



200 YOUNG SOUTH AFRICANS ●

This year marks eleven years of the Mail & Guardian’s annual edition of *Young South Africans*, featuring 200 notable South Africans under the age of 35. The edition has in many ways taken on a life of its own, becoming one of our best known projects. We love the fact that we get to introduce a new crop of talent to our readers — and to South Africa — every year.

We have also been gratified at how the list has grown in prestige. Our alumni proudly list their inclusion on their LinkedIn profiles, Twitter bios and CVs. As it is an honour to be included, so is it an honour to oversee this year’s edition as a young editor myself. Before I joined the M&G in 2009 I used to eagerly pore over previous editions, noting those who had made the list with a little awe and a lot of admiration.

Working at the M&G and seeing how the process was run has provided incredible insight into the sheer volume of talent our young people have to offer.

Every year we are inundated with entries across our ten main categories, adding an eleventh last year, Rising Stars, for those still at school. We received a good balance of entries and went through a rigorous process of selecting those who appear. At some point we adopted a policy of not repeating those who have made the list before. This makes our jobs tougher but it ensures that we are uncovering new, exciting talent event year.

The fact that we can so easily keep finding additional faces every year is indicative of the quality of people we have in this country.

Previously the list has been a pretty good harbinger of people who were going to become even bigger trailblazers in their respective industries. Alumni include people like Trevor Noah (2010), Julius Malema (2009, 2010), Lauren Beukes (2009), Michael Jordaan (2008) and Bryan Habana (2007), all of whom were profiled again in our special alumni edition last year, which you can find online.

This year the edition is being run by the M&G’s recently appointed special projects editor, Sipho Hlongwane, himself an alumnus. He has freshened up the edition and brought innovative ideas and energy to the attendant event, which promises to be a great party and celebration of the 200 young South Africans who have made the list this year.

You can find this year’s edition, along with the previous ten online at 200YSA.mg.co.za.

South Africa in many ways finds itself at a crossroads, politically, economically and in multiple other ways. Now is the time when we need fresh ideas, talent and energy to move us forward as a country. We are confident that we have found some of that talent and profiled it here for you this Youth Month.

Verashni Pillay
Editor-in-chief, The Mail & Guardian



PHOTO: MADELEINE CRONJÉ

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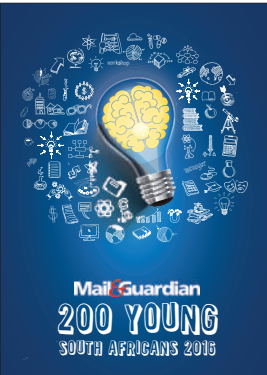
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City of Johannesburg pages: Writer Rebecca Haynes
Photographs City of Johannesburg

How we choose the M&G 200 Young South Africans

Every year in January we open up nominations for Young South Africans online on mg.co.za. This year we received over 1000 nominations for the publication. Once nominations close we go through the list, eliminating duplicates and shortlisting potential candidates. The shortlists are vetted by the M&G’s section heads and we select candidates for each category. Our team of writers then contact the selected candidates and we write profiles based on these interviews. If you know someone who we should profile in 2017, be sure to nominate him or her when entries open in January next year.



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200 YOUNG SOUTH AFRICANS ● CITY OF JOHANNESBURG



The City of Johannesburg's executive mayor, Parks Tau

Principles of 1976 youth anchor Joburg transformation

The year 1976 was a significant period in my life as a six-year-old who had started school a mere five months before the historic student uprising in Soweto.

I was besotted with my first year of school at Tshireletso Lower Primary in Meadowlands that year and have a faint memory of the historic events of 1976. I did not imagine then that I would, eight years later, become involved in student politics that would propel my involvement to today's heights.

Looking back to the dawn of democracy in 1994, Johannesburg has embarked on a journey to change the shape of Africa's most important economy, and subsequently the lives of its residents. This transformation began in Soweto, home to a number of initial interventions that ignited socioeconomic transformation throughout the City of Johannesburg (COJ).

The first and by far the most significant among these interventions was the 1976 Soweto student uprising, which we still commemorate annually. This was followed by a democracy that saw rapid development of the historic township and its surrounds.

The government began to tar roads, a bus rapid transit system was introduced, streets were lined with trees and sidewalks were paved, and shopping malls, state of the art recreational parks with gym facilities and multipurpose centres were built in our communities. Free online education in public libraries is on offer, COJ Free Wi-fi is live, and a remarkable theatre and massive stadium can be found in the township today — and the list goes on.

We have exchanged the stones and the placards of 1976 with the weapons of 2016: knowledge, technology, innovation and education

Today these interventions are being replicated across a number of the City's townships, in addition to basic service delivery of water, electricity and integrated housing in Luthureng, Fleurhof, Cosmo City, Lehae and Kliptown, among others. We are also taking these basic services into selected informal settlements, including electricity supply. It is important to point out that Johannesburg is still a city at work, working hard to undo the spatial injustices of apartheid, a process that will take many more years to complete.

I may have been just a six-year-old boy in 1976, and I can only imagine the smell of teargas that filled the air on that dark day. The news of what transpired on June 16 1976 became a significant part of South Africa's history for future generations to appreciate. The events of that unforgettable day changed the course of our nation in a fundamental way. Today we have June recognised as Youth Month to commemorate the bravery of the youth of 1976, who fearlessly faced the armed apartheid police.

Exactly 40 years later, Johannesburg has adopted the principles of the youth of 1976 to embark on an aggressive journey to bring about sustainable socioeconomic transformation in the city. This transformation began under the leadership of the Mayor of the Greater Johannesburg Metropolitan Council, Councillor Isaac Mogase, and continued by former City of Johannesburg Executive Mayor, Councillor Amos Masondo, before I was elected in 2011.

We are today at a critical juncture as we head towards the local government elections on August 3. The decisions we make as Johannesburg citizens in the coming two months will determine whether we continue to build on the gains made by the 1976 generation and create a promising legacy for future generations, or otherwise. Some of these decisions will also indicate whether we take major steps backwards, towards a past from which we have endeavoured to break away over the past 40 years.

During this Youth Month, we have the opportunity to reflect on the events of 1976 and to recommit ourselves to the type of decisions and actions that can advance the revolution ignited by the youth of 40 years ago.

Johannesburg has always been the hotbed of political

thought and social activism. It was here that human rights activist Mahatma Gandhi formulated the ideas that led to the ultimate independence of India. It was here that our mothers Lilian Ngoyi, Helen Joseph, Sophie de Bruyn and Rahima Moosajee, planned the massive Women's March to the Union Buildings.

It was in Johannesburg where our fathers Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu, Ahmed Kathrada, Andrew Mlangeni and many other legendary comrades initiated the processes that led to the rejuvenation of the ANC.

In Johannesburg, Robert Sobukwe and fellow activists debated political ideas and contested the conventional thinking of their time. In the City's historic township, Soweto, young leaders that included Tsitsi Mashinini, Hector Peterson, Hastings Ndlovu, as well as Murphy Morobe and thousands of fellow students decided to openly defy the brutal system of racial oppression.

Forty years later, we commemorated the 40th anniversary of June 16 at Orlando Stadium with the significant theme of "Youth moving South Africa forward".

Johannesburg remains a youthful city at the forefront of new ideas and innovation, hence the 40th anniversary theme resonates with us.

Our battleground, however, has shifted. We have exchanged the stones and the placards of 1976 with the weapons of 2016: knowledge, technology, innovation and education.

South Africa and large parts of the emerging world are looking to Johannesburg for new thinking on the many challenges that confront urban environments.

As was the case in 1976, the Johannesburg of 2016 believes in the power of ideas that are turned into action and subsequently into a sustainable force for change. We are a City that understands our youth are not the challenge that some perceive them to be, but our greatest asset.

It is for this reason that Johannesburg has introduced interventions that are particularly youth-oriented and designed to improve the quality of learning and skills development that is relevant to the current job market. One such example is the City's ongoing youth programme, Vulindlel'

eJozi, which is designed to break down barriers to various opportunities in further education, entry-level job placement and entrepreneurship skills development. Soon the programme will be introducing an opportunity for matric rewriting through learning centres of the Massive Open Online University (Moov).

The Moov centres are located in the City's public libraries in Alexandra, Orange Farm, the inner city, Westbury and Emndeni, and provides young people with access to the wider world of online knowledge. Moov centres will open in Diepsloot, Ivory Park, Eldorado Park, Cosmo City and Poortjie in the next two months.

Inspired by the events of 1976, Johannesburg is well aware of the need for significant reforms in our spatial, socioeconomic and education design. We have also identified entrepreneurship skills development and job training to empower young people in our current economic environment.

This informs Johannesburg's investment in these areas and together with our partners in the private sector and civil society, we continue to encourage more young people to rise and take up the many opportunities created for them.

It is clear that what was started in Johannesburg in 1976 has certainly grown into a movement that changed South Africa. What is emerging in the Johannesburg of 2016 is certainly flourishing into an undertaking that can also have a long-lasting impact on the City and the people who live in it, particularly our youth.

As my term of office draws to a close, 2016 marks a watershed year in Johannesburg's spatial and economic growth as an inspirational world-class African city. We have a historical opportunity to honour the legacy of the 1976 generation and build on what we have achieved since the democratic transition in 1994.

The power is in the hands of all those who live in Johannesburg to advance the legacy of the 1976 youth and build a City that we all aspire to live in.

Cllr. Parks Tau is the City of Johannesburg's executive mayor



Jozi@Work: Partnering with communities

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200 YOUNG SOUTH AFRICANS ● CITY OF JOHANNESBURG



Prince Harry and Liesel Kirsten, Jozi Digital Ambassadors programme manager

Joburg: Global leader in city-level youth development

A new global economic democracy is rising

The City of Johannesburg has rolled out innovative developmental programmes over the past few years that are changing lives daily, as they filter through to communities, particularly the youth. Pivotal to other programmes is Jozi@Work, a R3-billion co-production initiative championed by Johannesburg Executive Mayor, Councillor Parks Tau.

His vision is to see community-based enterprises partner with the city to boost delivery of municipal services to address poverty, unemployment and inequality.

Since 2014, the city's entities and departments began setting aside a percentage of their annual budgets for work packages to be contracted under Jozi@Work, to afford ordinary residents the opportunity to provide the metro with a range of municipal services. This work was traditionally done by large, established companies.

More than 5 000 small township businesses and co-operatives are registered with the programme, providing services such as grass cutting and landscaping, gardening, cleaning and refuse removal. Asset maintenance and repairs, development of information and communication technology and infrastructure development are also work packages included under Jozi@Work. Joburg Water recently announced a three-year R833 000 work package involving the repair of pavements and kerbs damaged by contractors doing water repairs.

Financial commitment for some of the city's programmes has come from both the public and private sectors. Noteworthy is the redesigning of the city through the spatial redesign programme Corridors of Freedom, recognised as a leading innovation by the United Nations, whose global Environment Facility has committed an initial R100-million to expand its rollout.

Continent-leading corporates

"We have rolled out the most ambitious youth empowerment programme in the country, Vulindlel'eJozi, which has seen us partner with over 250 companies, to break



down barriers to jobs in both large and small organisations, further education and entrepreneurial skills development," says Tau. "These efforts have since been recognised by the Citi Foundation and the Economist Intelligence Unit as being among 35 global cities with the most efficient youth empowerment strategies.

"We have aggressively enabled small businesses in general and township economies in particular, and will soon be adding our new JoziBread bakeries and township micro-mechanics as the newest community enterprises empowered by the city's socioeconomic transformation programme Jozi@Work.

"Links are being built between this new township economy and our continent-leading corporate sector. The Global Financial Centres Index this year found that Johannesburg is the most economically powerful city in Africa."

Tau says R14-billion worth of investment has flowed into the inner city through the Urban Development Zone tax incentive, enabling the development of, among other projects, the Maboneng Precinct and the new, smart, Braamfontein Precinct. "We are complementing this with a better street trading management system for the inner city — a trading sector where three of the central business district streets alone turn over in excess of R10-billion a year."

Plans are now afoot for developing micro-malls, which are

expected to bring about vital change to promote a culture of entrepreneurship.

Smart City programmes

"We have installed our own high-capacity fibre network, which we are now deploying as an asset to develop and democratise the economy of this city, bridging the digital divide and opening up opportunities to the youth through the Jozi Digital Ambassador programme. It is in this programme that digital entrepreneurs are thriving.

"We have further pushed ourselves to become the largest per capita infrastructure spender in government, after national government itself. We are the city least dependent on national government grants, and the highest spender — proportionately — on social housing, community facilities and equipment to enable frontline services.

"Building on our record, this sphere of government intends to accelerate developmental programmes as we build a city that is liveable, sustainable and resilient. Johannesburg is committed to building an inclusive, job-intensive, resilient and competitive economy that harnesses the potential of its citizens," says Tau.

"Joburg's new economic democracy is rising because local government and the private sector are partnering with the youth of this city, in an economy which is double the size it was in the first year of our political democracy."

Tau says that despite the massive increase in the black

middle class, economic opportunity is still a reality for too few in Johannesburg. The Vulindlel'eJozi youth programme launched by the City in June 2015 is being implemented in partnership with the Harambee Youth Employment Accelerator. This programme has already registered over 150 000 young people of the 200 000 targeted by the initiative.

Learning bridges

"We have already engaged over 45 000 youth in opportunity channels and most of the remainder are being attached to a foundational skills and matric rewrite programme through the Massive Open Online Varsity (Moov) network, which is breaking down major barriers to work and skills development opportunities in Johannesburg.

"The Vulindlel'eJozi programme rollout has confirmed that the lack of relevant skills and qualifications remains a major barrier to participation. Our young people bear the greatest brunt of this exclusion. Hence, we have identified vocational skills development and the bridging of foundational learning to be critical interventions in breaking down barriers to employment for the youth."

At the heart of the Vulindlel'eJozi is the Moov initiative, accessible in the city's public libraries in Alexandra, the inner city, Jabavu, Westbury, Orange Farm, Emndeni and Sandton. More Moov centres are being set up in Ivory Park, Eldorado Park, Cosmo City, Pooritje, and Diepsloot.

The Moov network uses state-of-the-art, video-enabled learning to turn libraries and community centres into online universities and technical schools, and it has already opened up opportunities for around 5 000 young Johannesburgers.

According to Tau, this new tech-savvy economic democracy is rising through partnering with the ICT sector. He confirmed commitments by SAP, Microsoft and IBM to train thousands of youths through the Moov initiative in basic digital administrative and vocational skills.



Joburg: Global leader in city-level youth development

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"We have partnered with the European tech giant SAP to deploy the first SAP Skills for Africa programme in the country," continues Tau. This programme already is the best performing on the continent. About 30 young, disadvantaged, unemployed graduates have gone through intensive training and have now progressed into careers as SAP specialists.

"This complements the opportunity paths we have created through the programme, City of Johannesburg Educating Digital Interns, also known as Cojedi. Here we have partnered with Microsoft, Cisco and a cluster of technology sector leaders to train 1 000 unemployed youth per year as fibre installers, application developers, and software and systems engineers."

The Jozi@Work network of SMME hubs is there to make sure thousands — and ultimately tens of thousands of new enterprises — have the chance to open for business. Tau says that over 14 000 small companies through these hubs have become part of Johannesburg's rising economic democracy. "Collectively, as the city, we have directly supported and assisted over 24 000 small-and medium-sized enterprises.

Incubating initiatives

"We are empowering our citizens as innovators," he stresses. "Through our partnership with Resolution Circle, an entity of the University of Johannesburg, we are combining faith in the ingenuity and innovation of our people with cutting-edge

We are empowering our citizens as innovators

science and commercial thinking. This is through the city's Jozi My Beginning Community Innovation Fund, which is designed to bring to life ideas that will improve delivery of municipal services.

"We are incubating ground-breaking service delivery initiatives, proposed by community members themselves through this innovation fund. These include mobile, temporary traffic lights, a new cable-theft prevention system, a shack-fire response vehicle and new methods for surfacing roads and fixing potholes using recycled material.

"In partnership with Wits University we have created a Research Chair in Economic Development and attracted one of the world's leading investment experts to fill this position. This will support the city through a research agenda which analyses opportunities and monitors performance.

"Johannesburg is also well on its way ensuring that the next generation of 'green industrialists' are being incubated through our Green City Start-up Challenge. We have already supported 10 entrepreneurs who have developed and patented new green technologies that boost service delivery in the city while also empowering local entrepreneurs.

"As we accelerate our move towards a low carbon economy, our Green City Start-up challenge has super-charged local green enterprises and opportunities. Last year's winner, Paseka Lesolang, invented a device that reduces water wastage from leaking toilets. This won him international recognition. As part of the Joburg Growth and Development Strategy 2040, we committed to promote development-driven resilience for all. This is exactly what we are working towards as a city.

"We are also evolving the next wave of digital moguls through the Johannesburg Hack.Jozi competition, which supports the development of new digital applications and awards cash grants to the winners. About 20 finalists were given support to develop their digital businesses during the first year of the programme in 2015. Our second year intake



Improving the City's infrastructure

is currently going through the same process.

"Participants include almost 50 enterprises based on innovations, directly supported and funded by the city."

Digital Ambassadors

Bridging the digital divide began with investments to transform Johannesburg into a smart city, with over 1 100km of broadband and fibre-optic cable in place. This has become the backbone of the Moov network, high-speed internet access in local libraries and the e-health systems in Joburg public clinics. It is also the anchor of the command centres that use information from CCTV cameras to make the streets of Joburg safer.

The new Maru a Jozi portal, which is being used by the Jozi Digital Ambassadors, is already helping those with little experience of the internet at the city's 408 free Wi-fi hotspots, including the wireless mesh over Braamfontein. These have logged 1.3-million hits since the start of the financial year. The first cohort of the Jozi Digital Ambassadors

has already trained more than 24 800 internet-deprived users on how to navigate the mobile web and use the Wi-fi to improve their lives.

"The movement of data and information is set to define the fate of cities in the 21st century, just as the movement of people has defined the nature of cities for as long as they have existed," says Tau.

"Our Go Jozi healthy lifestyle programme has also gone a long way to promoting better ways to eat and exercise. Through the Jozi Vitality Schools Programme — a partnership initiative with Discovery Health — we are directly influencing how schools promote and enable healthier habits.

"To this end we have enrolled 157 schools across the city to look after the city's younger citizens.

"We live in the nation's fastest rising economic democracy. Our city government is leading change through deliberate strategy, developed in partnership with the people for the people. This is the Joburg that is — in all the important ways, a city at work," he concluded.

Priority Projects Fast Facts

Jozi@Work is a R3-billion City of Johannesburg programme designed to create an opportunity for communities to partner with the metropolitan in the delivery of municipal services in their own neighbourhoods. The programme is set to boost service delivery and promote entrepreneurship in a bid to realise socioeconomic transformation across the city.

Jozi@Work was launched on 30 September 2014 and

consists of other developmental initiatives that include:

Vulindlele eJozi — a R150 million youth programme aimed at breaking down barriers to opportunities for 200 000 youth in entry-level job training and placement, online further education and entrepreneurial skills development. A number of corporates have come on board to provide opportunities for the youth and as a result 45 000 opportunities have so far been secured

and 7000 youth have been placed. The programme is being rolled out in partnership with the Harambee Youth Employment Accelerator, an NGO that specialises in matching unemployed youth to job opportunities. www.vulindlele.mobi

Massive Open Online Varsity (Moov) — a R25-million online further education programme under Vulindlele eJozi, which is designed for creating access to smart education to eliminate factors such as distance, cost and time associated with obtaining an education — particularly for the youth. Up to 4 555 people have registered for Moov in selected public libraries that include Alexandra, Emndeni, Westbury, Jabavu, the inner city, Sandton and Orange Farm. About 150 of the people registered for Moov, mostly youth, have already graduated with web master, web design, financial management and marketing certificates. They now have an option to upgrade to an advanced level of courses in computer coding. More Moov centres are set to be opened in Ivory Park, Eldorado Park, Cosmo City, Poortjie, and Diepsloot.

Jozi Digital Ambassadors — an R80-million programme, also under Vulindlele eJozi, designed for bridging the digital divide in the city by training 3 000 young people to go into communities and impart digital skills to 720 000 household members through training. The programme is currently being rolled out in partnership with the University of Johannesburg. www.digitalambassadors.co.za

Jozi My Beginning — a R50-million community innovation fund, which is an extension of Jozi@Work, is set to bring community innovations to life through investment in innovations from Johannesburg community members. The fund is being administered by innovation experts Resolution Circle, part of the University of Johannesburg.

Phase I of Jozi My Beginning was initiated in September 2015 and by November 2015 more than 2,000 proposals were received. Unfortunately, ideas received were limited in

their community impact and their ability to deliver innovative solutions.

Through two independent external evaluation processes, these proposals were narrowed down to 17 innovations, which came close to meeting the criteria of community and innovation.

A further 18 will receive training and business development support. The support value for the 35 projects will be R7 245 700, and the implementation of this support started on the second week of April 2016.

In Phase II, all seven City of Johannesburg regions were visited during May 2016 and about 1 223 people attended the CIF Phase II micro-container mall entry process regional forums.

- It is planned that about 60 start-ups from seven City of Johannesburg regions will receive training and indirect funding to expand their community businesses. Resolution Circle will be building micro-mall hubs where developing businesses or businesses expanding into the formal economy can grow in our communities.
- The following focus areas will be supported (still with the requirement of innovation, community focus and housed within a specific micro-mall):
- Retail (providing products and services to the immediate public);
- Micro-manufacturing (manufacturing, assembling, packaging and maintaining of products);
- Agriculture (micro-farming, agri-technology, conversion into products, food security);
- Recycling (collecting, sorting, processing, transforming and additional value-adding activities);
- Education and skills development (based on the provided facilities); and
- Offices servicing the local community (e.g. managing local initiatives).

The closing date was 27 May 2016.
www.jozimybeggining.co.za

- The launch of Jozi@Work came after six weeks of pre-Jozi@Work awareness roadshows where just over 10 000 community members were reached across the city.
- For three months a Jozi@Work registration drive took to all corners of the city and 2 013 new cooperatives were assisted with registration as legal entities, 1 083 community-based PTYs were also registered and 3 399 existing companies expressed their interest in the programme.
- Community members who missed the Jozi@Work Registration Drive do not have to travel all the way to the Department of Trade and Industry in the City of Tshwane to register as legal entities, but they can still register anytime with the assistance of the Business Place or the Gauteng Enterprise Propeller.
- The first cycle of the monthly Jozi@Work Regional Forums where communities are briefed on available work packages in their respective regions under the programme begun in December 2014. These continue to be hosted in various regions to announce new work packages and Jozi@Work roll-out developments. The Jozi@Work Regional Forums schedule is available on the City's website.
- The official roll-out of the Jozi@Work contracts begun in March 2015 and the Johannesburg partners who are beneficiaries of the programme are already visible on the city's streets with their clearly marked "Jozi@Work: Let's work" yellow overalls. These are members of contracted cooperatives and other community-based enterprises.
- An average of between eight and 10 work packages were made available in each region, to kick-start the Jozi@Work roll-out, and these packages consisted of about 20 and more work sites, which meant more work was contracted to more cooperatives and other community based enterprises. A total of 1 100 cooperatives have been contracted to date — and over 7 000 community members were benefiting from the programme by April 2015.
- The City of Johannesburg had targeted 5 500 community based enterprises to be contracted under Jozi@Work by the end of the current financial year and it is already sitting with just over 6 500 entities.
- For more information on Jozi@Work, people can visit the City of Johannesburg's website on www.joburg.org.za or www.joziatwork.org.za or go to one of the City of Johannesburg regional offices near them where a Jozi@Work coordinator is on standby to assist.



The interns of 2016

The value the Johannesburg Roads Agency (JRA) reaps from its annual intake of young interns is immeasurable in terms of supporting the growth and development of Johannesburg and its roads network, particularly given the influx of some 10 000 new residents to the city and the pressure it is under to accommodate this growth.

While new interns bring in new ideas and energy, they are also committed to make their internships work.

This year, the JRA has a real emphasis on enhancing and growing engineering skills.

Nelisiwe Mtshweni is doing her internship in civil engineering, based in the planning department (road asset management systems). She explains: "This is because it is compulsory to have a one-year practical in my field of study in order to complete my national diploma and receive my certificate.

"I sent my curriculum vitae to the receptionist at the civil engineering department, together with my academic record. I was later called for an interview at the JRA's head office, where I was interviewed by a panel. I then started with my internship in January this year.

"I am studying civil engineering at the University of Johannesburg (UJ) and was a S4 full-time student. I found out about the JRA's internship programme through a lecturer at UJ and am so grateful to have been granted an oppor-

tunity to work at the JRA and gather knowledge towards building my career.

"This internship has helped me shape my career path and gave me enlightenment on which field of study I want to specialise in at BTech level. I have now have an understanding on contract documentation, GIS [geographic information systems] and site inspection and I am still hoping to acquire more knowledge pertaining to my field of study."

Another UJ student, Vutivi Chabalala, has also completed his final NDip coursework semester and was unemployed before becoming a JRA intern.

"I heard about JRA from my geotechnical engineering lecturer and went for an interview, which led to my participation," he says.

"The programme has changed my life. I have gained more skills and knowledge related to my course, civil engineering," he stresses. "I can supervise lot of different teams at RSD [the road surfacing division] through the knowledge and exposure that I have so far, and my self-esteem is also improving through attending meetings where you are sometimes given a chance to present your own report.

"The programme has enabled me to gain more problem-solving skills without taking any individual sides. My being part of the programme also benefits my surrounding community, for example, when the traffic signals are not

working I call the JRA traffic signal number given to us during the inductions. If there are potholes I take pictures and show them to my manager at RSD then the patching team is informed to go and make the repairs. In such a way, being part of this programme has a big impact on my surrounding community."

Lunga Sogiba studied civil engineering at the College of Cape Town, and first heard about the programme when still working in a temporary job at the JRA, seeing an advertisement about the intern programme in a newspaper.

"I then applied and received a call from HR and followed all the instructions that were issued to me," Sogiba explains. "I was not a student at that time because I had completed my studies, but I needed a practical experience. I was not

permanently employed but doing contract work and temporary jobs.

"As an intern in Planning Development Control, I am now doing experiential learning in civil engineering. I have always wanted to do road construction — to be part of a team that allows us to get to our destination as smooth as can be.

"Since being part of this programme, I have been able to be part of a team that develops roads and stormwater systems for people who have never had the privilege of being dropped by public transport close to home. We also construct cycle lanes, trying to reduce the amount of combustion and thus fighting global warming. I have been able to really see what an engineer does on a day-to-day basis."



The JRA interns obtain valuable workplace experience



Practical skills training is essential for the youth

Road ambassadors

Still the biggest employer of the city's interns, the Johannesburg Roads Agency (JRA), with its mandate for road safety, needs the interns working on Johannesburg's road infrastructure to be both technically competent and customer-oriented. The JRA's human capital development (HCD) department is passionate about the quality of its interns and internship programme. It now has 42 interns for 2016 — 15 focused on engineering. Three of the 2015 interns are now permanently employed by the agency.

JRA's Bertha Peters-Scheepers, operations manager, marketing and communications says: "All interns undergo an induction programme when they start working here and are assigned a mentor who provides on-the-job training. Both must complete monthly reports to inform HCD on the progress of their development plan.

Business etiquette

"All JRA employees are considered road ambassadors and are expected to use the JRA Find & Fix mobile application or any other available electronic means to report problems

seen on the roads they travel."

From business etiquette skills to practical on-the-job training in their different positions, interns also have the opportunity to receive internal and external training and are afforded the opportunity to compete for positions within the organisation.

"We want to contribute towards South Africa's development strategy," continues Peters-Scheepers. "Employing young graduates gives them an opportunity to put skills learned in the classroom into practice in the real world. The majority of JRA interns are either employed at the JRA, [by] external contractors or at firms in Johannesburg.

"All candidates undergo a panel interview at the JRA before being placed as an intern or as a permanent employee. Usually the only interns not employed at the end of an internship are those who choose to further their studies."

The JRA's bursary scheme feeds into the internship scheme, and also gives bursary-holders opportunities as vacation work students and interns.

EMS mending youth

The City of Johannesburg's Emergency Medical Services (EMS) makes a significant contribution during youth month, travelling to different regions and undertaking a plethora of activities, including occupational health and safety training covering evacuation drills and CPR training for juveniles.

Further youth month events are a prison programme

intended towards crime prevention, where young people from Reaphila Secondary School in Orange Farm will be taken on a prison tour, an outreach in Alexandra to 500 youth about substance abuse and crime and a public safety dialogue forum for 200 young people, led by the MMC for public safety, councillor Sello Lemao, for 200 unemployed youth in Braamfontein.



Lufuno Maphagela, head of youth development programmes at the City of Johannesburg Emergency Management Services



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Innovating demand management

The Vulindlel' eJozi youth empowerment programme is scaling up and expanding its existing services to the small, medium and micro-sized enterprise (SMME) sector. The City of Johannesburg, together with partner Harambee Youth Employment Accelerator, has been working with SMMEs that include start-ups, franchises and in supply chains, placing young people in roles such as office admin and reception management, face-to-face sales, transport, retail and hospitality assistance and basic operations.

Sourcing and vetting new staff is a particular challenge for SMMEs but Harambee's SMME Solution offers a way for small business owners to decrease their risk while increasing employee success. For smaller businesses, hiring new staff is risky and resource-intensive compared to corporates. They need workers who are more versatile, have more industry experience and are more self-directed, yet they lack the resources to find and develop such employees.

Harambee is the aggregator and alignment vehicle for many of the Vulindlel' eJozi programmes such as SmartStart, Digital Ambassadors and Massive Open Online Varsity (Moov), and has helped to make the city's vision for the programme a reality.

According to Harambee's head of marketing Bryony Maxwell, the agency was instrumental in developing Vulindlel' eJozi with the city: "Harambee Youth Employment Accelerator has been operating in this arena since 2011; the mayor approached Harambee and asked us to conceptualise what a programme would look like that did much more for more young, unemployed people in

Joburg, and Vulindlel' eJozi was born.

Understanding behaviours

"Harambee Youth Employment Accelerator is the implementing agent for the Vulindlel'eJozi programme. This involves catalysing and activating opportunities for the unemployed youth, as well as profiling, matching them and facilitating their placement into the opportunities, plus managing retention," says Maxwell.

"Harambee was established in 2011 to address this demand-supply mismatch, by understanding what entry-level jobs exist in the economy and understanding what behaviours and skills are needed to prepare young people to succeed in those opportunities.

"Harambee's strategic intent is to accelerate inclusive youth employment by finding young people from poor households in search of their first job — who are at high risk of long-term unemployment — and introducing them into the economy. This is an even more heightened objective in a low growth economic climate, where the question of who gets the available jobs must be answered with a view to increasing social cohesion and shared prosperity."

Harambee has placed over 25 000 young people into sustained formal sector employment, with 250 employers in 10 sectors of the economy. It has also supported over 200 000 work-seekers, improving their chances of becoming employed, so they can navigate their way from education to work.

Building knowledge assets

Maxwell says: "Harambee has done this through innovative,

demand-focused matching and work-readiness solutions that break through barriers facing first-timers including social network, transport and connectivity barriers, educational signalling and functional competence barriers, as well as the mental, social and behavioural barriers that keep young people from poor households locked out of the economy, despite their potential and willingness to work."

The value of this direct impact as an operator has allowed Harambee to build knowledge assets. Its extensive demand and supply-side information and analytics provide meaningful performance data that can drive impact beyond just the youth it reaches.

With a data store of nearly one million assessments conducted, Harambee draws on rich analytics and research to enable its partners to use new proxies for judging young people's potential and skills, and to develop better predictors of success for entry-level job seekers and for more entrepreneurial roles.

"Harambee has, from its inception, understood the power of partnership with government. Two successive challenge match grants from the National Treasury's Jobs Fund have created a platform for scaling up and for a knowledge exchange with the Treasury about practical, on-the-ground realities facing both employers and work-seekers in accelerating inclusive hiring and demand-supply matching," says Maxwell.

"More recently, a joint initiative with the City of Johannesburg is allowing Harambee to work with government on the design of a clearinghouse that can provide first-timers with public employment services, to support their education-to-work journey in both the formal and informal economy.

"The province of Gauteng has identified Harambee as a key strategic partner in addressing youth labour markets as part of its broader economic development process, and Harambee has signed a Memorandum of Agreement with the province which will form a platform for this strategic partnership over the coming five years, and will provide for strategic engagement in support of the province's focus on growth sectors," says Maxwell.

Unlocking opportunities

The results of the programme have been exceptional and have greatly impacted the lives of young, unemployed work-seekers in the city, with over 7 000 placements into income-earning opportunities, over 4 600 beneficiaries registered in Moov learning labs. More than 26 000 beneficiaries have benefitted from work-seeker support; they have been provided with vital skills to better their chances of finding employment.

"However, the story of what the programme has achieved in less than one year is the real success story," stresses Maxwell. "Vulindlel' eJozi has begun to build a collaboration between the City, communities and the private sector to create journeys to employability. It addresses barriers to employability by leveraging Harambee's network of employers and growing the pool of work experience opportunities to improve employability.

"We are catalysing new demand opportunities, learning and skills development opportunities and SMME development and support opportunities. We are also positioning volunteering as a mechanism to improve employability, using SMMEs as a placement opportunity channel and exploring micro jobs and other self-employment opportunities.

Open the way in Joburg

Designed to break down barriers to opportunities by creating pathways for young people to access skills training programmes and entry level employment, Vulindlel'eJozi, which means 'open the way in Joburg' in isiZulu, is a youth skills empowerment initiative by the City of Johannesburg in

Applications for the BEngTech Degree, new Bachelor's Degree and BTech are open!

In 2017, the Faculty of Engineering and the Built Environment (Febe) at the University of Johannesburg will roll out its approved, three-year BEngTech and Bachelor's degrees. Consequently, most of Febe's National Diploma and BTech programmes will be gradually phased out. National Diploma graduates or alumni who have not registered or completed their BTech are urged to register as soon as possible.

partnership with Harambee Youth Employment Accelerator.

There are almost a million young people in Johannesburg who are not in employment, education or training. Vulindlel' eJozi's target is to reach 200 000 of these young people and to meaningfully include and engage them in the economy over the next year.

According to South African labour surveys, SMMEs make up more than 50% of formal sector jobs and this sector is also the most likely to provide real employment growth; thus it is an integral part of the National Development Plan, and an important focus for any organisation concerned with unemployment.

Opportunities are not only limited to entry-level job skills training and placement, but they extend to online further education or smart education, and entrepreneurship skills development.

In just its second quarter roll-out, Vulindlel'eJozi partnered with over 250 companies and secured up to 45 000 various opportunities for unemployed young people in the

City of Johannesburg. So far, more than 25 000 young people have been successfully matched to opportunities created through the programme and are directly benefiting from them.

About 7 000 young people have been placed into opportunities to earn a livelihood in various sectors of the economy, including early childhood development, hospitality, information technology, retail, financial services and business process outsourcing. A further 75 youths are currently being trained in entrepreneurship, which includes incubation of ideas and being trained in the process of bringing them to life, and then sustaining their businesses.

Operation Phakisa

Up to 4 555 youths have registered for the entry-level qualifications offered in Moov centres, which are currently being rolled out in the city's public libraries. About 50 of these young people have already obtained certificates as web masters — at no financial cost to them — and are running

small, community-based enterprises.

In March this year Johannesburg announced a group of yet more young people for whom doors into the maritime sector have just been opened through the Vulindlel'eJozi programme. This was in partnership with the South African Maritime Safety Authority and the presidential programme, Operation Phakisa, which is designed to boost the contribution of the maritime sector to the South African economy.

Vulindlel'eJozi identifies candidates through various means, including through Harambee Youth Employment Accelerator. Candidates are then invited to assessments at one of the Vulindlel'eJozi Opportunity Centres around Johannesburg. Here they also receive work-seeker support, aimed at teaching them absolutely essential skills to prepare them for entry into the workforce. They then receive feedback on the options available to them and are afforded access to opportunities that will be best suited for them.

Vulindlel'eJozi also offers many opportunities to potential partners to link in and participate in the programme.



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and work-readiness

“We are also building a municipal model for tackling youth unemployment through a high volume matching and clearing house, a ‘war room’ on unemployment with public and private sector partnerships — both generic and sector specific — and we are developing a model that addresses

a human capital deficit and merges it with a labour force attachment approach.”
According to Maxwell, the City of Johannesburg has set aside grant funding to the value of R150-million based on demand-led opportunities to finance this programme. This

funding has enabled them to catalyse opportunities across four channels, formal sector jobs and small- and micro-enterprises, new employment and new economic pathways and learning opportunities. It has also funded the development of infrastructure to run the programme.

The Harambee programme is driven by the office of the executive ayor, with the project management team made up of Harambee and City of Johannesburg staff. This team is backed up by the Harambee team of over 200 people, based in its Johannesburg office.

Calling for innovation

The Jozi My Beginning Community Innovation Fund is reaching out to communities in the city for innovative ideas in products and services. This is a call for entrepreneurs with ideas for products and services within the retail, micro manufacturing, agriculture, recycling and education and skills development industries. This year its Community Innovation Fund (CIF) aims to develop, fund and mentor 60 local entrepreneurs’ start-up ideas.
The CIF supports Jozi@work’s new ideas, by developing and funding them through an open, competitive process. An independent panel evaluates all project concepts submitted and the implementation of any project approved by the fund is conducted through a community-based co-operative or company that made the initial application, under expert supervision. An individual willing to establish a new company

or co-operative with support from the fund — if their idea is approved — can also make the initial application.
Certain funded projects can also be considered as proofs of concept for new ways of delivering services, on the basis of which they could later compete in the market and supply their innovation to the city via an open tender process. Thus, all applicants must be willing to implement their innovations themselves if approved — the approval is not transferable to another entity or individual.
In April 2016, Executive Mayor Councillor Parks Tau announced the introduction of the second phase of the programme, saying how “excited the City of Joburg is to be part of this initiative, helping local innovations prosper”.
“Partner University of Johannesburg and their own enterprise development company, Resolution Circle, have worked

hard to ensure that these raw ideas can be enhanced, developed and introduced into the market,” says Tau.
Objectives of the programme include driving it deeper into local communities and the production of six micro-malls near or in the City of Joburg’s townships in six regions. Resolution Circle will also be involved in the development and roll-out of these six containerised micro-malls, which will provide serviced spaces for micro-enterprises to function, and will be off-grid operational and Wi-fi enabled.
Says chief executive of Resolution Circle, Professor Willem Clarke: “The project is bringing ideas to life and together we can help advance the City of Joburg.”
While entries for 2016 closed in May, innovative entrepreneurs can start working on how they can contribute to becoming a 2017 entrepreneur.

FAST FACTS: The Jozi SME Hub programme has assisted in excess of 30 000 visitors across Johannesburg and facilitated more than R50-million in funding for SMMEs. Over 2 000 SMMEs have received training. It has assisted 162 clients in BEE compliances and formalised in excess of 2 000 businesses through CIPC registration.
It offers more than 200 websites with digital marketing assistance and has over 60 outreach programmes for business training in townships. It has incubated 42 clients in the Jozi Hub and incubated 20 clients in the property sector.

Clustering services

Aspiring entrepreneurs who wish to grow their own businesses can access services at the Jozi SME Hub programme, the City of Johannesburg’s entrepreneurial development programme, which includes the establishment of development hubs across the city.
The programme assists SMMEs by providing business information, training workshops and planning tools. Its courses cover financial literacy, sales and marketing advice, and the management of tax and business compliance. Funding facilitation and training and awareness of funding requirements — including funding compliance — are essential components.
Services also include internet access for businesses, idea generation, legal advice and access to meeting and training rooms.
It also provides a forum for networking sessions and exploring business opportunities, and access to ecosystem partners. These partners include Absa Enterprise Development, Gauteng Propeller, the National Youth Development Agency, Small Enterprise Finance Agency, Ai Yello, Setsmol, Anglo Zimele, Industrial Development Corporation and Productivity SA.
The Business Place (TBP) supports each Jozi SME Hub programme through its information centres, where clients are able to receive assistance in working out the next steps to start or expand their businesses. Clients may then be referred to the business support programme, other support

organisations or SMME service providers, many of which are clustered in the same building for ease of access.
The TBP, a non-profit company, is a proven enterprise development model established in 1999.
The City of Johannesburg has been in partnership with TBP since its inception and launched the Jozi SME Hub programme with TBP as its implementing partner. The partnership is funded by the city’s Economic Development Department.
TBP provides a monitoring and evaluation system that tracks and traces all SMME activities and interventions collectively of agencies and city programmes operating in a specific locality. The system is capable of reporting on jobs created, impact on the local GDP and other important statistics. The data can also be used to provide useful reports for supply chain linkages to corporates and the city’s supply chain, and provides valuable information for economic development planning.
TBP has also launched similar ventures in collaboration with local partners around South Africa and beyond, resulting in 10 Business Place branches to date. The group collectively assisted more than 30 000 clients in the last financial year.

Fragmentation
There is surprisingly little co-ordination between private and public sector programmes in this space, especially

with regard to enterprise development, and it could be said that of all the priorities of the state, small business or enterprise development is probably the most fragmented and uncoordinated.
Fragmentation of the small business development space both hampers the overall effectiveness of programmes and frustrates the intended beneficiaries. It is often difficult and costly for entrepreneurs to access the help they need, and the establishment of the Jozi SME Hub programme was in response to this. It is aimed at bringing a broad range of small business development services under one roof.
Having taken that first step towards co-ordination and integration of the small business development ecosystem, there is now the opportunity to take this process further by aligning and integrating this ecosystem into the broader economic development agenda championed by the city.
The Jozi SME Hub model is unique in that each branch is strategically developed to address the needs of the local economy and business environment. It brings together many of the diverse local stakeholders representing all tiers of government, community and corporate organisations which are committed to the common vision of building an entrepreneurial society.
Hub service providers are selected according to the quality of their services, their sustainability, service-oriented approach and contribution to each hub’s strategy and overall philosophy.

The Jozi SME Hub serves as an ideal delivery platform for other initiatives and is open to engaging with interested programme partners who share common purpose, to pool resources and expertise in order to improve collective long-term sustainability and avoid duplication of efforts.

The six Jozi SME Hubs are located across Johannesburg in its various corridors. The location and contact details are:

Jozi SME Hub, Central Johannesburg, 58 Marshall Street, Marshall Town, 011 833 0340;

Alexandra, Office 102, First Floor Yarona Mall, 89 Watt Street, Wynberg, 010 492 3928;

Alexandra Satellite Office, Motsweding Centre No. 17, Arkwright Avenue, Wynberg, 011 440 7887;

Soweto Empowerment Zone, A2/431 Old Putco Building, Zone 6, Chris Hani Road, Diepkloof, Soweto, 010 492 3792;

Poortjie, Poortjie Community Centre, Corner Kubheita Street and Foreman Street, Poortjie, 010 492 3790; and

Diepsloot Riversands, 12 Incubation Drive, Riverside View, Ext 15, Midrand, 010 492 3791



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UJ's Resolution Circle prepares young engineers for the world of work

Technology: giving students a chance

The University of Johannesburg (UJ) is looking at how it can apply technology to assist students with the chicken-and-egg problem of needing on-the-job work experience, in order to make them more employable.

Through Resolution Circle, a UJ initiative, its Intern Development Programme has already started changing lives.

One example is Resolution Circle's one-year engineering intern programme, during which interns develop 17 different skills areas that are divided into four groups: vocational skills, professional development, professional life, and technical work. This is offered as an outsourced service for companies that are required to take on interns but do not have the necessary facilities or resources.

Explains Liesel Kirsten, project manager for Jozi Digital Ambassadors: "When UJ realised that tech students with a diploma battled to get work, it created Resolution Circle, which operates as an independent, commercial company, through partnerships and projects."

Since its inception in 2012, Resolution Circle has grown to a company with more than 100 employees; it has successfully developed many products in the market and filed various patents.

Resolution Circle is a unique, horizontally integrated ecosystem, specialising in developing innovations to support their commercialisation. This includes both IT and non-IT

solutions, and is not just focused on in-house but also off-the-street ideas.

Resolution Circle undertakes commercial research and development projects, with a strict view to introduce commercial products to the market. A product may thus start as a concept and end as a prototype or even a small-scale production run.

Competitions

"The City of Johannesburg also runs its annual Jozi My Beginning Innovation Fund Competition, which rewards innovators," says Kirsten. Entrants present ideas that fit into programmes and the City can buy these from them.

"UJ has the equipment to help — depending on who is funding what — and the competition is intended to source the best ideas to provide products to the City.

"With our Digital Ambassador Challenge, 3 000 unemployed youth are enabled and paid to produce micro-enterprises and perform services, such as training the public on how free Wi-fi works, and how to go into a portal and use it. These technology warriors are expected to go into schools as well and champion the technology that exists now.

"Ultimately, ambassadors have to train over a million Johannesburg residents to use Wi-fi. They have also been into clinics to teach eHealth through the connecting Wi-fi

network. This programme makes it happen for the City and makes the dream come true. It helps the City to achieve outcomes and includes other programmes like Discovery's healthy schools project," says Kirsten.

The recruitment and assessment of 3 000 digital

ambassadors is being enhanced through Vulindlel' eJozi, a programme initiated in partnership with the nongovernmental organisation Harambee Youth Employment Accelerator, which breaks down barriers to youth employment.



Unemployed youth can bring technological skills to their communities

Real-world tech projects

Meaningful experiences with technology make for better engagement and use, and create a world of exploration.

Palesa Sibeko is part of this world in her capacity as co-founder of design consultancy Inquisition, creative technology company SiGNL, and Girls Invent Tomorrow, a non-profit organisation that aims to empower, educate and mentor high school girls on careers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (Stem). SiGNL has contributed its expertise to a variety of the city's youth development endeavours.

"In my role at SiGNL, I work with agencies to help them create human capital and SiGNL is also the vehicle used to experiment with start-up test ideas," says Sibeko.

"We are constantly looking at how physical data expression brings data into the real world, and I believe in a data-driven, experimental approach to content and solving of complex problems.

"We are educating the public about workspaces, and taking real action to present this meaningfully. Technology and art are my passions and both are part of this movement.

"Most of the business ideas we are presented with are validated, and through this we are creating an avenue for explorers, while guiding them to follow sound business principles."

Projects they are involved in include the Green City StartUp, Jozi My Beginning and HackJozi.

Concludes Sibeko: "What we now see is how people change and the way they think about problem-solving, and everybody wins because we create value propositions."

Right: Palesa Sibeko





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Bringing science to life

It has been a relatively well-kept secret, but for 10 years, SAP Africa has been changing the lives of the youth, from ages as young as six years old.

According to Sunil Geness, SAP Africa's director for government relations and corporate social responsibility, skills development, entrepreneurship and education are core mandates for SAP and the company is committed to investing in the communities it operates in to drive socio-economic growth and job creation in Africa.

A key component of SAP's Africa Growth Plan is the training of 8 000 to 10 000 new consultants in Africa in the next seven years. These skilled people, in the main economic hubs of Africa, will enable governments and the private sector to improve the way they do business across the continent and ultimately the world — driving prosperity through job creation.

"It is a whole matter of addressing youth through programmes for different age groups, with emphasis on science, technology, engineering and mathematics (Stem). Through the Sci-Bono Discovery Centre in Newtown, Johannesburg, we give young children otherwise unable to experience this the opportunity to see real-life installations."

Open seven days a week, Sci-Bono is alive with learners from Grade R to matric, who witness science come to life through live experiments in the laboratories and ICT lab. Also on display are 384 permanent science exhibits.

Sci-Bono works in line with the Gauteng department of education's mathematics, science and technology education strategy, providing outreach programmes in various districts in Gauteng. One of these is the Emasondosondo mobile science project, which sends out a team of trained maths and physical science teachers to schools in mainly rural and farm areas to teach learners in Grades 10 to 12.

"Our relationship with the centre is over 10 years strong and we have provided a range of capital to run programmes for children from pre-primary to 18 years old. We also established and funded the centre's 380-seater state-of-the-art auditorium, which is available to students, organisations, government and NGOs," continues Geness.

"We have now set up the SIMPLON laboratory, which teaches 25 youth how to develop web-based applications, which extends to candidates in the greater Gauteng region.

"When we first started working with Sci-Bono, we had children as young as nine. These children are now in second- and third-year university studying engineering and experiencing exposure to all its different facets."

Skills for Africa

SAP Africa's Skills for Africa ICT skills development and job creation initiative is part of its global commitment to promoting education and entrepreneurship. With growth and scarcity of skills on the African continent at the top of the agenda, this programme — among the first of its kind in the industry in Africa — offers selected students the opportunity to develop world-class IT and business skills, effectively giving them an opportunity to play a role in contributing towards Africa's future economic growth and infrastructure development.

SAP Africa also continues to invest in SAP skills development through various education programmes, such as its SAP University Alliances programme and Africa Corporate Social Responsibility programme.

In 2013, SAP invested more than R250-million into non-governmental and non-profit organisations throughout the world. In 2014, 1 001 organisations received SAP technology donations, SAP offered more than 188 000 employee volunteer hours (with 50% of those being skills-based volunteering) in 47 different countries, and about R375-million was donated to non-governmental organisations.

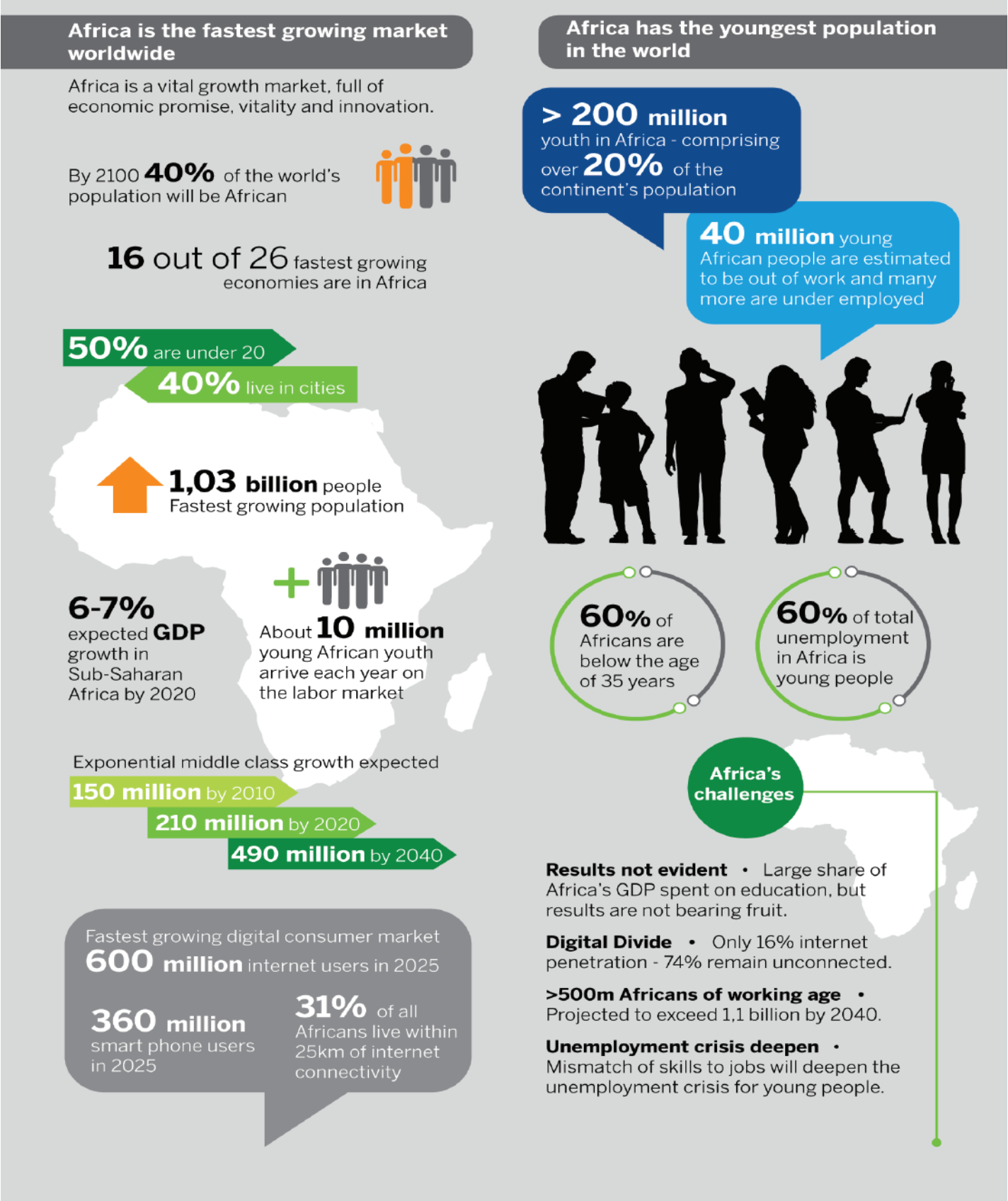
"We are very excited to be funding our first Lego League, a robotics challenge," says Geness. "In this challenge, SAP employees mentor and coach children between the ages of 9 and 16. Teams are taught how to develop and research robotic performance skills applicable to a global topic, such as water or energy, and the children's robots are expected to conduct specific activities."

"Africa's Code Week is also a phenomenal success. In its first year, we targeted 10 countries and 10 000 learners and reached 17 countries and 90 000 learners. This year

we are targeting 30 countries and 150 000 learners. This is a continent-wide initiative to simplify the face of coding for Africa's youth in three different age groups (8-11, 12-17 and 18-24), the objective of which is to spread digital literacy across the continent and start shaping tomorrow's highly skilled workforce.

"This programme runs hand-in-hand with all local and national stakeholders, from education systems all the way to governments and NGOs. Ultimately its intention is to innovate solutions that can be sold to the respective governments and to anywhere in the world," he concludes.

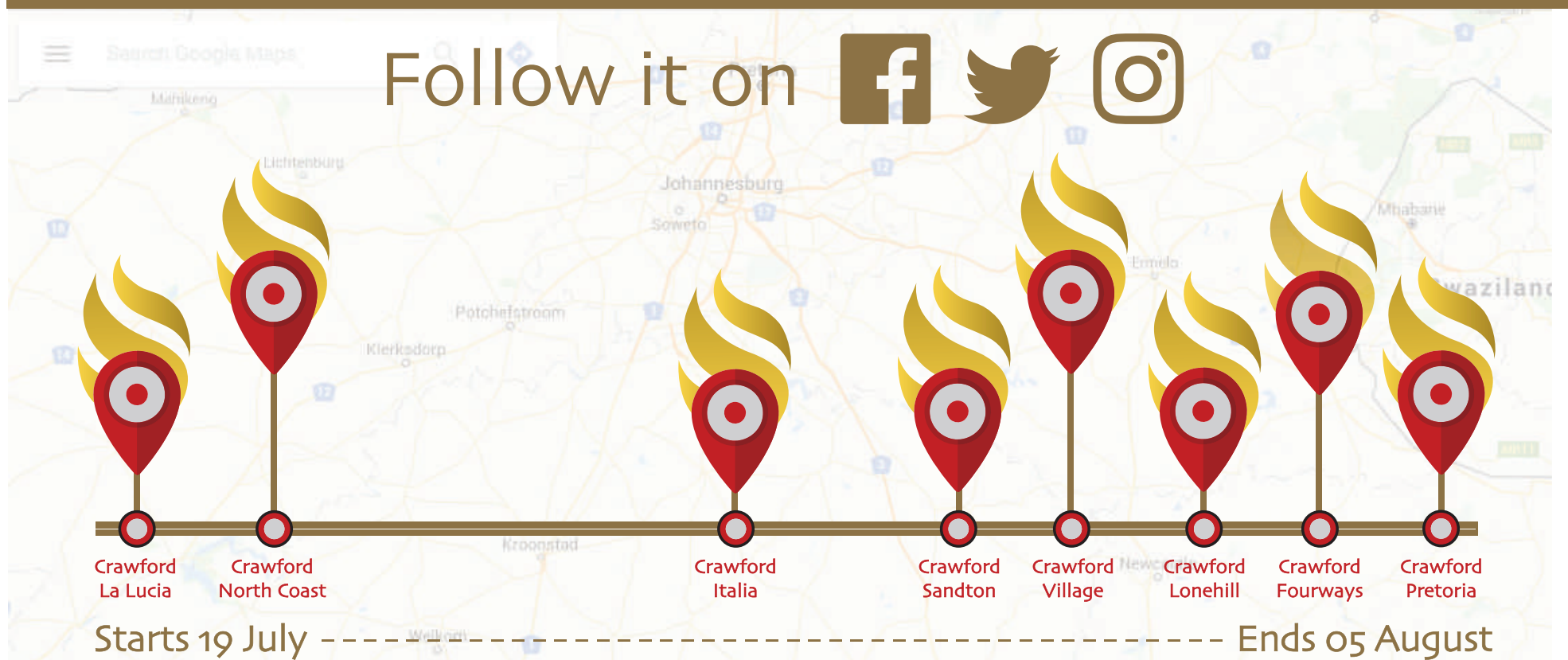
One of South Africa's most popular bands, Mi Casa, played their part in SAP's Africa Code Week at The World Economic Forum. As part of the band's #micasaunlockafrica tour, the artists provided code training to youth to help drive awareness of Africa's largest coding literacy event, which starts in October and aims to reach 150 000 youth across 30 African countries including South Africa. Pictured here is band frontman, J'Something.



#CrawfordTrackTheTorch

To celebrate the success of our Old Crawfordians: Jared Crous (Crawford Pretoria), Michael Meyer (Crawford Sandton), Michelle Weber (Crawford La Lucia) and Cameron van der Burgh (Crawford Pretoria), there will be a Crawford torch relay between the Crawford campuses. Please join us in wishing our past students well as they start their Olympic journey.

Follow it on



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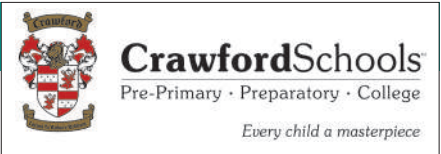
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THULANI CHILIZA

Cricketer

In March this year, 14-year-old Thulani Chiliza from Umlazi made 125 not out in match during a KwaZulu-Natal Cricket Union Township and Rural Development junior camp. He smashed four sixes during that innings and can't remember the number of fours he accumulated.

A day later, Thulani was asked by his coaches to fill in for an under-16 player in another fixture for the development side, outside of the camp.

There the all-rounder recorded one of his most impressive bowling performances to date: six overs, two maidens

and five wickets for just 18 runs.

"He'll play for the Proteas someday," says cricket coach Sandile Simelane, who has had a major influence on Chiliza. "That's a definite. He's one of a kind, he's a special kid — he's got staying power at the crease, you can slot him in anywhere and he'll perform."

But Chiliza is not just an extraordinary cricketer; he's an extraordinary individual who lives in an extraordinary set of circumstances. He and his twin brother live with their mother in extreme poverty. Until a few weeks ago, home to

them was a shack in an informal settlement, situated near a railway track. Their house was washed away in a storm, and right now they share a room with about 60 people in a community centre.

In spite of these circumstances, Chiliza is a regular at cricket practice. Last year he made it into the KwaZulu-Natal under-13 side. One day Chiliza would like to emulate his hero, Proteas cricketer Quinton de Kock. But he also has another dream. "I'd like to buy my mother a house and a car." — *Fatima Asmal*



PHOTO: SUPPLIED



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

ARMAND DUVENAGE

Inventor

Thanks to his father — a science teacher — Armand Duvenage (18) has been conducting science experiments from the age of four. Now a grade 12 learner at Hoërskool Garsfontein in Pretoria, he loves to understand how things work and seeing how people apply and integrate theories to create new things.

When Duvenage was in grade 10, he created a wireless energy management system for his school science expo. "Being a typical lazy teenager, I thought it would be cool to create a programme and device where I can turn off my household appliances with my smartphone," he says. "Of course the load-shedding nightmare made me look at a way in which my device could assist homes and industries to monitor and manage their electricity consumption without being physically at the source."

Duvenage was selected to represent his school at the Northern Gauteng Expo for Young Scientists 2014, where he won a gold medal and was selected to represent the region at the Eskom International Science Fair. He was then selected to participate in the Intel ISEF 2015, in Pittsburgh in the US, the world's largest international science fair, with over 1 700 participants from around the world. He was awarded third prize in the Embedded Systems category, which is one of the most difficult categories in the competition.

"I felt honoured to represent my country and grateful that my hard work paid off, and that I could compete against the brightest innovators in the world," he says.

Duvenage also plays the guitar, and is part of a jazz and blues duo. He hopes to study electrical engineering next year, but his dream is to go to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and specialise in electronic warfare.

"At this stage I just need to complete grade 12 and end my school career with a bang! But as soon as I can, I want to build my own guitar amplifier." — *Fatima Asmal*

LUCA HOLTZHAUSEN

Swimmer

This year Luca Holtzhausen (12) competed in the Midmar Mile (in the males under-13 and males 31 and over event) for the fourth time. He was recovering from a shoulder injury and, unusually, felt a little nervous before the race. So when his mother Caroline and the rest of his family heard a commentator talking about an unidentifiable swimmer who was at the front with two other competitors, they didn't pay much attention.

They were taken aback when Holtzhausen followed two adults out of the water, finishing third in the event, and first in the under-13 section, clocking a time of 20.14 minutes.

Holtzhausen, a grade six learner at Westville Senior Primary School in Durban, holds the South African record in five under-11 long-course swimming events, and six under-11 long course events. He's also the KwaZulu-Natal record holder in eleven under-11 short course events, and eleven under-11 long course events. These records include all four swimming strokes — freestyle, backstroke, breaststroke and butterfly.

When Holtzhausen began swimming as a pre-school learner, his coach immediately noticed his potential. At seven he was training with children much older than him, due to the strength of his stroke. From there it was onto Seagulls Swimming Club, which is headed by the South African swimming team's head coach, Graham Hill.

He trains six times a week, and gave up cricket — a sport he also excelled in — thanks to his schedule. "I don't want to get injured," he explains. "I can train straight after school and not be tired after other sports." However he does have a go at shot put for his school, and has held the KwaZulu-Natal record for his age group for the past two years.

His immediate goal is to qualify for the 2022 Commonwealth Games, which will take place in Durban. "I'll be 18 years old ... my next goal is swimming in the 2024 Olympics — this is my ultimate dream." — *Fatima Asmal*



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

SIYAMTHANDA HLANGWANA

Aspirant chemical engineer

Studying at home is almost impossible for Siyamthanda Hlangwana. The 16-year-old lives in a one-room house with her grandmother, two cousins and her aunt in a small township in the Eastern Cape. "I find it difficult to focus because people are having conversations or watching television," she says. "I have to learn to block out everything so that I can concentrate better."

Hlangwana credits ArtWorks for Youth — a program which provides free visual art instruction, academic support, mentoring and other forms of assistance to financially disadvantaged students in Port Elizabeth — with helping her cope effectively with her set of circumstances. She has been attending ArtWorks for Youth programmes four times a week for three years now.

"One of the most important things I have learnt at Artworks For Youth is being resilient," she says. "This has helped me to continue doing well at school even when life is throwing me curveballs. I let my situation at home encourage me and not break me. I realised that sitting and feeling sorry for myself was not going to help me at all, so working hard academically was my solution."

This attitude has paid off. Due to her commitment to working hard at school, Artworks For Youth was able to secure a sponsor who funds Hlangwana's schooling at Ethembeni Enrichment Centre.

Hlangwana is also passionate about encouraging young people to read. Together with her peers at Artworks for Youth, she initiated a junior reading club for children in

grades one to four. Children are divided according to their reading skills, and each Friday, Hlangwana and her friends teach them how to read and write in English as well as in isiXhosa.

When she finishes school, she hopes to study chemical engineering. She has a powerful message for her fellow South African youth. "Life is not a wish-granting factory. I know it is not easy to hope when all seems to be falling apart, but you have got to wake up even after a night of sorrow and you have been bruised to the bone, and do what needs to be done to secure your future. There is a saying: 'The light of a star shines brighter when it's dark.'" — *Fatima Asmal*



PHOTO: SUPPLIED



200 YOUNG SOUTH AFRICANS ● RISING STARS

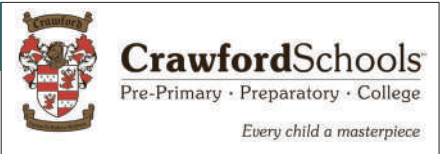


PHOTO: SUPPLIED

TLALENG KETUMILE

Gender activist

In 2014 Tlaleng Ketumile's teacher at her previous high school asked her and her grade 10 classmates to enter the Empowervate Trust Youth Citizen Action (YCA) programme's competition. The challenge was to identify a social issue in their community and find ways of tackling it.

Recognising that Ketumile had the ability to inspire her peers, the teacher made her the leader of the group. At first Ketumile and her friends decided to focus on teenage pregnancy, but while brainstorming, they realised that the direct cause thereof was statutory rape.

So they initiated a campaign called Stand Together Against Rape (Star), creating online awareness about rape, using the hashtag #BUA (which means "talk" in Setswana), as well as conducting silent protests at strategic points within their community. They also created a safe space where rape victims could obtain support.

Last year, Ketumile was part of a leadership development programme organised by non-profit organisation, enke: Make Your Mark. There — as her community action programme — she initiated "Abafazi I am Enough," aimed at creating awareness about gender inequality at schools, as well providing girls with a platform to be heard and respected. "It also encourages boys and girls to become feminist by advocating for equality in all spheres of their daily lives," she says.

Ketumile's passion is to initiate change, and have fun while doing so. She is regularly invited to speak at schools as a motivational speaker and on radio, and is particularly busy during October, as October 1 is the International Day of the Girl.

Once she completes her schooling, Ketumile wants to study medicine and specialise in gynaecology. "I am passionate about women and I believe my future career choice will allow me to continue being an activist against sexual violence and an advocate for women's rights in the medical world." — *Fatima Asmal*

RAJVEER JOLLY

Good Samaritan

Motivated by a teacher at school, Rajveer Jolly (12) wanted to inspire people to effect positive change in society. So he decided to undertake some random acts of kindness, record them, and challenge others to do the same. For example, when he saw a man begging at a traffic light, he decided to chat to him to find out why he was there. "I wasn't sure if it was safe enough for me to interact with a stranger. But I realised he is a human just like anyone else," he says. "When I spoke to him he was very kind-hearted and willing to share his story. I noticed he looked tired and exhausted from standing all day. I felt sorry for him and wanted to do something to make his day better." The man told Jolly that he didn't go further than grade two because his father couldn't pay his school fees due to an alcohol habit. He was therefore unemployable and forced to beg. Jolly gave the man some clothing and recorded this, as well as several other random acts of kindness, inspiring many of his peers and teachers at Curro Century City to do the same. Jolly is a prefect at his school, where he has also won the Values award six times — for respect, appreciation, kindness, friendship, caring and honesty. For his random acts of kindness, he was picked as the April Western Cape Lead SA Youth Hero. While he feels honoured by the accolade, this is not his driving force, he says. "I started making videos to show others — not for glory, but because if they make someone else do something good, then great. I am honoured to be a Lead SA hero. But I don't need to be, I love giving and making someone's day better. I am a Sikh and this is part of what our religion says we should live by." — *Fatima Asmal*

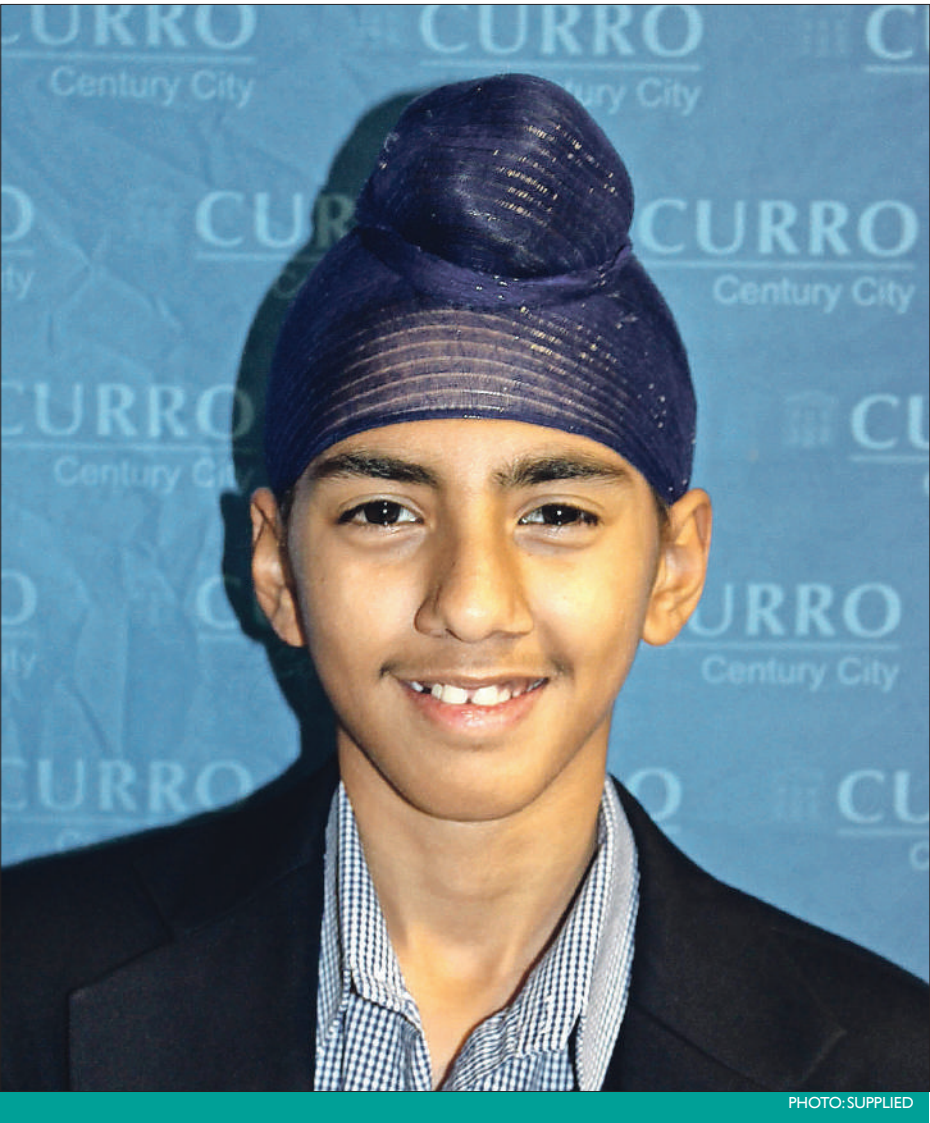


PHOTO: SUPPLIED



PHOTO: KATE SHORT

LESEGO KGOSINYANE

Humanitarian and chess enthusiast

When Lesego Kgosinyane was a little girl in grade two, growing up in Mapetla, a small township in Gauteng, her mother contracted tuberculosis and passed away. At first Kgosinyane — who is now 16 — found it difficult not having a mum to talk to. But she soon adjusted and began to talk to her granny instead.

When she finished her primary schooling, her family moved to a village called Phaposane in North West Province, where she started high school. Thanks to her academic performance — coupled with her circumstances — Raise The Children (RTC), a non-profit organisation aimed at empowering orphans, gave her a scholarship to pursue her secondary schooling at a better-resourced school.

Kgosinyane is now in grade 10 at Tiger Kloof Secondary, where she obtains 60% and upwards in all subjects. She also excels in chess, and is the best in her school. Often in the school dormitory, her friends mention their mothers, she says, but this doesn't bother her, as she has learned to adjust to her fate.

Twice a week Kgosinyane helps out at a soup kitchen, which her school runs for the disadvantaged, where the learners at Tiger Kloof donate non-perishable items that are distributed to the deserving.

When she finishes her schooling Kgosinyane would like to become a veterinarian. "I love animals and in my village animals are used as a mode of transport — I want to become a vet, because I have seen that when they become sick, they don't have a doctor to go to." She also has another dream: "Someday I'd like to open an orphanage and sponsor people like me who are disadvantaged — I want to give back to my community." — *Fatima Asmal*

SAIF ALI KHAN AND MUHAMMAD SHAH-NOOR KHAN

Mixed martial artists



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

On a daily basis, brothers Saif Ali Khan (15) and Muhammad Shah-Noor Khan (12) spend between one to one-and-a-half hours training at their dojo.

This dedication has certainly paid off. Saif Ali, a learner at Isipingo Secondary School in Durban — who achieved his black belt in karate last year — won two world titles at the World Martial Arts Organisation (WMO) Championships in London last year, placing second in points fighting and third in continuous fighting.

A few weeks ago, he was placed first in points fighting and first in continuous fighting in the boys under-55kg division at the Arnold Classic Africa. Muhammad Shah-Noor, who attends Isipingo Beach Intermediate School, was placed first for points fighting in the 12-14 years division at the same event, and has also won numerous local competitions.

Both boys were introduced to karate by their grandfather, a seventh Dan. "I simply love MMA (mixed martial arts) as it

as it gives me the opportunity to fight full contact, allowing me to freely execute the techniques I've learnt in karate," says Saif Ali. "Whereas in karate we are taught to execute controlled techniques, MMA also gives me the opportunity to see if I'm able to defend myself."

Muhammad Shah-Noor agrees: "I enjoy MMA as it is a full contact sport. It gives me the chance to really see how fit I am when we do continuous fighting, and karate teaches me self-discipline and control."

The younger brother is now working towards attaining his black belt in karate, while the older brother has his eye on more world championship titles. "I intend to take myself to the highest level possible and achieve numerous world championship titles. Eventually I want to open my own dojo, following in the footsteps of my mentor — my grandfather — and achieving my seventh dan just like him, or even more." — *Fatima Asmal*



PHOTO: SUPPLIED



200 YOUNG SOUTH AFRICANS ● RISING STARS

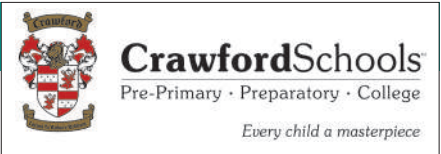


PHOTO: SUPPLIED

KAMVALETHU RENGQE

School latecoming activist

Someday Kamvalethu Rengqe wants to open a recreational centre in KwaNobuhle township in Uitenhage, where he lives. He hopes that this will provide the youth of his community with something positive and keep them away from drugs and crime.

Judging by this track record, this dream is well within his reach. Rengqe was one of the leaders of the team that won the Empowervate Trust Youth Citizen Action Programme (YCAP) 2015 Eastern Cape provincial competition, and then the national championships in the secondary schools category.

His group decided to try to combat latecoming at their school. "It was a problem that affected everyone in the school, not just the latecomers," he says. "We discussed as a group the problems that faced our school and our peers in general. We found that all these problems were caused by latecoming in some way."

At first they did presentations for the learners at the school, explaining the consequences of latecoming, and the benefits of punctuality. Thereafter, they stood at the school gates each morning, registering the latecomers, who would then be asked to bring a parent in to school. Parent and learner would be sent to the school's social worker, where a solution for the reason for being late was discussed. At first Rengqe's peers were resistant but they eventually came around. Nowadays there are seldom more than 10 latecomers out of a total of 1 190 on any given day at the school.

Rengqe is a class prefect at his school and excels academically. Last year, he won bronze in the regional rounds of the Eskom Science Expo. On Saturdays, he attends Engen Star School, which provides tuition in core school subjects. His future certainly looks bright. "I want to work hard and be a success. Because I want to show everyone regardless of where you come from you can make it in life." — Fatima Asmal



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

CHELSEA WEWEGE

Ballerina

There is nothing else that makes Chelsea Wewege as happy as ballet does. "I am truly myself when I dance, yet I become somebody completely different," she says. "When I dance I feel alive."

This passion for ballet has meant that Wewege received a full scholarship to the American Academy of Ballet Summer School of Excellence in New York for two years in succession (2014 and 2015). She also achieved gold with distinction for two consecutive years at the American Academy of Ballet Performance Awards, and a distinction for the Advanced 1 level of the Royal Academy of Ballet exam.

SANEUN LEE

African Queen of Mathematics

When the first Pan African Mathematics Olympiad for Girls (Pamo-G) took place at the National Mathematical Centre in Abuja, Nigeria last year, a young woman who hopes to make South Africa her home was crowned "the African Queen of Mathematics."

SanEun Lee's gold medal helped the South African team, which also won a silver and bronze, to win the Pamo-G. And that wasn't all. Lee also finished second in the concurrently run Pan African Mathematics Olympiad (Pamo). In April this year — this time in Senegal — Lee (17) was once again crowned queen in the PAMO-G, while simultaneously helping South Africa to first place in the Pamo.

In May this year, Lee was awarded the Dianne Tucker trophy for the top girl in the University of Cape Town Mathematics Competition — an impressive string of achievements for someone who only arrived in South Africa from South Korea two years ago. Lee has loved maths from a young age. She picked this up from her father, and her passion for the subject was nurtured throughout her schooling in Korea.

Lee came to South Africa to study at St George's Grammar School in Cape Town, where she also excels in physical sciences, life sciences, geography, business studies and advanced programme maths. She is also passionate about helping her peers, and does peer tutoring weekly, in addition to playing tennis and the piano. Should she secure permanent residency in South Africa, she aims to study medicine at UCT after matriculating. — Fatima Asmal



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

DARIO TRINCHERO

Best Cambridge maths student in the world

"Of course I wasn't expecting it! I was expecting to have done well, but I had not imagined something even close to this scale. This achievement means a lot to me," says Dario Trinchero (18).

And it should. Late last year, Trinchero — a matric pupil at Somerset College in Cape Town — was placed first in the world for mathematics in the International Cambridge AS Examination, obtaining 100%. He was also placed first in chemistry in South Africa.

Trinchero has always achieved above-average marks in his subjects, but he feels his ability developed fully after

grade 10, when he was able to engage with advanced maths in the advanced program maths syllabus. "It was then that I fully realised my potential, and began to work much more actively to develop it," he says.

Trinchero excels in other subjects too. Last year he achieved over 90% in five of his six subjects, falling short only in English. For Trinchero, mathematics is not only about doing sums. Doing so is akin to "viewing soccer as nothing more than dribbling a ball," he says.

Because he loves maths so much, he thinks about the subject a lot throughout the day. "This is the real reason

that I feel I am able to make the most effective use of the resources I am given."

After school, Trinchero aims to study theoretical physics, probably in conjunction with computer science. In the long run, he hopes to work on physics research in his chosen specialisation. "Not only does it (the Cambridge first position) motivate me even more to continue working hard at my mathematics, but it also excites me with all the potential prospects that may come about as a result of my ability. I am eager to excel further and to continue to open new doors to exciting opportunities in my future." — Fatima Asmal



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

to pay for the course; however, I believe that the best way is just to take this move with a lot of courage and a sprinkle of enthusiasm, because once I am in London training full time, there are more financial opportunities that I will be able to apply for," she says.

When she's not dancing, Wewege is busy studying via correspondence, determined to complete her schooling. Her ultimate dream is to join a world-class ballet company and perform as a professional ballet dancer. — Fatima Asmal

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YAASEEN BARNES

Comedian

Twitter: @Ya_a_seen_Him

Who would have imagined that you could start a career on Twitter? That's how Capetorian comic Yaseen Barnes first made his mark, making him a specialist in sharp one-liners. Comedy is now his full-time career, rescuing him from a life as an insurance salesman.

He's adopted a deadpan style and steers away from the Muslim stereotypes that his background could nudge him into.

"I started on Twitter and one of the bigger comedians who saw me said 'why don't you try doing it on stage?'," Barnes says. "I tried just doing normal jokes on stage and someone said no, 'just recite your Tweets', so that's what I did and I just tell short jokes."

His style saw him win the Joker's Comedy Championship in 2013 and in 2014 he won Good Hope FM's Laugh Master contest. The prize was a spot at a comedy club, which provided him with a regular slot.

He went on to perform at the Jive Funny Festival with Trevor Noah, Marc Lottering and Nik Rabinowitz and on Comedy Central with Casper de Vries and Deep Fried Man.

Barnes won the Newcomer of The Year award in the 2015 Savannah Comic's Choice Awards, but wasn't there to collect it because he was doing a gig in Durban. He remembers following a Twitter feed about the event from backstage in Durban, but couldn't shout for joy when he won in case he disturbed the act on stage.

He's since written material for Stuart Taylor's stage show, opened for Riaad Moosa and performed at the Comedy Central International Festival. He also features regularly on the Nigel Pierce Show on Good Hope FM and contributes to ZANews.

Barnes loves how the more experienced comedians helped him find his feet, and he's carrying on that tradition by running a weekly open mic night at the Armchair Theatre in Cape Town for first-time comics or established names testing new material.

"It's a small community and whenever they see someone with potential they look after you," he says. "I'm one of the guys now, so I'm running open mic nights to look after those who are trying. We don't want bad comedy coming up so we look after the good ones we find. The industry only works because we look after each other and look after the industry itself." — *Lesley Stones*



PHOTO: SUPPLIED



PHOTO: EVANS MATHIBE

ZÉWANDE BK BHENGU

Performance poet and television editor

Twitter: @Zewande

Using poetry as his therapy is how Zéwande Bk Bhengu has found his niche in the world.

But his words come from a lonely place; he talks of demons inside his head and being the puzzle that no one wants to solve.

This Johannesburg-based wordsmith has won numerous poetry slams and talent contests. He's also appeared in various theatrical productions that use poetry to tell their stories, and he co-wrote, directed and starred in *FIRE:BURN*, which has been performed at various festivals.

He grew up in the rural Eastern Cape where his mother was a teacher, and that rural background meant he was raised with certain values that are at odds with city life. Poetry has been his guide into the city mind-set.

City life also made him lonely, and in 2013 he was diagnosed with depression, which he still struggles with. "I have never been one for 'Dear Diary' or therapy, so writing poetry became the only space where I could allow myself to freely unravel and unpack my life to myself. I almost wanted to see everything in writing so I could understand what the problem was and I, from there, could then work on fixing it," he says.

"I write from feeling, and every poem is my emotional self working on making me a better person for myself, and ultimately for society."

Now turning 25, he describes himself as a loner whose life experiences have left him self-sufficient but with no deep-knit friendships. He feels most at ease in his own skin when he's performing. "Spoken word poetry; those moments on stage and the moments of meeting the people that receive your work and being the centre of attention, even in that ephemeral moment, it makes me feel whole. Like I am part of the world and living."

His sessions are more of a show than just a recital — he learned theatrical skills at the National School of the Arts in Braamfontein and fuses that with his poetry. He went on to study drama at Wits University, majoring in theatre design and television production, and is now working as the editor and visual effects editor on a new e.tv series called *The Alliance*.

Poetry gives him some hope that situations can improve, he says. "I want to share that hope and make things better using poetry." — *Lesley Stones*



PHOTO: MAZWI VEZI PHOTOGRAPHY

UTHANDO BADUZA

Curator, Red Location Art Gallery

Instagram: @u_badu

Trying to persuade people who live in townships without basic services that art is important is difficult, but it's a task that Uthando Baduza believes is crucial.

Baduza is chief curator at the Red Location Art Gallery in New Brighton township in Port Elizabeth. The gallery and museum there close at times due to protests by the community that money is being spent on "houses for the dead" instead of facilities for the living.

"If we are really serious about transforming people's lives and healing people, I think art can play a pivotal role in dealing with some of the challenges we are finding," Baduza says. "If artists have scholarships and resources then art can permeate our everyday lives and add a lot of value at an emotional level, and have an impact at a community level."

Officials work hard to keep the museum and gallery open by promoting the idea the Red Location belongs to everyone.

"This gallery is one of very few in a township, so there are complex questions about how to deal with the challenges of the community and the importance of art, because art is always relegated to the last on the list," says Baduza.

"A lot of commercial galleries focus on selling art and we as a public gallery are challenged to be more robust in our approach and provide art and museum services to the public. We need to be at the forefront of the role that art can play in our society, and get people excited about art and offer opportunities to the community to learn more about art."

His approach as a curator is to put artworks together to create new meanings and begin conversations between the art and the viewer so people leave with more questions than answers. This might sound like a bad thing, but he believes the essential purpose of art is not to impose answers but to expand our minds to imagine new possibilities.

Baduza has a BA in political studies, a postgraduate diploma in heritage and museum studies and an MA in public and visual history. He is currently a PhD student in the history of arts education.

He has worked at the District Six Museum and advises various government departments and organisations in the areas of arts, culture and heritage. — *Lesley Stones*

XOLISILE BONGWANA

Senior dancer, Vuyani Dance Theatre

Facebook: Xolisile Bongwana

Dancing is the main form of expression for Xolisile Bongwana, allowing him to be "everything I need and want to be in different forms," he says.

This talented artist has performed in countries around the world.

He always strives for high-quality work and self-improvement, he says, although his work also involves helping others. "I particularly love giving back to underprivileged communities because it is crucial to awaken hope and spark ambition in such environments. I teach dance every week at schools and community groups as an outreach initiative Vuyani Dance Theatre has. I aim to be an inspiration to the community I come from in Port Elizabeth; to show that life is filled with endless possibilities regardless of one's background."

He also teaches open classes to the public as part of Vuyani's work to boost health awareness in the city. Bongwana says these lessons are a fun and affordable way to keep fit and healthy and learn dance at the same time, while possibly uncovering the talented dancers of the future.

"I strive to be the force that changes people's minds about dance being a career," he adds. "We need to make people understand that all solutions to social issues can be found through art, because as performers we are able to touch and change lives through what we do. I am grateful to have received a platform to excel in my talents and hope to inspire young people to not tire of finding opportunities to be better and do what they love."

Bongwana's dancing career began in 1999 and in 2005 he joined Uphondo Lwe Afrika in Port Elizabeth. He then spent several years with the Dodgy Clutch Company, touring the UK and the US with choreographer Robyn Orlin. He performed in the ANC Centenary Celebration and has worked with James Ngcobo on the theatre show Ketekang. With Vuyani he has performed in numerous festivals in South Africa and New York.

Bongwana is the composer and musical director of Siva, a dance work that has performed in China. He's an accomplished singer too, and toured with dancer and choreographer Gregory Maqoma as a singer in the production *Exit/Exist*.

He was recently promoted to the position of production assistant at Vuyani Dance Theatre. — *Lesley Stones*

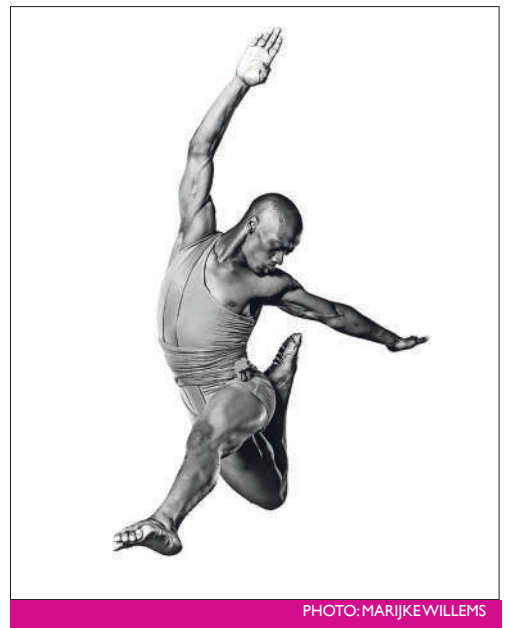


PHOTO: MARIJKE WILLEMS



200 YOUNG SOUTH AFRICANS ● ARTS AND CULTURE



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

OSCAR BUTHELEZI

Dancer

Twitter: @oscar58735354

World-class dancer Oscar Buthelezi proved himself truly worthy of that description by winning the Kurt Jooss Choreography Prize in May. This prestigious award is held once every three years in Germany, and Buthelezi won both the overall award and the Audience Choice Award — the first time the same dancer has won both awards in the six times they've been held.

Buthelezi (24) pocketed €10 000 and earned international recognition for his bold choreography and the brilliant style and sensitivity of his dancing.

He was dancing at the tender age of six in the Via Vosloorus Mapantsula Youth Club and choreographing his own pieces before he was a teenager. He appeared on TV in YO TV Groove and Jika maJika, and danced in France and the Netherlands with Nkosinathi Cultural Productions.

A big break came in 2010 when he won a training course with Moving Into Dance Mophatong (MIDM). He's now a member of the professional Moving Into Dance company and contributes significantly to its choreographic output.

He recently worked as a choreographic assistant to renowned "dance disruptor" Jessica Nupen on *Romeo & Juliet: Rebellion & Johannesburg*, which toured Germany and then opened the 2016 Dance Umbrella in Johannesburg.

His plans now are to continue creating works for Moving into Dance and other companies. "I want to find my own signature style and establish it on national and international stages," says Buthelezi. "I want to give back to communities as well because I believe that dance heals, and it has changed my life through opportunities that Moving into Dance has given me. I want to give other young people from communities like I came from a similar opportunity to change their futures."

Buthelezi says he always dreamed of changing his stars through dancing. "I come from circumstances that would very probably have kept me on the streets, but dance has taught me discipline. It prevented me from doing crime and drugs. It has taken my raw talent and groomed it into something I earn a living from and support my family with. Dance has moulded me into a successful artist who wants to achieve even more."

To help the next generation follow his beautifully choreographed footsteps, Buthelezi taught every week at Igagasi Primary School in Spruitview from 2011 to 2013, and now teaches teenagers in Newtown every Saturday for Moving into Dance. — Lesley Stones

THOMAS CHAPMAN

Architect

Website: localstudio.co.za

Pushing African architecture in a new direction is Thomas Chapman's goal.

Chapman has master's degrees in both architecture and urban design and couples that with his research into oral history and civic engagement to create designs that are inspired by and encourage community participation.

He's the founder and principal of architecture company Local Studio, formed in 2012, which focuses on innovations in public space design and alternative construction methods.

Although it's still a start-up, his company has already won the Saint Gobain Architecture for Social Gain award and a Gauteng Institute for Architecture Merit Award. Current projects include designing a pedestrian bridge in Westbury, an affordable housing tower in Braamfontein and a new cultural centre for Sophiatown. Local Studio is also the urban designer for a new framework for Cyrildene, the Chinatown of Johannesburg.

"I was lucky to have a great art teacher who encouraged me to pursue a creative career. He convinced me by telling me how much money an architect called Silvio Rech was making while doing great design and architecture. I ended up working for Silvio Rech for seven years before starting my own business," he says.

"I wasn't a particularly good student at architecture school, but was drawn to running my own projects outside of university fairly early on. These projects started as small — often free — commissions, but taught me great lessons about communicating with clients and professionalism, and allowed me to test many of my urban agendas."

He went solo in 2012, and has now grown his team to 10 people; there are usually around 25 projects in progress.

His aims are to create inclusive and responsive public spaces through his designs, and to be bold in experimenting with new construction technologies to find lasting, cost-effective solutions to urban spatial problems.

He's deeply concerned with the role a building's form can play in the products of apartheid — the townships. He spent nine years researching the urban history of the western areas of Johannesburg, which include Sophiatown and Westbury. That work has seen him present papers in San Francisco, Amsterdam and Berlin. "I have a few live projects in the area as well and I'm building a community centre, a network of cycle paths and several parks." — Lesley Stones



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

VIANNEY FARMER

Editor-in-chief, SATMag

Twitter: @VianneyFarmer

Attracting a bigger audience to the theatre is one of the main goals Vianney Farmer has for his young publication, *South African Theatre Magazine* (SATMag).

As its founder and editor-in-chief, Farmer is giving the theatrical industry its own mouthpiece and making people more aware of what's on and what's worth seeing.

"My aim as editor is to promote South African theatre and its artists and, most importantly, to produce a platform where young and established theatre-makers can obtain exposure for their excellence and along with that, bring audiences back to the theatre," he says. "I hope this magazine will inspire artists to continue to create exciting works, for the reader to make positive contributions to theatre and for South Africa to recognise the value and importance of its theatre, because theatre in South Africa is in actual fact alive! This is what I give back to a craft that has aided in shaping my being."

Farmer (26) is no slouch on stage himself: he starred in *Equus* and won the Best Actor Award for his portrayal of Dr Martin Dysart at the Glass Crown Awards in 2011. He's also appeared in *Verwagtings*, *Outers*, *Pillowman*, *In Our Blood*, *Verve*, *Glitches*, *Crave*, the one-man show *Simfonia*, and produced and starred in *Porcelain* at the State Theatre. He also produced *Suster*, which recently won two awards from Die Reviewer.

A more unusual role came in *ONSkuld* — 'n *Mobile Thriller*, the first "mobile thriller" ever staged in South Africa. Audience members meet the actors and literally join them in a car as the actors "get into character" for a show they are preparing for. Farmer then produced and starred in the follow-up, *aLEXA*, and is starring in the third instalment of these mobile thrillers, *bRENT*.

He formed his own company, VNA Productions, to help other young artists to learn, hone their skills and find their voice and space within the industry. He enjoys producing works that heighten awareness about the issues that ail society.

"I love being a theatre artist as it provides me the opportunity to create work that evokes conversations with the human soul," he says. "I take delight in playing eccentric characters that allow me to delve deep into the human psyche, to voice out the unique tales of our unique country and the world beyond it." — Lesley Stones



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

LWANDILE FIKENI

Arts writer

Twitter: @LwandileFikeni

Biker Mice from Mars and *Animal Farm* were two major influences behind the career of Lwandile Fikeni.

The comic book rodents and talking pigs combined to show Fikeni how works of fiction can provoke political discourse, and that's something he carries forward in his own writing.

Fikeni is a culture writer and art critic who won the Arts Journalist of the Year award in 2015 from the National Arts Festival and Business and Arts South Africa. He also won a gold award for features writing and a silver award for his reviews.

"My interest in art stemmed from my love of comics and cartoons," he says. "I used to draw and trace comic books and I watched *X-Men* and *Biker Mice from Mars* quite a lot. When I stumbled on George Orwell's *Animal Farm* in my dad's collection of literature, I became really intrigued with imaginative works. These talking animals seemed to be engaged in something I could vaguely make out as political discourse."

The metaphors and allegories in the writing piqued his interest in how works of art or fiction are constructed, and what they have to say about the society and the time in which they were created, he says.

Writing about art only came after he spent four years in advertising, winning an award for a TV advert in 2011. But he grew frustrated by how advertising revolves around promoting stereotypes, so he switched to arts journalism. He describes his work as "critical dialogue on art and politics or the politics of art, image and image making, in fine art, literature, pop culture and media".

"I was frightened by the thought of being a full-time writer, without the cushion of a monthly salary," he admits, but winning the Arts Journalist of the Year award has confirmed he made the right move.

Fikeni also writes about pop and youth culture, intermingled with discourses on politics and society. He contributes regularly to *City Press #Trending* and has been published by the *Mail & Guardian* and many other publications.

"I don't have very clear goals except, perhaps, to try write art out of privileged spaces and privileged situations into the realm of the everyday; that art becomes synonymous with culture in South Africa." — Lesley Stones



PHOTO: SUPPLIED



200 YOUNG SOUTH AFRICANS ● ARTS AND CULTURE

GARETH PEARSON & MICHAEL TYMBIOS

Founders, First Thursdays

Twitter: #FirstThursdays

Making museums and art galleries more popular is the idea behind the First Thursdays projects run by Gareth Pearson and Michael Tymbios. The Cape Town duo has been running events since 2012, in which museums and galleries stay open — with free admittance — on the first Thursday of the month. Artists are encouraged to attend and interact with the visitors. Theatres, live music venues, cultural institutions and design studios are also asked to join in and stage special events too, such as exhibition openings, walkabouts or performances. Local retailers and restaurants also keep their doors open.

"First Thursdays attracts a large audience to restaurants and bars in participating areas. These make up an important part of the greater experience and add flavour to the programme," says Tymbios.

The events give people an unusual night out, and Pearson and Tymbios hope they will have the broader effect of encouraging young people to visit these often underused public art spaces and start collecting art themselves. The Cape Town events have grown into one of the city's foremost cultural experiences, attracting thousands of people every month, says Tymbios. The Johannesburg edition was launched in May 2015 and now spans Braamfontein, Rosebank and Newtown.

Pearson is a project manager who previously worked on the ArtScience Prize, TEDxStellenbosch and Spin Street House. Tymbios is an award-winning graphic designer who worked in advertising as an art director. They met participating in a Critical Mass cycle through the city.

"We both grew up in Cape Town and we're both urbanists at heart, and First Thursdays was born out of our shared interest in the city and public space," says Pearson. "Our working relationship is incredibly complementary. We think very differently, the result being a lot of small conversations where we go back and forth and eventually end up somewhere else entirely.

"What we're trying to do is create cities that foster a better society for citizens different and alike to share the same spaces, get to know one another, deal with important issues, empathise, learn, be inspired, smile. Art and urban space are good ways to do that." — *Lesley Stones*



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

RUSSELL GRANT

Cinema entrepreneur and musician

Twitter: @bioscopetonight

If you enjoy thought-provoking, offbeat and sometimes just plain wacky cinema, you'll be a fan of Jo'burg's Bioscope cinema. The seats are salvaged from cars, you can take your pizza and wine in with you, and watch anything from kung fu fests to deep documentaries and French classics.

The man to thank is Russell Grant (31), who set up The Bioscope in Maboneng with his business partner Darryl Els in 2010, and since this year Grant has had sole responsibility for it.

"It was a daring project that surprised a lot of people, at a time when the idea of being in town was still a rather foreign concept, as well as the idea of going to a cinema that wasn't a recognisable mall cinema. We're proud to have kept the cinema going and relevant for all these years. It's taken constant attention and constant reinvention," he says.

One of its attractions is that it screens movies too small to make it onto the usual movie circuit, giving local filmmakers a chance to have their work screened. That allows audiences to see more provocative or important work than that provided by mainstream cinemas.

"We try to always focus on local cinema. We have had success with a number of films that would never have seen a nationwide release. So we have been able to help grow an audience for local cinema," he says.

Grant also works with embassies to expose viewers to other cultures through films, with events co-hosted by the Indian, Portuguese, Colombian, Danish, German and French Embassies.

"It's really been about giving Jo'burg something different, fun and interesting. We have hosted a number of unique shows and concepts, including some really interesting outdoor cinema screenings across the city."

When he's not at the movies Grant is the bass player for the pop/rock band Shortstraw, which has an album on iTunes. They have travelled to Australia and Japan and will soon tour Europe. "We're proud to now be representing South Africa on a more global stage," Grant says. "We're also the proud host of an event called Boosh, where we host up-and-coming acts.

"We are also responsible for putting on Mandelapalooza, a soon-to-be-annual Mandela Day event where we raise money for Cotlands and the Yenzani Children's home. We did it last year, and it was a real hit, so we'll do it again." — *Lesley Stones*



PHOTO: SUPPLIED



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

ADELAIDE JANUARY

Poet

Twitter: @Ada_Lady01

As a 14-year-old girl living in the little town Kuruman in the Northern Cape, Adelaide January discovered the only thing she could find solace in was her poetry. Since then she's never stopped writing, and now runs a poetry organisation to help other people find their way through words.

"Not many opportunities were available for poets in my town while growing up, besides being part of school plays and taking part in local competitions," she says. "My love for poetry grew over the years and I started using my notebooks as my places of safety. Writing poetry makes me disappear into a world where only I am in control of what happens next."

In 2013 she realised that many other potential poets growing up in her town were facing the same challenges. "I decided to do something about and that's when I started a poetry movement called Kurara Wordsmiths (KWS) where we host poetry sessions free of charge to provide a platform for young poets to showcase their talents to the community."

KWS has hosted several successful shows, with the most recent event fielding five poets from Johannesburg. The poetry sessions also keep the youth off the streets and expose the participants to potential sponsors, January says. The department of arts and culture recently spotted some talented poets at the sessions and invited them to take part in a regional writers' festival.

Her movement has also started a dictionary campaign to help disadvantaged kids by supplying them with dictionaries to spark a love of words. Another venture is an online readers' club for the Kuruman youth, to hopefully promote a culture of buying and reading books again. Next, January is aiming to organise writers' workshops to help local poets improve their writing skills, explore ways of publishing their work and understand copyright laws.

"In the future I would like to see the brand growing into our surrounding areas in the Northern Cape and being able to collaborate with other provinces," she says. On a personal level, the 24-year-old is preparing a studio album and working to finish a diploma in public relations. You can listen to her reciting two poems, Letter to the Unknown 1 and 2, under her performing name Ada_Lady on SoundCloud. — *Lesley Stones*

KYLE LOUW

Performance poet

Twitter: @27thWarrior

Kyle Louw (27) was working in IT when an idle scroll through Facebook changed his life.

"I was sitting in my grey cubicle punching numbers and running tests. I took a break to scroll down Facebook (as we do when we are supposed to be working) and stumbled across my first ever spoken word experience. I was instantly transported into its magical world to clever rhyme schemes and rhythmic metaphors," he says. "Within two weeks I found myself standing on a stage in front of 300 people."

Louw was already unhappy with his job, and an interest in language saw him enrol in a week-long course in neurolinguistics. That coincided with his online discovery of spoken poetry. "I've always had a love of language and this self-help course changed everything," he says. "In record-breaking time I went from that first performance to representing the Western Cape in the second Annual National Slam."

He now holds slam championship titles from InZync, Linqua Franca, Poetica and the Open Book Festival, holds a Best English Poet award, and has given a TEDxCape Town talk. He also worked with Cape Town Tourism to create their official video.

He rhymes with concern about the Facebook and Twitter era — when we're lonely despite endless virtual friends — and about women slavishly following beauty magazines instead of letting their real selves shine. Politics and racism get a battering too. His words are witty and entertaining, but intelligent and disturbingly shrewd.

To give back to the community, Louw has run some Voices of Tomorrow poetry workshops for young children. Now he's drawing on that teaching experience during a three-month tour of India, where he was invited to join an initiative running workshops and performing at universities to help people speak up for social change.

During the tour he hopes to meet global contacts who could provide a stepping stone for his next move, because poetry isn't a viable career in South Africa.

"There's a bunch of us trying to build an industry and we've got a contract with Joburg Theatre to run productions there. It might not be something I can make a living with in South Africa in my lifetime, but I'm hoping to build it up for kids. You can make a perfectly good living in the UK or US where there are big platforms and networks; we're just quite young in that area." — *Lesley Stones*



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PHOTO BY MARTIN MÜLLER

LEBOGANG MASHIGO

Founder and director, Nubreed

Twitter: @leewaMashigo and @nubreedMI

Lebogang Mashigo (25) heads Nubreed, a registered non-profit organisation that gives music lessons to kids in rural Mpumalanga.

Raised by a single parent, she never stopped believing in her dreams despite being teased and bullied. When she moved to Pretoria to study theology at a Bible college, Mashigo met many people who saw a leadership role for her even before she believed it herself.

"Living in a rural, disadvantaged area can close your mind; you stop dreaming and believing, because we are surrounded by poverty and negative behaviour," she says. "I was inspired to start Nubreed as a platform for young community members to express themselves and have a safe and enabling environment. Through Nubreed I am also aiming to create jobs for qualified young musicians."

Nubreed is based in Kwaggafontein and offers music lessons to youngsters under 21, covering keyboards, bass and acoustic guitar, drums, singing, African instruments and a compulsory theory course to help them become excellent performers and composers. It also offers life skills, business development and mentoring.

The students can then register for Unisa certificates in music, form their own bands, audition for orchestras and provide entertainment at local venues and events.

So far three students have passed the Unisa music exams, and Nubreed won the National Youth Development Agency's National Youth Competition in 2015.

Mashigo is also a Young African Leaders Initiative alumnus. "I love what I do because I believe in leading a purpose-driven life. Nubreed has allowed me to contribute positively to young people and the community at large," she says.

She wants to see it become the first school of the arts in the province and expand into rural areas across the country. This growth has already begun. "We were initially strictly a music institute with a core focus on musical theory and practice, but we have ventured into dramatic arts, crafts and fine art." Artist Collen Skosana is now running art sessions with them with the goal of creating works good enough to feature in top art galleries.

Nubreed is entirely donor funded, and Mashigo has applied for National Lottery funding to help cover its costs.

"I want to leave a legacy that will outlive me," she says. "I don't dream of fame — I dream of raising leaders and my community and country." — Lesley Stones

THEMBA MBUYISA

Photographer and fashion blogger

Twitter: @Themba_Mbuyisa

Themba Mbuyisa is shooting towards a permanent career in fashion after being named Elle magazine's style reporter of the year. It's the second time Mbuyisa's eye for style has earned him that role, as he was also Elle's top choice in 2013. This time he's won a contract with the magazine and camera equipment worth R25 000.

"Themba's work wowed us; it's edgy, architectural and his strong point of view, visual narrative and passion for style reporting sealed the deal," said the magazine.

Mbuyisa often photographs "street style", seeing the streets as "a personal runway for every individual who takes time to think about how they want to look for the day." He's a snappy dresser in front of the camera lens, too.

He points his camera lens at beautiful colours and wonderful sunlight, and at people who catch his attention with the way they walk and their facial expressions. "For me, colour, personality and facial expressions are what tell a story," he says.

The first time he ever used a camera was when his mother wanted him to photograph her and her newborn baby, when he was 10. He's turning 24 now, and has completed an advanced programme in photography at the Market Photo Workshop in Johannesburg, after first stud-



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

ying the foundation and intermediate courses.

Before that he studied desktop publishing and design at Vega School and took a BSc in mathematical sciences at the University of the Witwatersrand.

Success has come quickly in the last couple of years. He won third place in the national award run by the World Photography Organisation at the Sony World Photography Awards and had his entry exhibited in London when he was just 22. He travelled to Brazil for an arts residency in 2014, taking part in the Rural.Scapes arts residency in São Paulo.

In the same year he was shortlisted for the 2014 Gisèle Wulfsohn mentorship in photography, and last year he was a finalist in the Ariano International Film Festival in Italy.

His work has also been exhibited several times in South Africa, most recently in the What Does It Mean? photographic exhibition and video installation at the Goethe On Main gallery. Mbuyisa was also hired as a live-streaming videographer for the South African Fashion Week in 2015, and took photos for the Fassi 2016 photography advertising calendar in Italy. — Lesley Stones

THEMBI MABULE

Milliner

Instagram: Innovative_ways Website: thembimabule.com

Chic designer hats created by Thembi Mabule have graced the heads of Graça Machel and First Lady Bongi Ngema-Zuma.

They've also appeared in the soap opera *Generations* and on the catwalks at Africa International Fashion Week.

While most people see hats as a fancy accessory for special occasions, Mabule is trying to popularise them for daily life too. These aren't "busy" hats, she says, but are far simpler creations that complement your outfit. "There's still a need for education and more exposure to hats you can wear every day," she says. "I wear hats every day and currently I'm trying to bring back the old vintage style of a small bonnet worn halfway back on your head, with your hair curling out of the front."

Mabule (32) was already in business by the age of 20, making and selling handbags in a shop she rented while studying retail business management at the University of Johannesburg. She became hooked on hats after taking a millinery course and now has a shop in Pretoria, supplies boutiques in Rosebank and Athol Square and sells them via her website.

Most of her designs are crafted in sinamay, which is woven from banana palm, and dyed in fabulous colours ready for moulding into different shapes. She also uses felt and straw.

Mabule is working to grow the industry by running courses for aspiring milliners, but she's concerned that standards are beginning to slip. "It's worrying because we have a lot of people who are teaching in the wrong way. The quality of the materials they use and workmanship isn't up to standard. It takes time before you can say you are a milliner, and it's important to learn from the right person."

"My goal and focus — besides growing the company — is to contribute to millinery in South Africa by assisting other upcoming milliners. One day I would like to establish a school for millinery. I see myself more on the side of empowerment and development by offering mentoring and training in this field."

She hopes to do that by bringing all the interested parties together, empowering upcoming talented designers and teaching people more about hats and how to wear them at fashion shows and exhibitions. — Lesley Stones

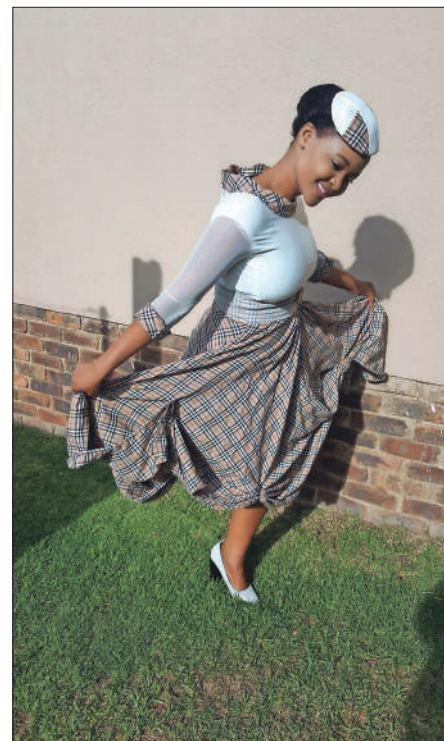


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BUHLE NGABA

Actress and writer

Twitter: @BuhleNgaba

Buhle Ngaba (25) is working to develop storytelling among underprivileged young girls through her writing and her non-profit organisation, KaMatla Productions.

Ngaba created KaMatla to develop the arts, and it has worked with the Black Professional Scholarship Fund and legal experts to run drama workshops about the law for children of the Amazing Grace Children's Home in Eickenhof, Johannesburg. She is also working with the Ruth Mompati Foundation to stage similar workshops in the Ruth Segomotsi Mompati district.

Her first novel, *The Girl Without A Sound*, was written to empower and inspire young black girls and remind them that their voices deserve to be heard. She wrote the story in defiance of a racist and patriarchal society where black female bodies are disempowered and dismissed, and as a call to action for girls and boys of colour to use their voices to shape their lives.

The book was released online as a free download in February and achieved almost 3 000 downloads in the first week.

Ngaba is best known as the actress who played Mrs Lyons in the hit musical *Blood Brothers*. She also acted in *Missing* and was nominated as the Best Supporting Actress in both the Fleur du Cap and Naledi Theatre Awards.

Ngaba studied acting and contemporary performance at Rhodes University and processes of performance at the University of Leeds. While she was in the UK, she helped a group called Wast — for women seeking asylum in the UK — to create a piece of theatre for a refugee conference.

Later as a member of Ubom! Eastern Cape Drama Company she performed in several productions at the National Arts Festival and across the country. She has also worked with the Kodumela Bokamoso organisation to create workshop programmes for the youth of Limpopo, to encourage innovation in social development.

Now she is writing a script of her own that she will also star in, about the life of her great aunt, Ruth Segomotsi Mompati, one of the first women in Umkhonto we Sizwe. — Lesley Stones



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JONATHAN ROXMOUTH

Actor **Twitter: @JonathanRox**

It's only a matter of time before South Africa loses its best musical actor to Broadway. For Jonathan Roxmouth (29), a starring role on Broadway is inevitable. Hopefully as the *Phantom in Phantom of the Opera*, he says, which is still the role he's best remembered for on home turf.

He's also starred as Sweeney Todd, Tony in *West Side Story*, Bertie Wooster in *Jeeves and Wooster* and owned the stage in numerous smaller, more intimate productions, a lot of them self-penned.

The man has even upstaged Jesus, with his stunning performance of Judas in *Jesus Christ Superstar*. His latest role is the Pharaoh in *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat*.

He's as comfortable on a huge stage filled with razzmatazz as he is in a tiny theatre as a raconteur and piano player. "It's nice to mix things up. I never want to do the same sort of show twice in a row — you get predictable and boring and that kills you more than anything else. It's nice to flip between those worlds and keep the audience guessing and that's the challenge for any actor, to do something brand new."

He's swift to credit those who have helped his career including Pieter-Dirk Uys, Ian von Memerty and Pieter Toerien. The latter advised him to use his time between big performances to start writing material himself.

"The thing I am most proud of and grateful for is that I have been around people who have encouraged me to do my own stuff, not just wait for a phone call for auditions for an overseas musical," he says. "We don't want to become an import-only industry, that's very dangerous."

His first original show was *Call Me Lee*, a tribute to the



PHOTO: RENEE FROUWS

flamboyant pianist Liberace. "The biggest thing I have tried to straddle is doing what you want to do without making the audience feel like you are telling them what they should watch," he says. "The secret of a great show is when everyone — the writer, actors and audience — all leave

feeling like they got what they wanted."

Among those local productions were *From The Footlights*, a concert of songs from hit musicals, which he also released as an album, and another album is in process.

The theatre can thank the dullness of South Africa's legal

system for Roxmouth's presence. He originally planned a career in law, until he realised there's no jury to perform to. "We don't have a jury system or an audience, just some dozy fart in a red robe, so what's the point?" he jokes. — *Lesley Stones*

BONGANI NJALO

Artist **Twitter: @BNjalo_artist**

Bongani Njalo is a man very much in demand; he's worked on art projects in several cities already, despite being only 28 years old.

His latest move took him to Bloemfontein as the project co-ordinator for the Programme of Innovation at the University of the Free State, a long-term art project bringing together internationally established artists and the communities around Bloemfontein.

Njalo is a fine arts graduate from Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, where he specialised in stained glass. His works have been bought by private collectors and are on display in public galleries in South Africa and abroad.

Before his graduation in 2011 he was an intern with Mandela Bay Development Agency, where he compiled the book *Art & Artists of the Eastern Cape*, encompassing more than 200 local artists. Njalo also organised a 2011 Grahamstown National Arts Festival exhibition featuring works by these artists.

His impressive work as an intern saw him hired by Port Elizabeth Athenaeum, a hub for emerging creatives, as its administration and marketing co-ordinator. He also carried on creating his own artworks, and was commissioned to create two pieces for the Nelson Mandela Bay's Route 67 Arts Journey, a public art route in Port Elizabeth.

In 2012 Njalo was invited to curate an exhibition for the Cape Town International Month of Photography Festival, showcasing works by unknown Eastern Cape photographers on an international platform.

Next he moved to Johannesburg to work at the Market Photo Workshop, before taking a job in Cape Town with the Arterial Network, an organisation dealing with issues affecting artists and cultural practitioners across Africa. That exposed him to broader issues facing artists, such as freedom of artistic expression and cultural policy.

Meanwhile Njalo's own work won him the David Koloane Mentorship Award in 2014, and he returned to Johannesburg to focus on his art. He briefly worked as the manager and curator for the HAZARD Gallery and still serves on the curatorial panel of the State of the Art online gallery.

Soon he'll be on the move again, because he's been accepted into the international leadership program in visual arts management at Duesto Business School, which takes place in Bilbao in Spain in November and New York next March.

The course aims to provide experienced arts and culture professionals with the global skills necessary to thrive in this industry. — *Lesley Stones*



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

AMEERA PATEL

Storyteller **Twitter: @AmeeraPatel**

Ameera Patel is an actor, theatre practitioner, poet and now a novelist too. She's recently had her first novel *Outside the Lines* published by Modjaji Books, and is acting in three shows at the National Arts Festival in Grahamstown this year.

Joburg-born Patel did a BA in theatre and performance at the University of Cape Town in 2005 and received a distinction for her master's in creative writing at Wits in 2013. She is a founding member of the poetry collective Rite 2 Speak and has performed at local festivals and at a Heritage Day festival in Portugal.

"I call myself a storyteller because that encompasses all the things I do," she says. "My first love has been acting and theatre-making, and writing has slowly grown on the side and is now as strong. My poetry is very personal and speaks very much to my life and womanhood, with quite a feminist slant."

Her theatre highlights include performing in *Victory*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, *Hot Seat Confessions*, *Cincinatti* and *Whistle Stop*, which she also wrote. *Whistle Stop* won a Silver Standard Bank Ovation Award at The National Arts Festival in 2014 and the Pansa Best New Writer Award. She is now reviving it for this year's Grahamstown festival, where she will also appear in two other plays, *Rat Race* and *Scorched*.

Patel's acting has made her a familiar face on TV too, with roles in *Hard Copy*, *Binnelanders*, *Sokhulu* and *Partners 2, Remix, Mzansi Love 3* and *Generations*.

Outside the Lines is a work of fiction dealing with parenthood, and is a cross between a thriller and a family drama. Patel has a child, but says the novel isn't based on her own experiences. "There's lot of drugs and sex, so it's definitely not autobiographical," she jokes.

What makes her a name to watch is the way she works comfortably with a multi-faceted approach. "I use different mediums to tell stories and I'm not completely focused on just acting. I'm also a theatre-maker and interested in the devising processes and the writing processes, and telling stories through all sorts of different mediums." — *Lesley Stones*



PHOTO: SUPPLIED



TANDO SONGWEVU

Founding director, Embo

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Improving the image of Africa, increasing tourism and persuading more traders and investors to do business here are the ambitious goals of Tando Songwevu.

She's doing that through her company the Embo Group, which she formed after leaving her job with the SABC in 2011. She describes Embo as a pan-African media, communications and events management company.

Songwevu spent her childhood in the Eastern Cape and moved to Pretoria when she was 13, where the different languages and cultures gave her a broader view of Africa. She went on to graduate from the Thabo Mbeki African Leadership Institute (TMALI) at Unisa and studied public relations at the University of Johannesburg, as well as project management with the Expert Group Academy.

In 2012 she became a partner, researcher and co-ordinator at Research and Action in South Africa, a cultural exchange programme with African-American students at Michigan State University in the US. In 2015 she was involved in a Back to Africa campaign with the University of California Los Angeles. Both projects forged links between Africa and the diaspora and contributed to cultural and economic development.

She was named a heritage ambassador by the National Heritage Council in 2015/16 and was awarded a Golden Shield for her work promoting South Africa's heritage globally.

She wishes to grow Embo's network across Africa to promote social cohesion, expand trade and increase investment between African countries and the rest of the world, by driving economic activity in the arts, cultural heritage and tourism. Unisa, TMALI and the

Archie Mafeje Research Institute have endorsed Embo's projects.

The core of her work involves reaching out to the African diaspora through projects that contribute to meaningful debates on Africa and the promotion of South Africa's cultural heritage.

"I am inspired by the prospects of an integrated prosperous Africa," she says.

"I am inspired by the youth who are discovering an alternative historical narrative. Pooling together all ideas and translating them into their everyday realities — the changes they aspire for, the kind of life they wish to live — the youth taking from the past to shape their own future. It is the youth that will change the economic trajectory of this country and continent."

Songwevu is also a TV presenter on *African Spiritual Realms* on SABC 1. — Lesley Stones



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

VUYOLWETHU SOTASHE

Singer

Twitter and Instagram: [@vuyosotashe](https://twitter.com/vuyosotashe)

Jazz vocalist Vuyolwethu Sotashe has made the classic fairy-tale move from singing with the local church choir to performing on the international stage.

He's won numerous career-enhancing competitions and valuable bursaries, taking him from Umtata to the New York club circuit.

"Music has always been part of my world. Jazz music in particular has helped me realise my identity, not only as an artist, but as a human being that has to interact and live with other human beings," he says.

Jazz brings together many different cultures and forces you to consider the person next to you, he says. "When I'm on the bandstand I always have to be listening — attentive and aware of the musicians I'm playing with. They would be listening to me too — it's a community in action. I've been able to express myself artistically with the most freedom I can in this music."

Sotashe was born into a musical family and sang in school and in church. He moved to Cape Town to complete his education, where his love of jazz was ignited. Despite having no formal musical training he was accepted onto a course for jazz studies by the University of Cape Town's South African College of Music.

He went on to win the FMR Jazz Scholarship in 2011 and first prize in the jazz category at the 2011 Samro Foundation Overseas Scholarship Competition for Singers. He graduated from UCT with top honours and won the 2012 Class Medal.

Sotashe moved to New York in 2013 on a Fulbright Scholarship for a master's in music at William Paterson University. He won first prize at the first Mid-Atlantic Jazz Festival Vocal Competition in 2014, and returned to perform on the festival's main stage in 2015. That year he won the Audience Award at the Shure Montreux Jazz Voice Competition in Switzerland (www.mjaf.ch) and came second overall, and he's been invited back to perform again this year.

He's sung in Italy and Sweden, appeared at the Cape Town International Festival with George Benson and the Cape Town Symphony Orchestra, toured with the band Proxy in the UK and performed with gospel artist Israel Houghton as part of the New Breed (Africa) ensemble. His most recent triumph was coming third in the Thelonious Monk Institute International Jazz Vocal Competition.

He now sings with the Lincoln Centre Orchestra in New York and performs around the city with other musicians. — Lesley Stones



PHOTO: MARC DUCREST

LAURA WINDVOGEL

Artist

Website: ladyskollie.com Instagram: [@ladyskollie](https://www.instagram.com/ladyskollie)

Lady Skollie (Laura Windvogel) has made sex her career. Painting it, not doing it, with confrontational artwork rich with suggestive images of bananas and repeated patterns of "pussy prints".

It's a strange way to earn a living, but it's becoming more important as she now channels her ideas and attitudes into activism.

Windvogel (28) paints under her pseudonym Lady Skollie and delights in being in your face. Her work exhibited at several group shows and art fairs such as *Sex at the Stevenson Gallery* and in her own solo exhibition, *Ask For What You Want*.

She's also recorded a series of entertaining podcasts talking about relationships and giving her opinions and confessions.

For a long time her work drew phallic symbols and vaginal shapes without tackling the issues of abuse, making them almost titillating, rather than confrontational. She admits she tried to stay away from activism, although her captions always gave her work a context. Now she's becoming more strident in the artwork, demanding that its messages be heard.

"Lately I have been very consumed with sexual assault and how commonplace it is in South Africa, and how 'normal' it is. People have been approaching me and wanting me to speak at survivors' centres; they're assuming I'm so passionate about it because I must be a survivor of some sort of abuse and I'm not — I'm just very passionate about it. I think it's something we should all be very angry about," she says. "Even if you are not a survivor of some kind of violence you should be so angry, and express your anger and discuss what's going on. Something like one in every four women has been a victim, so if you do the maths it's insane. I'm trying to unstigmatise it. If my brashness in speaking about it helps them to speak about it, then I've done my job."

Her work may offend and has been described as both beautiful and grotesque. She says she is obsessed with sexual images because "it's the simplest and the most complicated thing of being human, and [it] reminds us that we are just animals. Sex, food and sleep are very primal".

— Lesley Stones



PHOTO: SIMIATO

PENELOPE YOUNGLESON

Playwright and director

Twitter: [@pennyyoungles](https://twitter.com/pennyyoungles)

Penelope Youngleson is helping disabled children to enjoy and learn through the theatre, and also runs her own production company.

For the last three years she has taught at the Battswood Art Centre in Grassy Park in the Cape Flats, giving classes to more than 500 able-bodied and differently abled children every week.

This involved staging several productions with the children, including a mini-Shakespeare festival for deaf pupils. Her classes had a 100% pass rate despite some literacy and learning difficulties.

"My focus is very much on working with learners and using mentorship and performance interventions to curb further education and training dropout rates, and empower young women aged 15-18 to matriculate and gain access to tertiary learning systems," she says.

Youngleson co-founded the Rust Co-Operative theatre company in Cape Town with Philip Rademeyer, and writes, directs, produces and designs new work through this company. She has written seven scripts so far, telling stories about and in praise of people from this country.

Rust Co-Operative focuses exclusively on South African stories and has presented nine shows at 21 festivals in three countries. Her productions have used four of the 11 official languages, as well as some dialects.

Some of the shows have been staged in mainstream theatres including Artscape and the Market Theatre.

Youngleson's play *Expectant* won a Standard Bank Ovation award in 2013, and went to Amsterdam for the AfroVibes festival. Siembamba (co-written with Rademeyer) won a Silver Standard Bank Ovation award in 2014 and went to the Amsterdam Fringe festival, where it came second in the Best International Production Award.

In the Fleur du Cap awards of 2014 Youngleson was named Best New Director. Her shows *Nat* and *Full Stops on Your Face* have been selected for several festivals in the Western Cape. *Nat* has now received National Arts Council funding to tour Western Cape schools and be part of some workshops and interventions on violence and gender with at-risk youngsters.

She holds an MA in Theatre Making from the University of Cape Town and has been selected as a 2016 Bertha Scholar to pursue an MPhil in social innovation through the UCT Graduate School of Business.

"In my creative practice, I hope to continue making work and representing my company and country at arts festivals both in South Africa and abroad," she says. — Lesley Stones



PHOTO: SUPPLIED



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JO BUITENDACH

Founder and tour guide, Past Experiences

Twitter: @pastexperiences

South Africa's biggest, busiest city evokes many emotions, and for Jo Buitendach, her relationship with Johannesburg has been a burgeoning love affair that has seen her build a business around introducing visitors to its remarkable people, intriguing communities and inspiring art.

Buitendach's background is in archaeology, but she wanted to spend time with people rather than relics, and originally thought of starting an archaeology tour business. She started out with a couple of inner city walking tours in what was a very dangerous area, but the tours were so popular that she shifted her focus from the past to the present, and built Past Experiences.

Seven years on, Jo has expanded Past Experiences to include archaeological tours in and around the Cradle, and a wide variety of city tours that explore the hearts of Johannesburg, Soweto and Pretoria. The tours are great outings for friends or family; there is a range of tours that have been customised to meet corporate team building needs, and the company will soon introduce a new school tour product.

"Helping people discover the excitement and heritage of our inner cities has been a gift that has helped me discover who I am as a person," she says. "One of the biggest gifts has been meeting people from so many walks of life, whether its tourists or car guards, hawkers, shop owners or graffiti artists."

It's perhaps Johannesburg's inner city graffiti that has led Jo on one of her most interesting journeys, as she recently completed her master's degree studying the heritage value of graffiti. Impermanent though it may be, graffiti and public art are a vital part of the city, particularly for the children who live and move around in it every day.

"We only have a short time to show people the real city centre and have an impact on their lives," Jo says. "We also make sure that we involve ourselves in the communities that we work in, looking for ways that we can work together for the good of the city. If we call keep sharing and promoting the inner city in a positive and realistic way, supporting its businesses, the district can only continue to improve for everyone who lives and works there." — *Kerry Haggard*



DAVIS COOK

Chief executive, RIIS

Twitter: @RIIS_innovate

With a career that spans brands such as KPMG and BlueIQ, not to mention high-level advisory positions within provincial government and host of degrees gained both locally and abroad, Davis Cook has achieved a great deal in a very short space of time.

But it's in his role as chief executive of the Research Institute for Innovation and Sustainability (RIIS) that he's found his most rewarding role.

"As an innovation-focused consultancy, RIIS helps organisations to adapt and remain relevant to changing economic, social, and market conditions," says Cook.

"This means we don't just deal with resource issues, we help our clients to understand the deeper social, generational, environmental and other factors that will impact on them as companies, as well as their staff, customers, and broader stakeholders. We want, and need, to change the world we live in."

From a project with the South African National Space Agency developing over a dozen start-ups in the local space industry, to other projects that have helped save lives in the railway industry, or assisting emerging farmers to enter global supply chains, there's a wealth of variety to keep Cook's work fresh and exciting.

Apart from his achievements in business, Davis is also a Jiu Jitsu sensei, which has given him the opportunity to travel and meet people with something in common.

"One of the things that really struck me in teaching Jitsu around the world is that when things get really difficult (and we make it as difficult as possible when training), we are capable of so much more than we imagine," he says.

When it comes to his favourite places in the world, Cook has a deep love for South Africa. He also loves Prague, but not just because this is where his partner is from.

He finds it fascinating that the Czech Republic has one of the lowest income inequality ratios in the world, something that was brought home to him quite starkly recently when he ran into one of the Czech presidential nominees, before the elections, just having a drink and a chat with someone at a local bar.

"It wasn't a campaign tour. He lived in the neighbourhood and wanted a quiet drink," he says. "It struck me that this is how society could be, and how I wanted my society to be. There's a lesson there for South Africa, I'm sure." — *Kerry Haggard*



NHLANHLA DLAMINI

Founder, Maneli Group

Website: www.maneligroup.com

Growing up in Soweto, Nhlanhla Dlamini dreamed of studying dramatic arts or teaching, but when he couldn't obtain bursaries for those disciplines, he chose to study commerce. Quickly developing a passion for economics, finance and entrepreneurship, he went on to complete an MPhil in development studies at Oxford and an MBA at Harvard Business School, as well as being a Rhodes Scholar in 2008.

After dreaming of the arts, studying commerce and working for the likes of McKinsey & Company and Morgan Stanley abroad, Dlamini started up his own company, the Maneli Group, which seeks opportunities to build and expand businesses in the food and agricultural sector.

"I wanted to address some of the biggest challenges that the world is currently grappling with, such as food security and sustainable farming," he says. "I believe that well-run agribusinesses are catalysts for economic growth and job creation, and I relish the opportunity to build my own business after years of advising other companies and management teams."

The Maneli Group has two subsidiaries — Maneli Pets and Maneli Commodities. The former manufactures pet foods using game and ostrich by-products, which are exported to the United States, while the latter is one of the first black-owned grain trading businesses in South Africa.

In the face of the country's most crippling drought in decades, Dlamini's advice to industry players is twofold. "Firstly, food companies have to build up cash reserves in the good years to help them through the bad years as a form of self-insurance, because droughts are inevitable. Secondly, agribusinesses need to diversify away from pure farming — if all your profits come from farming, your business will be very exposed to weather events."

Dlamini believes in surrounding yourself with good people, making sure that your colleagues are smart and have your interests at heart. "Be curious and energetic, and soak up



as much information as you can from as many sources as possible," he says. "Take the initiative. Being new to an industry gives you a fresh perspective, and you should use those insights to drive positive change." — *Kerry Haggard*

ISMAIL HASSEN

Managing director, CSR-Africa

Twitter: @IsmailHassen2

Ismail Hassen is no stranger to the spotlight, having won several competitions in 2015 including the Transnet/SABS Moving Ideas competition and the industry sector SMME award from the Africa Growth Institute, along with that body's SMME of the year award. These follow on several earlier achievements, including a R5-million investment in his Bitu-Box bitumen product pitched to the team on the 2014 season of *Dragons' Den SA*.

The Bitu-Box is a sea, road and rail storage solution that holds 24 000 litres of bitumen in a heated container. Before Ismail and his team created the Bitu-Box, the only solutions available to market were produced by Chinese companies, which only offered them on a rental or purchase basis. Key to the solution's success has been Hassen's talent for gathering investment into his business, including seed funding through the Eastern Cape Development Corporation.

Hassen spends most of his time with his company, CSR-Africa, which focuses on the design and manufacture of solutions for the bulk storage and transportation sector. He also consults in the manufacturing, agriculture and information technology sectors, and has positioned himself as an active mentor to four emerging SMMEs.

With his experience in navigating the local regulatory framework, Hassen also helps international businesses entering South Africa to implement the correct procedures when it comes to government policy and best business principles.

It's not just his experience in building businesses that positions him to be a trusted expert — in addition to his bachelor of technology degree, he holds an MBA from the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, where he researched methodology to improve project implementation.

"Having a strong ethical framework for your decision-making will give you a competitive edge as an entrepreneur," says Hassen. "It's also key to manage your time carefully, and remember that entrepreneurship is a lifestyle, it's not a job. Every failure is a life lesson, and it will make you tougher." — *Kerry Haggard*





PHOTO: SUPPLIED

MPUMELELO MFULA

Founder, Returning Home to Create **Twitter: @frypanmfula @rhtconline**

With his honours degree in political studies behind him and at least six months' worth of job-seeking ahead of him (if his social circle was to be believed), Mpumelelo Mfula used his last R2 000 to secure a domain name, customise a blog template and take the first steps towards creating an online retail space for emerging African streetwear brands.

The rest, as they say, is history. A year (and a great deal of effort) later, the result was the extremely successful Returning Home to Create (RHTC). It stocks exclusively African-owned brands that are authentic to today's space and time, and "look fresh".

Mfula's foray into online retail is about more than simply running a successful digital store, however. He is driven by the concept of encouraging African people of all ages to take the initiative to develop structures that allow them to be the main beneficiaries of their own culture and ideas.

"We all need to recognise and play our role in a constructive eco-system that will strengthen us as a people. That is how I believe we can encourage social progression and leave less space for exploitation and various forms of oppression," says Mfula.

Outside of his online retailing endeavours, he has also run a series of workshops entitled "Let's Play Outside" that encourage RHTC's customers and other participants to explore a creative, alternative approach to their personal goals, with the objective of beating the odds young Africans face today.

Each workshop was delivered as a "couch session" with various pioneers across different disciplines, who shared their own stories about their individual trajectories to success and more specifically, how a creative, alternative approach to things contributed to their success.

Looking forward, Mfula says he would like to see more young Africans create relevant solutions to genuine African problems.

"It begins by starting something and giving ourselves the opportunity to develop to a point where we can define African innovation and what it means to be authentically African in any setting," he explains.

And somehow he's finding time to do even more. His latest project, The Playground, creates customised furniture and mobile, multifunctional stalls for hire, democratising premium presentation by making it affordable for individuals, companies and organisations. — *Kerry Haggard*

KAYAN LEUNG

Human rights lawyer

Twitter: @kayan_leung

Kayan Leung believes in the principles of service and social justice. It's no surprise then that she pursued a legal career completing her LLB from Unisa, with certificates in advanced administrative law, human rights advocacy and litigation from the Mandela Institute at Wits. She is currently doing an LLM in International Human Rights.

Leung joined Lawyers for Human Rights in the Refugee and Migrant Rights Programme and has been involved in a number of strategic litigation cases in advancing refugee protection, especially for women and children concerning issues of access to health and education. She has recently embarked on a project with the Praekelt Foundation that will extend the advice and assistance of her organisation to thousands of asylum seekers and migrant workers who can't afford to travel or access law clinics.

The project will allow refugees and migrants to access general advice and guidance on their rights using their mobile phones, as well as report on xenophobic attacks, corruption and unlawful detentions. She has strong ambitions to expand the project outside of South Africa's borders, is currently exploring partnerships with other countries in the region, and recently presented a paper at an international conference on ICT for development.

While she says she finds her job immensely fulfilling, it's also littered with obstacles and challenges. In particular, she says it is heartbreaking to hear about the injustices people inflict against each other.

"In the same breath these most vulnerable people find hope and the strength to survive and move forward," she adds, "And I'm extremely encouraged by the rise of activism among young people and their commitment to become change agents. In my opinion, a good human rights activist will utilise and develop the law as a positive tool but simultaneously empower communities, especially the youth, to participate in developing a better Africa."

In recognition of her passion to promote gender equality and development of the youth, she was selected to participate in the Unesco Intergenerational Leadership Forum in 2015 and has been elected as a 2016 Yali fellow under the African Leadership Initiative.

Outside of her work with Lawyers for Human Rights and her exciting project, Leung still finds time to serve as a youth leader at a local church, focusing on developing and mentoring young people, and keeps involved in social upliftment projects with the Miss Earth South Africa Leadership Programme. — *Kerry Haggard*



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

GEORGINA JEPHSON

Attorney

Twitter: @georgiej

Georgina Jephson has spent the last five years working on the biggest class action suit South Africa has ever seen. In mid-May 2016 in a ground-breaking judgment, the High Court in Johannesburg confirmed that there are sufficient common issues to proceed with a class action against the South African gold mining industry to seek damages for tens of thousands of gold mine workers with silicosis and tuberculosis.

Remarkable in itself, this particular class action suit raises many new and complex issues, primarily because class actions are relatively new in South Africa.

"When we started working on the case, there were only a few court judgments on class actions and we had to make decisions about which route to take in the conduct of the litigation, without the guidance of precedent and established practice," she says. Back then, it was not yet clear whether class actions were available to people suffering purely personal injuries, when there is no breach of a constitutional right.

The case at hand spans 50 years, involving 30 defendant gold mining companies and tens of thousands of mine-workers across Southern Africa suffering from silicosis and tuberculosis that developed from working in gold mines. Her hope is that the outcome of the litigation will mean improved compensation payable to mineworkers afflicted with occupational lung diseases, as well as improved working conditions in all South African mines.

Originally choosing law as a career because it looked glamorous, and without an inkling of what human rights law entailed, Georgina's focus changed when her father was killed while she was completing her LLB.

"I realised that I am profoundly more fortunate than most South Africans, and that knowledge of the law is a powerful

tool," she says. "I decided that I wanted to use my skills and knowledge to advise, assist and empower people who have little, if any, access to justice."

Georgina was shocked when, in one of her first lectures, the professor explained that the law "is not about justice". Her realisation that legal representation is only available to those who can afford it also played a role in her choice of speciality.

In her spare time, Georgina keeps fit with trail running and mountain biking, and she loves to cook. — *Kerry Haggard*



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

DRISHA KIRKMAN

Director, Tutuka **Twitter: @drishanair**

When she joined a small Johannesburg start-up after returning from working in Europe, Drisha Kirkman had no idea that the company she joined as a junior marketing manager would lead global innovation in prepaid cards.

"Being a small company meant that not only was I responsible for marketing; I also learnt about the actual technology, support, sales and financials behind running the business," she says. "After the launch, the concept took off and over the next five years we rolled out gift cards across the majority of shopping centres in South Africa, retailers, insurers, corporates and rewards programmes.

"Tutuka was soon MasterCard's premier prepaid card processor in Southern Africa, and for me this meant having a strong relationship with the MasterCard and Standard Bank teams. Standard Bank then outsourced all their prepaid card programmes to Tutuka. I was responsible for the rollout and then became account manager for several of these programmes."

The software is created and controlled by Tutuka, so as the market changed Tutuka was able to innovate and improve on the offering. In 2010, Kirkman was the project manager for Visa's official Fifa World Cup card. The card was the first its kind to be used at an event and now is a standard at all Visa events, including future Fifa World Cups and Olympics.

Already in charge of several of the accounts and strategic relationships of the rapidly expanding business, Kirkman was appointed as director of Tutuka in 2011.

Since then her role has been to expand Tutuka globally, as the need for the company's solutions in other developing markets was clear. Tutuka has launched programmes in eight countries, with planned rollouts in several others. It is now one of the largest prepaid card processors in Africa and in Thailand, and has over 400 different card programmes globally. From a small team of seven people 10 years ago, the company now has 55 employees from six different countries in three offices.

Kirkman has led Tutuka's participation in a number of social projects, including participation in the Star Schools programme, and paying for additional tuition for female learners excelling in maths, biology and science. She also mentors many young women, and uses her extensive network to arrange work experience for students. This investment in the future of young women has played a key role in the lives of a medical student in Cuba, a psychologist, three law students, a scientist, and two students who went on to work at Tutuka. — *Kerry Haggard*



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PHOTO: SUPPLIED

NOTHANDO MOLEKETI

Chief operations officer, ReWare

Twitter: @ThandoMoleketi

It's no secret that smartphones are a key enabler in the South African and African environments, providing access to mobile banking, health care and education support that are key to the social and economic growth of our country.

It's also no secret that smartphones are well beyond the means of most South Africans, which is why Nothando Moleketi, along with chief executive Felix Martin-Aguilar, launched ReWare, a company that provides access to leading brand smart phones at affordable prices. The brand was launched across selected Edgars stores and via CNA online in November 2015.

She built on her career as a management consultant with Deloitte Consulting Strategy and Innovation, as well as her time spent working as part of the internal strategy team at CellC. This position in particular gave her a wealth of insight into the legal frameworks and other issues around operators and mobile telecommunications.

"ReWare formalises the purchase and resale of pre-owned smart phones in South Africa, which are all supplied with a service certification," says Moleketi. "My vision is that ReWare will become the most trusted certifier of pre-owned devices on the continent."

Her other major drivers are creating a broader environment that enables financial inclusion, job creation and environmental stability by tapping into the sharing economy network.

When she's not building her own smartphone empire, Moleketi is an avid foodie, loving South African food stories. She spends as much time as she can writing about her food experiences on her own blog, Jozi Foodie Fix, and is currently writing a food biography. — *Kerry Haggard*

VUMILE MSWELI

Executive head: client services partner for Africa, Vodacom

Twitter: @vumim

Inspired by the projects she completed as part of a Junior Achievement South Africa programme which saw her participate in a global entrepreneurship conference at the age of just 14, Vumile Msweli has collected an enviable number of qualifications in commerce, financial planning, life coaching and leadership. These have paved the way to her current role as executive head: client services partner for Africa at Vodacom, where she deals with service strategy for Africa at Vodafone for top-tier corporate clients.

Refusing to rest on her laurels, she also holds various postgraduate diplomas from Gibbs, Gimpa in Ghana, as well as New York and Harvard universities. She is currently working on her doctorate in applied leadership and coaching through Switzerland's University for Graduate Studies in Management.

Despite having accumulated so many qualifications, some of her greatest learnings came from outside her coursework. "I think the greatest challenge for me having failed my honours in accounting was to accept failure and know that things don't always go according to plan," she says. "Overcoming that ego-crushing failure and dusting myself off, learning to gracefully let go of a dream that was clearly not meant for me was not an easy feat. I am grateful for it in retrospect, but at the time it was quite a challenge."

She also has a passion for property that saw her purchase her first home at just 22 years of age; she now owns six homes and plans to expand her portfolio.

Vumile invests a significant amount of time in philanthropic work, volunteering on weekends to teach high school students at Soweto's Almont Secondary School. This work inspired her to write the book *Imbokodo Inspiring* about successful women in business. Set to be published this year, it has interviews with the likes of Yolanda Cuba, Judy Dlamini, Daphne Mashile-Nkosi, Sibongile Sambo, Lillian Barnard, Shireen Chengadu and Sindi Koyana-Mabaso among others.

Even though she engages with so many inspiring women, Vumile is most inspired by her own mother, who completed her postgraduate degree in her 40s, and started her own bakery business in her 50s. "The words 'stagnant' and 'complacent' don't exist in her vocabulary, and she does everything with the most wonderful smile!" — *Kerry Haggard*



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

JEFFREY MULAUDZI

Founder, Alexandra Bicycle Tours

Website: www.alexandratours.co.za

Jeffrey Mulaudzi was born and raised in Alexandra in Johannesburg where he lived with two siblings and his mother, who was a domestic worker. He explains that he was very restless at school and wanted to be unique in everything, until he finally found an outlet for his restlessness through hockey.

His hockey skills saw him awarded a bursary at an upmarket school, which was where the seed for his business, Alexandra Bicycle Tours, was first planted. "I had a French hockey coach and in 2010 I gave him a tour of my hometown of Alexandra by bicycle. He enjoyed it so much he immediately called up four more of his friends. With the money they gave me I bought two more bicycles and the business was started," says Mulaudzi.

The business has already earned a TripAdvisor Excellence award, and now, at the age of 24, he has grown it from a small initiative with two bicycles to a professional tourism company with five full-time employees.

More than just a business, Mulaudzi's company incidentally addresses the most pressing issues in South Africa: poverty, inequality and unemployment. As a local resident of Alexandra with humble beginnings, he has shaped his own destiny and is now making it possible for local people to earn an income.

His company provides a bridge between different population groups, and provides people from different social classes a way to interact freely and meaningfully. His initiative is also very relevant from an environmental sustainability point of view, as it promotes a culture of cycling, which is good for safety and provides sustainable, cheap urban transport.

Jeff recently started a very innovative corporate investment initiative, a bicycle sharing system for matric students in Limpopo, which makes it possible for students to stay at school longer, study more and improve their opportunities. — *Kerry Haggard*



PHOTO: KERRY HAGGARD

WAYNE NCUBE

Attorney, Lawyers for Human Rights

Twitter: @Zwncube

Wayne Ncube started out studying business science and computer science as he had always pictured himself in a maths-oriented career, but switched study paths after he witnessed how the needs and concerns of marginalised communities are seldom met with adequate responses.

"Law was the obvious choice for me to pursue a career in public interest work, and to position myself to be able to make a positive impact in people's lives," he says. "South Africa already has a brilliant legal framework that affords individuals extensive rights and strong legal remedies that are tools to achieve individual and social justice."

Ncube holds an LLB from Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University and an LLM in human rights advocacy and international law from the University of the Witwatersrand. He is also the founding member of the African Legal Centre, a non-profit voluntary organisation of students who seek to strengthen and develop the rule of law in Africa by commenting, documenting and reporting on human rights issues across the continent.

He now works for Lawyers for Human Rights (LHR), and is an attorney in its Strategic Litigation Programme, having previously headed the organisation's Detention Monitoring Unit, which assists people detained as a result of immigration issues.

In his years at LHR, Ncube has already brought many precedent-setting court cases, obtaining judgments that restricted the detention of stateless persons and declared that the failure to bring immigration detainees before a court within 48 hours is a violation of the Constitution.

His work was also instrumental in assisting over 300 people unlawfully detained during Operation Fiela and ensuring vulnerable refugees were not detained and deported to countries where they fear persecution.

Despite these significant victories, Ncube notes that the smaller cases he works on where relief is obtained for one person normally yield the greatest emotional satisfaction. He cites successful judgements in two key cases against the minister of home affairs, both relating to the rights of individual migrants facing detention, as examples of this work.

"One of the biggest challenges of my career is dealing with the personal toll the detention cases take," he says. "A lot of the cases involve people who would face serious persecution, torture or death if they were deported to their home countries. A practical solution to this is to challenge the laws that facilitate the detention of people without allowing them access to legal representation and the courts."

Ncube intends to continue developing jurisprudence around international criminal law to create access to justice for victims of international crimes. — *Kerry Haggard*



PHOTO: SUPPLIED



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

NOBESUTHU NDLOVU

Co-founder, Burgundy Fly

Twitter: @burgundyfly

After completing her studies in information systems at the University of Cape Town in 2001, Nobesuthu Ndlovu started her working career in business analysis in the banking sector, followed by an honours degree in commerce at the University of Johannesburg in 2003, majoring in informatics. Having been part of her father's "free labour" team during school holidays in her youth, she was naturally inclined to become an entrepreneur. To kick-start the journey she completed a business course with the Gordon Institute of Business Science in 2007.

Ndlovu and her business partner, Nhlanhla Ndlovu, set out to create a platform that would propel South African designer wear to an international advantage, yet also make their product line accessible to local fashionistas. They launched Burgundy Fly without much retail background, but applied the theoretical knowledge from their studies and took the plunge to literally learn on the fly.

The first Burgundy Fly store opened in 2008 in Maponya Mall, followed by a second store in 2012 in The Zone in Rosebank. The Zone operates as their flagship store, with three further stores in located in Greenstone, The Glen and East Rand Mall, which opened in 2015. The brand is fast becoming a favourite with a growing, discerning clientele, and plans are underway to open an additional store in November this year.

According to Ndlovu, Burgundy Fly is the blending of everything regal and quirky. "We are unconventional in our approach to fashion but still take the art seriously," she says. "The colour 'Burgundy' is associated with royalty, and phly or fly which is colloquial for beautiful.

"We started out as a relationship-based business with our suppliers, and intend to continue along this path. We realised that we weren't going to build strong relationships through formal, minuted meetings," says Ndlovu. "Working with creative personalities and design professionals needs a different approach, and for this reason we have been running our brand successfully for eight years without a single designer contract."

The business works with just a few designers, with a strong focus on building mutually beneficial relationships with its suppliers, and with customers who know that Burgundy Fly offers well-designed quality garments that make them feel good and look fantastic, whatever the occasion.

Ndlovu is mother to two beautiful daughters, and makes spending time with them her top priority outside of the business. She also practices yoga, and enjoys jamming to music with her husband. — *Kerry Haggard*

SIBUSISO NGWENYA

Founder, Skinny Sbu Socks

Twitter: @skinnysbusocks

When you're nearly two metres tall and your socks always show because nobody makes trousers long enough, your best bet is to be bold and turn your socks into a statement. So says Sibusiso Ngwenya, founder of Skinny Sbu Socks, an online sock emporium that has changed perceptions around socks, making them into fashion statements rather than bland necessities.

Ngwenya, who was made aware of the importance of socks when his mother instructed him to wash his own pairs, inside out, when he was a youngster, owned 70 pairs of socks when he started his business with just R70 and a truckload of chutzpah. He bought socks at Mr Price for R5 a pair, repackaged them and sold them for R25 a pair — and selling them out was clear evidence of his formal training as an actor and storyteller!

"I think that not having enough capital is often a great start for an artist with a great idea," Ngwenya says. "It pushes you to your creative limits, and helps you find solutions that build

your business." It was after this bold beginning that he found his business partner and appointed a brand ambassador, starting a new type of fashion business.

With Ngwenya viewing each of his collections as art, the Skinny Sbu price point may be higher than high street stores, but the brand occupies a special place in society, as would art in other mediums, he says.

"For example, my most recent collection celebrates South African kings and leaders, including Shaka, Moshoeshe and Mzilikazi," he says. "I identify with them because they challenged the status quo."

One of Ngwenya's greatest points of pride is that his socks are locally produced, and his factory in Cape Town employs 60 people, each of whom is now able to support their own families. "This business is all about its people, and I'm eternally grateful to the people who work with me that allow me to focus on designing my next collection." — *Kerry Haggard*



PHOTO: CLEARVISION

AVESH PADAYACHEE

Founder, Fibon Energy

Twitter: @AveshZA

Having qualified and practiced as an attorney specializing in the fast-paced mergers and acquisitions environment, Avesh Padayachee wanted to find a way to make an impact on the daily lives of African people, participating in the growth of the African continent. After completing his MBA in the US, he saw an opportunity to start a renewable energy venture and returned to South Africa. He reached out to friends from university, former colleagues and industry experts, and launched Fibon Energy.

The company now boasts a multidisciplinary team of legal, financial and environmental services experts who are all passionate about the potential that renewable energy offers.

"At a time when even large companies are reluctant to enter the African market, we see renewable energy as a practical solution to the power shortages currently faced by many countries in Africa," Padayachee says. "The challenge however is the long lead time from inception to reach financial close, typically two to three years in order to close a project.

"Building from scratch is not easy either, and many projects will be the first of their kind, which involves educating the market, and equally, the Fibon Energy team learning as they go.

"The differences in operating in the different countries are striking, too," says Padayachee. "Using financing and security structures which are commonplace in South Africa and other developed economies [is] not always appropriate for countries across our borders. We are developing a blueprint as we go along to overcome these challenges though, which is exciting in itself."

The company is already involved in two photovoltaic power plants in the Western Cape, and has completed a transaction as lead sponsor to develop the first photovol-



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

taic power plant in Swaziland. It is also actively developing projects in Zimbabwe and Zambia.

"I am inspired by the economic participation and development by Africans in Africa," says Padayachee. "Renewable energy is the first step in our infrastructure portfolio, and our vision is to develop and participate in different asset classes which will contribute to the economy. In 10 years' time, we want to be building and creating infrastructure: roads, rail, ports and refineries on the continent. I want to create a legacy on the continent of dreams."

In his spare time, Padayachee loves a good game of golf — most special when he tees off just before sunrise — and loves to travel South Africa in search of good runs and hikes. — *Kerry Haggard*



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

TOKOLOGO PHETLA

Founder, Black Industrialists and Commodore Media

Website: www.blackindustrialists.com

Tokologo Phetla started his first business, Student Investor, with a few university friends, setting out to highlight the importance of financial awareness among young people.

A year later, he and his friends incorporated The Moneytree Group, a media, publishing and recruitment company that focuses on young professionals and provided services to the likes of Sanlam, Ernst & Young, the departments of science and technology and telecommunications and the postal service.

Having sold his interests in The Moneytree Group, Tokologo founded Black Industrialists, which was established to be an innovation leader in African business with a focus on agriculture, agro-processing and developing informal markets. "We seek to develop informal markets across Africa in farming and trade, as they represent billions of rands' worth of untapped potential," says Phetla.

With a new publishing venture called Commodore Media under his wing too, he is clearly determined to make a success of building new businesses. Commodore holds a contract with the South African National Taxi Council to produce a publication that communicates positive stories about the South African taxi industry and all its related stakeholders, aiming to change negative perceptions about the industry.

"In my experience, one of the secrets to success in starting a new business is to do it with people who add value to your personal and professional life, people who uplift you and challenge you to be better," he says.

Another key skill is to understand the life cycle of your business, and whether it's about to soar or go bust. "Sometimes, as young entrepreneurs, we simply build unsustainable business models, and no matter how hard you push and work toward realising success in that business, it will never happen because the model is simply unsustainable or un-scalable.

"It takes some entrepreneurial maturity to discern whether the business you are working on simply needs more time or work or effort to succeed, or whether it is actually purely a bad idea that you should just walk away from."

He loves the unique sense of achievement and thrill that comes when things go as planned, as well as the entrepreneur's freedom to exercise his or her own vision without any inhibitions.

"There are challenges too," he says. "Access to seed finance is often difficult, and cash flow is a struggle from time to time. You've also got to constantly adapt to new dynamics, and reinvent yourself to respond to changing business environments." — *Kerry Haggard*



200 YOUNG SOUTH AFRICANS ● BUSINESS AND LAW



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

THIOFHI RAVELE

Business development manager, Fair Trade Tourism

Twitter: @Thiofhir

A degree in hospitality from the University of Johannesburg was Thiofhi waha Ravele's first step into a career in the tourism industry. Soon after, he was appointed general manager of a lodge outside of Kruger National Park at the tender age of 25.

His passion for local community development in South Africa saw his next career move into sustainable development as part of the Open Africa team, and his positive impacts on sustainable growth and development in South Africa led to his appointment as operations manager at the organisation.

After six years at Open Africa Ravele moved on to take up the post of business development manager for Fair Trade Tourism — a leading sustainable tourism development non-profit organisation. At Fair Trade Tourism he worked with established and emerging tourism businesses in South Africa and Southern and East Africa, helping them to create decent work and positive social, environmental and economic impacts that benefit the communities in the areas where they operate.

"Travelling around different parts of the country and the continent, I have had the opportunity to explore and further develop both my interest in the Southern and East African regions' history, as well as the challenges that different communities face," he says.

Ravele is currently working to support the development of sustainable projects in areas of Limpopo Province to address unemployment, poverty and associated community development issues.

"My approach to community development work starts with consultations with local chiefs and traditional leaders to identify their needs and challenges," he says. "We then make use of local cultural, natural and other such resources, supported by external funding, to create sustainable solutions for their particular challenges."

Not satisfied with supporting sustainable job creation in his day job, Ravele has established a confectionary business with his mother that has already created jobs for four people and has recently launched a homemade chilli sauce into the market. He is also in the process of establishing his own nongovernmental organisation that will focus on youth development. — *Kerry Haggard*

GUGULETHU SIGASA

President, Abasa and Founder, Ncube Investment Holdings

Twitter: @sgugwana

When she achieved 99% for grade eight accounting, Gugulethu Sigasa realised that she had a knack for the discipline — something she used to attain a number of bursaries to complete her tertiary studies.

Now the president of the Association for the Advancement of Black Accountants of Southern Africa (Abasa) and one the youngest people to hold this seat, Sigasa has launched Ncube Investment Holdings, a 100% black-owned consulting and investment company with divisions focusing on tax and accounting, renewable energy, and renewable energy options such as solar powered products and biogas installations.

"I ventured into starting my own business because I believe that Africa needs to utilise its most under-used resource — its women — so much more effectively," she says. "Our growth capabilities would be well enhanced if we leveraged off the value that women have to add to our continent. You cannot expect to move Africa forward if more than 50% of its people are not part of that move."

With a vision of seeing her business become a pan-African conglomerate fully owned by women, Sigasa strives to achieve that by working with schools and career development initiatives through Abasa, in order to help young women achieve their potential. She also mentors university students, serves on the board of the South African Institute of Chartered Accountants and is on the Black Business Council.

Sigasa runs marathons in her spare time "to keep me sane", pointing out that there are many problems you can resolve while running 42km. She completed the Comrades Marathon for the first time in 2015, inspired by the camaraderie and the overcoming of personal limitations that she witnessed during the run. — *Kerry Haggard*



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

KYLE SCHUT

Founder, Straton Watch Company

Instagram: @stratonwatchcompany

Getting an idea listed on an international crowdfunding platform such as Kickstarter is a challenging task for a South African. Getting it funded is an entirely different story.

That's why when Kyle Schut decided to pour his dual passions for classic motor car racing and fine timepieces into crowdfunding the formation of the Straton Watch Company, he set his goals at a relatively low R250 000.

To his surprise the market gave him an overwhelming R2.5-million investment, making it arguably the most successful crowdfunding campaign created by a South African to date.

"Like the car you drive, the watch you wear reflects your passion and can say a lot about you," he says. "Combining the two was something that came naturally as my inspiration was right in front of me, my 1977 Alfa Romeo Alfetta GT. The tachometer of this car inspired me to design my first watch," he explains.

Schut's successful experience with crowdfunding has allowed his range to expand somewhat since then. "I currently have the Vintage Driver Chrono, which is available in five colour variations, and I have just launched the Curve-Chrono — a 70s inspired racing chronograph — as well as my own range of leather driving gloves."

Schut's primary channel to market his watches is his website, and he has successfully delivered more than 1 000 watches to customers all over the world.

If Schut's story has you fancying your own foray into the world of crowdfunding, best you take some advice from the maestro first. "The most important factors when considering to run a Kickstarter campaign is to take your time, and develop a product with a story people can relate to," he explains.

This, he says, entails spending at least three months marketing it to every possible avenue before launching your crowdfunding campaign. "Many people make the mistake of creating a campaign and expecting it to become successful.



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

This just isn't possible. Before and during the campaign you have to contact every possible blogger, magazine, newspaper and website, asking them to write something about the campaign or your upcoming launch."

Kyle says his idea has grown into a business that's more successful than he ever dreamt.

"I sold over 1 000 watches in less than a year and my second watch on Kickstarter raised a total of R2.8-million in just 25 days," he enthuses. Kyle is already designing his third watch, which will launch later this year. — *Kerry Haggard*

INGA VANQA

Owner, Inga Vanqa Quantity Surveyors and Project Managers

Twitter: @IngaVanqa

From an early age, Inga Vanqa knew that he wanted to pursue a technical career in the built environment, but it was only when he was introduced to quantity surveying in a career guidance class in his matric year that he knew which path he was going to follow.

"Quantity surveying held huge appeal for me because it fuses a number of disciplines, including technical know-how, law, finance and economics, a combination that very few professions offer," he says.

By the age of 20, Vanqa had already completed his studies and was working as a candidate quantity surveyor. Once qualified, he completed his master's in the built environment, and is currently working on his PhD. His qualification as a professional construction project manager means that he is one of few South Africans qualified in two professions in the built environment industry.

His local and international experience gave him the confidence to start his own firm from his parents' garage three years ago, and he's built it up to employ five full-time professionals and four part-time personnel. He is leading the construction of state-of-the-art offices for the department of public works in Aliwal North, worth R200-million, where his firm is both the principal agent and quantity surveyors. He has also worked on a coalmine project in Mozambique and the expansion of the manganese terminal at the Port Elizabeth harbour. With "green" building principles already having found significant favour in the private sector, Inga is working hard to introduce these guidelines to public sector projects, to see them built on more environment-friendly and energy efficient terms.

"The problems South Africa is faced with at the moment provide interesting opportunities for smart young people to come up with innovative solutions to make our country better, and that's exactly what I'm doing," he says. "For a young person who is ambitious, driven, and willing to work hard, the possibilities are endless and the only limit is one's imagination."

Vanqa spends his spare time with his wife and son, and enjoys reading about South African politics, economics, and literature related to his profession. He's an ardent fan of Kaizer Chiefs and the Sharks, and recently took up golf as a great way to unwind. — *Kerry Haggard*



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

Brand South Africa

salutes the **200 Young South Africans**
who are flying the flag for our country.

You inspire a culture of innovation and excellence
and we thank you for playing your part.

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Inspiring new ways



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ALEXANDRA APPELBAUM

Researcher, SA Chair in Spatial Analysis and City Planning

Twitter: @Ali_Apples

"Overcoming poverty is not a gesture of charity. It is an act of justice. It is the protection of fundamental human rights." There are the words of Nelson Mandela, who said that, like slavery and apartheid, poverty is not natural.

Alexandra Appelbaum hopes to put these words into practice, and has dedicated her academic skills in urban planning to shaping cities that work for people, particularly the poor and marginalised.

Appelbaum realised her passion for cities at the University of California, Berkeley, where she was an exchange student from the University of Cape Town, and upon her return to UCT, she focused her BA and honours (both achieved with distinction) on urban history.

While at UCT, Appelbaum ran the Thetani Debating League, an educational nongovernmental organisation focused on fostering critical thinking skills in underprivileged school learners through debate. She also sat on the board of Ubunye, an educational development agency.

She was recognised by the South African Washington International Programme for excellence in servant leadership and had an opportunity to intern in the US Congress.

Now a researcher at the South African Chair in Spatial Analysis and City Planning at Wits University, Appelbaum manages a project funded by the French Development Bank that provides action-based research to the City of Johannesburg on the Corridors of Freedom Project.

This is an ambitious initiative undertaken by the City of Johannesburg to repair some of the spatial imbalances inflicted on the city by apartheid.

Appelbaum sees great potential for Johannesburg to become an equitable city that connects people easily, welcomes migrants, empowers the marginalised, and enables all to live with dignity.

"I have interrogated the constructs of African urbanism at the heart of academic and development discourse, and worked to aid local governments globally, through research, about how best to serve the poor and marginalised. My passion for cities and equality, together with my belief in the power of ideas and the importance of knowledge, guide my work in civil society." — Linda Doke

JADE ARCHER

Head of digital, loveLife

Website: jadearcherblog.wordpress.com

Energy, passion and hard work are three important elements of business that marketing and communications specialist Jade Archer (32) applies every day to her life and her work.

Head of digital at youth empowerment programme loveLife, Archer has been at the forefront of taking the work loveLife does with young people in communities around South Africa to millions more people with the launch of iLoveLife.mobi.

This is an innovative cellphone-based site that delivers a holistic youth development programme that equips young people with the skills, knowledge, insights and advice they need to navigate all aspects of life in South Africa.

The programme uses a mobi site rather than an app, making it accessible to all, no matter what phone they have. It provides young people with information, helping them access adolescent- and youth-friendly services, and then rewards them with things like airtime, data, and vouchers for movies and clothing stores.

"The innovative approach that loveLife's iLoveLife.mobi project has to youth development is really exciting. On a personal level it brings together all my passions: writing engaging content, marketing and communications, using digital media to drive behaviour change, and the opportunity to be involved with the largest youth development organisation in South Africa," says Archer.

"loveLife's mission is building complete leaders: young leaders who believe in their own power, develop resilience, respect equality, promote safety, live in optimal health and successfully connect with the resources of their society. I believe that's what our country needs."

Archer is motivated by a desire to create positive change in South Africa: "We live in an amazing country that is so dynamic and has so much energy. Even though we have lots of challenges, there is enormous scope to do work that can change peoples' lives in a really tangible way." — Linda Doke



PHOTO: SUPPLIED



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

SARA CHITAMBO

Project manager, Zazi

Twitter: @inaturell

Growing up, Sara Chitambo knew she wanted to tell stories and do things that are meaningful and add value to people's lives. She equipped herself with a degree in film and media studies and leapt into health activism, infusing public health messages into everyday conversations using popular culture, mass media and social media.

Chitambo finds her work fulfilling. She is project manager at Zazi, a national women's campaign that speaks out for women and tackles the needs and issues of young women in an accessible way, encouraging them to support each other under the motto "know your strength".

She says planning media strategies and complementary social media strategies allows for the same message to be experienced on multiple platforms. It is exciting, knowing the power of covering a single important topic across television, radio, outdoor advertising Facebook and Twitter. This kind of reach soon has people talking about it on the streets and around dinner tables.

"It's life-affirming to be able to be creative in messaging that helps people. Constantly having to negotiate the challenging but necessary partnership with government also keeps us on our toes, and thinking outside the box for innovative ways of working," says Chitambo.

At 35, there are two recurring themes in Sara's philosophy on life: don't be afraid to start over — it's a brand new opportunity to start something better; and we need to be alive to live our best life.

"As long as I'm still alive, I can keep trying to help others. Life can sometimes knock you down, but as long as you're not dead, you have another chance to really live out the dreams of your heart and get closer to expressing your true self with every lesson learned." — Linda Doke

KGOTSI CHIKANE

President, InkuluFreeHeid

Twitter: @kgotsi22

Kgotsi Chikane was once told that the definition of poverty is having no choices. That message resonated deeply, and Kgotsi has dedicated his life to striving to give people choices.

Son of theologian and apartheid activist Frank Chikane, Kgotsi is blazing his own trail of activism in progressive youth politics as the president of InkuluFreeHeid, a non-partisan youth-led social movement that seeks to unite South Africans, particularly youths, behind efforts that help solve major socioeconomic challenges, deepen democracy and enhance social cohesion.

"What we try to do with InkuluFreeHeid is open up or create spaces in which young people can engage with policy questions within the country. We run workshops on policy development and deepening democracy, and we get actively involved in policy formulation regarding youth issues," says Chikane.

A Mandela Rhodes scholar with an honours degree in public administration from UCT, Kgotsi is now studying for his master's at Wits.

Having played a prominent role in the successful #FeesMustFall campaign in November 2015, Kgotsi hopes his work will be seen more as permanent than innovative.

"Our country is set up to acknowledge class and race before knowledge and ability, and it shows across the board. It makes me realise how far we still need to go as a society. I'm committed to doing my bit to change the system — it's my long-term ambition."

Chikane's motto in life is *Perfer et obdura dolor hic tibi porderit olim* — be patient and tough; someday this pain will be useful to you. — Linda Doke

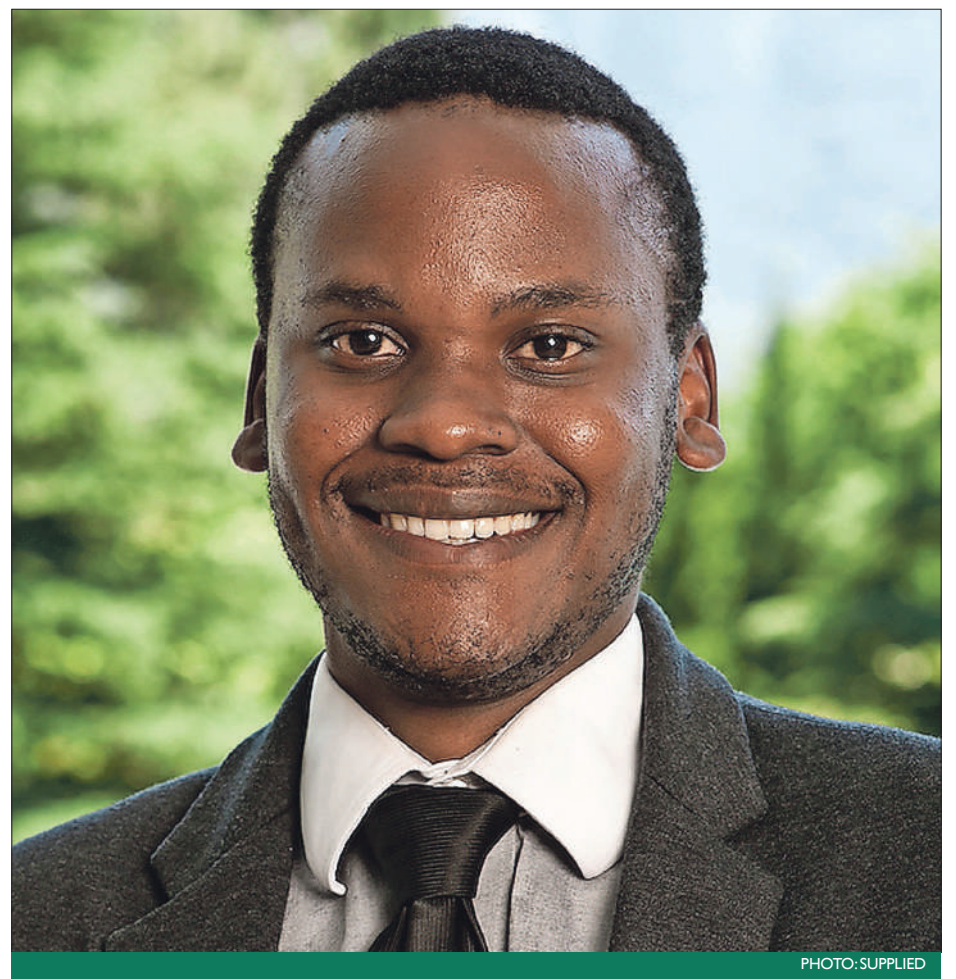


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MATTHEW CLAYTON

Research, advocacy and policy manager, Triangle Project
Twitter: @mattclayton89

Matthew Clayton uses his background in law, politics and industrial relations to focus on the human rights and advocacy side of gender, development and conflict.

As research, advocacy and policy manager at Triangle Project, Matthew works to ensure the full realisation of constitutional and human rights for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) people, their partners and families, and seeing that LGBTI people and their concerns are given a substantive and effective voice in important national issues.

"The lack of a concerted and co-ordinated presence of LGBTI people in South African policy development remains a problem, and LGBTI people are still having to deal with policies and services that do not take their needs or experiences into account," says Clayton.

"Without a considered and inclusive policy and implementation backbone, many of this country's laws falter when it comes to enforcing the rights of LGBTI people or catering to their needs."

Apart from funding, Clayton regards one of the greatest challenges of the area in which he works to be that while many LGBTI people are faced by the same lack of services as others in South Africa, they often feel it more acutely.

"Given the heteronormative and ciscentric environment that characterises South African society, LGBTI people experience numerous obstacles to opportunities and services that many cisgender and heterosexual people take for granted. Combine this with the intersectional challenges related to race, gender and class, and our work becomes distinctively complex and nuanced.

"The Triangle Project addresses the needs of LGBTI people from a variety of backgrounds, mind-sets and circumstances, and it is a constant challenge to be able to assist these different cases within a restricted funding climate and within a society largely opposed to the work we do and the community we serve." — Linda Doke



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PHOTO: SUPPLIED

ANTON DU PLESSIS

Executive director, Institute of Security Studies
Twitter: @AntonDP

Making Africa safer, fairer and more sustainable is the life work of Anton du Plessis. Being the executive director of the Institute of Security Studies (ISS) is the best possible platform available for him to deliver on this passion.

Qualifying in law early into South Africa's new democracy, Du Plessis was so impressed by Nelson Mandela's commitment to justice, the rule of law and fairness that he applied to serve in the new government.

He was just 25 when appointed senior state advocate and became the senior manager responsible for the national management of sexual offences courts and the setting up of one-stop rape care centres.

"The work was incredibly fulfilling, but unbelievably draining. I was exposed to the best and worst of mankind on a daily basis, and it had a profound impact on me," says Du Plessis.

When he joined the ISS in 2003, he realised he could take his passion for justice and the rule of law to a different level, continuing to work on issues in South Africa, but also expanding his work to the rest of the continent.

Beyond his work with the ISS, which is a world leader in providing evidence-based policy advice and capacity-building on issues relating to human security in Africa, Du Plessis also works with other platforms to bring African perspectives to key debates regionally and globally. These include the African Union, the United Nations, the World Bank and the World Economic Forum.

As testament to his leadership, Du Plessis is a World Economic Forum Young Global Leader and has served as vice-chair of the forum's Global Agenda Council on Terrorism. He is also a member of its Council on Fragility, Violence and Conflict.

Du Plessis sees his greatest work challenge as achieving a clear and measurable impact in his field, particularly when working on longer-term and politically charged issues such as countering corruption, terrorism and sexual violence.

"You need to be smart in designing and delivering on your theory of change, and then describing this clearly to your colleagues and main partners." — Linda Doke

FARAAZ MAHOMED

Senior researcher, South African Human Rights Commission
Contact

In South Africa, the issue of human rights is far from simple. On the one hand we have a constitution renowned for its progressive nature, while at the same time we struggle with the challenges of implementing its laws.

Faraaz Mahomed is a 31-year-old South African who is determined to use his learning to contribute to a better society. As a senior researcher at the South African Human Rights Commission, Faraaz's focus is on discrimination relating to race, gender, sexual orientation and nationality.

He sits on various steering committees for change, including South Africa's National Action Plan to Combat Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerances, and the National Task Team to Combat Gender and Sexual Orientation-Based Violence.

Faraaz has a master's degree in clinical psychology, and another in public policy, specialising in human rights, a combination that provides him with an interesting depth of learning that he can apply to his work. The latter degree was earned as a Fulbright scholar in the US, where he spent time working with Amnesty International before bringing his expertise back to South Africa.

Faraaz has worked in HIV/TB/STI clinics in Khayelitsha, trained community health workers on human rights issues, met Barack Obama and travelled to every continent. All of this was to nurture his understanding of the world around him. He runs a small practice as a clinical psychologist, while also holding two university research fellowships and pursuing a PhD.

Faraaz sees the nature of South Africa's human rights landscape as a significant challenge.

"We have a really strong Constitution and we have progressive laws and policies in place. However, human rights are also about implementation, which South Africa struggles with. A human rights culture is about shifts in public perceptions, attitudes and behaviours. We can have all the right laws, but if people do not believe in them, we will not be able to foster a human rights culture." — Linda Doke



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

SIAN FERGUSON

Feminist activist
Twitter: @sianfergs

Sian Ferguson is committed to the realisation of social justice within South African society, and focuses her energy on anti-rape and queer activism.

Her motto in life is simple: do no harm, but take no shit.

While studying at Rhodes University, Ferguson was the chairperson of Gender Action Project, a student organisation educating on issues of intersectional feminism and gender. She has also been involved with the Chapter 2.12 Initiative to address the way management on campuses handles sexual assault and rape complaints, an issue that has recently come to the fore at her alma mater.

Never afraid to speak her mind, 21-year-old Ferguson feels it's unfortunate that women with a great deal of privilege tend to dominate feminism.

"As a working-class woman I struggled to identify with many aspects of mainstream feminism. This pushed me to think deeply and work with other marginalised members of the feminist community to offer our own insights and analysis, rather than accept the analyses offered by mainstream feminism. Black feminism and trans feminism also helped me explore my own privilege and try to support marginalised women who go through struggles quite different to my own," she says.

Ferguson believes a large contributing factor to inequality and oppression is ignorance.

"We all have lived different experiences and we all have issues we're ignorant about. That's why it's important for us to educate ourselves and one another."

A prolific writer, Sian has written regularly for Everyday Feminism, Matador Network and Women 24 and has her own blog. — Linda Doke



PHOTO: SUPPLIED



TERRINA GOVENDER

Founder, Data Life Africa

Twitter: @TerrinaGovender

Business and information systems specialist, innovator, volunteer and social entrepreneur are just some of the ways Terrina Govender is described.

Fresh out of university Govender landed her first job at Google, where she was exposed to the power of data and its ability to change the world. She then moved into the international development sector with Dalberg Global Development Advisors, where she works on issues such as food security, SMME development, using ICT for social good and urban resilience.

"In my job we work on trying to solve the world's most pressing issues. Exposure to those problems allows me to stare down the barrel of broken systems — it inspires me to do something to fix them."

Using seed funding she received from being recognised as a Global Young Innovator for 2015 by the United Nations Agency ITU, Govender launched Data Life Africa, a social enterprise that works to create dialogue and heal social trauma in developing countries.

"Currently we are working on #MySAVote, a campaign to encourage civic youth participation in the upcoming munic-



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

ipal elections. In South Africa the youth are not apathetic when it comes to meaty issues, yet only one in three born-frees is registered to vote," says Govender.

"The movement is open source, so anyone can contribute. We have partnered with the IEC, World Economic Forum Global Shapers, United Nations and Desmond Tutu Foundation to get young people talking, thinking and engaged."

Govender also convenes intellectual think-tanks to discuss interesting topics.

"My hope is that these conversations will create ripple effects in society and ultimately stimulate a generation of interesting thoughts and people. This was partly inspired by a Margret Mead quote: "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has." — Linda Doke



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

KOKETSO MOETI

Executive director, amandla.

mobi

Twitter: @KMoeiti

The unsung heroes of South Africa are often black women, who hold families, movements and societies together, despite often being adversely affected by the justice system.

Koketso Moeti is passionate about empowering black women, uplifting their position in society to its rightful place. She also strives to see that those most affected by injustice are able to take action on issues affecting their lives, in their own language.

Moeti is the executive director of amandla.mobi, a public benefit organisation that works to turn every cellphone into a democracy-building tool.

The aim of the project is to make sure those most affected by poverty, violence and corruption — black women from poor socioeconomic areas — can access cutting-edge tools to organise their communities in numbers that incentivise accountability and deliver change to people's lives.

Since launching in June 2014, amandla.mobi has run over 40 mobile and multilingual campaigns to amplify the voices of those most affected by injustice, says Moeti. "We use creative technology and tactics to build a more just and people-powered South Africa, by enabling people to use their collective power to hold leaders in government and corporations to account. People can join campaigns using SMS and WhatsApp."

At the same time as running the amandla.mobi initiative, 29-year-old Moeti is the national co-ordinator of Local Government Action, a loose alliance of South African organisations working on local government issues. She is also the deputy chairperson of the SOS Coalition.

A believer that change is not only out there, but that it's also with us in every space we occupy, Koketso acknowledges she holds an interesting position.

"I recognise that I personally occupy a space in which I straddle two worlds — one being an oppressed [person] simply by virtue of my blackness and being a woman, but another in which I am also relatively privileged at the same time. So I think it's a constant pursuit of trying to take action within these worlds, but also trying to not be limited by the confines imposed by those worlds." — Linda Doke

MICHAL LUPTAK

Co-founder, Dlala Nje Foundation

Twitter: @hilooopyhere

Faith in South Africa's youth, being self-employed, and the desire to support local entrepreneurial business is what inspires Michal Luptak to make an impact on society.

Better known as "Loopy", 31-year-old Michal Luptak is the co-founder of The Dlala Nje Foundation, a non-profit social enterprise based in the Ponte Tower in downtown Johannesburg that offers a safe environment and community centre for inner-city children to do their homework, play and learn.

Dlala Nje means "just play" in isiZulu. The idea for the foundation was born when Luptak was looking for a way to provide an opportunity for the youth in the area to bloom.

"At the time I was working at a global audit consulting firm and living with a friend in Ponte City. We saw that people from elsewhere in Johannesburg were curious to find out more about our neighbourhood. So we started hosting tours through Ponte and its surrounding area," says Luptak.

Through the revenue the tours generated, the community

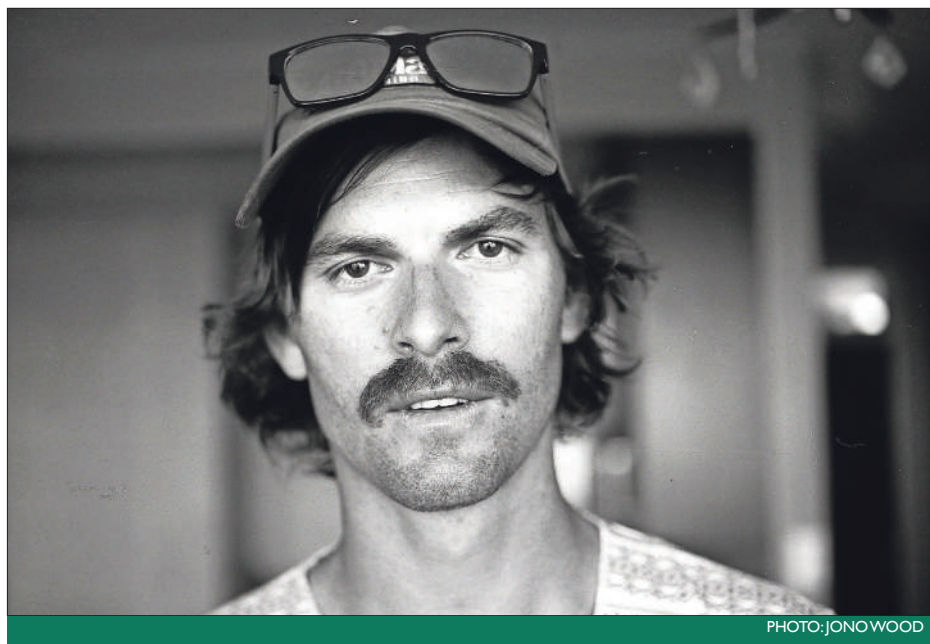


PHOTO: JONOWOOD

centre remained sustainable. The Dlala Nje Foundation (an NPO) was then set up to attract donor funding to generate a larger social impact.

"The 'experiences business' supports local entrepreneurs, who bring curious locals and internationals through our

doors to give them an honest depiction of inner city living in Johannesburg. Our experiences business represents fair tourism, and challenges the negative perception of our people and area that is generated by the media and disparaging South Africans." — Linda Doke

SHAEERA KALLA

Student activist

Twitter: @Shaeera_K

Shaeera Kalla feels strongly that as a Muslim she is obligated to fight against all social injustice. Her privileged background and good education highlighted for her the stark inequality in the world, particularly in South Africa.

At Wits University Kalla is an activist, keenly involved in the Progressive Youth Alliance, the Palestinian Solidarity Committee and the Workers Solidarity Committee, and was the president of the Student Representative Council (SRC).

"I don't claim to speak on behalf of anyone in the work I do, I am merely exposing a system that is bound to fail, neo-colonialism in the form of neoliberal capitalism," says Kalla.

"As the great writer and activist Arundhati Roy said: 'There's really no such thing as the 'voiceless'. There are only the deliberately silenced, or the preferably unheard.'

There is much work to be done, and much social injustice to fight."

In her position as president of the SRC, Kalla played a prominent role in the forced shutdown of Wits as a symbolic act to display the students' anger and frustration at the elitist,



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

exclusionary anti-black and anti-poor university system in South Africa.

"At the time, we had no idea it would turn into a national campaign," says Kalla.

The successful shutdown had a ripple effect on numerous campuses, resulting in a national shutdown of universities

across the country, and put the issue of free, quality education for all on the national agenda.

"The protest showed the world that the power of a mobilised youth can shake the core of an unjust system. More importantly, it reminded us as the youth of the power we hold to defeat the status quo." — Linda Doke



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ROBERT MTSHALI

Founder, BizKidzSA

Twitter: @TreborMtshali

Growing up in Alexandra township and seeing the kids around him doing drugs and getting involved in crime is what inspired Robert Mtshali to be different. From a young age he wanted to change how young people see and think about themselves.

Entrepreneurial from the start, Mtshali was already selling sweets at school at 12, and by the time he reached grade 11 he had registered his first business. But without guidance, one failure followed another, and Robert knew that he needed help along his journey to business success.

Because of this, in 2014 Mtshali started BizKidzSA, a social business seeking to foster entrepreneurial skills in primary school children aged eight to 12 by teaching them to build and launch their own micro-enterprises through inspiration and education, and thereby create much-needed employment in their communities.

Mtshali believes entrepreneurship should be encouraged from an early age. He says kids under 12 have two options in life: "They can either be on the street and stealing in order to survive, or be educated and become entrepreneurs who contribute to their own financial independence and national wealth creation. We aim to spark kids' entrepreneurial spirit and build business acumen, confidence and resilience, so they can choose entrepreneurship as their future career and use business as a force for good."

The programmes run by BizKidzSA include Market Days, BizCamps, Workshop and BizPitch, and cover the broad spectrum of entrepreneurship, from how to brainstorm business ideas to mentoring and creating platforms for the kids to pitch their businesses to potential investors.

Within a year the BizKidzSA innovation was profiled by SABC1, SABC3, Alex FM, Brand SA, Alex News, Soweto TV and Dumisa TV, and made it to the top five in the Radio 702 Small Business Awards.

Mtshali's motto is simple: do more. He believes in the positives of failure, and that it should be embraced and celebrated. It is through failure that life's greatest lessons are learned. — Linda Doke



PHOTO: RICHARTISTRY

LAWRENCE NDLOVU

Priest

Twitter: @NdlovuLawrence

Father Lawrence Ndlovu is a Catholic priest whose work helping others in numerous areas proves that even today, many in the church truly practise the message of Christ.

"A priest will always be at the heart of the lives of the people he serves. I see myself firstly as a Catholic priest, then as a youth activist, writer, speaker and a big believer in community-based initiatives. I counsel young people, families and all those who seek counsel," says Ndlovu.

Lawrence worked for some time in the Catholic Youth Office of the Archdiocese of Johannesburg, and was a facilitator of the Education For Life programme with the Southern African Catholic Bishops Conference from 2002 to 2007.

"In this development space, we were able to work with young people across southern Africa, including Botswana and Swaziland. We have worked with young people in schools, correctional facilities, the church and different communities."

Ndlovu is motivated primarily by his faith, but South Africa, and its wonderful people and potential, also inspire him.

"Working with people, especially young people, in the forgotten pockets of this country and in its over-populated cities, I am often moved by their stories and what they have had to go through. I think about the many people with so much talent but no way to grow their talents into livelihood. I want to reach some of them and work with them," says Ndlovu.

"I am inspired by the giants who have walked before us. Often I think about my grandparents from rural KwaZulu-Natal who arrived in Johannesburg with nothing and built their lives from scratch. I look at what they have achieved and I am inspired."

A regular columnist for the Daily Maverick, Ndlovu uses his voice to reflect upon issues of national importance, ranging from politics to day-to-day matters. — Linda Doke



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

LAUREL OETTL

Director, Association for Rural Advancement

Twitter: @Laurel_Oettle

"Go out on a limb, that's where the fruit is." This is the motto Laurel Oettle lives by, and in the process she has dedicated her work to serving South Africa's land sector to undo the inequalities that persist from the past.

Oettle (33) is the director of the Association for Rural Advancement (AFRA), one of the foremost nongovernmental organisations dealing with land and rural issues in South Africa.

Founded in 1979 as a land rights advocacy NGO to assist rural communities in their struggle against forced removals, AFRA seeks innovative ways to improve the living conditions of farm dwellers, and ensure they have secure land tenure and access to services to improve their livelihoods. It empowers and mobilises farm dwellers to act on their own behalf, and prevents and opposes evictions, working with like-minded organisations to provide spaces for joint lobbying, as well as record emerging models to positively influence policy and legislation.

"AFRA has gone through a difficult few years with both funding and leadership challenges, and we've worked hard to find new relevance, new spaces for innovation, new energy and focus, and the secure funding that has unlocked our capacity to grow our team and the quality and breadth of our work," says Oettle.

"We are about to start three exciting new projects, with new funding partners, including one working with youth around the creative, visual expression of their rights. We're also launching into a new strategic planning process, which will include the design of a new programme working specifically to empower women living and working on farms."

Oettle is also leading a precedent-setting class action case against the department of rural development and land reform to act on 20 000 labour tenant claims that have not been processed in the 15 years since they were lodged.

"Our country has many challenges, and I see three dominant themes to them all: the ever-growing inequality between rich and poor, between landowners and land occupiers, and between black and white." — Linda Doke



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

MATHYS PRETORIUS

Inventor

Twitter: @Matt_Pret

"It's important to do shit that matters. There are too many problems affecting those who are most vulnerable, with too few people giving a shit."

This is the motto Mathys Pretorius, better known as Matt, holds true. With a hunger to learn more and to figure out why things are the way they are, Matt likes to invent things, creatively solve problems, and experiment with possibilities.

He formalised this in his studies, completing a civil engineering degree in advanced structural design and project management, followed by his master's in industrial engineering.

It's often said not many inventors become successful entrepreneurs. But Matt proves this theory wrong. He has developed an environmentally friendly sanitation system for impoverished communities, with the aim of providing basic sanitation for all. Simply named Common Toilet, the company aims to empower impoverished communities by providing incentives for them to collect plastic and trade it with the company in exchange for an all-in-one eco-toilet. The units are manufactured using the recycled plastic.

Litter, in effect, becomes a currency for families to acquire these toilets, thereby encouraging plastic recycling while providing much-needed sanitation.

The concept was awarded first prize in the "For Society" category of the #MazarsforGood Innovation Challenge 2015.

Matt intends to use the prize money from the award to file a patent, develop the concept further and, with financial assistance from the department of science and technology and international partners, run a pilot project in Khayelitsha.

Matt believes the greatest challenge facing South Africa today is the breaking down of stereotypes and preconceived ideas.

"Due to the corruption, crime and lack of political and financial stability, we haven't been able to work through our underlining racial tensions and inequality. The challenge we face is to build trust among people from very different backgrounds and collectively work together in solving problems." — Linda Doke

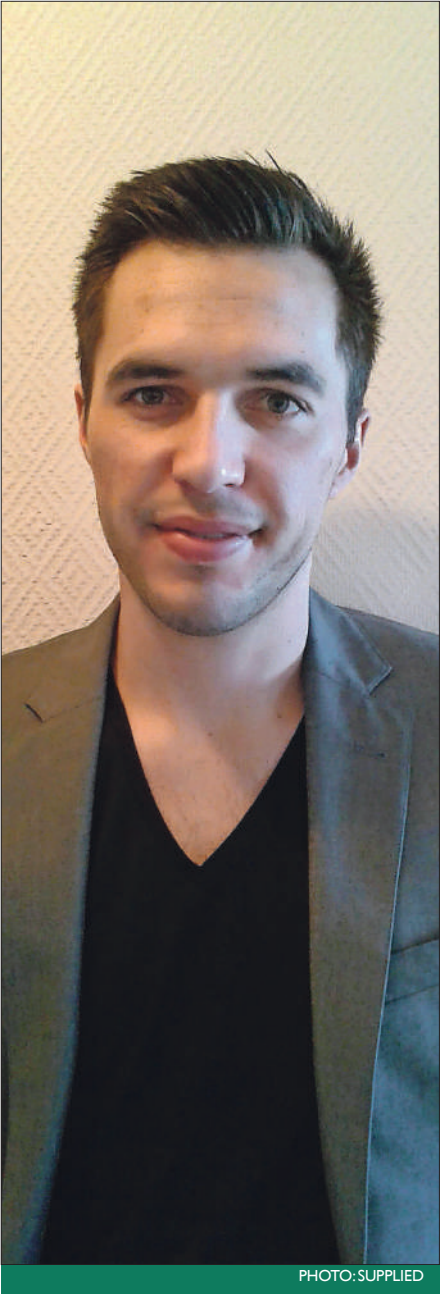


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MICHAEL RASSMAN

Director and principal architect, Architects of Justice **Twitter:** @ArchiOfJustice

Michael Rassman believes in creating building designs that are meaningful and have a positive influence on the end user.

When 36-year-old Rassman and his two business partners Alessio Lacovig and Kuba Granicki started their company in 2009, it was not their initial intention to get involved in architecture for the youth, even though it was a sector they felt passionate about.

"I suppose you might say it happened by chance," says Rassman.

One of the first projects for the company was a library and media centre for a school in Edenglen, Gauteng. This led to the design of a library in Alexandra, and ultimately, their involvement in the SEED Library initiative, designing and implementing prefabricated libraries across South Africa using shipping containers.

"There is such need in South Africa for libraries to uplift the youth, and the SEED project clearly responds to that need," says Rassman.

The SEED libraries have won numerous awards for design and architectural merit and the concept is well recognised for the role it plays enhancing child literacy. In support of this, Architects of Justice have designed the Micro SEED library, a smaller, more cost-effective alternative to the SEED library.

Essentially a steel-frame building with self-supporting insulated panels, the Micro SEED is prefabricated and flat-packed onto the back of a single truck for delivery, and can be assembled almost anywhere, no heavy machinery required. They can be on site within a week, thereby reducing the hassle of procurement processes, and create a temporary solution to the enormous lack of educational facilities in South Africa.

The project has taken off well, and is funded across the country by several non-profit organisations like Breadline Africa and the Nelson Mandela Day Initiative, as well as Shout SA, Talk Radio 702 and Exclusive Books. — *Linda Doke*



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

MPHO SEKWELE

Founder, Bantu Hikers

Twitter: @BantuHikers

Is there a greater challenge than getting people to wake up and climb a mountain at dawn? Mpho Sekwele does just that. The 34-year-old founder of Cape Town-based hiking group Bantu Hikers connects young professionals across various industries with matriculants from previously disadvantaged schools to build networks, and provide informal career advice, mentorship and guidance on occupying new spaces, be they on a mountain or in unpopular work industries.

"The hiking group encourages participants to connect and challenge themselves through climbing mountains or being in spaces that are not the norm for them. Bantu Hikers also promotes a healthy, active lifestyle with the motto 'it all starts with one step,' " says Sekwele.

"We want kids to know they should not only see mainstream careers as their only option. They can shoot for the stars and become anything — hedge fund managers, marine biologists, retail planning managers, chartered accountants and successful entrepreneurs. Through climbing mountains, we show them they can reach beyond what they think are their limits, and aspire to greater heights."

Sekwele was once in an average kid's shoes, seeing life through an average kid's eyes, thinking there were limits to his potential.

"I suppose having spent a part of my life living in a township in a rural area, I had very limited exposure to life outside the norm. But I've have always been somewhat of an outlier, seeking more of the unconventional out of life. I was fortunate to partner up with someone who shares similar values and is passionate about instilling a culture of knowledge, belonging and excellence among young people. This saw the birth of Bantu Hikers."

Sekwele believes there is no limit to one's dreams or the different spaces one can occupy, no matter what your background is.

"I liken the sense of achievement of a challenging hike or a difficult climb to how one feels when graduating — at the summit of your life! I'm inspired by the great sense of purpose, and by the positive people who surrounded me, always eager to push the envelope." — *Linda Doke*



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MANDISA SHANDU

Attorney, Ndifuna Ukwazi

Twitter: @MandiShandu

Mandisa Shandu has always sought to learn more and do more, and uses her education, her skills and her resources to give better spaces to the poor and marginalised.

Co-director and attorney at Ndifuna Ukwazi (NU), Shandu heads the organisation's law clinic, which she founded in 2015. Through her work, she seeks to advance urban land justice in the City of Cape Town through providing legal, advocacy and related support to communities and social movements.

She leads a staff of young and dynamic lawyers, researchers and organisers in a campaign that seeks to create a more integrated Cape Town, through the expansion and protection of well-located and affordable land and housing in the city.

Shandu's personal vision for South Africa is equality and spatial justice, where all people are afforded dignity and equal access to housing, educational and employment opportunities.

"I have always been inspired by great South Africans — activists, artists, lawyers, academics and other influencers — who committed themselves to the liberation struggle and paved the way for the South Africa we know today," says Shandu.

"But we have to accept that the work is not yet done. Whereas in the past, injustices were caused by the apartheid segregationist laws of the time, today's injustices continue to happen in spite of our Constitution, progressive laws and policies."

At Ndifuna Ukwazi, Shandu also uses educational workshops and community meetings to train activists to better understand and use the law as a powerful tool to boldly assert their citizenship and activate their constitutional rights.

Appropriately, Shandu's favourite quotation is Cornel West's "Never forget that justice is what love looks like in public." — *Linda Doke*

NISHA VARGESE

Blogger and fundraiser

Twitter: @Nisha360

Knowing that her life and work makes a difference to the lives of others keeps Nisha Vargese inspired to do the work she does to help others.

At just six months old, Vargese was diagnosed with cerebral palsy, the non-progressive, non-contagious motor condition that causes physical disability in human development, particularly in the areas of body movement. As a result Vargese is unable to walk and her right arm has reduced functionality.

Fast-forward to age 13 — when Vargese was put on bed rest following surgery to her back for curvature of the spine, her attention was grabbed by a TV interview by Oprah Winfrey of Kendall Ciesemier on his organisation Kids Caring 4 Kids.

This planted a seed for Vargese — since then, using whatever means she has, mainly the internet, she has raised funds for people in need around the world.

She uses fundraising platforms, her blog and social media to increase awareness and raise money for causes she cares about. These have included \$7 862 for The Water Project Inc. (the money was used to dig a borehole well for a community in Kenya; \$1 075 for the anti-trafficking Not For Sale Campaign; \$1 088 for the Elton John AIDS Foundation UK; and \$5 307 for the Malala Fund, seeking to enable girls to complete 12 years of safe, quality education, equipping them to achieve their potential and become positive change-makers.

Her current campaign is called 25 Smiles, raising funds for cleft palate surgery for 25 children through the Smile Train. So far she has raised almost \$6 000.

Nisha's message is simple: if I can't fix my own life and body, I can at least contribute to helping some other kids fix theirs. — *Linda Doke*



PHOTO: SUPPLIED



DR WENDY MAPULE CARVALHO-MALEKANE

Education researcher, University of Pretoria [LinkedIn: dr-wendy-carvalho-malekane](#)



Dr Wendy Mapule Carvalho-Malekane's mother is Spanish but was born and raised in Portugal. Her father is Tswana and a native of Pretoria. Carvalho-Malekane — who is based at the department of educational psychology in the faculty of education at the University of Pretoria (UP) — spent her childhood in Zambia and her adolescence in South Africa.

It is perhaps not surprising then that the title of Carvalho-Malekane's PhD thesis, published last year, is "Racial identity as narrated by young South African adults with parents from different racial and national heritages".

Carvalho-Malekane is one of South Africa's leading young researchers in the field of biracial identity formation. Her work has been lauded by leading scholars in education, including Professor Joyce King (president-elect of the American Educational Research Association), who noted that her study contributed to a better understanding of the issues around identity construction faced by young biracial people, specifically in a race-conscious society such as South Africa.

"I identify myself as biracial and have had my own experiences of negotiating and constructing my biracial identity as a young adult in South Africa," says Carvalho-Malekane (33). Last year, she was chosen as an inaugural fellow of the Tuks Young Research Leader Programme (TYRLP programme), which aims to grow early career academics at the University of Pretoria, in the areas of thought leadership, team development, engagement and collaboration.

She has also obtained research funds from the university's research development programme to continue research on the topic of the identity development of children with parents from different racial backgrounds in post-apartheid South Africa (with a focus on children seven to 12 years old).

Racial identity scholarship is dominated by North American and European scholars, but Carvalho-Malekane's vision is to change this by contributing to existing literature on racial identity, as well as through presenting her work at national and international conferences.

"I hope that my current and future research may provide valuable knowledge on how to plan and provide effective preventative interventions and treatment strategies for health practitioners, in order to promote the development of culturally sensitive practice models with multiracial, and multicultural individuals and interracial families within the South African and global context."

— Fatima Asmal



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DR WILLIE TAFADZWA CHINYAMURINDI

Senior Lecturer, department of business management at the University of Fort Hare [Twitter: @chinyaz](#)

All that Dr Willie Tafadzwa Chinyamurindi had in his pocket when he arrived in South Africa from Zimbabwe in 2002 was R1 200 and a letter of acceptance from the University of Port Elizabeth. "In a foreign country, all I wanted was to take the opportunities presented to me," he recalls.

Armed with his grandmother's "early to rise, late to sleep" work ethic and a strong value system, he didn't look back. From 2002 to 2007, he received scholarships and grants to support his studies and eventually ended up graduating with a master's in industrial psychology. Thereafter, he travelled to Ireland to take up a government scholarship for his master's of philosophy and from there it was off to the United Kingdom to study for his PhD (also on a scholarship) at the Open University Business School.

These days Chinyamurindi is based at the University of Fore Hare, where he is a senior lecturer in the department of business management. He also serves as the research niche area leader within the faculty of management at the university. At 34, he is the university's youngest niche area leader, in charge of an area of research concerning the vicious cycle of poverty and how it can be alleviated within rural communities. His role is basically to ensure that departments in his faculty are finding ways to meet this agenda through undertaking high quality research, as well as sourcing funds for this research to happen.

During the course of 2015 and 2016, Chinyamurindi has presented at six local conferences and one international conference, and published seven articles in peer-reviewed journals. He is also the joint editor of a special issue on technology in the African workplace, which will be published by the . To date, he has supervised eight honours students and two master's students to completion.

Chinaymurindi would like to become a professor. He also wishes to pursue research examining the lived experiences of refugees. Back in Zimbabwe Chinaymurindi schooled at Churchill Boys High, a school famous for producing achievers such as Tatenda Taibu (former Zimbabwe cricketer), Beast Mtawarira (Springbok rugby player), Nigel Chanakira (Zimbabwean businessman) and Peter Ndoro (SABC and TV personality). His name is right up there with theirs. — Fatima Asmal

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MARY IMMACULATE
SITHEMBILE DLAMINI

Teacher, Linpark Secondary School, Pietermaritzburg

Growing up in a socioeconomically disadvantaged community in Elands-kop, Mary Immaculate Sithembile Dlamini did not have access to tap water or electricity, and community halls and sports centres were unheard of. Dlamini walked to school daily because her parents could not afford to pay for transport.

The primary school she attended didn't have a library and when she got to high school, there wasn't a science laboratory to speak of, so pursuing a science stream was not an option. This posed a problem for Dlamini, who had always been fascinated by science and biology. Determined to pursue her ambitions, she moved to a school in Marianhill that offered science, and successfully completed her matric there. Thanks to funding from the National Student Financial Aid Scheme she was able to enrol at the University of Kwazulu-Natal, where she obtained a BSc biochemistry and chemistry degree.

Dlamini had long fancied herself a teacher — during her high school days she used to assist her fellow learners with certain subjects and loved every minute of it. So once she completed her degree, she completed a postgraduate certificate in education (PGCE). Thereafter she spent a couple of years in the Czech Republic, completing a master's degree at the Technical University of Liberec, after being awarded a scholarship to do so by the department of economic development in KwaZulu-Natal.

These days Dlamini (30) teaches mathematics and life sciences at Linpark Secondary School in Pietermaritzburg. As a teacher she goes the extra mile for her students, teaching extra early morning life sciences classes to her grade 12 learners to better prepare them for their examinations. She is simultaneously pursuing a PhD in science education, marrying her two passions.

Dlamini is also the current deputy secretary of the South African Democratic Teachers Union Pietermaritzburg Central branch. She uses this position to encourage her fellow teachers to further their studies in an effort to benefit their learners. "The task of a teacher is educating a child, and a nation, for that matter," she says. "I would love to see my learners as engineers, health experts, lawyers, captains of industries and businessmen/women." Someday she'd like to be the principal of a disadvantaged school, setting new standards. "A teacher is a master of all arts — without a teacher the economy will collapse." — *Fatima Asmal*

JOHAN FERRIERA

Mathematical statistics lecturer, oboist

Twitter: @scrofungulus4

Johan Ferreira may be merging the worlds of mathematical statistics and wireless communication systems for his PhD, but he's also a lecturer at the University of Pretoria, an oboist by night and an occasional rugby player.

"I am involved in a variety of activities that stretches from research, teaching, performing, sports, and community engagement work," says Ferreira, who is also happens to be on the management board of two non-profit organisations in Pretoria and Johannesburg.

During the past four years Ferreira has won a variety of research prizes from the University of Pretoria, the South African Statistical Association, and the South African Academy of Science and Art.

From 2013 until 2015 he played a pivotal role in raising more than \$50 000 for uplifting the discipline of statistics within the South African scientific fraternity via various initiatives within the department of statistics at UP.

In April 2016, Ferreira acted as head of state of the South African delegation of the G20 Youth Summit in Germany, where he discussed South African and African challenges in global health, labour market issues, new strategies for the financial sector, and technological challenges with other global young leaders from diverse backgrounds.

That aside, Ferreira considers himself fortunate to be involved in music as the principal oboist of the Gauteng Philharmonic in Pretoria.

"I also freelance as oboist for the KwaZulu-Natal Philharmonic and the Johannesburg Philharmonic. Recently I completed my LRSM from the Royal Schools of Music in oboe performance, and I am in the woodwind quintet Airflair in Pretoria, where we maintain a performance schedule," says Ferreira.

For Ferreira, maths and music are intrinsically linked. "Mathematics (and statistics in particular) relies on counting," he explains "The world consists of mathematics. Music is but a part of that! In an orchestra performance or a solo recital, whether you are Beyoncé or Joshua Bell, your performance fundamentally consists of counting.

"Many people only see statistics as numbers reporting on data. It is so much more: algorithms dictating how the banking system works, logistical planning of government services, underlying models of ways the public communicate — statistics is everywhere."

Ferreira compares being a PhD student to standing in line to buy a train ticket: when you get this ticket, it allows you access to a certain number of trains that can take you somewhere you haven't been before. "Main aim: get this train ticket!" — *Tiana Cline*



PHOTO: SUPPLIED



Benny Masekwameng

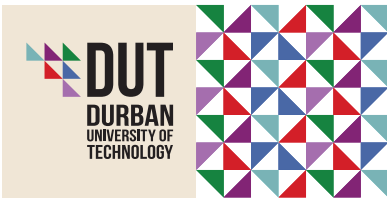
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NDONI MCUNU

Founder, Black Women in Science

Twitter: @BlakWomenInScie

Ndoni Mgunu was not always interested in science. Some of her family members made a living in the field and that's why she initially pursued it. However, as a 16-year-old she struggled with both maths and science, as a result of which she was told she was not a scientist.

Determined to prove that others could not determine her destiny, she persevered with both subjects, with the support of her family. Her attitude paid off, and Mgunu now holds a bachelor of science (honours) in environmental science and geography and a master's of science in applied environmental science.

For her MA thesis, she examined how remote sensing (RS) and geographic information systems (GIS) could be used to improve and assist rangeland and agricultural managers in monitoring the changes in grasslands. "This will assist farmers in implementing the benefits of precision agricultural practices. Furthermore, it will serve as a warning system to farmers in the case of unpredicted climate changes," she says.

Mgunu is now pursuing her PhD at the Global Change and Sustainability Research Institute at Wits, focussing on climate change and its effects on biodiversity conservation and agricultural production for smallholder farmers.

She also recently founded Black Women in Science (BWIS), a non-profit organisation aimed at providing knowledge and awareness of science for young rural women. "As exposure [to science] got me into the field of science, I believe that is how South Africa can increase the number of rural black females [going into] careers in Stem (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics)," she says.

BWIS exposes young black females to such careers, and provides support and mentorship for them. The organisation is working with four learners in remote rural areas in KwaZulu-Natal, but some day — with adequate funding — Mgunu hopes to expand across Africa. "Becoming a scientist has expanded my mind and built my confidence in a great manner," she says. "I want to ensure that all women have the opportunity of receiving such a privilege. Exposure to my field and story was a way in which I could assist young women to grow with me and not get left behind." — *Fatima Asmal*



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

ANELE MKUZO

Senior programme co-ordinator at Gibs

linkedin: linkedin.com/in/anele-mkuzo-7758ab23

Anele Mkuzo's parents made many sacrifices to ensure that she and her siblings had a good education. Her father moved to KwaZulu-Natal to work, while her mother studied and worked. This meant that as children, Anele and her siblings moved around a lot, and often stayed with family and friends in the Eastern Cape.

"The reality is that had my parents not sacrificed a lot to get us a good education I would not be blessed with the opportunities that I have at my disposal today," says Mkuzo (28). "Access to good education, access to healthcare and poverty are issues that many people in my community in the Eastern Cape are struggling with every day."

She feels strongly about these issues and in her current role as senior programme co-ordinator at the Gordon Institute of Business Science (Gibs), she has the opportunity to make a positive difference, by pursuing her passion in education and entrepreneurship. To date, she has worked with over 400 entrepreneurs from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds and industries, assisting them in designing business management programmes that empower them to increase revenue and employment.

Last year the Gibs Enterprise Development Academy (EDA) won the Most Innovative Programme category at the Women in Construction Awards, which recognises excellence in Africa within the construction, cement and concrete industries. Mkuzo was instrumental in designing EDA's award-winning programme, which involved taking 100 women who own construction-related businesses through a 10-month empowerment programme.

Mkuzo also sits on the National Home Building Regulatory Council's Women Empowerment Panel, which sponsored this programme. At the weekends, Mkuzo often volunteers her time to Seeds of Hope, a nongovernmental organisation which provides an accelerator programme for tutoring grade 10 and 11 learners in maths, science, accounting and English. She has also recently registered her own social enterprise through which she aims to educate schoolchildren about financial literacy and entrepreneurship. She is determined to ensure that this education will be provided in numerous African languages, so as not to exclude children who are unable to understand English.

"Everyone has the right to basic education," she says. "Education gives one an opportunity to do better for themselves and their communities. Providing an education is one of the few ways in which we can ensure that everyone has a fair chance at achieving their potential." — *Fatima Asmal*



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LOYISO MAKAPELA

Lecturer, faculty of law – University of the Free State

Instagram: @queenlloyd

At just 27, Advocate Loyiso Makapela is the youngest lecturer at the University of the Free State's faculty of law. She also has two master's degrees under her belt — one in international economic law, and the other in law, development and governance (the latter she acquired with merit at the University of London's school of oriental and African studies).

Makapela was awarded the Desmond Tutu Doctoral Scholarship by the National Research Foundation and will commence her PhD at both Stellenbosch University and Vrije Universiteit in Amsterdam in June.

As a lecturer, Makapela is passionate about mentoring her students beyond them completing their modules. "I firmly believe that that is where they need it the most," she

says. "When they are still in varsity, they have a plethora of options in front of them: they have councillors, residence heads, student leaders, lecturers et cetera at their disposal for mentorship and advice. But when they complete their studies, they are completely alone: I know I was."

Having noticed that many of her students are not ready to enter the job market, Makapela encourages them to pursue postgraduate studies, which are beneficial for their employment prospects. "I encourage them to become student assistants or research assistants. On a personal level, I also really think we could do with more young lecturers at higher education institutions, and where I see that potential in one of my students I like to encourage it," she says.

As much as she's ambitious, driven and self-motivated,

Makapela also loves watching YouTube makeup tutorials and having fun with fashion. When she noticed that most internet offerings didn't really cater for corporate fashion, she decided to initiate Young Women of Power, a soon-to-be-launched lifestyle website aimed at young, ambitious South African women. With the website, she hopes to build an online community of like-minded young women who can have a national conference annually.

One of Makapela's other goals is to pioneer a summer school program on business, human rights and corporate social responsibility at the University of Free State. "I just want to be the best version of myself, to have each student that enters my lecture hall leave believing that they can do anything they put their mind to," she says. — *Fatima Asmal*



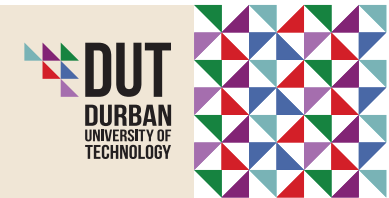
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NEDINE MOONSAMY

Senior lecturer, English department, University of Pretoria

Facebook: facebook.com/nedine.moonsamy

Nedine Moonsamy has a very distinct childhood memory of falling in love with the sensation of delving into books. She took pleasure in the “texture of the grainy, yellowing pages of public library books and “grasping at words that were never spoken” in her environment. “All of these things brought about the loveliest sense of dissonance where worlds were set in motion that helped me to know and to see and to sense my world with increasing depth and clarity,” she recalls.

But Moonsamy’s romance with reading didn’t end there. As an adult she successfully pursued two master’s degrees in English literature — one at the University of Pune in India, and the other at the University of the Witwatersrand — as well as a PhD in English literature, also at Wits. Moonsamy (32) also held an AW Mellon Postdoctoral Fellowship in the English department at Rhodes University last year.

Driven by what she describes as “pressing need” to make a culture of critical thought a commonplace one, Moonsamy regularly writes poetry and pieces on arts and culture in South Africa. She has contributed two chapters on South African literature to books edited by international scholars and has published articles in various journals, the most recent of which is a piece on African science fiction which will soon be published in the *Cambridge Journal of Postcolonial Literary Inquiry*. She is also currently co-editing a special issue of *English in Africa*, a journal that will be published later this year.

There is very little critical scholarship around science fiction in Africa, and with her latest project, Moonsamy hopes to change this: “This project will critique science fiction in the African context by engaging the particularities that emerge as a result of African uses of science fiction. I will examine how authors navigate the tenuous politics of power, technology and representation when operating within this genre,” she says.

“Of interest is how African writers have adapted the genre to suit the continent, its sociopolitical complexities and the nuances of its varying cultural milieus. Through a thorough examination of texts from all across the continent, I seek to analyse the differences and similarities that emerge during the engagement with themes like postcolonialism, African utopias (or dystopias), race, gender and class — otherwise central to much African literature — that have found innovative entry points into the imaginative consideration of African futures.” — *Fatima Asmal*

NTOMBIZONKE “ZONKE” MPOTULO

Leap School leader

Twitter: [@ntombizonke](https://twitter.com/ntombizonke)

“Growing up in the township to me is like growing up in a matchbox. You are only exposed to what you see there. Growing up I felt marginalised as a young woman, with no positive role modelling around. I longed for conversations with an elderly woman about understanding my own femininity.”

Life changed for Zonke Mpotulo when she began attending a Leap school, one among a network of independent, no-fee schools in South Africa, catering for children in marginalised communities. For the first time, she was asked how she felt. She couldn’t answer the question because she was so used to thinking rather than feeling. Inspired, Mpotulo decided that she, too, wanted to show children in Langa that schools could be places of love. So, after matric, she completed a bachelor of education via Unisa, through Leap’s Future Leaders Programme.

In 2012, Mpotulo took the giant step of leaving Cape Town to help set up Leap’s sixth campus in Ga Rankuwa, Pretoria. Teams lead Leap schools, not individuals, and Mpotulo was part of the school’s four-member leadership team. At first the community found it difficult to understand how a young woman could be a key member of a school’s leadership team. But this changed with time, as the school grew in numbers and reputation — it now has 129 learners.

Last year, Mpotulo also took on the role of Future Leader Programme manager at the Global Teachers Institute (GTI), a new organisation incubated from the Leap schools that is creating a new model for training teachers in South Africa. The GTI provides a five-year internship, involving mentoring at schools for matriculants who want to become teachers. Under Mpotulo’s leadership, the programme has been activated at six schools across South Africa, with 50 teachers in training.

“I think my journey is useless to the young people if I am only talking about my successes and not my current struggles as a young woman in this country,” says Mpotulo. “Just as I was hungry for conversations with an elderly woman, I know there are young people who are also hungry to hear how I am defining my womanhood now and the struggles I still face. I want to continue that work and use education as a platform, so that women are talking to girls and men are talking to boys.” — *Fatima Asmal*

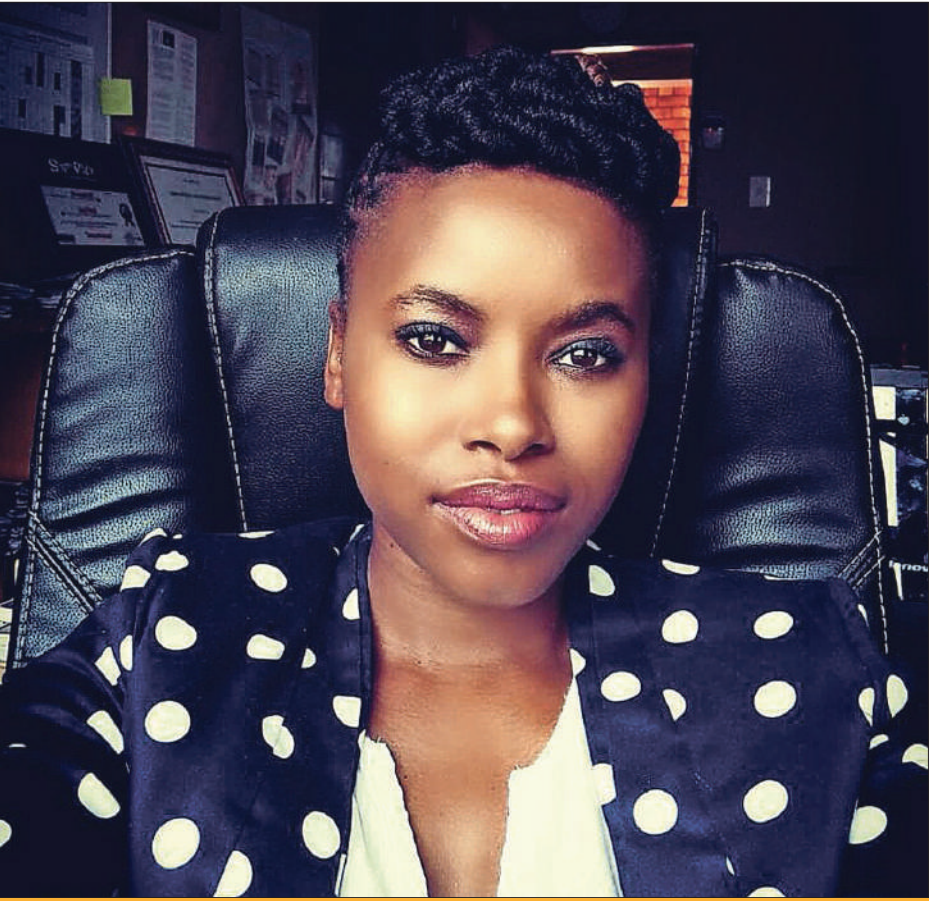


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DJ Merlon



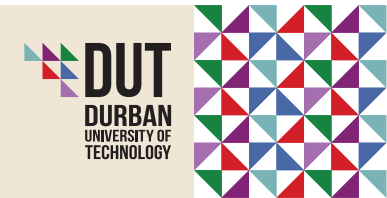
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TENDAYI SITHOLE

Associate professor of African politics, University of South Africa (Unisa)

The title “associate professor of African politics” conjures up the image of a middle-aged someone who has been involved in academics for decades. But Tendayi Sithole, who holds this title at the department of politics at Unisa, is just 32 years old.

“I was promoted to associate professor in 2016 as a result of good mentorship under Professor Sabelo Ndlovu-Gatsheni and Professor Mabogo More,” says Sithole. But he also admits that that being promoted to such a rank came through dedication, discipline, devotion and determination.

Sithole completed his degrees in a very short space of time. He holds a master’s degree in politics, which he acquired cum laude in 2012, and a doctorate in African politics (2014). He completed a BA majoring in communication and politics in 2008. He found political science intriguing and was attracted to political theory and philosophy, and this interest took him away from media studies.

“I am now more interested than ever before as there are knowledge systems from Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean worlds that call for decolonisation of political science and other fields in the humanities and social sciences,” he says.

Sithole’s research interests are black radical thought, Africana existential phenomenology, decoloniality, critical race theory and literary studies. His forthcoming book *Steve Biko: Decolonial Meditations of Black Consciousness* will be published by Lexington Books. He has also completed a manuscript, *Meditation in Black: Essays from the Limits of Being*, and his current research is for a book project on the philosophical thought of Sylvia Wynter.

Sithole has contributed numerous chapters to edited books and has published journal articles both locally and internationally. He is also a founding member of Africa Decolonial Research Network, and is currently Unisa’s disciplinary chair for African politics and a chair in the departmental ethics review committee.

Still, he wants to study further. “I want to be an advanced student, because a professor should help other students to grow. I want to advance scholarship in decoloniality with the collective of scholars who are doing so from various walks of life.” — Fatima Asmal



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

UNATHI SEPTEMBER

Founder and Chairperson, IFG Africa

Twitter: @UnathiSeptember

Unathi September was concerned about the low pass rates in subjects like maths and science in township and village schools, especially in the Eastern Cape, where he grew up. He also realised that learners from these areas struggled to pursue studies beyond matric due to them not having enough information about post-school opportunities, so he decided to do something about this.

September (26) initiated Inspire Foundation Group (IFG) Africa, which was founded on the principle of bridging the gap between village/township learners and their former model C and private school counterparts. IFG Africa designs and implements programmes that complement the theory taught in class. For example, its entrepreneurship programme, *Junior Apprentice South Africa*, empowers learners with the basic concepts of starting up businesses and funds these business ideas to allow learners to run them practically. The organisation also supports schools through awarding full scholarships to financially needy learners with high academic potential.

Over the past six years, IFG Africa has impacted over 16 000 learners across the country through its various programmes and assisted by the South African public and private sectors. Unsurprisingly, last year, it was recognised as the best youth-led emerging social enterprise at the Price Waterhouse Coopers/LifeCo/University of Johannesburg Emerging Social Enterprise Awards, and September was also selected for participation in the Top 100 Brightest Young Minds (BYM) summit.

September left a lucrative career in investment banking to focus on growing IFG Africa and running Gradesmatch, an educational technology company aimed at solving challenges faced by learners through research and innovation, which he co-founded. “I’m really passionate about making a difference in our continent, specifically in the education sector. Unfortunately working at a bank on a full-time basis didn’t allow me to do that,” he says.

“This is a global trend amongst millennials: research shows that our generation is really interested in doing meaningful and fulfilling work, more than just [earning] big paycheques.” As part of his education sector research, September also dedicates some of his time to teaching, in order to better understand the challenges facing teachers, as opposed to just making assumptions about this.

“The African continent at large has numerous challenges that I strongly believe will be solved by our generation,” he says. “Find an area that you’re passionate about and play your part in finding and implementing a solution, starting on a small scale.” — Fatima Asmal



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MOLEFI NYOFANE

Founder, Miya

In early 2006, after matriculating with a couple of distinctions from Kgola-Thuto Secondary School in QwaQwa, Free State, Molefi Nyofane arrived at Wits University, excited about pursuing a degree in law.

However, it was not to be. Nyofane was told that he did not meet the minimum requirements, because his English mark was below 60%. Instead of going home, Nyofane enrolled for a bachelor of arts degree at the University of Johannesburg. Although he eventually fell in love with and began pursuing studies in information management, this incident led him to ask himself how many other young people were pursuing careers they were not really passionate about.

“I felt one of the contributing factors to the high unemployment rate was that young people were pursuing wrong

career paths,” he explains. “I thought I could contribute by advising them, and by making resources available for them to pursue the right career paths for them.”

So in 2008, Nyofane initiated the Macro Informative Youth Agency (Miya), with the aim of bridging the gap between rural communities and institutions of higher learning, and roped some of his friends in. Miya’s key function is to convey information about graduate and postgraduate studies to young people in rural areas, through career coaching and guidance, motivational events and career expos.

Since its inception, the agency has reached more than 5 000 people through these programmes, and has placed around 70 learners per year into various universities and colleges across the country. Currently eight young men and women are studying abroad in Cuba, China and Russia,

thanks to its efforts.

Someday Nyofane would like the agency to be in the financial position to assist students with bursaries, but for now, he connects students with organisations that provide funding. Students are also assisted with the often cumbersome task of applying for their chosen fields of study. Nyofane and his friends also fund a go-to resource centre for learners — run by two staff members, supported by four office bearers and fifteen volunteers — from their own pockets.

“An educated society cannot be poor; it cannot be without light,” he says. “It doesn’t matter where a person was born, rural or urban community, how they grew up also doesn’t make any difference; if they are enlightened and learned, they will become people of value to themselves and to society.” — Fatima Asmal

Twitter: @molefinyane

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LYDIA CAPE

Environmental scientist, CSIR

LinkedIn: za.linkedin.com/in/lydia-cape-597b8622

Lydia Cape's love of the outdoors comes from her parents, who spent their time outdoors, hiking and climbing up things. That made her curious, and they indulged her constant questioning, spending copious amounts of time explaining how the world works.

She started off with a BSc in biochemistry, but soon realised that she didn't want to pursue a career where she would be locked up in laboratory all day. She moved on to do a master of sciences in applied ecology, with a specialisation in environmental management, from the University of Kiel in Germany. Her thesis was a spatial simulation, modelling alternative land use strategies, at the University of Adelaide.

With her degrees in the bag, she started at the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research in 2011. Applying her environmental management skills, she started managing projects across the country. This led to her working on South Africa's renewable energy build, as project manager for the solar photovoltaic area of the CSIR's strategic environmental assessment into wind and solar development zones. These are areas where the environmental tests are done before development, so companies can start construction almost straight away.

But this was not enough. She is now project managing the strategic environmental assessment for the Square Kilometre Array, one of the world's biggest scientific projects. Her goal is to do the kind of work that ensures the ambitious goals in the National Development Plan unfold in the real world.

Cape spends a lot of time lecturing and speaking at places such as the University of Cape Town. She has also turned her work into papers, which she presents around the world.

She spends her spare time outdoors, running with her dog, or hiking with her husband at the weekend. In 2012 they climbed Kilimanjaro, and she has done a five-day hike in Patagonia. — Siph Kings

LEEKO MOKOENA

Founder, Made with Rural

Website: madewithrural.com

Leeko Mokoena grew up in a village where everyone did subsistence farming: every household had food growing in the backyard, or in communal fields. Everyone took part, and nobody went hungry. But around the year 2000 the older people in the community started to get too old to work, or died.

The generation that inherited their land thought that they did not need to farm to get food, or earn a living. The land went fallow. That choice resulted in endemic poverty, unemployment and hunger. This did not make any sense to Leeko — hungry people were living on arable land, which they could use free of charge.

She decided to fix that and started Made with Rural. This empowers small-scale farmers, who are linked to sustainable markets. It also helps farmers with the endless paperwork that comes with their industry. Information is shared through an app — Pocket Crop — which farmers can use to quickly access new information and check on their sales. Together, the farmers are able to leverage their numbers to buy and sell at better prices.

Mokoena's most important project is to resuscitate failed government farming initiatives. Using state funds and support from the department of agriculture, fisheries and forestry, she ensures that farmers can obtain tools and seeds to bring life back to fallow fields. This comes just in time for farmers in areas where the climate has already started to change, most felt in lower rainfall each year, and a change in the planting season. The Pocket Crop app allows farmers to get instant updates on this sort of information, so they can plan their crop.

The other side of Made with Rural's success is more intangible, because it celebrates all things rural. Where rural areas are seen as backward and with little industry, the project seeks to make people feel proud about their skills and where they live.

The success stories are myriad. One farmer made R22 000 in just three weeks from selling her crop. That sort of success makes Mokoena wake up each morning beaming. One project can have a ripple effect across a whole community and she has little time for anything else except starting those ripples. — Siph Kings

ETHAN NEWMAN

Evolutionary plant biologist

Ethan Newman's first memory of nature is of Cape sugarbirds screaming while they searched for nectar. His first conscious interaction came through searching for padloper tortoises under the fynbos of his native Grabouw, in the Western Cape. That kindled a passion that bloomed into a career in the biological sciences.

Always hungry to learn more — and create more knowledge about South Africa's natural systems — Newman is working towards starting up his own laboratory. Its main focus will be on conducting research into evolutionary biology — why things have come to be the way that they are. This will give him the tools to research how aspects of the world work. In a country where evolution is entwined with the land, this is particularly important.

Getting to that dream involves a constant balance between being in the field, where he enjoys the incredible diversity of flowering plants and pollinators in the Cape Floristic Region, and sitting behind a desk so he can collate his findings and communicate them to the public.

Finding that balance has made him live a considered life. Each day is meticulously planned, allowing him to jump out of bed with an idea of what he needs to get done. The world encourages quick fixes and, as a result, people survive by using over-the-counter drugs to battle work-induced stress. Newman yearns for a society that keeps things simple, so people turn back to nature, helping them rekindling their link with the Earth. His hope is that this shift will lead to more sustainable development.

This is already happening in South Africa's environmental sector, and Newman is at the forefront of that change, kindling passion to bring about tangible change. Seeing this change happen makes him believe that humanity will one day overcome its destructive tendencies.

Gardening, hiking, running and cycling get him out into nature. Photographing pollinators in action allows him to mix work and fun. But his favourite pastime comes when he gets to spend time fishing for galjoen, South Africa's national fish. — Siph Kings



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NEOKA NAIDOO

Policy communicator, Project 90by2030

Twitter: @gigglygreenbean

Neoka decided to become a vegetarian at age 10. This stemmed from an empathy she felt for animals, and the realisation that her actions have consequences. She is now vegan. It was at around the same tender age that she started thinking about the Earth beyond her immediate surroundings. Her grade nine teacher even started the class talking about global warming. Neoka immediately wondered why her generation was not hearing more about this.

While other children were thinking about becoming firefighters or lawyers, she decided there and then that she would study environmental science. She now works for the nongovernmental organisation Project 90by2030, which seeks to make renewable energy provide the lion's share of electricity to South Africa's grid. As its policy communicator, she works to get information to those who would otherwise not have it.

This tends to be rural communities and women, who are usually left out of climate change discussions, though they are those most affected, as water resources dry up and food becomes harder to grow in a changing world.

She goes a step further, and tries to ensure that the communication does not just happen in one direction. Too often the voices of rural communities are left out of international climate negotiations or discussions on national climate change policy. This means the policies are then drafted on the basis of assumptions, or without political will, because the politicians don't feel pressurised to do the right thing.

This job gives her a deep sense of purpose. But she keeps driving and working harder to create meaning to her life, and only works on projects that she is absolutely convinced are important. This hunger gets her out of bed and ready to roll each morning. She then has a spell of yoga to get limbered up for the day. On the weekend she takes her exercise outdoors with regular hikes.

On the odd occasion that she needs to do something that is not physical, she unwinds with a turn of pottery and a spot of reading. — *Sipho Kings*

FORTUNATE PHAKA

Youth project leader, Youth 4 African Wildlife

Contact: x

Fortunate Phaka grew up in Kgotsoro, a small village near Polokwane in Limpopo, before moving to Mamelodi outside Pretoria to do his primary school. His teenage years were split between the two locations, with his mother and grandmother ensuring that he spent little time indoors. He spent much of his childhood playing in the shadow of mountains, and splashing in rivers. Instead of expensive toys, he played with small animals — his dog became his play buddy.

It was this intimate relationship with nature that started his fascination with how nature works and led him down the path of environmental sciences. His peers in Mamelodi tried to force him to conform, but his family told him to follow his heart, providing him with a solid base. Biology at school led to zoology and geography at university — he wanted the tools to learn more about his favourite animals.

It was during university that his faith in humanity was shaken by the realisation that our everyday actions were doing an incredible amount of damage to the environment. He is now aiming for a PhD, so he can do something about this threat.

His studies focus on the habitat of frogs in the Ndumo Game Reserve in KwaZulu-Natal. The first step is to train locals so they can become frogging guides, which will earn them extra income. He also wants to show communities around the park that their livelihoods depend on healthy ecosystems. From that work, he will publish research on frog habitats in both English and isiZulu.

To further include communities, he also works as the youth project leader for Youth 4 African Wildlife. He works with the interns, but also runs their social media and gets their work out into the public. His plan is to get young people to grow up with an awareness of the dangers of destroying the environment, so they will be less likely to repeat the mistakes of their parents.

That means he spends a lot of time in a sleeping bag, in the bush, where he gets to do a lot of wildlife photography. But when he is home his favourite moment comes with his morning cup of organic coffee. If he is home for the weekend, he spends his evenings at the theatre or listening to music concerts. — *Sipho Kings*

NASREEN PEER

Ecologist

Nasreen Peer became entranced by all things marine on trips to the beach as a kid. This exploded into full-blown love when she realised she could study ecology. People did try and trample on her dream by telling her that she would not make money and was squandering her talents. But this only made her more determined, partly to show these people that she could do what they doubted she could.

Narrowing her love down, she has put her focus into researching true crabs at St Lucia in KwaZulu-Natal (many other species such as hermit crabs and king crabs are not true crabs). Following them in extensive detail creates a trove of data about how they respond to small changes in their environment. She then links this to work by other researchers in the area to get a broader picture of the ways in which key species are responding to the changing climate of their home. The small things are important. Accuracy is key. This is her speciality — applying infinite patience to recording exhaustive detail.

Her expertise means she spends a lot of time presenting her findings on public platforms. This gives her new ideas for her research, with people in the audience raising questions that push her in new directions. Her only setback has been a very public trip on stage, but she survived. Waking up next to her significant other, and realising how much she has to be grateful for helps her to overcome any setbacks. Along with a big network of friends and family, she is constantly reminded that she has the capacity to do what she wants.

Now she is using her confidence to teach people — especially children — to ask the right questions and seek their own answers, instead of trying to lobby policymakers to make the right decisions. "The greatest change happens when people take control over their own environment, instead of waiting for an outside force to look after it," says Peer. "People that just complain frustrate me, to such an extent that I think that it should be a punishable sin!"

She escapes negativity by reading and watching television series, with more focus on the former. Surfing and swimming keep her healthy. But in recent months archery and Dungeons and Dragons have quickly overtaken these other pursuits. — *Sipho Kings*



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GARRET BARNWELL

Advocacy and communications officer, Médecins Sans Frontières

Twitter: @GCBarnwell @MSF_southafrica

Garret Barnwell, former president of Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) Southern Africa, has spent several years working in the field across Africa and the Middle East, and now works to promote better evidence-based care and mental healthcare, particularly in rural areas.

Currently working as MSF's advocacy and communications officer in Rustenburg, Barnwell focuses heavily on the public health response to sexual and intimate partner violence.

Prior to qualifying as a clinical psychologist, Barnwell worked in the field with MSF in South Africa, Somaliland, Turkey and Lebanon. Among other projects, he assisted with the malnutrition assessments in Somalia during the Horn of Africa Crisis of 2011, helped rehabilitate a 140-bed hospital in Somaliland and assisted in the effort to provide medical supplies to doctors in Syria. "While my family has always been very supportive, I think there were times when my mother sat with a ruler and a map, measuring how far I was from a conflict or other potential security concerns," he says.

He has completed two master's degrees, in conflict management and clinical psychology, at Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NNMU) in Port Elizabeth, where he worked as an intern psychologist. He also conducted regular outreach with colleagues to Graaff-Reinet, where he developed his passion for rural mental health, sparked by his work as a student working on Transnet's Phelophepa Healthcare Train. He was actively involved in the development of the Rural Mental Health Campaign launched at the 2014 Rural Health Conference.

Barnwell is now embarking on his PhD, aiming to focus on a potential link between suicide and intimate partner violence, and how they intersect with the public healthcare system.

He aims to continue advocating for improved, patient-centred care for survivors of sexual and intimate partner violence. "What drives me is hope — it's easy to become negative and cynical, but we are entering a stage in the public health care landscape where we can actually bring about change, and I see people becoming passionate about driving positive change." — Tracy Burrows

DR TINASHE CHANDAUKA

Medical intern, aspiring academic surgeon

Twitter: @tinashchandauk

27-year-old Dr Tinashe Chandauka is a man on an ambitious mission — to positively impact surgery and its outcomes across South Africa. Currently a second-year medical intern at Frere Hospital in East London, Dr Chandauka has been awarded a Rhodes scholarship, and will travel to the UK later this year to begin his DPhil in surgical studies at Oxford University. He aims to gather and analyse vast amounts of data on surgical procedures in South Africa, Kenya and possibly Rwanda, to bring about improvements in surgery and its outcomes in developing countries.

Born in Zimbabwe and raised in South Africa, Dr Chandauka is the first member of his family to become a medical doctor. His mother is a publishing director in South Africa and his father is involved in higher education in Zimbabwe. Having initially set out to study architecture, he quickly realised that his passion lay in healthcare and its potential to improve the lives of many people. He completed his degree at the University of Cape Town, where he was a co-founder of the International Association of Student Surgical Societies. He loves sport in his free time, participating in the South African Ironman 70.3, marathons and numerous half-marathons.

However, his primary focus now is fast-tracking his PhD, becoming a leading academic surgeon, and contributing to improved outcomes for patients undergoing surgery.

"What drives me is the story of Africa," he says. "I would like to contribute to overcoming the healthcare challenges Africa faces. If you consider that the World Health Organisation has acknowledged that 10-30% of the emergencies that could lead to death require surgery, this is a field with a huge impact on healthcare and communities as a whole. However, there are challenges facing healthcare professionals in South Africa, particularly those working in under-resourced and rural areas."

Dr Chandauka aims to study hundreds of surgical procedures over the next few years to gather data on what contributes to errors, the factors impacting patient outcomes, and the costs to patients, hospitals and communities of adverse outcomes. With gaps in the understanding of the cost of surgery, particularly in South Africa, he believes there are opportunities for young local doctors to develop the necessary databases and infrastructure to improve surgical care, and even contribute to stopping the healthcare brain drain. "I'd like to make a tangible difference to the way in which people receive healthcare, as well as their feelings about South Africa." — Tracy Burrows



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

DR HARRIET ETHEREDGE

Bioethicist, health communication specialist

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Now a post-doctoral research fellow based at the Wits Donald Gordon Medical Centre, Harriet Etheredge focuses on bioethics and health communication research. At its core, healthcare is about people and interaction, and this makes her research essential in improving the way patients are treated in South Africa.

Etheredge (31) did her undergraduate studies at Rhodes and her master's degree at Wits. She has a PhD in health communication and has focused her work on two areas currently affected by the need for practical implementation of ethics and communication — organ transplants and oncology.

"In organ donation, there are widespread misconceptions among the public and even challenges within the healthcare system," she says. "For example, organ retrieval must take place quickly and efficiently, but ensuring the entire multi-disciplinary transplant network is in place when it is needed, and overcoming hesitance among nursing staff attending the organ retrieval, can be a challenge."

In oncology, her research has found that patients need to have more detailed information about their day-to-day treatment, what to expect and even why their treatment is being administered. Etheredge is working on implementing a patient diary, providing patients with detailed information on what to expect from their treatment every day, giving them some control over how to plan their days around treatment.

Etheredge is the youngest member of the Wits Human Research Ethics Committee (Medical), tasked with reviewing proposed clinical research projects and clinical trials based on their ethical and legal merit, which helps protect vulnerable populations in South Africa.

Medical ethics as a subject is often seen as tedious and mainly theoretical, she says. "While healthcare practitioners all agree on the need for ethical practice, the practical application of codes of ethics is not always clearly laid out."

She hopes to address gaps between the theory and the practice, improve communications among everyone involved in medical treatment, develop models to promote patient-centred care, ensure that the doctor-patient relationship is entrenched in consultations, and make sure that patients have a feeling of autonomy.

Etheredge regularly gives talks on ethics. "My aim is to make ethics practical for students, pharmaceutical companies, medical aids and health professionals, so that they will put communications and ethics into practice. This should enhance patient care and legally sound practices," she says. — Tracy Burrows



PHOTO: SUPPLIED



DR KOOT KOTZE

Medical intern, writer and activist

Twitter: @kootbenderkotze

The recipient of Stellenbosch University's Chancellor's Medal for 2015, Dr Koot Kotze is currently interning at the East London Hospital Complex (which encompasses Cecilia Makiwane Hospital and Frere Hospital).

Kotze (24) received his MBChB degree cum laude in 2015. He passed 29 of his 31 modules in this period with distinction, and achieved numerous academic and merit awards: academic colours from the Tygerberg Student Council; the Rector's Award for outstanding academic achievement as well as SU's merit bursary every year since 2010. In 2015, he was recognised as the best student in family medicine, primary care, community health and disabled care, forensic medicine, paediatric and child healthcare, the clinical skills domain and urology. He received the award for the best MBChB dissertation and was named the best undergraduate student at the faculty.

On top of putting in long academic hours, he was also active in the launch of the advocacy group TB Proof and is a member of the Safe Working Hours campaign, which seeks to better control the number of consecutive hours doctors must work, in the interest of patient safety. He also enjoys writing about these and other topics, and has academic and mainstream articles to his name.

These organisations, Kotze says, are in line with his leaning toward knowledge transfer and evidence-based advocacy. "In the long term, I hope to do more work in evidence-based activism — using evidence to effect change, and the gap between what we know and what we do," he says. For example, he notes that TB is one of the most widespread infectious disease killers in South Africa, yet there are still gaps between best practice and diagnosis and treatment in the field. "This is why TB Proof advocates for greater awareness of and protection against occupational and community-based TB transmission, for shortcomings in prevention and treatment to be addressed, and also seeks to destigmatise TB."

While enjoying his daily interaction with patients and learning to speak Xhosa to improve his communication with them, Kotze envisages becoming more involved in evidence-based practice in medicine, public health or global health; or becoming involved in medical education in future. "I'd like to have an impact upstream, so I'd like to become involved in training healthcare workers to take an evidence-based approach," he says. — Tracy Burrows

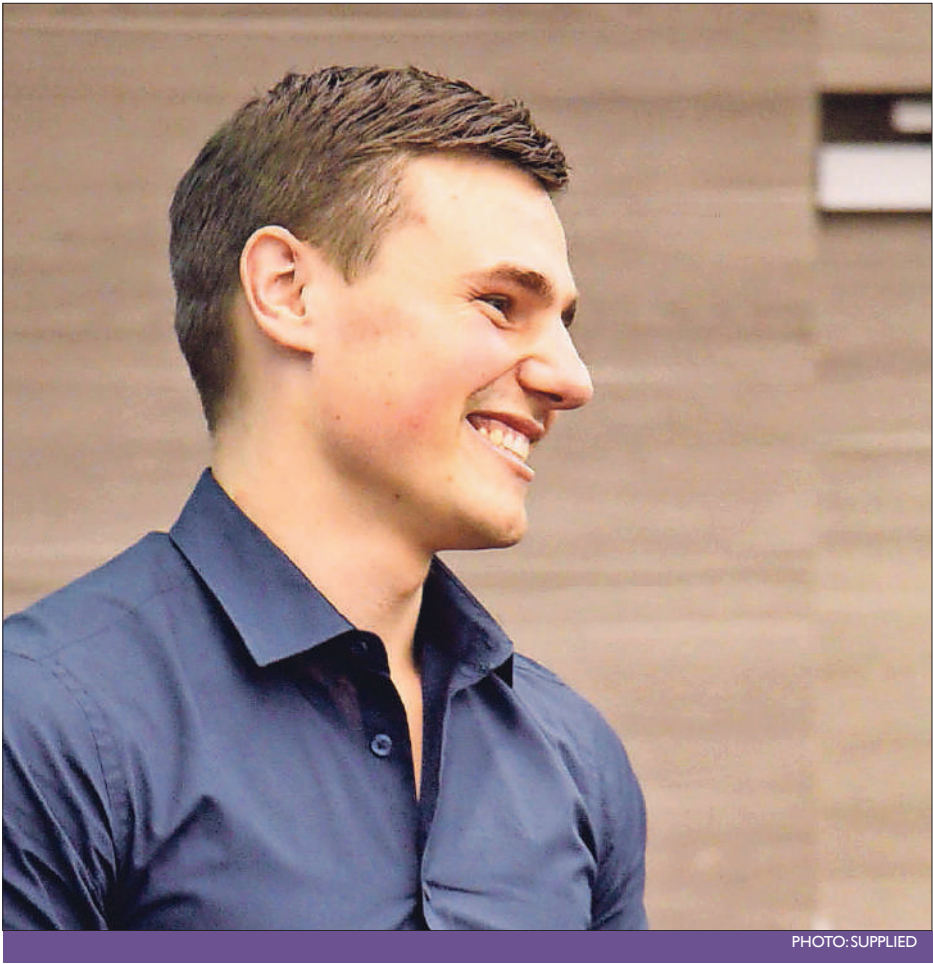


PHOTO: SUPPLIED



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

NSOVO MAYIMELE

Pharmacist, public health advocate

Twitter: @RadiantXiluva

As a Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University graduate and a community service pharmacist at Thabazimbi Hospital in Limpopo, Nsovo Mayimele (26) spends a great deal of time talking to patients and supporting rural clinics in the area. This experience has given her insight into a range of challenges in the healthcare sector, and has strengthened her resolve to help.

Mayimele believes government, healthcare professionals and patients need to view public health as an integral part of the socioeconomic "big picture" and that access to healthcare and health knowledge must be stepped up, particularly in rural areas. She is working to change mind-sets and increase knowledge on a number of fronts, including serving as president of the Junior Public Health Association of South Africa, social development officer of the International Youth Council South Africa and working with Chrovron Dreams, an organisation that promotes education for marginalised youth.

Her involvement in advocacy bodies frequently sees her arranging conferences and moderating panel discussions both locally and internationally, in addition to her daily community service pharmacy work in Thabazimbi. Her job sees her advising patients in the hospital and in rural areas, as well as helping with pharmaceutical stock management at primary healthcare clinics. Having observed a lack of understanding among patients about how and why they should take their medications, she is currently completing an advice booklet, which she hopes to distribute to patients. As a Women Deliver Young Leaders programme fellow, she takes every opportunity to learn more about public health issues impacting women in particular, and to advocate for healthier behaviours. Mayimele is turning her passion for photography and video into an opportunity to create informative public health messages, but she believes direct contact is the best approach in rural areas.

"I simply go up to groups of people and chat to them to spread information. Luckily I'm very talkative, I make an effort to befriend people, and I try not to hurt their feelings. It's important to understand the 'why', before giving people advice. This friendly, down-to-earth approach has more impact than when you deliver information from behind a white clinical coat," she says.

Mayimele pursued a master's in pharmacy (public health and management). Her research, based on quality improvement in pharmaceutical stock management, won multiple awards on national and international platforms. — Tracy Burrows

DR MAMAILA LEBEA

Paediatric cardiologist

Instagram: @mamailalebea

31-year-old Dr Mamaila Lebea has put in over a decade of studying and isn't finished yet. But what drives her is not the potential for a lucrative position as a highly qualified paediatric cardiology specialist — it is the satisfaction she derives from engaging with her young patients, and seeing their health improve as a result of treatment. "This work is so rewarding. You'll see a child so sick one day, and the next day they are running to give you a hug."

Lebea was born and raised in Limpopo, where as a child she found herself inspired by a story she read about pioneering heart surgeon Dr Chris Barnard. "I didn't even know he was a South African at first. I was just fascinated by the story and decided I wanted to be a 'heart doctor' when I grew up," she says.

She received her MBChB at the University of Cape Town at the age of 23, and went on to complete a diploma in child health in 2011. During her internship in Limpopo, she was assigned to paediatrics, and her love of working with children blossomed. She subsequently specialised in paediatrics and child health, qualifying to be a paediatrician at the age of 29. She also completed a master's in medicine (paediatrics) at the University of the Witwatersrand, and won a bursary from the Nelson Mandela Children's Hospital to further her studies in paediatric cardiology, which she is completing at Chris Hani Baragwanath Hospital. "The Nelson Mandela Children's Hospital is still under construction, but it is going to be a beautiful facility, and much needed," she says. "It will be only the second such facility in the country, focusing entirely on children. I hope to see more of these hospitals being built in future."

Although her daily workload is significant, with her and the team at Chris Hani Baragwanath seeing 70 patients on the busiest day of the week, Lebea is also studying towards a master's in science at Wits. She starts every day with prayer, and takes strength from seeing her work have an impact. In her free time, she is an avid reader and is on a personal quest to travel to as many places in Africa as possible. In the long term, she hopes to take her skills back to Limpopo, to benefit the community there.

— Tracy Burrows



PHOTO: SUPPLIED



DR TLALENG MOFOKENG

Sexual health advocate, radio presenter

Twitter: @drtlaleng

33-year-old Dr Tlaleng Mofokeng is well known among Kaya FM listeners and social media followers for her efforts to champion reproductive health rights and information. In addition to this work, she is also a hardworking private practitioner, producer of sexual health videos, women's health and sexual health advocate, vice-chairperson of the Sexual & Reproductive Justice Coalition, a wife and the mother of a toddler. What drives her is a quest to challenge rape culture, engender respect for patients among health practitioners, and raise awareness of women's health issues and sexual violence.

Mofokeng grew up in QwaQwa, and says she has always known she wanted to be a doctor. After studying at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, her internship and community service work took her to Gauteng. "During my internship and community service, I found myself doing caesareans with just a nurse in under-resourced community hospitals, and I encountered many rape victims and victims of abuse. I realised we all need to work harder to address the social injustices that lead to rape, violence and a lack of respect for bodily integrity," she says.

Mofokeng admits there were times she was driven to tears, especially when treating child rape victims. "I saw there was a lack of comprehensive care, safe havens for women



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

and children and effective mechanisms for handling rape cases in the health and justice systems."

Moved to agitate for better community and state interventions and support, as well as to better inform communities, Dr Mofokeng presents a regular sexual health show on Kaya FM; raises awareness via social media; gives talks on sexual health; and has made several TV appearances, including two

in Al Jazeera's The Cure series, which saw her traveling to Liberia. Mofokeng also runs a women's health practice from the Disa Health Care clinic in Hurlingham, Johannesburg.

"My end goal as a doctor is to ensure there are places where people can have their bodily integrity respected, where they aren't discriminated against because they are a transgender man who needs a pap smear, or a black

lesbian who has been a victim of 'corrective' rape," she says. Addressing rape culture and improving women's health starts with information and support, she says. "In communities where there is support at every level, people tend to speak out more, because they know they are not alone. Without knowledge and support, people tend to remain silent, for fear of being shamed and victimised." — Tracy Burrows

HERE'S TO A NEW BREED OF SPORT AND FILM LEGENDS



Denwin Farmer
SuperSport United
U23 National Team

Emmanuel Letlotlo
Kaizer Chiefs FC

Lindiwe Dube
Intern Presenter

Simphiwe Ngwenya
Intern Camera Operator

Saluting young talent in the MultiChoice Diski Challenge

OVER **60**
PLAYERS PROMOTED
TO THEIR FIRST TEAMS

89
NATIONAL TEAM
CALL UPS

75
LIVE MATCHES PRODUCED
BY 36 INTERNS





DR YOSHAN MOODLEY

Perioperative researcher

Six million South Africans have HIV, which increases their risk of developing a number of medical conditions during their lifetime, some of which may require surgery. However, not enough is known about how HIV impacts a patient's risk of developing complications around the time of surgery. Dr Yoshan Moodley's research aims to shed light on HIV patients' risks when having surgery, giving doctors much-needed data that can be used to improve their care and reduce complications.

Medical research has long been Moodley's focus. He grew up on the north coast of KwaZulu-Natal and completed his master's in medical microbiology at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) in 2008. During his years in the lab, Moodley became increasingly interested in the "big picture" that lay beyond the scope of the microscope. "I would see these specimens coming into the lab and wonder where they came from, the diseases behind them and the real people impacted by them. In medical research, you can't really understand a situation if you view one factor in isolation — you must understand the interaction between multiple factors."

He became involved in perioperative research, which focuses on the care of patients undergoing surgery, while working as a research assistant on two international clinical trials at the Inkosi Albert Luthuli Central Hospital in Durban. His own research on how hypertension affects the perioperative health outcomes of patients undergoing non-cardiac surgery earned him a PhD in anaesthetics from the Nelson R Mandela School of Medicine at UKZN and provided new findings on the potentially harmful effects when hypertensive patients begin to take beta-blockers shortly before surgery. He also developed the South African Vascular Surgical-Cardiac Risk Index, which can be used to identify vascular surgical patients at risk of heart attacks around the time of their surgery, and has also developed another perioperative risk stratification tool, which is being evaluated by the American Public Health Association.

Currently a post-doctoral fellow at the department of anaesthesiology and critical care medicine at the Nelson R Mandela School of Medicine, Moodley and his team of master's students now focus on research into complications in surgical patients with HIV. "We are seeking to identify the extent of the problem and understand the factors influencing the risk of perioperative complications in HIV patients. We hope to inform new guidelines leading to improved patient management and lower rates of complications in these patients." — *Tracy Burrows*



PHOTO: SUPPLIED



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LEBO TSHABALALA

Radiographer

Twitter: @missl_s

Lebo Tshabalala has turned her radiography qualifications and a passion for helping people into a viable business that aims to have an impact on thousands of people across South Africa. She plans to take her mobile TB screening unit Visionary X-Rays to mines, construction companies and other large enterprises in South Africa, offering TB screening to employees and their household partners.

For many, this will be the first screening they undergo, despite the fact that South Africa has the third highest TB infection rate in the world. If an employee is found to have TB, the unit travels to the employee's home to screen his or her family members. This home service is subsidised in part by the government. In its first year of operation, the unit aims to x-ray over 20 000 people, says Tshabalala. She plans to expand her services to include much-needed mammograms and sonar scans, and to expand her reach across the rest of Africa, possibly through a franchise model.

"I grew up in a poor mining area near Odendaalsrus in the Free State, so I was well aware of the local need for access to quality, affordable healthcare. Many local people cannot afford to travel to government hospitals for diagnosis and screening; awareness of diseases such as TB and cancer is lacking, and often local healthcare facilities are ill equipped," she says.

After graduating from the Central University of Technology in Bloemfontein, Tshabalala worked for some years at the Botshabelo District Hospital and private hospitals in Welkom and Johannesburg, where she observed that quality healthcare was available only to a select few. She then worked as a medical sales and marketing rep and studied for her MBA, honing her business skills and increasing her understanding of various markets.

Armed with this experience and grants won through the Pitch & Polish challenge and a Mandela Washington Fellowship, she sourced specialised mobile x-ray equipment, fitted into a trailer capable of travelling on rural roads. With many awards and international recognition, this unit is just the start of a movement set to make quality healthcare available to people from all walks of life.

In addition to improving access to healthcare, Tshabalala actively seeks to encourage girls and young women to become entrepreneurs through the Dream Girls foundation. This foundation offers one-year entrepreneurship and leadership courses to schoolgirls in the Free State. — *Tracy Burrows*

CLAIRE WATERHOUSE

Medical access campaigner

Twitter: @cbwaterhouse

As the Southern African advocacy co-ordinator for the Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) Access Campaign, Claire Waterhouse lobbies big pharmaceutical companies and the government in an ongoing effort to lower the price of medicines that save lives.

South African-born Waterhouse did her schooling in Dubai, studied at Rhodes University and completed her master's in human rights law at the University of London's school of oriental and African studies. As a field worker for MSF, she spent six months working as a project administrator at a refugee camp in the Central African Republic, and three months each at Ebola treatment facilities in Liberia and Guinea. "Every new day in the field brought a new challenge," she says. Waterhouse found herself being evacuated from Bangui as bullets rained down, and setting up a temporary refugee camp by herself in a rural location in response to an emergency flood. "My experiences in the field taught me that I can do whatever I put my mind to, and they helped me realise how lucky we are in South Africa — often, we take life for granted. In some places, nobody takes life for granted and just surviving is a battle."

The struggle many face just to survive is a theme carried forward into her current role, pushing for better access for all to vital medicines, diagnostics and treatment. MSF's global Access Campaign challenges governments and pharmaceutical companies to make life-saving medicines accessible to those who need them most. In South Africa, this means challenging patent laws that can keep medicines under patent and out of reach of the poor for 20 to 30 years. "In South Africa, we focus in particular on ARVs and TB medication. However, we lobby for affordable medications across a range of other treatment areas too: recently, we picketed outside large pharmaceutical company to reduce prices of a breast cancer drug that is currently completely unaffordable in South Africa, even for patients on medical aid."

Waterhouse says that while she loves working in the field, she believes her current role, although more desk-bound, could have greater impact in the long term. In future, she plans to continue working in the humanitarian healthcare sector. "Now that I am working in the health rights arena, I realise how huge the challenges are and how much there is to be done."

In her free time, she and her husband are engaged in renovating their new house in Johannesburg. — *Tracy Burrows*



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

40 YEARS LATER

THERE IS A DIFFERENCE,

BUT HAS ANYTHING

REALLY CHANGED?

LET'S TALK

#40YEARS LATER

@KAYAFM95DOT9

JUNE



IN COMMEMORATION



HOME OF THE AFROPOLITAN



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

TEBOHO EDKINS

Filmmaker

LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/in/teboho-edkins-23222218](https://www.linkedin.com/in/teboho-edkins-23222218)

Teboho Edkins has directed nine films and seen these films screened at more than 200 international film festivals. He has won 21 international awards, and he has held 10 individual and group exhibitions at exclusive and remarkable venues such as the Tate Modern in London, Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris and Haus der Kulturen der Welt in Berlin. His last film *Coming of Age*, which premiered at the Berlinale in 2015, has won seven awards to date and has been screened at more than 40 film festivals.

"I studied photography at the University of Cape Town's art school and ended up making only video art in my final year," says Edkins. "Then my father, who was an established documentary filmmaker, offered me the opportunity to direct a film in Lesotho. This first film — *Ask Me I am Positive* — played at festivals all over the world and encouraged me to apply to film schools in France."

Edkins grew up in a filmmaking family and believes this really helped him to see it as a tangible, attainable profession instead of some distant, impossible dream.

"What intrigues me about filmmaking, and especially documentary films, is the process of making them," says Edkins. "I find that within the documentary, you can be more playful with the genres, moving between fiction and reality. I have been influenced by famous and not-so-famous people, but growing up in Lesotho has been, I think, the greatest influence on my work."

Edkins plans to continue making films which don't fit easily into set categories, films which can show in film festivals, but which could work as art pieces in galleries and museums too. He is also keen to explore the idea of making a documentary film with scripted scenes and actors, or a fiction film that is actually a documentary.

"Recently I showed my last film to its cast in Lesotho and I felt it was a moment which stood out in my career so far," concludes Edkins. "I realised that while my films may have shown all over the world, they are also screening in small mobile cinemas in tiny villages in Lesotho, and I am particularly proud of these diverse spaces." — *Tamsin Oxford*

ANNELI GROENEWALD

Deputy editor, *Finweek*

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Anneli Groenewald is the deputy editor of *Finweek* at Media24, with an accomplished and exciting career so far. She has been working in the media industry for more than 10 years, with time spent at *Farmer's Weekly* and as a part-time lecturer at the University of Johannesburg. She is inspired by what journalism stands for and how it can make a difference.

"As a student I had all sorts of perceptions that journalists can change the world through their writing," says Groenewald. "I love writing, and liked what journalism stood for. While the media environment has changed drastically over the past years, in many instances resulting in drastically reduced teams who have to work miracles to get the basics done, I still believe that good journalism has the ability to change lives, and to hold the powers that be accountable."

For Groenewald, this industry is exciting because she gets to meet exceptional individuals and gets to write unusual stories about unique things. She also finds that, as a lecturer, she is inspired by the chance to help young people develop the skills they need to operate in the industry.

"These students have grown up in the online era," she says. "Many of them are extremely talented and really eager to work in the industry. Journalism is an always-on career. The migration to online platforms has amplified this effect. In many instances, this has led to a loss of quality. On the other hand, it has created loads of potential, and people who currently work in the industry are in the position to help shape how it plays out."

Groenewald plans to further her studies over the next few years and to find ways of maintaining quality in journalism, regardless of its platform.

"Every time that the industry's circulation figures are released, we are again reminded of the continuing downward trend in print media," she concludes. "It can no longer be seen as surprising. I believe a core of readers will remain who enjoy the finite read, and the visual presentation and physical element that print publications offer. At the same time, I think an important question to ask is whether media companies will be able to afford and commit to producing quality journalism in the online space." — *Tamsin Oxford*



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

ROB FORBES

DJ, 5FM

Twitter: [@RobForbesDJ](https://twitter.com/RobForbesDJ)

Rob Forbes is a renowned 5FM DJ with a powerful radio presence and an equally powerful personality. His skill in deftly capturing the attention of his audience and his awards — one MTN Radio Award and two nominations — speak of a talent set to light up the South African landscape for some time to come. Rob is socially conscious, passionate about his career and has created a show that appeals to a wide array of South Africans.

"I came to radio as someone who appreciated the art of presenting, but never thought they would be able to do it," says Forbes. "After joining a station on campus, I was taken by the technical elements of it and slowly learned the art of what happens on air as well. I'm lucky I've been a part of both sides."

For Forbes, being a DJ is a real skill that improves with practice, and he receives real-time feedback from an audience quick to share opinions and views. It is also a career which he finds deeply satisfying and one which was inspired by some of South Africa's finest.

"I grew up listening to talk radio in the car — Dan Moyane, John Berks and the like," says Forbes. "When I started actually working in radio it was with guys like DJ Fresh, a man whose journey has been so long and important it has literally shaped radio and music for more than one generation in this country."

Forbes has plans to build towards a drive-time show at 5FM, which is, he believes, every entertainment presenter's dream position.

"Ideally, you want that one under your belt," he laughs. "I also want to do talk radio at some stage. I've never done it and it would be an entirely new radio challenge. It's going to be important to keep an eye on what broadcast media looks like in five to 10 years; a lot will change. For people paying attention, there will definitely be opportunities to do interesting things." — *Tamsin Oxford*



PHOTO: SUPPLIED



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

NDONI KHANYILE

Actress, presenter and storyteller

Twitter: [@NdoniKhanyile](https://twitter.com/NdoniKhanyile)

Ndoni Khanyile has been described as a storyteller, as someone who has taken her skills across numerous visual media and honed them as she's told stories about social injustice and brought awareness to thousands. Her qualifications and capabilities are numerous. Ndoni received a BA in theatre and performance from the University of Cape Town, was awarded a Fulbright Scholarship to pursue a master's degree in broadcast journalism at Columbia University and has performed in some of South Africa's biggest local productions. She has appeared in *When We Were Black*, *Strike Back*, *Beaver Falls* and *Long Walk to Freedom*.

"My career path began with a love of storytelling and I was lucky enough to experience the ritual of inganekwane (bedtime fables) with my grandmother during the school holidays," says Khanyile. "This fuelled my already active imagination and I threw myself into school productions, writing poetry and all things make-believe. My career was further cemented when we studied protest theatre in my drama class at high school, and I was inspired by the notion that my love of story could meet my social convictions."

The women in Khanyile's life have inspired her, as they have had the biggest influence on her as a person, and her way of thinking. "A famous name who also stands out is definitely Maya Angelou," says Khanyile. "I owe my love of words to her. I read *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* when I was about 11 and then started writing. Being published in a poetry collection compiled by *O magazine* alongside her was a huge moment for me as a young poet many years ago."

Khanyile's work is driven by her beliefs and commitments and her continued success is a testament to this passion. She has been able to perform on stage and screen both locally and internationally, write and be published with journalists she admires and she has plenty of plans for the future.

"In the first 10 years of my career I was fortunate enough to have some great opportunities to build and deepen my skills in key areas," says Khanyile. "The next 10 are about using those skills to produce work which speaks directly to my social and political beliefs, especially the enormous work of making sense of, and beginning to heal, the trauma we carry from our collective past." — *Tamsin Oxford*



HERMAN LENSING

Food editor, *Sarie*

Twitter: @HermanLensing

Herman Lensing is a dynamic personality and passionate foodie, a combination of skills that netted him the role of the youngest ever food editor at *SARIE* magazine. He was only 21 when he was given the position and he has since then made it his own.

"I trained to be a chef and then realised that the long hours and constant abuse were not my idea of food," laughs Lensing. "I wanted something creative which would still allow me to indulge in my love of food and have a social life. Then some talented people triggered something in me and I chose journalism as a career, with a specialism in food so I can share my love for it. To share a quote from my mother — 'food is a powerful thing, as it can make someone's day better.'"

Lensing says one of his most notable sources of inspiration is Sumien Brink, editor of *VISI* magazine. He is also inspired by the constant changes in the media industry as a whole, along with the rich flavours and textures of dishes from across the world. Today, he is driven to take his passion to new levels by embracing technology and all it can offer.

"Things that didn't work when I started in the industry do now," says Lensing. "The platforms are changing and for me as a young South African, I am so excited to see how we as a country are embracing these changes. I grew up in conservative Uptington and my mother didn't much like change; now she is talking on social media!"

Lensing's plans for the future are to keep on doing what he loves at *Sarie* in creating beautiful digital and print content that makes everyone salivate. He looks back on his career with pride and holds one moment as his most stand-out: "The moment Michelle van Breda told me I was food editor for *Sarie*," he says. "I had just turned 21 and it was surreal. I never in my wildest dreams believed I would get this job." — *Tamsin Oxford*



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PHOTO: SUPPLIED

RODERICK MACLEOD

Video journalist, BBC Africa

Twitter: @RodMacleod

Based in Nairobi, Kenya, Roderick Macleod is a video producer and journalist working with BBC Africa's newsgathering team. Previously he filmed, produced and presented content for BBC's flagship show *Africa Business Report*. He is one of a handful of video journalists to have represented South Africa on this renowned international platform. At 31, he has covered multiple stories across the continent including in Nigeria, Uganda, Ghana and Ethiopia. At home he has won a South African Film & Television Award for his work as an editor.

"Growing up in South Africa in the 1990s it was easy to be sheltered from the true realities of the country," says Macleod. "I found that through television, newspapers and radio I was exposed to the true occurrences in South Africa. The atrocities of the past, the heroes of our present and the difficulties we face as a nation."

As a result, Macleod has followed the news intently and become entranced by local and African politics. He believes that South Africa is still very segregated and inequality is pervasive, and that through journalism he has been exposed to stories and people he wouldn't normally have been.

"There are so many talented and hard-working media professionals working in Africa who continuously inspire me," says Macleod. "Most recently, during my time with the BBC, I've had the privilege of working closely with many of the finest journalists and video producers on the continent. People like Lerato Mbele, Milton Nkosi, Taurai Maduna and Christian Parkinson to name a few... all of whom I've learned a lot from in terms of professionalism, creativity and storytelling."

One of Macleod's best moments is when he managed to arrange some boats to take a team along part of the Niger Delta to film rigs and bunkering for a piece on oil.

"We were warned of kidnappings and violence in the area, so we went in with a mobile police unit and a private bodyguard," says Macleod. "On arriving at the dock in Port Harcourt I quickly disembarked, expecting us to rush to the boats undercover to avoid any attention. A moment later I turn around to see our presenter being asked to take selfie pics, and our armed guard and bodyguard asking me to take snaps of them for their Facebook pics. The locals found it hilarious." — *Tamsin Oxford*

NGWAKO MALAKALAKA

Producer and presenter, Jozi Maboneng Radio

Twitter: @NgwakoSA

Ngwako Malakalaka began with Trans Africa Radio in 2007, and was part of the team that pioneered online radio in South Africa when Rhythm 100 Radio started. He has produced content for other radio stations, was a panellist at the Johannesburg Social Media Week 2014, mentors up-and-coming presenters and invented the pop-up radio concept for his current station, Jozi Maboneng Radio. Pop-up radio has allowed the team to take radio shows to various venues and not keep things in studio — like an outside broadcast, but with selected shows coming from various places.

On top of this impressive list of qualities Malakalaka has a vibrant personality and most definitely a voice for radio.

"Radio is my life and I love the energy and the human-ness," says Malakalaka. "I was always fascinated with radio, wondering how the voices got inside. Back in the day there was not a lot of TV and contact with the outside world was through radio, and as I grew up I realised that this is what I wanted to do — touch lives, inform and educate."

Malakalaka has a long list of people who have inspired him over the years and one of these is Bob Mabena, a man he describes as a positive influence and role model.

"He used to live in the same block as my aunt and one day I walked up to him and told him what I wanted to do," says Malakalaka. "He said to me that it was a great idea and that when I had made it [in the radio industry], I must call him and let him know. Another DJ who inspired me is Fresh — he is someone who embodies a presenter as he doesn't just DJ, he creates a show."

A third inspiration was Brenda Sisane, a mentor whose style of presentation and type of content really inform his work. Malakalaka plans to grow more into the radio space, making connections with key players, mentoring and getting to know his peers. He believes it is important that everyone works together in radio, getting along and sharing the craft.

"Learning is so important to me, and my radio plans include my goal to shift to a more commercial base," he concludes. "I am a jazz blogger too and I cover all the exciting names on the South African jazz scene. I want to give these amazingly talented people a voice and make a contribution, and to promote jazz music to my peers. It is viewed as a genre for old people and I feel it is time for jazz to take back its crown."

He recently tackled cancer and won; Malakalaka's is an inspiring story, and he is a light in the South African radio industry. — *Tamsin Oxford*



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

FAITH MANGOPE

Anchor, *Sunrise* and owner, FTA Media Communications

Twitter: @FaithMangope

Faith Mangope is the lead anchor on e.tv's breakfast show *Sunrise*, and both her presence and work ethic are considered incredible. Those who work with Mangope admire her for her perseverance, her focus and her innate sense of entrepreneurial spirit. Not only is she lead anchor on a prominent show, but she owns her own media company, FTA Media Communications, recently won the YALI scholarship and was selected to give the inaugural address to President Barack Obama at the presidential town hall for Young African Leaders.

When asked what inspires her about her career, Mangope replies: "The media chose me! I was recruited to work for Talk Radio 702 while standing in an audition queue with one of my closest friends as his supporter — he really wanted to audition to be a part of the Primedia family. Needless to say, I got the job and I am grateful I got to keep my friend as well."

Mangope started out at 702 as a call screener and was promoted to the executive producer of the *Early Breakfast Show* within a few months. She is driven by the need to empower the continent through open, robust and even uncomfortable conversations about how to effectively identify tangible African solutions to Africa's problems.

"Two people who have really inspired me are Angela Merkel and Oprah Winfrey," says Mangope. "The reason is relevance and legacy. Oprah moved from working in the media industry to owning a piece of the industry pie and her work still speaks for itself. I am inspired by strong women who are influential both in their own countries and internationally."

"I am planning to play a lot in the technology space, providing solutions for some of the challenges confronted by society," concludes Mangope. "I also aspire to grow further as a broadcaster and as a tool of empowerment."

— *Tamsin Oxford*



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LEBOHANG MOJAPELO

Researcher, Africa Check

Twitter: @Lebo.Mojapelo

Lebohang Mojapelo is a young, dynamic researcher who focuses on her goals and achieves what she sets out to do. Currently working at fact-checking site Africa Check as a researcher, sorting fact from fiction, she has tackled complex topics across Africa, including issues impacting countries such as Botswana and Zimbabwe. Her talent and ability to work in a team make her a force to be reckoned with in young South Africa.

"This career wasn't something I chose," says Mojapelo. "I didn't even choose a career. I opted for stories, narratives and storytelling in its many forms and numerous voices. It is this storytelling which inspires me."

Mojapelo describes Zimbabwean writer Yvonne Vera as someone who ticks the inspiration box perfectly. Vera's writing moves her, especially in terms of the attention she pays to the lives of the people she writes about, and how she "brings them to life" in an endearing and empathetic way.

"This is what I strive to do one day," says Mojapelo. "Having been in several jobs in the media, I can now clearly see that this is my end goal. While it is dynamic, I am more of a traditionalist when it comes to media and writing, and I fear we are moving away from that — the ability to write a good story."

For Mojapelo it is essential that the writer maintains the dignity of the person they are writing about or representing, paying attention to style and tone to create an authentic, considered work of art, no matter what the topic.

When asked about her most defining career moment to date, Mojapelo says: "Being chosen to be the presenter of a pioneering Zimbabwean talk show, and all the people I met and interacted with at that time; it was amazing. Every time I have produced an important fact check about something I am passionate about, and every time I have helped someone to write better, these moments all add up to define me and my career." — Tamsin Oxford

MANDLA NTSIBANDE

TV rugby producer

Twitter: @SS_Phaka

Mandla Ntsibande produces TV content on Super Rugby, the Springboks and the Currie Cup. In fact, if it has rugby in it or on it, he is too. In 2015, Ntsibande produced around 80% of the Springbok games, the Rugby World Cup opening match, quarterfinals, semis and finals, and in 2016 he is producing the only African-language sports show in the country, *Phaka*.

"I chose this career because of my love for the arts and for sport," says Ntsibande. "The combination of both is truly amazing to be a part of and to be involved in. Part of this attraction is the fact that it is unpredictable and live — nobody will know what will happen with the results in any one match and it keeps me on my toes."

Ntsibande has been inspired by a number of people throughout his career, including the team that is currently working with him on *Phaka*, Scott Seward, the director of the 1995 Rugby World Cup final, and Erin Ferreira, the producer of *TMO* on SuperSport.

"All my colleagues at SuperSport are very creative and driven people, so we push each other to create the best TV for our subscribers," says Ntsibande. "No day is ever the same ... and each day is better and exciting."

Plans for Ntsibande's future include his hopes to open an art school for Sowetan children. For him, an achievement of this magnitude would complete him as a person as he could use his insight to share his knowledge of the world behind the camera and the opportunities that lie there. He is incredibly excited about his new show *Phaka*, as it shows a different side of rugby and tells stories about the sport that have never been told before in a way which is both vibrant and current. — Tamsin Oxford



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

SIBUSISO NGALWA

Editor, *Daily Dispatch*

LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/in/sibusiso-ngalwa-51967292](https://www.linkedin.com/in/sibusiso-ngalwa-51967292)

Sibusiso Ngalwa is the 31-year-old editor of the *Daily Dispatch*, one of the most respected daily newspapers in the Eastern Cape. His rise through the ranks has been both fascinating and impressive, as he progressed from a general reporter at the *Sunday Tribune* to senior political correspondent and then political editor at the *Sunday Times* before joining the *Dispatch*.

"I grew up reading the *Dispatch* — my late father was a regular reader although, with hindsight, I am not quite sure if his interest was more the horse racing results or the news," laughs Ngalwa. "From the time I was doing grade 11 I knew that I would pursue journalism as a career, especially after my dad piqued my interest by saying media was the coolest profession ever. It was one of the best decisions I ever made."

Few things excite Ngalwa as much as changing someone's life through the stories he tells and it is the tales of everyday heroes that make him want to wake up and go an edit another edition of the publication.

"We are the mirror of society and we make those who do wrong under the cover of darkness face up to their actions by exposing them," says Ngalwa. "I always say that if I could write as well as Barney Mthombothi, work half as hard as Angela Quintal, be as disciplined as Moshoeshe Monare and be as meticulous with my work as S'Thembisio Msomi, and lastly be as brave as Phylicia Oppelt, then I would have done my bit in journalism."

Ngalwa's plans for the future are to follow in the footsteps of his predecessors and to ensure that his print product remains relevant, with exclusive content that continues to set it apart from the rest.

"Investigative journalism has always been the hallmark of the *Daily Dispatch*, for a regional newspaper it punches way above its weight and has the accolades to show for it," concludes Ngalwa. "My predecessors have left a good track record for me to follow and that is what I intend on doing, especially as we head into a digital future." — Tamsin Oxford



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PHOTO: JUSTIN LEE

KATCHIE NZAMA

Travel blogger

Twitter: @TheSoloWandera

Mukhatshelwa (Katchie) Nzama is the type of young South African who will bring a spurt of jealousy to most hearts. She is 27 years old, with a dream to travel to 50 African countries before she is 30 — and currently has 15 under her belt. She is also the first African woman to backpack Cape to Cairo solo using public transport to highlight intra-African travel. Her journey showcased the generosity of the Africans who hosted her, the best of African music festivals and breathtaking sunsets and destinations.

"I grew up in a family of travellers; it has always been a part of our lives and my grandparents never imagined that through travel we would all love it so much, and that we would mostly end up in the industry," says Nzama. "Tourism is exciting: every day I look forward to a new adventure. People ask me how I do it, and I tell them that I turned my passion into my career."

"There is a famous lady who has inspired me. She's not famous to the world but she's famous to me," says Nzama. "People know her as Livhuwani Nzama; I call her mommy. She's fantastic, a true superhero without a cape, my cheerleader and best friend. She's also a real bookworm, something I didn't inherit from her. I always thought of my mom as the enabler of my craziness."

Social media has allowed her to travel the continent, and is how she has connected with locals in different countries. It is how they follow her travels and why she has been welcomed into villages and homes with open hearts and hearths.

"The future is about sharing more and marketing African destinations to Africans, and to promote intra-African travel and show the world that Africa is not a dark continent," says Nzama. "I am working on building my platforms to educate Africans and show that intolerance is not necessary. No African will ever be a foreigner on African land. I have also started my own movement, #50Before30, which is basically all about traveling 50 African countries before I'm 30. The blog Travel with Katchie began to share Africa with Africans, and found a way to share Africa through the eyes and voices of Africans." — Tamsin Oxford



200 YOUNG SOUTH AFRICANS • MEDIA AND FILM

KRIVANI
PILLAYExecutive producer, SAfm
current affairs

Twitter: @KrivPillay

Krivani Pillay is the executive producer of SAfm current affairs, a demanding and exacting role that she handles with aplomb. In spite of a hectic workload and a career that expects an always-on attitude, Pillay still finds the time to mentor young journalists entering this challenging industry. She has 15 years of experience, has won many awards and, perhaps most notably, she is just as famous for her leadership and personality as she is for her hard work.

"It was the summer of 1995 when I won the Model United Nations debates! I then represented KwaZulu-Natal to travel to the UN in Switzerland and New York City," says Pillay when asked what made her choose this career. "The debates coincided with the United Nations 50th anniversary and I, together with eight other provincial winners, accompanied Nelson Mandela to the UN general assembly.

"Prior to meeting us, Madiba read essays that we wrote on our dream for a democratic South Africa. When it was my turn to meet the legend, he asked me in his booming voice if I was to become the journalist in the group. I answered 'no' and that I had planned to study speech and hearing therapy at UCT. He went on to praise my writing and the vision I had for my country and encouraged me to stay the course in media and journalism."

The rest, as they say, is history, as Pillay returned to South Africa and changed her university applications to journalism and media studies at Rhodes University.



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

"Madiba changed my career trajectory, but my family and ordinary South Africans inspire me every day," says Pillay. "Their stories help ground me and reinforce my role as a media practitioner. I hold South Africans in high esteem. The struggle of our people is a painful one and it will take time until the majority are able to move past the hurt and injustice

of an oppressive past."

Pillay is hoping to spend time travelling South Africa and documenting the stories of the people. She wants South Africans and the rest of the world to see and hear that, while it is a country in transition, it doesn't crumble in the face of adversity. — Tamsin Oxford

DALE
PRETORIUS

VFX Supervisor

LinkedIn: za.linkedin.com/in/dale-pretorius-158b88

Dale Pretorius is a self-taught businessman who has been nominated for various awards and has recently won a Realscreen award for visual effects (VFX) production. He has become the go-to guy when it comes to animation, with many international companies seeking out his expertise when they need something unique.

"I watched a movie called *The Lawnmower Man* when I was young and it was one of the first I had seen to really introduce 3D and CGI as a workable medium," says Pretorius. "Although the movie itself wasn't that great, it opened up what was visually possible. The possibility of creating literally whatever was in your head and giving it its own world was something that really drew me in and kept me going ever since."

Pretorius has been inspired by a number of films and directors from Ray Harryhausen, the godfather of modern-day compositing, to Steven Spielberg. He finds any director who has pushed the craft of digital or special effects inspirational, and loves the industry because of its constant challenges.

"Every day we are problem solving things which, at the start, seem to not always have a clear direction," he says. "It's really about perfecting the craft at the end of the day. The playing field in our industry is forever changing and we're always finding newer and faster ways to do what we love, and do it better each time."

Pretorius's plans for the future are exactly what he is doing right now, today. He wants to take on bigger work each year and to keep on pushing boundaries.

"Our best shot is the very last one we work on," he concludes. "It is the culmination of every bit of knowledge, skill, talent and creativity of the whole team, every single time. I do see a lot of growth in the industry, especially here in South Africa. The way we do things and think about the work has certainly matured a lot. Even though we're still considered quite 'young' when it comes to the film industry, I think the drive and passion of the people and companies here keep knocking down misconceptions that we're not serious contenders." — Tamsin Oxford

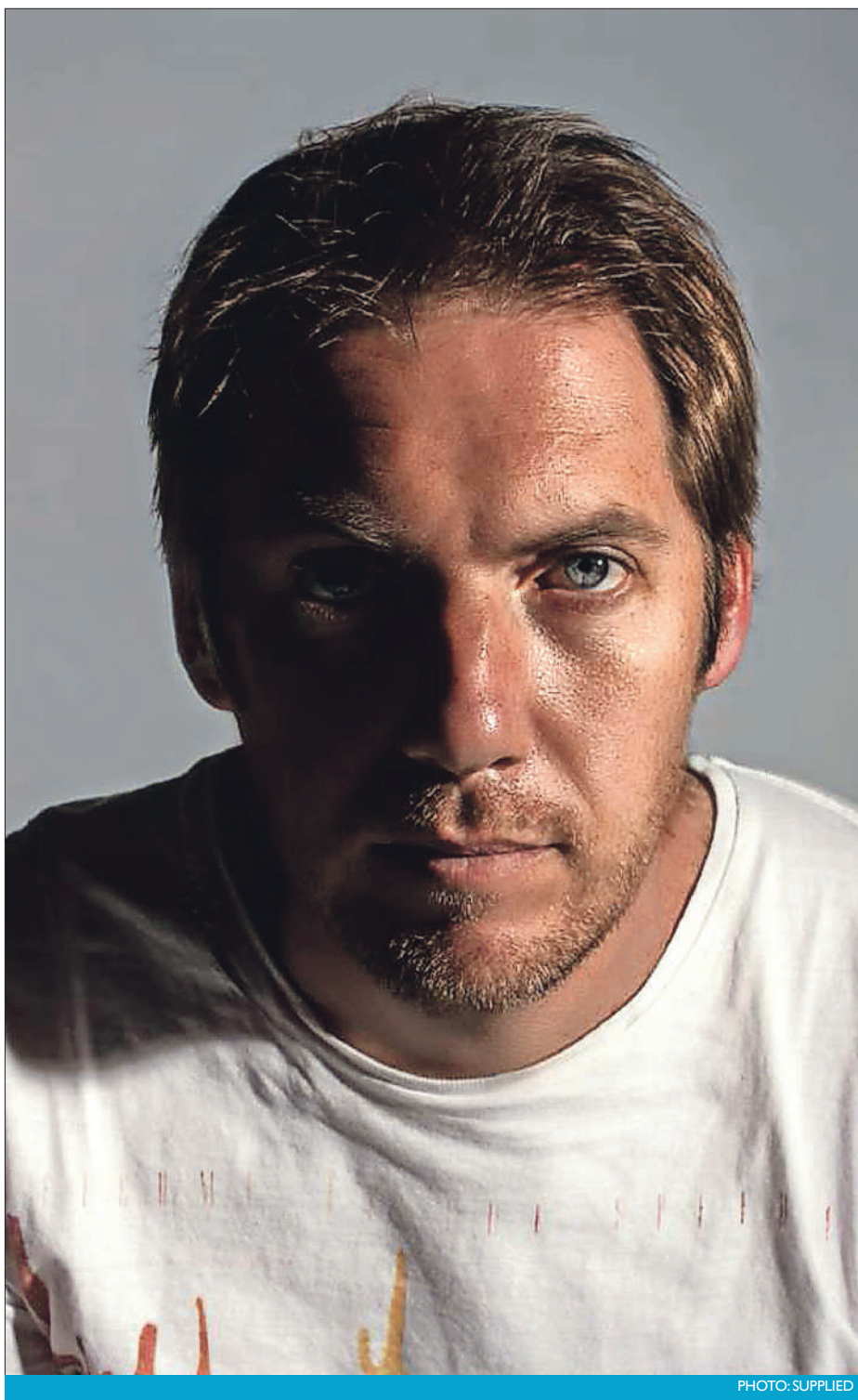


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THENJIWE
STEMELA

Presenter and producer

Instagram and Twitter: @ThenjiStemela

Thenjiwe (Thenji) Stemela is a presenter on the SABC 3 *Expresso Morning Show*, and has been an eNCA technology reporter, a producer, a voice-over artist and worked in theatre. At 27 she has accomplished much thanks to her vibrant personality, hard work and tenacity.

Stemela graduated in theatre and performance at the University of Cape Town and spent months working in a call centre to pay her bills. She applied for an opening at *Expresso* on a whim and got the job as a production assistant, quickly working her way up the ladder to become a producer within nine short months.

"I realised that I was inexorably drawn to a sense of freedom and escape through stories and storytelling, and that I would prefer the challenge of making this my career," says Stemela. "I still feel daunted at times, but I am mostly inspired by the constant demand to be creative and the fact that while our country is still growing and making world history, we storytellers play such a key role in how the decades after 1994 will be remembered."

Stemela has found a role model and mentor in Boitumelo Molekane, whom she met in 2007 for a school assignment.

"We are required to interview an inspiring South African and I was still deciding whether I would pursue a humanities or commerce degree," explains Stemela. "He was kind enough to lend an ear to my worries about venturing into the entertainment industry, and somehow the interview transformed into a master-class on life and art. Since then he has been a driving force in how I think about my work through his music, artistry and our subsequent conversations."

Stemela has some exciting plans for the future, which include developing her private writing projects into fully fledged productions. She has been working on building a production company and is hoping to make it into a reality.

"I love performing, so building my repertoire on screen is an endless endeavour," she concludes. "At some point I would love to return to my academic path. Once these medium-term goals have aligned, I am certain a more powerful purpose will be revealed." — Tamsin Oxford



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

KUDZAYI TIRIBABI

Programme manager, Mix 93.8 FM

Twitter and Instagram: @justkudzayi

In 2012 Kudzayi Tiribabi arrived at the doors of Mix 93.8 FM. He was a radio student fresh from Boston Media House with a keen eye for radio and a passion for the medium as a whole. It became a joke at the station that once Tiribabi got in the door, he never left. He hosted a late night weekend show, was involved in radio sales, script-writing, advert production and jingles and also played a part on the technical side, and he did all this while doing his media studies.

"From a very young age I knew that radio was all I ever wanted to do," says Tiribabi. "I fell in love with radio the first time I walked into a studio. What inspires me about it is the impact it has on society; the ability to touch lives in a personal way. No other medium can achieve that."

Tiribabi has been inspired along his journey by some of the industry's most notable names. Tich Mataz, a close family friend, who used to work for 5FM, Tony Blewitt, a colleague at Mix 93.8 and other individuals like Given Mkhari, who owns a few stations — they are all people who have taught Tiribabi a great deal and understand his passion for radio.

"Radio is a major part of people's lives. It is personal," says Tiribabi. "People get in the car and tune into a radio station because they want to listen to music, traffic, news or just a particular presenter. When I started in radio I didn't know there was more to it than just presenting. I thought guys just worked for three hours, and that was it. Now I know the time spent on sourcing content, coming up with ideas and honing content!"

Tiribabi's most memorable moments of his career were when he was inducted into the MTN Radio Awards' Bright Stars Club, and when he was promoted to a programme manager at the age of 22. He was thrown into the deep end and it changed his life.

"My plans for the future are to one day own my own radio station and to make a difference in our society, touching as many lives as possible. I've always said that there is no point in being successful if your success isn't going to be of benefit to others." — Tamsin Oxford

STACEY (VEE) VENTER

Head of content strategy, Content Candy

Twitter: @MissStaceyVee

Stacey Venter is the head of content strategy at Content Candy, one of the first content-only agencies in South Africa. She started her career in the Media24 trenches, and struck out on her own in 2010 when she noticed shifts in industry currents, to start Copy Candy. In 2013, she took on magazine editor Brendah Nyakudya-Dandala as a partner, and they rebranded as Content Candy.

Today they have nine women in their employ and work with some of South Africa's biggest brands. Venter also writes the successful and powerful blog www.livinglionheart.co.za, which documents life raising a child with special needs and ran the charity, iPadsforLionhearts, which collected second-hand iPads for families with autistic children.

When asked what made her choose this career, she says, "Whenever a journalist starts working in PR or marketing, we joke about how they've crossed over to the 'dark side'. I like to think I am saving the world from bad advertising as I approach brand storytelling from a journalist's perspec-

tive. I'm always digging for the authentic, the interesting and the colourful angles. It's less about selling and more about surprise."

Venter has been inspired by some of South Africa's most interesting talents such as Craig Rodney of Cerebra, Kirsty Sharman of Webfluent and Tom Manners at Clockwork Media.

"This industry is incredibly exciting for two reasons — emerging technologies and the ever-evolving creative ingenuity," says Venter. "There are so many ways to tell a story. The future of content marketing is dominated by the rise of the machines. I've seen demos of marketing and automation platforms recently that have made the hair on the back of my neck stand on end. It's so intelligent and I don't know whether to be amazed or afraid."

Venter has some clear-cut plans for the future, including a sharp focus on what she calls "staying in my lane". She believes too many agencies try to be everything to everyone, with the result that they are mediocre at most things. Her



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

goal is to be the cream of content creation and nothing else. As for one of her most memorable moments in her career to date?

"My face was on an FNB billboard in 2013 promoting the work I was doing collecting iPads for autistic children," says Venter. "It was surreal driving underneath a sky-high photo of myself on the N1 highway!" — Tamsin Oxford



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

SHANE VERMOOTEN

Founder, Cinemo and film director

IMDb: imdb.com/name/nm5899757

Shane Vermooten is a film director and social entrepreneur making a mark on the South African filmmaking scene. His first startup, Cinemo, provided pan-African content to more than 400 000 people through low-end mobile phones and he has released a number of short films to market. His most recent film, the full-length medical thriller *Bypass*, is due for release later in 2016.

"Small particles of light carry images of pirates, princesses, heroes and heroines to millions around the world every day, but these seemingly insignificant particles of light have the power not only to entertain, but to change lives for good," says Vermooten. "This is why I want to spend the rest of my life making films. It is a medium which has global impact and is not restricted to religion, gender, age or nationality. It is capable of touching the deepest part of people's hearts across the globe at any point in time."

Vermooten has been inspired by Danny Boyle, finding his take and style on filmmaking to be powerful and impactful. He is also quick to remember one of Boyle's best pieces of advice — don't have an ego.

"It sounds easy, but it can affect the film you are making

in such a large way," says Vermooten. "Boyle believes that the means of production are just as important as what you produce and that ultimately the texture of a film is affected by the honour with which you make it. This has shaped the atmosphere I like to create on my sets."

For Vermooten, the future is all about making films. It is what he feels most fulfilled doing as he knows that stories can change the world and this ethos is something he very much wants to follow. One of his most memorable moments in his career underscores this belief.

"My first day directing on set we were shooting a film called *Freedom Road*, and I can still remember driving to the location and thinking I have no idea what I am doing," says Vermooten. "There is no better way to learn than by doing it. On set I met Anele Matoti, Mama Sylvia and Matthew Dylan Roberts and I discovered how much I enjoy working with actors and digging deep into issues that have genuinely affected people. There was such a sense of authenticity on that set it went on to win awards across the world, including best short narrative at the Pan African Film Festival." — Tamsin Oxford

CRAIG WILSON

Editor, Stuff Magazine

Twitter: @craigwilson

Craig Wilson is a young media personality who has worked his way up the ranks from journalist to editor in a short space of time. Currently the editor of *Stuff Magazine*, Craig has skills in photography, writing and technology with a clear focus on his goals for the future and the road his career is set to take.

"*Stuff Magazine* is one of the few print titles in South Africa that has seen growth in recent years," says Wilson. "Technology is becoming more pervasive and ubiquitous, and I am hoping *Stuff* can capitalise on that and continue to grow its audience. I am also beginning to get more speaking gigs and am getting involved in a couple of local podcasts and the like, and I'm always looking for opportunities in radio and television."

Wilson has always been inspired by words, and wanted to write for a living from his teens. After completing degrees in philosophy and English at the University of the Witwatersrand he began his writing life as a music journalist, but soon wanted a career that would expose him to a wider range of people and experiences.

"I also wanted something which was future proof, would allow me to travel and would expose me to media other than print," says Wilson. "Also, with technology there's a sense



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

that the best is always still to come. That optimism makes for a very stimulating and dynamic industry.

"My first big break came when I was appointed arts and entertainment editor at *SL Magazine* in 2008, then Duncan McLeod, founder of TechCentral, took a chance on me and hired me as his deputy in 2011."

For Wilson, his time at TechCentral with McLeod was one of the most formative in his career as McLeod taught

him to spot a real story, avoid the fluff and always remain ethical.

"Duncan was an incredibly motivating, inspiring and, at times, gruelling editor, which is exactly what I needed to bash me into professional shape," concludes Wilson. "Now I've been fortunate enough to have the inimitable Toby Shapshak give me the opportunity to shape *Stuff's* trajectory, which is proving to be the most fun I've ever had." — Tamsin Oxford



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BONGANI DLAMINI

Mayor, Umtshezi Local Municipality

Bongani Dlamini wants to be able to make a difference in his community.

"Growing up in a rural area with no basic services and minimal attention paid to the community is one of the reasons I chose to be in politics — I want to make change happen, for the better," says Dlamini.

In 2010, he became mayor of Umtshezi Local Municipality, KwaZulu-Natal, making him the youngest in South Africa to ever assume a mayoral role.

The goals he set were clear: to upskill, empower and ensure service delivery to his constituents. Since he took office the municipality has seen sweeping developments, with targeted upliftment programmes for youth, women and rural communities.

These include programmes to support women farmers and those in agro-processing, introducing a bursary scheme for local youths to study at university, leading the building of community-based early childhood development centres, introducing a driver's licence learner programme, initiating private partnerships for the building of tarred roads and bus shelters, and electrification using renewable energy.

"For many years Umtshezi Local Municipality was rocked by a high rate of political intolerance. During my term of office as mayor of this municipality, I have managed to stabilise issues amongst political parties and to eliminate the element of political intolerance. I have worked to create a good working environment for all political parties, with the result that we now have a stable political environment and we work together to achieve much-needed development in rural communities."

Just 33, Dlamini keeps his focus and is inspired by knowing where his community has come from, what they have achieved, and what they still have to achieve.

"Looking at how many lives we have improved, and believing in the plans we have to change many more lives in my community is what keeps me focused." — *Linda Duke*



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BABA-TAMANA GQUBULE

Economist, Tips

Twitter: @Gqubs

Baba-Tamana Gqubule was raised by her grandparents who had committed their lives to addressing social injustice in the areas of education and religion. Gqubule is continuing her family tradition by applying the set of skills she has acquired to right social injustices.

An economist at Trade and Industrial Policy Strategies (Tips), a non-profit economic research institution that aims to provide economic policy research in response to public policy needs, Gqubule is involved in sector-specific policy research within the manufacturing industry.

Her work environment encourages alternative development approaches in order to inform the development of policies that ultimately aim to tackle systematic and structural factors that affect the economy.

With a master's in development studies from the school of oriental and African studies at the University of London and a bachelor of economics honours from Rhodes University, Gqubule worked as a policy analyst at the economic development department, where she was involved in developing policies aimed at broadening participation in the economy, with a specific focus on conducting research to inform the department's strategy towards increasing the participation of women in the economy.

"I'm determined to contribute towards achieving a more inclusive economy and am particularly passionate about the inclusion of black women in the economy. This is a lifelong project that requires a multidimensional response," says Gqubule.

"Even if policies have the best intentions, they can also have unintended consequences. The difficulty is remaining patient and committed to chipping away at the system even when the problems at hand are urgent, because structural transformation is a permanent project."

Gqubule is also the founder of a group informally known as "Rhodents With Purpose", a network of Rhodes alumni that aims to provide financial and peer group support to disadvantaged students at Rhodes University. — *Linda Duke*



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

SIVIWE GWARUBE

Head of ministry, Western Cape ministry of health

Twitter: @Siviwe_G

Injustice is what made Siviwe Gwarube choose a career in politics — it awakened in her an urgency to act and driver for change.

Gwarube's first job after graduating from Rhodes University was as spokesperson to the then DA parliamentary leader, Lindiwe Mazibuko. Her experience during these three years was invaluable, exposing her to real life political situations, including the precedent-setting motion of no confidence tabled by opposition parties in 2012.

"I chose politics and communication because I believed that public office is one of the key vehicles for effecting change. I have been fortunate enough to work with some incredibly talented politicians in the country, while [being] given the space to own my work and grow in the profession," says Gwarube.

As head of ministry in the Western Cape department of health, Gwarube manages the office of the health MEC in the province, Dr Nomafrench Mbombo. "My role entails managing a staff complement of eight people in the MEC's private office, providing strategic and political counsel to her; managing her executive, legislative, political and public profiles; assisting the MEC in presiding over the R19-billion budget of the department, and ensuring the implementation of ministerial projects and the provincial strategic goals of the next five years."

Gwarube says she is constantly inspired by South Africa and its potential.

"I want to be part of the change and the move towards a capable state. Working in government means you have a seat at the decision-making table where the healthcare needs of 75% of the Western Cape's population are being met. That inspires me, because I believe I am responding to the call of injustice and inequality in the country."

Just 26, Gwarube says her greatest challenge is being a young leader.

"Leading at a young age requires you to do a lot of growing up outside of work. While the work you do may contain valuable lessons that help you to grow, there is never space to doubt or wobble. You need to constantly keep it moving. That is difficult." — *Linda Duke*



MANDLA LIONEL ISAACS

Director of research, department of home affairs Twitter: @LionOfJozi

Lionel Isaacs believes his life purpose is to contribute to the African renaissance through politics, public service and intellectualism.

As director of research in the ministry of home affairs, Isaacs has contributed to the policymaking process as part of the team developing a new international migration policy for South Africa.

"I believe good public policy is crucial to advance society, so it has been exciting to be inside the process. International migration is an urgent and complex topic, with significant political, social and economic dimensions. I'm grateful to be part of the team developing recommendations on how South Africa can best manage international migration in ways that advance our national interests, and our connect-edness with Africa and the world."

Isaacs (33) sees influencing the economy to work for everyone as one of South Africa's greatest challenges.

"Even in the most developed countries, it is difficult for governments to influence the economy to achieve social objectives. In South Africa, with our unique history and racial inequality, it is even more so. Developing new ideas and approaches to address structural inequality is the global issue of our time."

Philosopher and revolutionary Frantz Fanon said that each generation must discover its mission, and either fulfil or betray it. Isaacs believes our mission should be to build a South Africa and Africa in which all children, no matter to whom they are born, receive a quality education, have a decent quality of life, and have the opportunity to actualise themselves.— *Linda Dove*



PHOTO: SUPPLIED



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

SIMON SIZWE MAYSON

Acting director of inner city transformation, City of Johannesburg Website: mayson.co.za

Simon Sizwe Mayson (28) has always been fascinated and inspired by solving housing challenges. As acting director of inner city transformation at the City of Johannesburg (CoJ), he is perfectly placed to make real changes in the lives of thousands of people.

He was born into an activist family, and his grandfather was charged in 1981 with high treason under the Terrorism Act and imprisoned, tortured and exiled during the State of Emergency. Mayson's middle name Sizwe means "nation" and was given to him by his parents' UDF comrades.

"My name was inspired by the hope of a new nation beyond the violence of the times. I feel I'm a product of those times, and am driven in my work to fulfil my potential to help South Africa realise its potential. Like my grandfather, I aspire to be a change-maker, a thinker and a doer."

During his studies, and his internship with UN Habitat in Nairobi, Mayson chose to live in high-density, and sometimes slum housing to experience and better understand the challenges inner-city people face.

"Inner-city Johannesburg, despite being a mayoral priority and pinpointed at provincial and national level as the hub and core of Gauteng, had neither formal policy, nor implementation by the housing department. Yet decent, affordable housing is arguably the key to transformation there."

Mayson co-ordinated the development of the Inner City Housing Implementation Plan, through a partnership with the Johannesburg Social Housing Organisation, Johannesburg Development Agency, the City's Planning Department and the CoJ Housing Department.

"The process was hard going for our team, but we managed to secure quite a shift in the CoJ's thinking around the municipality's role in the provision of affordable housing, and in evictions and the provision of alternative accommodation, particularly within the inner city." — *Linda Dove*



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

KLAAS MABUNDA

ANC branch chairperson, Modimolle Twitter: @KlaasMabunda

All there is to everything is keeping the faith, and daring to never lose hope. This is the principle upon which 29-year-old Klaas Mabunda, who heads the ANC branch in Modimolle, serves the people of his community.

Political consciousness was awakened early for Mabunda. Experiencing financial exclusion as a boy by not being able to meet his school's uniform requirements or pay his school fees, he joined the Congress of South African Students, encouraged by the stand it took against the exclusion of learners for non-payment of school fees. He felt strongly that the doors of learning should be opened wide for every child, regardless of his or her background.

Modimolle is a community in Limpopo dogged by massive unemployment and limited opportunity. The people of the area struggle to afford even the most basic things such as sanitary towels, sanitation and access to basic education.

Mabunda is determined to uplift his community. He runs a programme of daily house-to-house visits across all social strata, from child-headed homes to the unemployed, personally seeing that the families are provided with access to basic services.

Always ready to set the example, Mabunda is happy to get his hands dirty — after recent violent service delivery protests, he was alongside members of the community, cleaning up the debris and encouraging parents to send their children to school.

Mabunda is kept motivated by the people in his community who, despite being in bad and bitter situations, are open-hearted, always expressing gratitude when they see people reaching out to them.

"We are masters of our own destinies, living in prisons of our own creation" is the motto Mabunda deeply believes in. His motivation to be the best he can is driven by the dream that Modimolle will one day become a winning community. — *Linda Dove*

PHAKAMILE MBENGASHE

Spokesman and ANC social media strategist Twitter: @Phakiii

Phakamile Mbengashe, or Phaki for short, was born into a very politically aware family. With a Harvard graduate mother who chaired the ANC Women's League in the Eastern Cape, and a medical doctor father who was a stalwart ANC member, Mbengashe's home while he was growing up often had senior ANC leaders like Nelson Mandela, Chris Hani, Joe Slovo and Joe Modise staying the night.

Mbengashe joined the ANC Youth League (ANCYL) when he was 16. His mother used to take him to her ANC meetings when he was young, so the culture of politics became second nature to him.

After a brief period in the private sector after he graduated with a BCom in marketing management, Mbengashe joined the public service, feeling the country needed more people who are willing to invest their skills in its progress.

At just 29, he is now the spokesman for the deputy minister of trade and industry, Mzwandile Masina, and has been instrumental in the development of the government's Black Industrialists Policy and ensuring the South African public knows about and understands the programme.

Considered the ANC's key social media strategist, he was responsible for popular social media campaigns such as #AMANC, #AmandlaChallenge and #ZiReadyComrades and #SishodaNgawe, all of which were used to rally support for the ANC and to direct the public to the party's policy information and news updates.

Mbengashe is also an astute political leader within in the ANCYL, and holds the position of chairperson of the popular suburban ANCYL branch Ward 82. He is a convener of the ANCYL in Tshwane East, a member of the ANCYL Gauteng Provincial Executive Committee's Subcommittee on Communication and is on the ANC's National Elections Task Team.

Mbengashe believes the future is always an opportunity to do better than yesterday. Keeping humble, and being selfless and grateful for what he has, is very important to him.

"The vision of a better future for all South Africans keeps me inspired to do the work I do. The slightest hope that our work as government and a vanguard liberation movement can change lives gives me the strength to continue," says Mbengashe. — *Linda Dove*



PHOTO: SUPPLIED



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

MICHEL MUBERUKA

Acting director of transportation services, Polokwane Municipality

Public transport is the key to stitching South Africa's fragmented, spatially disconnected cities back together. Where the poorest of the poor often live the furthest away from services and jobs, connectivity changes lives.

As acting director of transportation services in the Polokwane Municipality, Michel Muberuka plays a crucial role in helping make that happen in the region — he is responsible for implementing an Integrated Public Transport Project.

Implementing transport systems is challenging and Muberuka has to co-ordinate the construction of large infrastructure, and manage often suspicious and emotional stakeholders like the minibus taxi industry, while designing a system that is affordable, safe and reliable for the community.

As a boy, he was curious about engineering, dismantling toys to find out how they worked. A degree in civil engineering at UCT sparked further interest in urban engineering and transport studies, which was further fuelled by time spent working in different parts of Africa, the Middle East and Europe, which taught him about the relationship between policy and infrastructure implementation.

"I believe conscious public transport planning married with sound spatial planning can only ultimately lead to harmonised communities and healthier lives for all," says Muberuka.

Openly a proponent of non-motorised transport (NMT), and knowing Polokwane's vision to lead the way in innovation, sustainable development and pro-poor public transport interventions, Muberuka's office promotes walking and cycling as a means of transport. As a result, NMT is a large component of the Polokwane Integrated Rapid Public Transport System.

"Apart from zero carbon emissions, the health benefits are endless. We are fast transforming our city's look."

Muberuka says his greatest challenge is finding the perfect balance between the different elements that drive a multifaceted project involving systems planning, infrastructure implementation, contract management, business and finance, marketing and communications.

"One must conscious of the tough financial times we find ourselves in, yet still try to maximise the benefits we provide to commuters who will use the system. There is also a need for a certain level of maturity and sensitivity when it comes to handling taxi and bus industry transition matters — it requires a well-defined change management process." — *Linda Doke*

AYANDA TSHABALALA

Member of the provincial legislature

Twitter: @blackchild_inc

Ayanda Tshabalala has a strong desire to serve and improve the lives and experiences of the poverty-stricken black majority in South Africa through the democratic process.

Ayanda was the chief whip of the Economic Freedom Fighters but resigned from her position out of principle, citing financial misappropriations in the party.

She now works with the elections team in the office of the Mpumalanga provincial secretary of the ANC in preparation for the upcoming local government elections.

"As a member of the provincial legislature, my work involves assessing the annual plans of provincial departments within the committees, participating in public participation legislature activities, submitting motions for deliberation, and engaging in debates in an effort to promote the party's political position on the various societal matters," says Ayanda.

Knowing that her efforts contribute to the success of the organisation, and seeing its direct impact on service delivery and the immediate needs of the people of South Africa is what motivates Ayanda.

Born and raised in Standerton, Mpumalanga, she was the beneficiary of a Telkom scholarship, which afforded her the opportunity to study overseas. She graduated in a record time of four years from the Multimedia University in Malaysia with an honours degree in information technology, specialising in business analysis.

Before venturing into politics she was a senior business analyst for some of the country's biggest financial institutions including First Rand Bank, Momentum Group and TransUnion South Africa. — *Linda Doke*



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

MONDLI ZONDO

Director of parliamentary research, National Freedom Party

Twitter: @MoZondo

Mondli Zondo believes that the epitome of courage is being afraid but doing it anyway.

A natural leader with a talent for public speaking and a determination to make a difference in South Africa through influencing policy and law formation, Zondo is the director of parliamentary research for the National Freedom Party (NFP) in the KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Legislature.

His day-to-day work involves research, policy development and political analysis, and he gets his inspiration from seeing people benefit from the work the NFP does.

"I love that, through careful planning and well-considered execution, we are able to draw the attention of government and the public to the appalling circumstances of impoverished communities so that people can receive the aid and assistance they need," says Zondo.

"I also love that fact that I am a part of strengthening our democracy by playing the role of a strong and effective opposition party which exercises oversight on the executive."

Just 27 years old, Zondo feels one of the greatest challenges is having people undermine you because of your age. "Politics has for a long time been the domain of the older generation, and now that there is a surge in young people entering political life, some of that older generation feel threatened and think you don't know what you are talking about." — *Linda Doke*



PHOTO: SUPPLIED



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

ZUKISWA MQOLOMBA

Director of social insurance schemes, department of social development

Zukiswa Mqolomba sees her destiny intrinsically tied to removing the chains from Africa's citizens, particularly the unemployed and the poor.

As the director of social insurance schemes at the department of social development, Mqolomba is a senior researcher, policy analyst and, by her own admission, a scholar activist.

A political economist by training, Mqolomba was a recipient of a Mandela Rhodes scholarship and a Chevening scholarship. She has master's degrees from UCT and the University of Sussex, and is currently pursuing her PhD through UCT.

Just 31, Mqolomba has worked in a number of prestigious organisations, including the World Bank in Washington DC as an extended-term consultant, the department of public enterprises as director for economic research and writing, McKinsey & Co as a consultant, and the department of labour as assistant director for research, policy and planning.

Mqolomba is deeply intrigued by research and policy analysis, public policy research, the National Development Plan, the New Growth Plan and the Industrial Policy Action Plan.

In 2012 she co-founded the International Forum for Africa's Development, an informal network of young African intellectuals in the diaspora designed to provide new thinking on 21st-century development paradigms for Africa, considering issues such as conflict, human (in)security, democracy and good governance. The organisation started with just two individuals, and has now grown to 30 associates.

"I want to live in an Africa that is free of poverty and unemployment, a continent that can take care of the material needs of its people," says Mqolomba.

"But the challenges are great. There is insufficient funding to provide social insurance and social assurance for all South Africans. We have a limited tax base. We can only provide social security for the absolutely poor, the elderly, orphans and children. This means we need to be innovative in devising funding arrangements and delivery for those in need." — *Linda Doke*



200 YOUNG SOUTH AFRICANS ● SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

CHRISTOPHER BISCHOFF

Co-founder, The Brotherhood

Christopher Bischoff is the co-founder of The Brotherhood, the Cape Town-based game studio behind STASIS, one of most commercially successful video games to come out of South Africa.

He's both a professional 3D artist and self-taught game designer, and one of those lucky people who have managed to turn his hobbies into a job.

"I've always loved the idea of making my own PC games, and have been involved in game development since I could work on a computer. My parents always encouraged us to learn computer skills, and with both being artists, the merging of computers and art was a natural one," says Bischoff.

He credits a lot of what he knows to the internet, reading articles, interviews, following online tutorials and generally being stubborn about learning.

"We live in a wonderful time where the collective knowledge of mankind is at our fingertips. From a technical side, video games are difficult to create. I feel that they are one of the few art forms that form a perfect marriage between the technical and the artistic. If you can work in the computer game industry, either as a programmer or as an artist, your skills can translate into multiple disciplines and other careers."

Digital distribution and crowdfunding have intrinsically changed the landscape for game developers, especially in emerging countries.

"You no longer need a publishing deal with an international company to get your game to the consumers — which was a major hurdle for any artistically driven industry — something that we at The Brotherhood have taken full advantage of!"

Twitter: @stasisgame

Africa has a lot of challenges when it comes to working in a technology-based field like game design; intermittent power failures and a heavily fluctuating currency both make long-term planning challenging, explains Bischoff. At the same time, living expenses and game development hubs in South Africa are much cheaper in comparison to the first world.

"Not to mention that South Africa is one of the most beautiful countries in the world! In this industry, it's easy to get creatively burnt out, but those energies can often be quickly recharged with a walk on the beach or a drive through the countryside."

Bischoff is working on an additional chapter of STASIS called CAYNE: A Stasis Story.

"After that is complete, the world is our playground!" — Tiana Cline



PHOTO: SUPPLIED



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

NADIA CARSTENS

Medical scientist, Wits/NHLS Division of Human Genetics

Email: nadia.carstens@wits.ac.za

"Our job as geneticists is to find disease genes. The ultimate aim of this research is the development of new diagnostic tests, therapies or improved counselling so that we can help a patient to make an informed decision that would benefit not only them, but their family as well," explains young medical scientist and geneticist Nadia Carstens.

"It can sometimes take a couple of decades to translate research into a tangible clinical outcome, and I focus myself by remembering that we are ultimately doing this work to improve the lives of patients who are not receiving the care they deserve at the moment."

Carstens was born in the small town Vredendal on the west coast, but her pursuit of genetics has lead her to some pretty interesting places (and people). She is currently based at the Wits/NHLS Division of Human Genetics in Braamfontein, which allows her to apply her bioinformatic skills to find new disease genes and develop new diagnostic tests.

Carstens studied at Stellenbosch University but moved to the university's Tygerberg campus for her MSc and PhD. She traded the microscope for a computer shortly thereafter when she joined the Sydney Brenner Institute for Molecular Bioscience as a bioinformatics postdoc.

"I enjoy detective novels, which is perhaps why I love research into monogenic disorders so much. In monogenic disease research we usually start with hundreds of thousands or even millions of DNA variants as the 'suspect pool'. We then need to apply our knowledge of the disease and bioinformatic techniques to identify the most probable 'suspect' or disease-causing mutation," she adds.

Carstens strongly believes that African researchers should champion research on African populations and that bioinformatics (the application of computer technology to the management of biological information) is the key to advancing genetics in Africa.

"We can leverage global resources to do experiments and analyse the data locally if we have the requisite bioinformatics skills and capacity. This means that we can contribute to global research as active participants and not mere sample providers, despite limited resources," says Carstens.

"I really enjoy monogenic and rare disease research and I've decided that this is where I want to leave my mark." — Tiana Cline

TSITSI NAPHTAL CHIUMYA

Game designer, founder of Shapa

Twitter: @shapapie

"One of my fondest memories as a kid was playing board games with my grandfather, as this was his way of keeping me off the streets. I also played arcade games at the tuckshop, which is where my interest developed for video games," says Tsitsi Naphtal Chiumya, when talking about his childhood. "Growing up I always had to share game space with a lot of other kids and that shaped the way I perceived games. I always thought games bring people together, and I want to create those experiences that will cross cultures and bring all people of the world together."

For Chiumya, studying game design was tough because of the kind of background he came from.

"I did not have the kind of consoles and experience that the other students had; all I had was a burning desire to learn. Most of the time I felt like an outsider because I did not know all the games that other players were playing. All the games I knew seemed too rural or too boring to mention in conversation," he adds.

But when Chiumya got to play morabaraba in class, he realised that these games had similar patterns to what he was used to. "Learning to design modern games through games such as morabaraba showed me that most games have similar traits — they bring people together — and I wanted to make games that bring people together."

In 2014 with the help of some friends, Chiumya created After Robot. "Instead of using formulas from other games I incorporated real streets and real taxi prices into After Robot. I wanted to teach players about the taxi industry and wanted them to experience the taxi world how they perceived it. Most people choose to be violent and others play more peacefully; the game is a platform on which players can express their opinions on taxis and not adopt preconceived ideas."

After his studies, Chiumya started a company called Shapa studios. He plans to turn After Robot into an app. He also currently works with a company which partners with Pearson to make educational games.

"I want to create a game studio that makes games that are made from a South African or African perspective. They will not necessarily be African games, but they will be made from our perspective. I will make all types of games in the studio: board and digital," Chiumya says. "What I love about the industry here is that it is still developing in most areas, so there is more opportunity to be a young pioneer in a great and creative industry." — Tiana Cline



PHOTO: SUPPLIED



NEIL DU PREEZ

Chief executive, Mellowcabs

Twitter: @mellowcabs

The premise behind Mellowcabs is simple: 80% of all urban vehicle trips are shorter than 4km, which is (if you really think about it) an extremely inefficient use of fuel-burning cars.

Mellowcabs, on the other hand, are micro-vehicles (electric mini-cabs) that provide convenient, low-cost and eco-friendly transport. They're the brainchild of chief executive Neil du Preez, a serial entrepreneur, start-up enthusiast and ex-Kruger National Park guide.

Thanks to Mellowcabs, Du Preez has been a speaker at the World Bank's Climate Innovation Centre, the South African Sustainability Conference, Microsoft's BizSpark program, the Durban Innovation Summit and more. He's the recipient of numerous awards including the U-Start Africa competition and Johannesburg Green City Start-up. *Forbes* magazine listed Mellowcabs as one of the seven most innovative companies in Africa, and Du Preez received the Global Citizen award, presented in Puebla, Mexico in October last year.

"I've always been really interested in public transport systems, and what it can mean for individuals and the economy. Growing up in South Africa we didn't have access to public transport. Then, after living abroad for a few years I started seeing transit systems in a new light. Mobility is a precondition for economic growth: mobility for access to jobs, education, health and other services. Mobility of goods is also critical to supply world markets in our globalised economy," says du Preez.

Mellowcabs manufactures and operates new electric mini-cabs that provide on-demand, eco-friendly and affordable taxi and transport services in cities. They're designed for urban commuters who need taxi services. They're the opposite of meter cabs and large, privately owned cars that can be expensive, inconvenient and massively polluting.

"I'm really interested in public transport planning and management, new urban transport and thinking around smart cities. I love design, especially functional design and hardware start-ups. Product design for Africa is of particular interest," he adds.

Mellowcabs is not just an innovation for Africa: du Preez has expansion plans for Europe and Asia as well as pilot projects lined up in the UK, Germany, the Netherlands, Denmark, India "and a few other cool places," he adds.

"Mellowcabs is my pride and joy, and I believe that it could change the world." — *Tiana Cline*



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

ROBYN FARAH

Founder, KAT-O, Arduino Cape Town and Modern Alchemists

Twitter: @RobynFarah or @KickAssTechObv

Robyn Farah is committed to pushing hardware and tech growth to better Africa. "I have always done what I love, even if that meant doing it during lunch breaks, and after hours while working a nine-to-five. If you do what you love it doesn't feel like work, but passion and a need that must be fulfilled."

While her main business, KAT-O, builds hardware prototypes for clients, Farah also started and runs two of South Africa's most active tech/maker communities: Arduino Cape Town and Modern Alchemists.

"I started ArduinoCT a month after returning to SA in 2012 after meeting an awesome group of people at the Science Hack day who wanted the same thing. They helped start it, but I continued to run it. I was then approached by Niel Bekker to find teachers for Arduino courses at Curiosity Campus, after all the people I suggested let him down. I felt so awful I agreed to teach for him and a year-and-a-half later we become business partners."

She recently started Women in Tech Cape Town and is also a partner in Curiosity Campus, which teaches people all sorts of tech skills from the programming language Python to building and coding your own robot and creating VR (virtual reality) environments.

In 2015, she was invited to be a guest lecturer at MIT and to attend the World Maker Faire in New York.

"My main interests are the future and how tech can improve all fields, from biohacking to renewable energy," elaborates Farah. "To me makers are important, because there is a sense of unity and collaboration in a non-judgmental space where anyone is free not just to dream but to see their dreams come to life. We need to make more, collaborate more, show off our work and we need to make a bigger effort to bridge all divides, to include women and people from less advantaged and different backgrounds than our own."

"Connecting South Africa and Africa and really, really pushing to put us on the tech scene globally is vital. This means making people around the world aware of the ground-breaking stuff we are achieving right here at home."

— *Tiana Cline*



PHOTO: AUDIOVISUAL ALCHEMY

REBECCA FRANKS

Android developer, Google developer expert

Twitter: @riggaroo

Rebecca Franks was born in Johannesburg. She works there now as a full-time developer, creating apps; she also speaks regularly at meet-ups and conferences, mainly about her speciality: Android.

"It is a fun and exciting profession as there is always a challenge or a puzzle to be solved," explains Franks. "It is a great feeling being able to tell someone you made an app. The ability to be creative and logical at the same time is what makes programming my passion."

Last year, Franks decided to get involved with a non-profit organisation called Book Dash, which creates free African storybooks. After reading the books, she realised that she wanted to help solve the same problem they wanted to solve: improving the literacy of children in South Africa and Africa as a whole. Franks decided to volunteer to create an Android app to showcase all the free books. The app already contains over 60 free books in various different languages such as English, Zulu, Sesotho, Xhosa and Afrikaans.

"The beauty about the whole project is that everything at Book Dash is open-source and free. This means that the app's source code itself is available for download. These books are uniquely African and tell great stories. Some include bits of history while others inspire you or make you laugh," she says.

In March of 2016, Franks was selected as a Google developer expert — a recognition by the tech company for her extensive knowledge of the Android ecosystem and contributions to the global development community.

"I love that the South African developer community is humble, willing to learn and listen to others. South Africans are also hungry for knowledge," she adds.

She is the first Google developer expert in Johannesburg and the first female in Africa to receive this title.

"Being the first female in Africa to obtain this status is important, as it will encourage other females to take up a career in STEM [science, technology, engineering and maths], and it also shows that this line of work is not just for men; women can do it too. I believe that I am also setting a good example for younger women by encouraging them to learn and grow their careers." —

Tiana Cline



PHOTO: SUPPLIED



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

DEAN FURMAN

Chief executive, BetterWage

Twitter: @BetterWageHQ

Dean Furman is an actuary by profession, but definitely far from what one would call a typical number cruncher. Fin-tech innovation is where his passion lies, something he learnt after his studies while working at Discovery and later, Alexander Forbes.

"Alexander Forbes is an organisation with such a big heart — they really have their customers' interests at heart," says Furman. The renowned financial institution backed Furman (as well as his friend, colleague and now co-founder Rudie Shepherd) by giving him carte blanche to disrupt the status quo, and create a hub for innovation.

"We were intent that the first solution had to help people make more money — this is how BetterWage.com was born and I'm very proud of what we have achieved in such a short time . . . I enjoy doing anything that improve the lives of others."

Furman says that time spent developing solutions like BetterWage have been his real education. And in a nutshell, it offers a solution that will help others, especially those in need of extra income.

"We have a very unique country and this means there is opportunity to create unique solutions that wouldn't fly abroad," adds Furman. "Anyone developing a start-up outside of the major hubs like Silicon Valley, New York or Tel Aviv are at a disadvantage, purely because of the inability to connect with the right people. As the saying goes, it is not what you know but who you know."

Furman is inspired by his father, someone who taught him what it means to be your own boss.

"I don't draw too much inspiration from the world's most famous entrepreneurs. I feel that unless you know someone personally you cannot use that individual as a role model. Once you know someone, you learn whether their successes stemmed from a positive or a negative place. If you want to know whether a man is truly a legend, speak to their family — don't read their autobiography or the press."

"We need to ensure that all South Africans are fighting for the same goal of making our country a beautiful, safe place to live in with opportunities for all its people," says Furman. "I want to create more and more solutions to help others live better, happier lives. I hope to do this by growing BetterWage." — *Tiana Cline*



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TAYLOR GIBB

Derivco R&D, Microsoft regional director, founder of Developer Hut

Twitter: @taybgibb

Taylor Gibb (22) dropped out of school in the second week of grade nine. He currently works on the research and development team at Derivco, where he gets to dream big every day.

"After hours I run my own company, Developer Hut. I am a four-time Microsoft most valuable professional (MVP), and as of this year, a Microsoft regional director, one of only 100 in the world."

Microsoft regional directors like Gibb are "independent technology enthusiasts", expected to be adept in many different areas of technology and who form the contact point between Microsoft and the developer community. Although not employees of Microsoft, regional directors form part of an official Microsoft programme.

But you might also recognise Gibb as an active public speaker who regularly speaks at universities and technology events nationwide.

"When I was about 17, I started working for a company called iSolve. I moved from there to Derivco and have had four jobs here since; I am now in my happy place. My team is called TechInc and we get to work on cutting-edge technology.

"There are six of us who look three to five years into the future and create prototypes using the technology of tomorrow. It's a great team to be in — I get to change my mind three times a week about what I want to work on."

Some examples of things Gibb and his team have worked on include augmented and virtual reality, creating some amazing gaming software on these platforms, as well as the internet of things and exciting big data projects.

"I am very technical. In my spare time I like to dabble with my own personal projects as well as work on my own company. I like to dabble with electronics as well. When I am not in front of my PC or laptop, I enjoy traveling and reading a good book (the technical kind, of course)," he adds. "I am living the dream. I get to do what I love every day of my life, and I never want to stop working. It doesn't feel like work though, so I guess that old cliché holds true."

Gibb is continually inspired by his parents — "they are the hardest workers you will ever meet" — and loves the fact that there is so much space for disruption in the South African tech sector. "It's still in its infancy, and that leaves a lot of opportunity to make a difference."

Gibb recently agreed to an undisclosed amount of shares in a South African-based augmented reality company. "There are also a few big products in the pipeline for Developer Hut." Watch this space. — *Tiana Cline*



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

DAVID GLUCKMAN

Director, Lumkani

Twitter: @LumkaniFire

"My business interests lie at the intersection of technology, sustainability and comfort. How can we create goods and services that are in demand, add significant value and are funded innovatively by the those who benefit directly or indirectly from the said goods and services?" asks David Gluckman.

Taking a break from the corporate world to pursue his other interests (among them, entrepreneurship) Gluckman joined a group of his colleagues who were working on the foundations of Lumkani, a technology company that builds fire detection systems for informal settlements.

"I believe that technology will be a continual driver of value for billions of people who live in resource constrained environments. In these markets, fundamentally different approaches supported by technology will be the order of the day to promote economic freedom."

Gluckman believes that the local start-up scene needs to be spoken about and celebrated more.

"There are great start-ups here doing really great things, which should be advertised to create an awareness around it to inspire young people so that they can fulfill their dreams here on SA soil."

With his entrepreneurial background and experience in business he was tasked to turn Lumkani into a social enterprise: one that is focused on both profit and social impact as an engine for growth and development.

When not working on Lumkani, Gluckman is interested in both film and space, and is continually inspired by Elon Musk. "He's turned a traditionally excessive sector (space) into an efficient business (by reusing space shuttle parts). He has very large futuristic visions that he is determined to turn into a reality. If I am ever in a position to do so, I want to leave Earth's atmosphere and look back at the 'pale blue dot' — little fascinates me more than the endlessness of the universe."



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

For now, it looks like Lumkani has an extremely busy and important year ahead.

"We have been working at Lumkani for two years with a dedicated team and bootstrapping as far as we can, but still ensuring we build a product that suits our customers' needs," says Gluckman. "We're testing an insurance model and social impact bonds which will see us moving out of our technology phase and focus on these innovative funding models, so we can see ourselves scale quickly across South Africa and the globe — that's the plan." — *Tiana Cline*



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

NOZIPHO GUMBI

Nanoscience and nanotechnology researcher

Twitter: @noziphogumbi

Nozipho Gumbi hails from Empangeni, a small township in KZN. She's an upcoming researcher in the field of nanoscience and nanotechnology based at Unisa Science Campus. She is both a PhD student and a Grow Your Own Timber candidate and, most recently, the winner of science communication competition FameLab South Africa.

"I want to make good use of this [win] to encourage and motivate others, especially the young female science students to never doubt or think less of themselves, because they are equally capable in coming up with even better solutions for tackling issues that the world at large is faced with; only if they work hard, and remain persistent in doing what they do."

If anyone has bright prospects, it's Gumbi. She managed to graduate cum laude and in record time for her master's degree.

"I am very passionate about the research work that I do and its promise towards the betterment of the lives of people in South Africa and beyond," says Gumbi.

She believes it is crucial that women take part in fields of Stem (science, technology, engineering and maths) because, from what she has observed both locally and internationally, women are equally capable of taking on the challenges that occur frequently in these fields, and of providing amicable solutions to existing problems.

"There needs to be a shift in belief that women are [only] good enough for domesticated types of jobs and we [should] start looking at the bigger picture, where everyone is allowed to be part of any field that they desire, on merit. A number of women in Stem have already disproved this misconception by making significant and reputable contributions in Stem. Therefore, more women are needed in Stem to even out the numbers while continuing to make remarkable contributions in addressing issues [in] Stem disciplines."

Personally, Gumbi would love to raise awareness about the status of science in South Africa.

"It is definitely heading for greater heights and slowly but steadily matching up with the research scene globally. It is indeed exciting to be involved in the field of science in South Africa at a time where we are thinking globally about our research ideas and solutions, but we must start by acting and applying our findings locally.

"What really stands out for me is the new focus in doing the not so far-fetched research but research that aims to solve real life problems that our country faces on a day-to-day basis, not just for the sake of publishing the research findings in high impact factor journals, but to really provide practical and applicable solutions that can help towards the betterment of the lives of all in South Africa." — *Tiana Cline*

GRANT HINDS

Video games personality and YouTuber

Twitter: @granthinds

"Interactive entertainment like video games as well as how social media and new technology has shaped the kinds of entertainment we consume is extremely exciting to me. I'm super lucky I get to work with both!"

Grant Hinds studied visual communication at AAA in Cape Town with a specialisation in art direction. And from the moment he stepped into his first full-time job, he's been working in TV, with a focus on video games and technology.

"I moved to a company called Zoopy which was positioning itself to be a YouTube competitor at the time and learnt a lot about how online video production is done, what sorts of content were garnering an audience and how social interactions would dictate the kind of content that was created," he explains.

Hinds considers video games to be this generation's greatest gift. And while radio, magazines, comic books, television and cinema etc, have made their mark, video games are arguably a more exciting medium.

"It harnesses every discipline from the previous generations to bring the world's first purely interactive media into our homes. It's mind blowing! And with it comes the opportunity to experience many things we weren't able to do in the past, put ourselves into someone's shoes, a writer's narrative, be the star of our own show. It's more than we could've possibly imagined, and it's only going to get better!"

In between it all, Hinds has hosted a few South African TV shows, and has been featured in many more local productions talking about gaming and technology.

"I've written for GQ magazine, hosted a few online shows, been on radio speaking about games and basically lived my childhood dream and so much more — that dream I had back in that school quad all those years ago. I spent a few years making a show called GameState. You can see a few of those videos on another playlist in my channel. It was here that I grew to absolutely love online videos," adds Hinds, who simply can't wait to see where YouTube, as a medium, takes South Africa.

"It's in its infancy here and we have a habit of putting our unique stamp on something when it gets here. It'll be about growing my channel and pursuing the craft, making the best quality videos." — *Tiana Cline*



PHOTO: SUPPLIED



DAYNE KEMP

Space engineer, Nasa

Linkedin: [linkedin.com/in/daynekemp](https://www.linkedin.com/in/daynekemp)

How many of us wonder what it's like to work for Nasa? Dayne Kemp, a South African-born and -educated electrical/space engineer, has turned his childhood rocket scientist dreams into a reality.

As a PhD candidate based at Nasa's Ames Research Center in California, Kemp's primary research is focused on the development of a high-energy physics particle detector that can detect life, or signs thereof, in extraterrestrial and extrasolar environments.

"I have two ambitions with regard to my professional career. The first is to assist in protecting our planet, Earth, and to help improve the quality of life of its inhabitants. This is particularly important to me having grown up travelling around Africa. Space technology is already helping Africa in a big way with crop monitoring, water quality measurements, disaster monitoring et cetera," says Kemp.

"The second is to look beyond our planet, explore the unknown and expand the frontiers of our knowledge. I hope to help unveil some of the universe's endless mysteries such as 'are we alone?' and 'how did the universe begin?'"

During his undergraduate career Kemp founded the University of Cape Town's Space Association, aimed at informing the youth about space science and technology. The association has since changed its name to the Space and Astronomy Association.

"Space science and exploration is at the forefront of technological advancement, which often leads to new scientific discoveries and/or invaluable inventions. Traditionally, 'space' has been something only pursued by a small handful of government agencies and research institutions. However, with the relatively recent commercialisation of space, there has been a large spike of interest resulting in more private companies, universities and individuals getting involved."

Mark Shuttleworth and Elon Musk have been a great source of inspiration for Kemp, as they are both very successful South African-born entrepreneurs with a love and passion for space.

"It's hard to say what Nasa does as it is such a multifaceted organisation," he says. Kemp mentions recent book and film *The Martian*, saying it "describes the challenges Nasa faces in space exploration: everything from living in a habitat, growing plants in space and traversing across the Martian surface in a futuristic spacesuit. The work, although technical, is truly fun and exciting."

What's next for Kemp? He's aiming for the stars, quite literally.

"We are probably a decade or less away from putting humans on Mars. However, to answer the larger science questions I believe we need to leave our star, the Sun, and explore the rest of the Universe. Seeing that this isn't a profit-making venture, for now at least, it will be research institutions and space agencies leading the charge. I would personally like to focus on scientific payloads, and supporting technologies, for interstellar exploration." — *Tiana Cline*



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

FRANK LATTER

Virtual reality developer, SenseVirtual

Twitter: [@sensevirtual](https://twitter.com/sensevirtual)

Son of well-known screenwriter Greg Latter, Frank Latter is a CGI artist, VJ (virtual jockey) and virtual reality developer at South Africa's first dedicated virtual reality (VR) studio, SenseVirtual.

After obtaining his bachelor's degree, Latter left South Africa to teach English and travel in South Korea. It was here he fell in love with the combination of art, music and technology. "Art being the result of human creativity, expression and imagination, and technology the force that propels it," explains Latter.

He has spent the last seven years crafting and performing live visuals at events and festivals across South Africa, including Oppikoppi and Rocking the Daisies, alongside top local and international artists.

Wishing to increase his knowledge and skillset in the world of computer graphics, Frank enrolled at The Animation School in 2014. While studying Frank became fascinated with the emerging technology platform of virtual reality and joined forces with other VR and tech enthusiasts Tyrone Rubin and Richard Ramsbottom to form SenseVirtual.

"As a kid in the 90s playing computer games, the dream of a virtual world made of digital information was already there. The cyberpunk novels of William Gibson and Neal Stephenson and the *Matrix* films fuelled that fire even further, but virtual reality still felt like something far off, the stuff of science fiction."

Fast-forward to 2016 and VR is here — the technology has caught up to the dream and the ride is only beginning.

"I quickly realised that the skill set I am building in the world of computer graphics and animation is the skillset required to create VR worlds, and here I am, creating and living the virtual dream. The creativity of people never stops amazing me."

With Oculus Rift, HTC Vive and Samsung Gear VR available to consumers, Latter considers 2016 to be "year one" for virtual reality.

"We have the first generation of VR headsets able to achieve 'presence', that magical feeling when your brain is tricked into believing that the virtual world is real," he explains. "This isn't television, films or computer games, this is something entirely new, and what it will become, how it will change the world, well that's being written right now! At SenseVirtual we want to be there, creating and building in this exciting new medium, and opening doors to worlds beyond our imagination. We don't only have a front row seat for the virtual future — we're in it!" — *Tiana Cline*



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RIAZ MOOLA

Founder and director, Hyperion Development

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The degree with the highest dropout rate in South Africa and across all universities nationally is computer science, with an average failure rate of 88%. Through Hyperion Development, Riaz Moola is on a mission to change that.

"I'm most interested in the application of computer science to various industries. This is of course very popular, as comp sci is the basis of the most famous firms and start-ups today: Apple, Google, Facebook, Uber, Airbnb, et cetera."

Moola's previous work at Google as a product manager was using computer science (specifically artificial intelligence) to help build new products and features with this tech.

"I worked in the Google Search team on 'Ok Google' (Google Voice Search), similar to Siri. These features have now been used by millions."

After studying at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Moola noticed a high dropout rate in computer science.

"I also noticed people at UKZN had bad internet access," he explains. "My entire idea was very simple — an online course where people could still take courses with limited internet access. I was inspired by course materials at Edinburgh on artificial intelligence, a subject not offered at UKZN."

"I created a simple online course with small files — rather than large videos offered by most massive open online courses (Moocs) — in a new programming language (Python) teaching people some basics of AI. I went back to UKZN during a holiday and spoke to students in my previous classes, urging them to sign up for the course. Over 100 signed up in the first week. The course then spread organically to many other universities in Johannesburg, Cape Town et cetera. Eventually we had students from every tertiary institution in South Africa. We now have students from eight African countries and this is growing every day."

A core tenet of open education is the development of non-traditional learning methods that reduce barriers to entry to education.

"Many Mooc platforms claim to reduce these barriers, but no existing platform seeks to serve the unique limitations of millions of South Africans, many of whom would benefit most from the principles of open education," says Moola. "Hyperion is filling this large gap in knowledge transfer using a scalable model."

Moola would like to grow Hyperion throughout the continent, and hopes to strengthen his relationship with Google and other tech firms like Facebook. "We must not forget Africa as a whole." — *Tiana Cline*

ANINA MUMM

Science communication and digital media specialist, co-founder SciBraai

Twitter: [@SciBraai](https://twitter.com/SciBraai)

Anina Mumm is a trained biochemist and journalist who likes to experiment with new ways of telling science stories. She wears two hats, working with scientists and journalists to help bridge the gap between science and society.

"I help run SciBraai, a proudly South African non-profit organisation and online platform dedicated to digital science journalism, science communication and outreach," says Mumm. She also manages a digital science communication agency called ScienceLink, which helps scientists and research organisations communicate their work to various audiences.

Mumm began her journey into science communication as a freelance science writer.

"I will be on an eternal mission to find out, 'what makes a good story?' This question drives me professionally, because it underlines effective science communication," she says. "As a science communicator I work with scientists and journalists on a daily basis. These two groups of people often think

they are total opposites, but they are cut from the same cloth. They are both after the truth in the public interest. They both search for facts, so that they can identify problems and solutions. Scientists and journalists are the pillars of a prosperous, democratic, modern and healthy society, and that keeps me motivated to contribute in some small way to what they do."

The field of science communication is still relatively new in South Africa, especially in the digital space, and Mumm sees plenty of opportunity for growth. This is partly because within science itself, there is so much more South Africa can do in terms of collaboration, innovation, communication and implementation.

"The wheels are turning, and I'm thrilled to be part of the process, but there is a great need for more science-based policies, a need for a heavier reliance on science to inform decisions about the economy, infrastructure, health, resources, food security and so on. There is also a need for scientists to be trained in multiple disciplines that would compliment their abilities to advise government, innovate, consult, build businesses, manage people, market products, teach, mentor, and do outreach."

Mumm hopes to establish SciBraai as a household name in South Africa, and in doing so help to bring science and South African scientists into the fabric of our culture.

"SciBraai's slogan is 'round-the-fire stories about South African science and scientists', so our aim is for every South African to talk about science around the braai, just as they would about soccer, rugby, e-tolls or Nkandla." — *Tiana Cline*



PHOTO: SUPPLIED



200 YOUNG SOUTH AFRICANS ● SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

DANNY NOCHUMSOHN

Chief executive, NinjaTech

Twitter: @Dnoch

Danny Nochumsohn is a bit of a serial entrepreneur. From creating his first business at the age of 18 while studying a BCom law degree, to becoming the chief technology officer (and later chief executive) of a tech start-up called Daily Homes, leading the company to two rounds of capital raises, he's simply destined for Silicon Valley.

"I am inspired through personal determination. It has always been my dream to build a successful business," says Nochumsohn. "Over the past few years, I have been involved in several tech start-ups, and I am currently the co-chief executive of Ninja Tech, a website development and digital marketing agency."

Ninja Tech was born in January 2015 out of the frustration that Nochumsohn was unable find an effective, affordable marketing agency for his various businesses. Today, it consists of a strong team of 12 people and offers a variety of website development and digital marketing services.

"My primary business interest is my team. I believe that through a culture of learning, fun, and dedication we will achieve our vision for long-term success. We are all (myself included) constantly learning and getting better and better at what we do by pushing the boundaries and learning from the collective."

Although Nochumsohn values perseverance (and a bit of luck) as the underlying success factor when it comes to creating a start-up, he sees his work experience at Daily Homes as his own "street MBA".

"I learned everything I know about running a business from that time, including sales, marketing, finance, negotiation, HR. I have been privileged to meet fantastic business partners and investors who have believed in me and backed me through my business endeavours over the past few years."

In 2015, Nochumsohn was asked to be one of the judges in the #Hack.Jozi start-up competition.

"There is enormous opportunity to bring new technologies and ideas to the country, something that we are always working to do at Ninja. It has always been my dream to build a successful business, and with every milestone I get closer to that goal."

"Some day in the future, if viable at the time, I would love to go to Silicon Valley to build my next start-up there. In the meantime though, I feel like a proud parent to Ninja and I look forward to all the successes and challenges ahead of us." — *Tiana Cline*



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

DR TOZAMA QWEBANI-OGUNLEYE

Lecturer, Tshwane University of Technology

Twitter: @olathozie

Dr Tozama Qwebani-Ogunleye strongly believes that one's destiny is in one's hands. She's a lecturer at Tshwane University of Technology who hails from Bizana in the Eastern Cape.

"There might be external forces that you do not have control over, but still there will be something that you do have control over and that is yourself — take charge of that," she says.

"I believe that both challenging and great moments are significant and carry crucial lessons ... I failed biochemistry in my second year at UCT. I think I had become relaxed in the seat of victory and thought I had previously got first class/distinctions because it was me and forgot about the principles I had to put in place before those distinctions."

"Second year was a wake-up call — if you don't put the effort you will fail, irrespective of who you are. To make matters worse one of my lecturers said I was a weak science student. I promised myself that I would show him what the weak science student is made of; I was determined to push myself to the PhD level with no more failures. Looking back,

I thank him for saying that to my face."

In 2014 she was one of the participants in the National Research Foundation role modelling campaign. She is also the author of a motivational book called *20 Fantastic Life Lessons: insights from my life journey*.

This year Qwebani-Ogunleye is one of the 25 Emerging Women scientists in South Africa, an initiative sponsored by the Organisation for Women in Science for the Developing World, the South African Young Academy of Science and the Academy of Science of South Africa.

Her work ethic and belief in pushing boundaries have resulted in a number of notable accomplishments: in 2011 she was honoured with a Women in Science award sponsored by the department of science and technology and Tata Africa. That same year the CSIR biosciences unit acknowledged her with the best student of the year award (PhD).

This year Qwebani-Ogunleye is one of the recipients of the NRF Thuthuka grant, and will soon get started with her research group. — *Tiana Cline*



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NOMANDLA NGCOYA

Medical chemist, UKZN

LinkedIn: za.linkedin.com/in/nomandla-ngcoya-39b3a48b

"I am into creating my own things. Science is fun, and broad; I feel like a doctor who is going to save lives when I find a cure for diabetes."

Nomandla Ngcoya is currently doing her master's degree in chemistry at the University of Kwazulu-Natal. The title of her project is the synthesis, molecular modelling and biological evaluation of O-substituted coumarins. And for her PhD, she will be synthesising compounds with the aim of enhancing the activity of the compounds against alpha-glucosidase, which is the enzyme that breaks down starch and disaccharides to glucose.

"I am hoping to file a patent for one of these compounds," she adds. In simple terms, Ngcoya is looking to inhibit growth in diabetes. She's also passionate about women and Stem (science, technology, engineering and maths).

"Women need to be told that science is everything and it is everywhere, you can be whatever you want to be. When I say you can be anything with science, I mean you can be a manager with no management degree, a journalist with no journalism degree or an entrepreneur. We are always talking about being 'independent' — when I think science, I

think independence. Now if independence is so important to women, then science is the way to go."

Many become demotivated by the fact that most scientists end up doing their postgraduate certificate in education (PGCE) and becoming teachers, but Ngcoya finds that Stem programs like Take a Girl Child to Work are stepping-stones to producing more engineers and scientists.

"We always see people coming to do their postgraduate studies after doing their internship, because once you get a feeling of what you want to do, you want to learn more about it. We have to train them when they are still young. It took me three days to decide whether I want to go into the science class or not, because I was told by many that physical science and mathematics are hard."

Ngcoya's main inspiration is Judy Dlamini, a medical doctor and the chairperson of Mbekani Investment Holdings and Aspen Pharmacare.

"I dream of having her as a non-executive director of my pharmaceutical company one day. That woman has really worked hard to build her profile. You see, you can be anything you want to be with science." — *Tiana Cline*



BRANDON BEACK

Wheelchair racer

Facebook: Walking with Brandon

In August 2012, talented Western Province gymnast Brandon Beack was doing his final preparations for the South African championships when a bad dismount resulted in him falling on his neck, leaving him paralysed from the shoulders down.

But, as testament to the character of Beack and his family, despite the rehabilitation team advising them that they needed to accept his future as a quadriplegic, Brandon set himself the goal of walking again. Through the support of the Walking with Brandon Trust Fund, he was able to buy specialised equipment to aid his recovery and get access to advanced and often quite alternative therapies to help him reach his goal.

"Gymnastics was a part of me since I can remember. The love of the sport stuck with me throughout my life and I wanted to qualify for the Olympic Games as a gymnast. That all changed with the accident. The year following my accident, I devoted my life to rehab and getting myself more independent," says Beack.

He spent time at a recovery centre in the US towards the end of 2013, and discovered that a new fire had awoken in him. "I will never stop training to walk again just because I am in a wheelchair. I can still do sport and do things. I am still as abled as an enabled person."

He is focusing on qualifying for the Paralympics in Rio later this year in the 100m wheelchair sprint, and perhaps shot put as well.

Already, he has been to three national championships in



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

South Africa and has broken the South African and African records for the 100m wheelchair sprint, and the South African record for shot put.

A key stepping stone for Olympic qualification is attending the U/23 IWAS World Games in Prague at the end of June. He has already begun raising funds to get there and gain the

international experience required for qualification. Given that he only started in the sports 18 months ago, his has been a truly inspiring journey. — Iwan Pienaar



PHOTO: ANTHONY GROTE/GAMEPLAN MEDIA

FRANKIE DU TOIT

Mountain biker

Twitter: @Frances_DuToit

She won her first bicycle as a prize for a colouring-in competition when she was six and is now leading the Women's Cross-country Pro Elite category in her first year at that level. But that is not enough: 18-year-old Frankie du Toit has set her sights on the Rio Olympic Games later this year.

Originally from Wartburg, a small town approximately 40km north-east of Pietermaritzburg, du Toit has dominated the junior girls' podiums across several disciplines.

And while she had only a slender lead over Elite XCO national champion Cherie Vale after two rounds, Du Toit is very comfortable in the world of cross-country racing.

Currently, she races for the Kargo Mountain Bike Team, the only UCI-accredited trade team in Africa, and has already represented South Africa four times. Amid all her successes last year, she also wanted to do well at the UCI MTB and Trials World Championships in Andorra held in September. Unfortunately, she had to settle for 27th position.

"I really wanted to do well at Worlds and I got there with the hope of getting a top five. However, my bike broke and I had a series of mechanicals that held me back," she says.

Despite the disappointment, she is enjoying the challenge of racing in the elite category this year.

"Originally, I was going to study this year but when I was approached by Kargo, I knew it was a great opportunity. Additionally, they are based in Durban so it is well situated for me. Transitioning from junior to pro-elite has been tricky, requiring more laps and racing for longer."

Despite this, she is familiarising herself with the new environment and will definitely be one to watch in the future. — Iwan Pienaar

PEGGY DE VILLIERS

Deaflympics swimmer

Twitter: @PeggySwims22

Peggy de Villiers lost her hearing when she was six months old, after contracting bacterial meningitis. But it was only after she turned 12 that the girl from Somerset West realised the impact of discrimination against hearing-impaired people.

"At the time, growing up with a hearing disability did not seem so challenging because, as a kid, you do not see the negatives and you do not compare. But as I got older I started learning the advantages that other kids had, both in the classroom and in the pool," she says.

At that stage she discovered her love for swimming. She competed at school and club levels until she left for the United States to continue her studies (and swimming) at the University of West Florida in 2013. She quickly became one of the most accomplished swimmers in the history of their programme, where she became the first student athlete to achieve a NCAA Individual Qualifier 'A' cut time.

"I do not like to view myself as a hearing-impaired athlete because I do not feel like I have any setbacks as far as my physical and mental capabilities are concerned. But I do feel proud about what I have accomplished and hope to serve as inspiration for other hearing-impaired athletes. I want them to see my story and feel that it is something they can also achieve."

De Villiers has been a member of the South Africa Deaflympics team since 2007 and holds the deaf world swimming record in the 50m backstroke. She competed in the 2013 Deaflympics in Bulgaria and won a silver medal in the 50m backstroke, a silver in the 100m butterfly, and a bronze in the 100m freestyle, building on her success at the 2009 Deaflympics in Taiwan, where she won the gold medal in the 50m backstroke, silver in the 100m freestyle, silver in the 100m backstroke and bronze in the 50m butterfly.

"Getting chosen to represent your country is always such an honour. I have been racing for South Africa for more than 10 years, but every time I am humble and proud of being afforded the opportunity to go and race." — Iwan Pienaar



PHOTO: EMMELE PHOTOGRAPHY



BRANDEN GRACE

Golfer

Twitter: @BrandenGrace

“When I shot that 10-under par at the 2012 Joburg Open it gave me a boost, and I thought, ‘I can win’,” says Branden Grace. And he did. In fact, the young South African charged to victory again the next week at the Volvo Golf Champions tournament in Durban. By the end of the season he had become the first player ever to win four times on the European Tour in a season, after earning his place via qualifying school. But the disciplined Grace, who only turned pro in 2006, stayed under the radar of the all-powerful American golf fans and media. Despite rushing into the world’s top 100, he had to brush off the disappointment of a winless 2013. However, that time wasn’t wasted. The broad-faced, effervescent George resident grew his reputation as a “good guy” on tour, with his signature “Congrats, bud!” tweets a regular part of post-competition banter. He steadily ground away at his weaknesses. “I’m pretty good off the tees,” he declared at the time. “That’s a strong point of mine and a great advantage. Approach shots are also one of my strong points. The one thing that’s been keeping me back is the putting, but I feel that’s improving.” In April this year, Grace won his first tournament on the US PGA Tour, proving he had been working on the right departments of his game. On the final day of the RBC Heritage in South Carolina, it wasn’t until he sunk two dangerous birdie putts on the back nine that he believed he could win. “When I got to 12 and 13 and made a couple of nice putts, I knew I was in there with a chance.” A private jet to Palm Springs that night for congratulatory drinks with Ernie Els at the home of “The Big Easy” sealed the moment for the sporting annals and welcomed Grace into the proud fraternity of South Africa’s nice-guy, world-beater golfers: Els, Scharl Schwartzel, Gary Player et al. — *Ian Macleod*



PHOTO: CHUNG SUNG-JUN/GETTY

BRIDGITTE HARTLEY

Canoer

Twitter: @for_bridgitte



PHOTO: CLIVE MASON/GETTY

South Africa’s golden girl of kayaking, Bridgitte Hartley, is preparing hard for the Rio Olympics; she leaves for Brazil in July. The 32-year-old Hartley says her biggest aim at the moment is working on technique and focus. Asked what drives her, she says: “I am extremely goal-orientated. Have been since I was small and I have always set goals, which somehow I cannot change, so I work towards achieving them.” “I am also fortunate to have a flair for sport and have been involved in different types of sport at school and university. I started surfing at a young age and attended many South African championship events as a junior and senior. I played hockey, athletics, gymnastics, water polo and eventually kayaking, which I took up competitively at university.” Hartley says her father introduced her to river marathon kayaking and she started competitive river kayaking at the end of 2002. She began sprint training with Hungarian coach and head coach of the Austrian Canoe Federation, Nandor Almási, at the end of 2004. Hartley’s success is an inspiration for youth across continents who appreciate her determination and the hard work required to excel in any sport. “It is great to be recognised by my peers, and I hope my success is further motivation for the other female paddlers in Africa to keep driving women’s canoeing competitive standards.” In 2009, Hartley won her first World Cup at the K1 Women 500m in Szeged, Hungary, and also in Hungary she qualified for the London Olympics with an unofficial world record time. Hartley became the first person from the African continent to medal — a bronze — at the ICF Canoe Sprint World Championships in Moscow in 2014. This year, Hartley was named the African Canoe Federation’s Women’s Paddler of the Year for 2015. Hartley won a bronze medal at the 2012 London Olympics K1 (kayak singles) Women’s 500m and secured her 2016 Olympic qualification at the last World Championships in Milan. She recently won the K1 Women’s 500m at the KwaZulu-Natal Championships and dominated the South African Championships. “The Olympic village is very distracting so I will be basing myself in São Paulo for July and will only move to Rio four or five days before my events. I finished sixth at my last World Cup at the end of May and I got the same result at a World Cup in 2012, so I believe with a lot of hard work before Rio, I can still improve.” — *Rebecca Haynes*

SHABNIM ISMAIL

Cricketer

Twitter: @Shabnim_Ismail

Born in Cape Town in 1988, talented fast bowler Shabnim Ismail broke into the South African women’s national cricketing side at the tender age of 17 in 2007, against Pakistan. Already she has become one of the leading wicket-takers for South African in limited-overs cricket, having taken more than 140 wickets in One Day Internationals (ODIs) and Twenty20 combined. To date, she has played 59 ODIs and 58 Twenty20 internationals. Such has been her talent that she attracted attention in Australia, playing two games for the Melbourne Renegades in the Big Bash League. In her debut match earlier this year she took two wickets in as many balls, finishing with three for 10 runs, impressing many with her raw pace and unerring accuracy. Additionally, she has been contracted to play in the United Kingdom for the Yorkshire Diamonds in the equivalent Twenty20 super league in that country starting at the end of July, as one of her three foreign signings. Her commitment to her bowling over the years has reflected her character, as she has made the transition from being a first-change bowler to a leading opening bowler for the national team. Last year, she received the Women’s Sports Star of the Year award in the South African Sports Awards. — *Iwan Pienaar*



PHOTO: MARK KOLBE/GETTY

JAYDÉ JULIUS

Cyclist

Twitter: @JaydeJulius

As a sport, cycling is often seen as a contradiction. On the one hand, it involves a solitary rider competing against the elements and other competitors. On the other, it requires working with teammates for greater, overall glory. Cape Town-born, 22-year-old Jaydé Julius knows this juxtaposition all too well. Cutting his teeth in professional cycling as part of the MTN-Qhubeka Feeder Team (Now Team Dimension Data for Qhubeka) based out of the World Cycling Centre Africa in Potchefstroom, Julius was drafted into the main team as a stagiaire (the cycling term for an amateur rider who joins a professional team) a year ago. “I am really excited and overwhelmed by the opportunity to race with the team. The team has always been a real motivating factor for me, knowing that the chances of reaching the highest levels of world cycling as a South African are real,” he says. However, Julius is not unfamiliar to racing in Europe, where the majority of UCI racing takes place. He joined the Rondse Cycling School in Belgium when he was 15 and spent time training at the UCI World Cycling Centre in Switzerland. But it was in 2015 that he really started coming into his own and showing the cycling world just some of the talent he possesses. In the space of a few weeks, he became under-23 South African Road Race Champion as well as the under-23 African Road Race Champion. It was at the South African Road Race Championships that he impressed by finishing third in the elite race behind teammate Jacques Janse van Rensburg and Darryl Impey, another world-class cyclist. Given his commitment and determination to compete at the highest level of cycling, even as an amateur, many suspect it will only be a matter of time before he becomes a full-time professional cyclist. — *Iwan Pienaar*



PHOTO: STICH PHOTOGRAPHY



ASHLEIGH MOOLMAN-PASIO

Cyclist

Twitter: @AshleighCycling



PHOTO: LUC CLAESSEN/BELGA PHOTO

30-year-old cyclist Ashleigh Moolman-Pasio got into the sport thanks to the encouragement of her boyfriend, now husband, while she was studying. She still recalls clearly the moment she realised that becoming a professional cyclist was her passion.

"It was December 2009 and I was sitting in the graduation ceremony at Stellenbosch University for my chemical engineering degree when the dean said we should find our passion and pursue it. I am sure most of the students and the dean himself were referring to finding a passion in the engineering field, but it was being on my bike that awoke those feelings in me," she says.

"With risk comes reward. For many, it would be too risky giving up engineering for a less stable, uncertain career in cycling. For me, it was worth it to pursue my true passion."

And she has not looked back since.

Now firmly busy with preparations for the Olympics in Rio later this year, Moolman-Pasio had a stellar year in 2015, when she won the South African National Time Trial as well as the National Road Championships. She was also first in the African Continental Team and Individual Time Trial Championships, and achieved a number of great results for her UCI professional team Cervélo-Bigla Pro Cycling.

Despite these accomplishments, she was bitterly disappointed with her failure at the World Championships last year, where she had a mechanical problem.

"As a professional cyclist you learn quickly that everything is not sunshine and roses. Fortunately, I have a very supportive husband who is with me and gave up his own cycling aspirations to be with me. This bit of gender reversal (society believes it is the man who is the athlete) challenges the status quo, but he is doing what his heart is telling him to do."

With the Summer Olympics just a few months away, she is focused on being at her peak, but understands that there needs to be a balance in life.

"To relax I love to take a bit of quiet time, especially because we travel so much. I love being in the mountains as it refreshes the body, mind, and soul." — Iwan Pienaar

GIFT NGOEPE

Baseball player

Despite its long history in South Africa, baseball has never reached the same popular (and financial) status as rugby, football, and cricket. Yet this niche sport in our country has produced several players who have joined the professional ranks of Major League Baseball.

Each one of these players have unique stories to tell, but Polokwane-born Gift Ngoepe (26) was the first black South African to sign a professional baseball contract when he joined the Pittsburgh Pirates in October 2008.

Ngoepe's story could easily be mistaken for a Hollywood movie. "My mom worked as a domestic worker at the Randburg Mets, with us living in one of the clubhouse rooms. I started playing baseball when I was three and lived the sport all my life," says Ngoepe.

Such was the talent of the shortstop that he attracted the attention of US scouts while participating in an Italian baseball academy in 2008.

"There was some nerves in making the move to America, especially being far from my family and friends, but that is part of the process. If you don't have nerves then there has to be something wrong with you."

While he has not been able to crack the nod for the major leagues quite yet, many pundits there believe it is a matter of when, not if, he gets his opportunity to play at the highest level. To date, he has played close on 700 games in the Minors, with a solid enough batting average of .234 (the average in the majors is .266). However, it is in his exceptional defensive fielding that he has been making waves; he is cited as possibly the best infielder currently in the Minor Leagues.



PHOTO: BRETT HEMMINGS/GETTY

JORDAN PEPPER

Racing driver

Facebook: facebook.com/JordanPepperOfficial

At an age where most teenagers are hoping to get their driving licence, 19-year-old Jordan Pepper has already accomplished great things as a racing car driver.

"Motorsport has run in my family since my great grandfather raced in England. I practically grew up on the race track and just love the adrenaline you get out of motorsport. It requires focus and the fact that you are always racing on the edge means the pressure is on to be completely dedicated to what you are doing," he says.

He admits that he had to make a lot of sacrifices.

"It was especially tough during my school years, and even now I do not often go out with my friends. But I have no regrets and want to be racing for the rest of my life."

Such has been his commitment that he decided to move to Germany on his own after he matriculated to pursue his career.

"It has been tough going overseas but Europe is where everything happens and I am enjoying every minute of it. There is always another mountain to climb and I am constantly aiming higher and dreaming bigger."

So far this focus has paid off, with Pepper recently being chosen as one of the Bentley Boys for the 2016 ADAC GT3 Masters series. He joins a team of six drivers that will compete in three cars, among a grid of 30 from eight manufacturers.

"I am really excited to make the change to the Factory Bentley Abt Team for 2016 after a very tough but promising first year in the 2015 ADAC GT Masters. I am thankful that the team has seen promise in me. This will be my second year in GT Racing and I will have a better understanding of what to expect." — Iwan Pienaar



PHOTO: VOLKSWAGEN MOTORSPORT



LUCAS SITHOLE

Wheelchair tennis player

Twitter: @Lucas986Lucas

In 2013, Lucas Sithole (29) made wheelchair tennis history by becoming the first African to win a Grand Slam event by taking the US Open title. Early in 2016, the current world number three also added the Australian Open doubles title — the first of his career — to his incredible list of accomplishments.

Such accomplishments seem a far cry from his roots, the dusty coal mining town of Dannhauser in KwaZulu-Natal. He was just an ordinary boy from the township when tragedy struck in 1998. Sithole and a friend were helping load a goods train and checked the direction of the railway line for the driver. On returning to the slow-moving train, his friend jumped into the carriage but Sithole slipped and fell underneath the train. He lost both legs and his right arm. For many, it would have been an insurmountable challenge to come back from.

Admittedly, Sithole said it was a challenging time for him. "To believe that everything was going to be fine was hard. But things changed when my mom registered me to go to a special needs school." Embracing his second chance in life, he joined the school tennis team and fell in love with the sport.

"Tennis is my life. After playing my first international tournament in Holland in 2005, I knew this was something I wanted to do." And do it he has. His best single ranking came in 2013 when he was second in the world; he now boasts an impressive 209 wins and 83 losses in his career (as at May 29 2016).

But that is not stopping him from setting his sights even higher: Sithole is targeting a Paralympic gold in Rio later this year. The 2014 recipient of the South African Order of Ikhamanga, which recognises citizens who have excelled in the fields of arts, culture, literature, music, journalism and sport, clearly has found a new passion for life. — Iwan Pienaar



PHOTO: WHEELCHAIR TENNIS SA

MONDE SITOLE

Sailor and mountaineer

Twitter: @MondeWalks

Versatile young South African Monde Sitole has traversed the world both as a sailor and a mountain climber. Based in Cape Town, he is a global youth ambassador for A World at School, an organisation that together with its network of ambassadors performs grassroots education work in 85 countries.

The inspirational 27-year-old was one the first youngsters to attend school on board the SV Concordia tallship, an international school based in Nova Scotia, Canada. Sitole covered many sea miles while attending classes, sailing from Cape Town to Namibia, St Helena, Ascension Island, Fernando Island, Brazil, Trinidad, Tobago, Bermuda and eventually, London. He then completed his Competent Crew Certificate through the Good Hope Sailing Academy, and is now working towards becoming a yachtmaster.

"It was after this adventure that I was chosen to partake in the Mike Horn Young Explorers Camp in Switzerland, where I met Mike Horn, who educated us on alternative energy resources and conservation," says Sitole. "We also sailed on Lake Geneva."

While in Switzerland he became fascinated with high-altitude mountaineering and responsible exploration, and Everest is just one peak in his sights. "After my time in Switzerland, I conceptualised my Dare2Dream expedition to scale the highest peaks on each continent and ski [to] both the South and North Pole unassisted. I succeeded with Kilimanjaro and Elbrus, the highest peak in Europe, and recently returned from Denali in Alaska — the highest peak in North America.

"I completed my advanced mountain walking certificate with Ventureforth Mountaineering School and have also opened my very own adventure club in my township, Khayelitsha."

The Desert Rose Adventure Club falls under the umbrella of the Monde Sitole Educational Strategies Foundation, and its vision is to produce "high-altitude sportsmen, future Olympians and compassionate beings".

"I want to develop a culture of achievement and excellence by promoting an impactful, meaningful, comprehensive, holistic, world-class education and training system that is engaging and integrated," says Sitole.

He has frequently appeared in national and international broadcast and print media. His accolades include being nominated as "One of nine bravest men we know" by *Men's Health* magazine and for South Africa's "Heart of gold bravest men we know" awards hosted by Klipdrift and *Intrepid Explorer* magazine. He has also won an honorary award for adventure at the City of Cape Town's Khayelitsha Awards. — Rebecca Haynes



PHOTO: SUPPLIED



PHOTO: LIVEMAG.CO.ZA

SECHABA TEEFU

Founder, Skate Society Soweto

Twitter: @Skate SocietySSS

Skate Society Soweto is a nongovernmental organisation run by Sechaba Teefu formed in 2010 in response to the high rate of drug abuse among black teens in Soweto. Teefu figured that forming a skateboarding collective would teach kids in the township how to skate and help keep them off the streets.

With no funding, Teefu and his collective began forking out from their own pockets at the end of each month towards buying skateboards and shoes for kids who could not afford their own hardware, putting weight behind the word "society" in their name. The collective, which celebrates its fifth birthday party this December, also donates money towards hosting skate competitions and charity events in Soweto.

A decade ago when Teefu was still a teenage skater, he and his friends drew up a petition to have a skate park built in their neighbourhood and sent it to their municipality. Two years later the skate park was built, and on May 22 2015 Skate Society Soweto dropped the first black-owned line of skateboards in the township.

The boards are aimed at empowering Soweto youths, not only physically but also mentally, by helping them to deal with fear and overcome stereotypes.

Skate Society Soweto plans to renovate the skate park in Pimville for the new generation of upcoming skaters. "I'm trying to do as much as I can to improve the standard of skateboarding in Soweto, and eventually in South Africa as well, so that the kids who skate now are exposed to better opportunities," says Teefu.

Skate Society Soweto has appeared in a number of television adverts, on billboards and in and publications such as the *Times*, *Hype Magazine* and the *Daily Sun*. The collective also featured in a Skrillex music video that has garnered over 51 million views. — Ian Macleod

SHEPHERD ZIRA

Equestrian

Shepherd Zira is part of the South African Lipizzaner team, as its first black professional equestrian rider.

The South African Lipizzaners in Kyalami, Johannesburg, is affiliated with the world-famous Lipizzaner Spanish Riding School in Vienna. The South African centre not only attracts the public with its shows, but its white stallions are also embedded in South Africa's heritage. Riders follow a rigorous training programme and Zira's selection to ride as part of the prestigious team is a great achievement.

"To me, being part of this team means a lot and I have never been part of anything like this before," explains 22-year-old Zira. "While I also work at other yards, I feel needed as part of this team and this keeps me motivated.

"My father has been one of the two people who have truly inspired me. He worked as a groom at Randjesfontein and I would go there every day after school. I originally wanted to be a jockey, but became too tall."

The other person who inspired Zira is A-Grade showjumper, Ronnie Healy, who has competed on local and international circuits. It was Healy who spotted Zira and then started coaching him, also sourcing sponsorship for Zira so that he could dedicate his time to riding.

Zira started riding when he was 11 when he was first given a pony to ride at a riding school. "The instructor knew I could not ride and did not have money for tuition so she basically put me into a lunge arena and left me to my own devices for three months," he explains. "I was then offered a lesson and she was amazed at the extent of my progress.

"Although it has taken me a long time to get to this point, my ambition is to compete in the Olympics in both show jumping and dressage. I have wanted to do this since I started riding," he says. — Rebecca Haynes



PHOTO: SUPPLIED



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