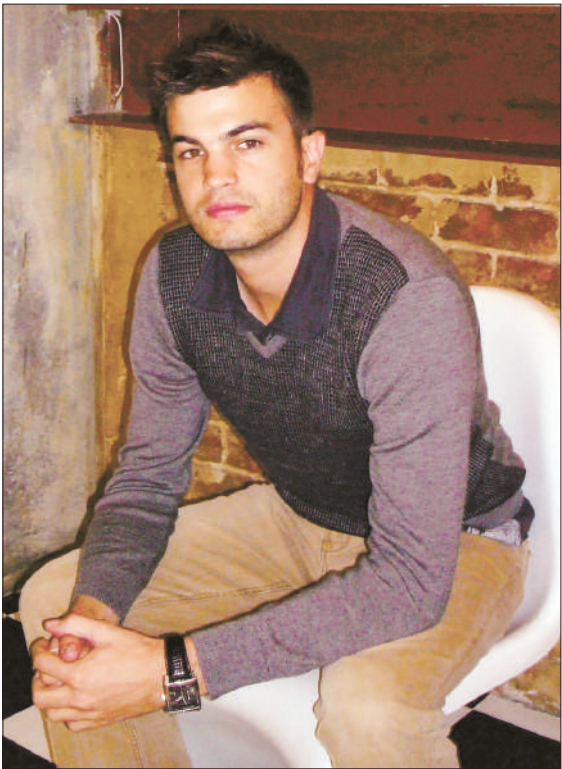
As a researcher at a qualitative research company, Submarine, Hoffman has made his mark by creating online research communities.

For Submarine's biggest client, cellphone giant MTN, Hoffman has been a running online research groups focusing on

his true love. The results have been overwhelming. Hoffmans' communities have given MTN a direct link to its consumers who are responding with suggestions on how MTN can credibly work with local musicians.

A self-described über-nerd, it's not unusual to have Hoffman at his desk at 7am on a Monday morning at his offices in the old banking district in Joburg's CBD.— Jane Steinacker

 Lunch spot: Sugo, Parktown North, Johannesburg



Charl Norman

Head of operations and technology, Blueworld Communities

To be described as a visionary, a marketing genius and a Web 2.0 guru at 24 is quite impressive, but then Charl Norman did start young. He launched his first website while still in high school.

Now, at 24, he heads Blueworld Communities (BWCOM) and has nine years experience in online publishing. BWCOM, which Charl co-founded, was acquired by Media24 in 2008. It owns leading social networks in South Africa such as Zoopedup.com and Blueworld.co.za.

Norman was a runner-up for the ICT Young Entrepreneur of Africa

2008 and nominated for the Top 30 entrepreneurs under 30 in South Africa. He is also a guest lecturer at the University of Cape Town's Graduate School of Business. He's an avid blogger and a public speaker on internet strategy.— Qudsiya Karrim

 Lunch spot: Royale, Long street, Cape Town



Nic Haralambous

Project manager, social media, Vodacom

Armed with a BComm from the University of Cape Town and an honours degree in e-commerce from the University of South Africa, Vinny Lingham set out to conquer the world. And for the most part he has succeeded.

When it comes to internet marketing, internet strategy and search engine marketing Lingham is the guy to call. With offices in Cape Town, Johannesburg, London and Los Angeles for his recent venture Yola (formerly known as Synthasite) he's making waves as never seen before. His passion for entrepreneurship and growing business has left him with no less than eight top awards under his belt including the CJ Horizon Award for innovation 2004, Horizon award for global vision 2006, Top ICT Young Entrepreneur in Africa 2006 and the Business Day's Technology Top 100 winner for most promising emerging enterprise 2005. — Jane Steinacker

 Lunch spot: Bukhara, Cape Town



Vinny Lingham

Chief executive, Yola

From the get go, it's obvious that Nic Haralambous is deeply in love with multimedia. The 24-year old attributes his preference for online over print media to his view of the internet as the more "democratic communication" medium.

Proactive is probably the best word to describe him. "Don't bitch and moan, give solutions," he says. It appears to be his mantra.

After hearing a speech by Bob Geldof on television in 2005, he booked a ticket to Edinburgh for the next day, where he rocked up with his film camera to photograph the G8 summit and he was beaten by riot police.

Haralambous has written and shot for the Sunday Times, designed websites for Financial Mail and managed blogspots for the Mail & Guardian. He also started up the website SA Rocks and recently moved from general manager of the social media website, Zoopy, to Vodacom.— Ilham Rawoot

 Lunch spot: Plaka, Illovo, Johannesburg



Saul Kropman

Host, The Digital Edge

Saul Kropman's only formal employment was as an intern at L'Oreal for two months launching a shampoo, which, he says is the hardest thing he has ever done. Kropman believes that digital marketing is in and traditional marketers need to see the light.

His weekly podcast The Digital Edge (www.thedigitaledge.co.za) promotes just that. The show airs all topics relating to the digital age from the marketing of political parties to mobile marketing. Kropman is also the mastermind behind www.firststep.co.za a youth portal that helps the youth ask questions and gets the people in the know to answer them. Addicted to writing and blogging whenever and wherever possible, this 24-year-old is determined to make his mark. He's already secured considerable airtime in mainstream media including 5fm, Classicfm, SABC3's Lunchbox and Morning Live. — Jane Steinacker

 Lunch spot: Hokkaido, Norwood, Johannesburg

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Rudolph Muller

Founder, MyBroadband

Rudolph Muller has always had an interest in all things related to the internet, but it was not until the advent of broadband in South Africa that he decided to make a career of it. In 2003, he changed careers from mathematics and physics education to information technology. That was when he started MyADSL, now known as MyBroadband, with the aim of bringing broadband users together, allowing them to air their views. After a two-year stint as an IT lecturer at the University of Johannesburg, Muller moved to run MyBroadband full time. MyBroadband has become the largest IT website in South Africa and hosts an annual conference attracting delegates from around the country. But he is pleased that companies are now actively engaging with consumers on MyBroadband out of choice. — Lloyd Gedye

 Lunch spot: The Butcher Shop, Sandton, Johannesburg



David and Mark Perel

Podcast hosts

A few months ago, brothers Marc and David Patel had an epiphany. The web designing bloggers decided they wanted more than mere printed words — they wanted their own TV show. So they launched their very own video podcast *From the Couch*, which covers everything under the web. Viewers can watch interviews, site reviews and tutorials in a sort of high tech *Wayne's World* with a totally unscripted format that keeps the show natural and funny. But providing the world with insider tech secrets isn't their altruistic mission. Nope, these savvy

twenty-somethings are building their own brand, a larger-than-life reputation and are getting exposure around their design and programming skills. After finishing school the brothers started working for their programmer dad, so they were on good footing for their future business undertaking — Obox, a web design company they started while still in their teens. Initially, they used their small business cash as a sideline to fund their interests in motorsport and cycling. Now they are so busy, they struggle to find time for anything else.

The brothers say they just wanted to be themselves and get their message across with their podcast. Their plan seems to be working. They were nominated for three awards at the recent South African Blog Awards and ended up taking home the award for Best New Blog. Next up: best new Web TV show. And they did all this right from their couch. — Eamon Allan

 Lunch spot: Summerville, Camp's Bay, Cape Town

Providing the world with insider tech secrets isn't their altruistic mission



Jason Bagley

Web entrepreneur

Jason Bagley met his former business partner on Twitter. This may sound odd but it is totally in character for this Generation Y entrepreneur, who professes a dislike of "old-school corporates". Bagley has little formal education and learned most of his developers' skills on the job. "I didn't want to wait three to four years studying before I could start working," he says. So far, it's been a good strategy. He's worked for Trustco Goup International, Travelagic and Yunique. Earlier this year, Bagley's popular, but unofficial My Coke Fest blog, which featured advertising and made use of Coke trademarks, came under fire from Coke. Under threat of legal action, Bagley sanitised and relocated the blog, but retained a loyal community base. He says the incident shows a lack of understanding about how social media works. Bagley recently set up his own media company, Beanbag Media, and also consults to World Wide Creative. He runs the Incredible Connection blog. — Faranaaz Parker

 Lunch spot: Wine, Women and Sushi, Somerset West, Cape Town



Matthew Buckland

Founder, 20FourLabs

No stranger to the world of technology, Matthew Buckland starting programming at the tender age of seven. He also got involved in online media pretty much since its inception in South Africa. Buckland has spoken and guest-lectured on online media issues around the world. Eight months ago, Buckland founded and now heads 20FourLabs (www.20fourlabs.com), an innovation division at 24.com, the country's largest online operation. He was the head of *Mail & Guardian* Online, is a former chair of the local Online Publishers Association and a director of Creative Commons, South Africa. He also co-founded 2008 Webby Honoree Thought Leader and blog aggregator amatomu.com. — Jane Steinacker

 Lunch spot: Beluga, Cape Town



Arthur Attwell

Managing director, Electric Book Works

Technophobes, prepare for assimilation. Arthur Attwell is the managing director of Electric Book Works, a maverick independent publishing house based in Cape Town. Selected by the British Council as South Africa's 2009 Young Publishing Entrepreneur of the Year and runner up in the British Council International Award, Attwell is driving e-book development in South Africa. Part of his offering is professional publishing to new authors through Mousehand and the development of educational titles. He recently made e-book history, launching an electronic version of Lauren Beukes' novel, *Moxyland*, which includes an embedded soundtrack. — Eamon Allan

 Lunch spot: Queen of Tarts, Observatory, Cape Town

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Mike Stopforth

Social media entrepreneur

Mike Stopforth has never been a geek. He can't code to save his life. Yet he's one of the country's top social media evangelists. Once an "average Google-user", Stopforth worked a range of odd jobs before discovering a passion for social media. He has a knack for taking the "geek speak" out of social media and helping companies understand the value of social media for business. "Social media is not about blogs or Facebook or Twitter; it's about how people connect to each other," Stopforth says. Three years ago, he founded Cerebra, a social-media startup, that now boasts clients such as

Converse, Toyota and Standard Bank. In 2007, he co-founded Afrigator.com, a social media aggregator that won international attention and was later sold to MIH Print Africa. Stopforth has lectured at marketing and business schools and is a popular speaker at business-to-business events. He also instigated 27dinner, a multi-city networking platform for professionals looking to leverage the internet for business. — Faranaaz Parker

 **Lunch spot: The Grillhouse, Sandton, Johannesburg**



Adriaan (Adii) Penaar

Co-founder, Woothemes.com

Until about 16 months ago, Adii Penaar from Cape Town was loosely collaborating on a project with Magnus Jepson from Norway and Mark Forrester in the United Kingdom. It was then that they decided to formalise their business into what is now known as Woothemes.com. Woothemes.com offers registered users some of the most cutting-edge WordPress (open source blog application templates) templates, packed full of features, presented beautifully with clean layouts, slick colour palettes and neat typography. And since July last

year the trio have attracted more than 7 000 registered users for their online website templates. The three partners finally met in person for the first time in May this year. Penaar has an honours degree in business strategy from Stellenbosch University. — Jane Steinacker

 **Lunch spot: Café Magnifico, Willowbridge**



Justin Drennan

Managing director, WantItAll.co.za

A self-proclaimed IT geek who's been obsessed with computers since he was 10, Justin Drennan now heads South Africa's biggest online shopping store. WantItAll.co.za was founded in 1996 by Drennan, his brother and a friend with a mission of making overseas products readily available to South African customers. The idea has paid off. Spectacularly. Now WantItAll has become

internationally renowned for its e-commerce services. The store provides over 14-million products to customers, including imported goods through an associate agreement with Amazon.com. It has branched out to Brazil and Nigeria, importing everything from toothpicks to R150 000 camera lenses. Ever since Amazon stopped shipping goods to South Africa because of problems with the South African Post Office, WantItAll has become the main stop for local customers wanting to buy hard-to-find items. The store delivers products countrywide through a courier service directly to a customer's doorstep. — Qudsiya Karim

 **Lunch spot: Any place that serves good Indian food**

'Hi, my name is Heidi Schneiganz and I'm a twitterholic. Just call me Snowgoose. I'm on a mission to convert ordinary people into geeks ... Welcome to my blog." Although Heidi admits she only started her blog last year because "I was unsure" she now appreciates the space it offers to express oneself and thinks everyone should have one. The former digital designer for Standard Bank, Schneiganz is now working as a marketing producer for the leading full-service digital agency, Quirk eMarketing. With a diploma in graphic design and a certificate in marketing management, she also added a Cape Wine diploma in wine and wine-making to her list of qualifications which, she says, "really helped a lot more than I thought it would." — Karabo Keepile

 **Lunch spot: Browns, Rivonia, Johannesburg**



Heidi Schneiganz

Marketing producer, Quirk eMarketing



Photo: Independent Newspapers

Anthony Pascoe, Steve Porter and Tom Eaton

Founders, Hayibo.com

Who can forget their memorable headlines "Gautrain construction devastating Gauteng Gummi Bear Communities", "Bitter and disillusioned Liewe Heksie packing for Perth" or "Zille to send army after taxis, then hairstylist and dance instructor"? Anthony Pascoe lived in London for three years, where he worked for a content syndication company and returned to South Africa in 2005 to co-found Sunday Media with Steve Porter, which syndicated global sports news. In January 2008, they partnered with Tom Eaton, a former columnist for the Mail & Guardian, to start Hayibo.com: "South Africa's second best source of satirical news after the SABC", which became an instant online hit. With about 20 writers on the website churning out hysterical news coverage every day, the readership of Hayibo has a growth of almost 40% a month and was viewed by 75 000 unique users last month alone. — Eamon Allan

 **Lunch spot: Arnold's, Cape Town**

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