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Win!
Dear Alumni,

With Covid 19 severely disrupting most of our plans for the year, many of us had to navigate our way through the “new normal”. But on a positive note, the lockdown has presented opportunities for us to find alternative ways for the #TUTAlumni to engage with the students as well as their peers. Our Alumnae from corporate and public sectors hosted the first Webinar which was broadcast on multiple social media platforms. Your selfless efforts to give back to your Alma Mater are appreciated. Congratulations to our Alumni for making it to the Mail & Guardian #MG200YSA list of progressive young people.

In this issue...

Our Alumnae tackle issues of gender inequality in the workplace in our first ever online webinar. Meet this exceptional trio, Shereen NaNgwenya, Maletsema Phofu and Mamela Nyamza, as they share their lived experiences on how they grappled with patriarchy in their respective professions.

Former Miss Earth runner-up Pinky Mokwena makes TUT and South Africa proud as she takes the top spot in the #FameLabSA competition. Read about her next move on page 4.

We acknowledge the effort of the #TUTAlumni community who continue to make a difference in the lives of society members both in their professional and private lives. Check out our “Alumni on the move” to see what some of them have been up to.

Thank you for supporting the #TUTAlumni Office and the University with your donations to the TUT Bursary and Scholarship Fund and also giving your time and skills to ensure that your Alma Mater achieves its goals to empower people.

Happy reading! 🎈

Keep sending us your stories!

ourbeat@tut.ac.za
https://www.tut.ac.za/alumni-tut/about

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Alumni reaching out to FINANCIALLY CHALLENGED STUDENTS

The novel TUT Bursary and Scholarship Fund exists to assist financially challenged students with their academic costs. While we acknowledge the immense role played by NSFAS, we note that a significant number of our students still do not fall within the set threshold to qualify for funding from this scheme. We call on our Alumni to help us reach out to fellow aspiring academics to realise their dreams. Help us ignite their spark to fulfil their goals.

To donate, please follow the link below www.tut.ac.za/alumni-tut/i-want-to-donate

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WIN THIS EXCLUSIVE TUT BRANDED KNIFE SET!

* All you have to do is answer the following question: Who won the #FameLabSA competition?

Please send your answer, name and contact number to: alumni@tut.ac.za before 30 November 2020

Please mark the subject field: COMPETITION

Our prize winners for the previous competition are:

• Sara Selaelo Monyepao
• Melida Mabogoane

Note: Only registered #TUTAlumni can enter

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REFLECTIONS from the VC

Dear TUT Alumnus

It is an honour and privilege to share some highlights of the past quarter from your Alma Mater with you.

Although the COVID-19 pandemic and national lockdown from the end of March 2020, brought about many unexpected changes, it once again highlighted our rainbow nations’ resilience, ability to adapt and succeed even in adverse circumstances.

We have introduced new ways of working from home and implemented a multi-modal learning and teaching model to ensure the academic year could continue. A big thumbs up to all colleagues and units involved in the successful implementation of this project, despite the challenges of lockdown and the looming pandemic.

Well-known as a leading university of technology in Africa, TUT did not disappoint in taking the lead in helping the country to manage the pandemic effectively with the appointment of one of our own experts, Prof Keolebogile Motaung, Chair Person of the Gauteng Provisional Health Research Committee (PHRC) and Assistant Dean of Research, Innovation and Engagement, to head up a team of researchers in assessing the COVID-19 readiness of Health facilities in the province.

I would also like to commend the COVID-19 Task Team, headed up by Chief Compliance Officer, Ms Moretlo Mokuele, Executive Director of Human Resources and Transformation and Resources for the stellar work they have done. Owing to this team’s work a lot of work was done behind the scenes, including awareness campaigns to ensure the University community was constantly informed about all relevant COVID-19 protocols and regulations, it continues to monitor compliance, while members of the team have been working extremely hard to prepare residences and venues for the return of staff and students.

I am extremely proud of our staff and students’ innovations to help the country and society cope with the COVID-19 challenges. One such innovation that deserves mention, is TUT’s newly developed, low-cost automated resuscitator. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, many Universities across the globe became proactive in the design and development of ventilators and resuscitators to alleviate the possible shortfall of these devices in hospitals.

The knowledge, skills and expertise of Tshwane University of Technology (TUT) researchers and academics were also put to work to contribute to the global need for sufficient equipment. In less than six weeks, a group of TUT lecturers, led by Drs Ron Aylward and Nico Steyn from the Department of Electrical Engineering, developed the EABA (Emergency Assisted Breathing Apparatus). This low-cost automated resuscitator will go a long way in contributing to alleviate the impact of the virus on affected people in general, but especially vulnerable communities where adequate medical facilities are often unavailable, including rural areas.

EABA is an automated Bag-Mask-Valve (BVM) for application in emergency medicine to resuscitate patients during emergencies such as CPR. It can also be used for temporary ventilation when transporting a patient having breathing trouble, or when transferring a patient from the theatre to an ICU where a conventional ventilator is then connected to the patient.

Congratulations to all successful students who have received their qualifications during the University’s first-ever online Autumn and Spring Graduation ceremonies in June and October respectively. Welcome to our Alumni Community. During the June ceremony, TUT also awarded an honorary doctorate to the late Sam Nzima, world-renowned photographer, who is best known for taking the Hector Pieterson photograph where Mbuyisa Makhubu is carrying Pieterson’s lifeless body away from the rioting crowd during the student protest on June 16, 1976.

August 2020 also saw the selection and appointment of Desire2Learn (D2L), a global learning technology leader’s Brightspace platform to improve the delivery of blended and fully online learning for TUT’s more than 64,000 students and to become South Africa’s first truly digitally advanced university.

Having worked with another learning provider for more than 23 years previously, TUT wanted to improve the quality of learning content delivery and increase its options for blended and fully online learning. This is underpinned by the University’s ambitious strategy that will see TUT adopt digital and smart technologies to enhance student-learning experiences, facilitate knowledge creation, increase engagement, and accelerate technology transfer.

As the Vice-Chancellor, the academic and research project of the University is very close to my heart and I am delighted by the continued, outstanding performance of the University both at a local and international level, even in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In line with the plan approved by Minister Blade Nzimande, the phased return of senior and first-year students has already commenced. The first 66% of students allowed to return to residences and campus has been informed and has started with practical and laboratory work. We really look forward to the return of all our students to campus, in accordance with the approved phased return plan.

As a last word, our students and Alumni are the future of this beautiful country. Therefore, we must all remain vigilant and observe the COVID-19 protocols to ensure the safety of our communities, especially our campus communities. Please continue to sanitise, wear your masks and practise social distancing.

Until we talk again, all the best.

Prof Lourens van Staden
Vice-Chancellor and Principal
TUT Alumna to represent SA in the upcoming famous global speech contest

A collaboration with a Professor at the University of Birmingham in the UK is also currently being planned for. The future looks really inviting and bright.

Pinky Mokwena

TUT’s Environmental Science Masters’ candidate impressed the judges with her outstanding public speaking skills during South Africa’s first online Fame Lab competition recently.

Pinky Jedidia Mokwena (26), won the national competition, #FameLabSA beating seventeen finalists from universities nationwide. She will proceed to represent South Africa at the international competition that will be hosted at the Chaltenham Festival in UK in due course.

Eager to represent the country well, Pinky has been spending most of her time reading and taking counsel from her mentor, Professor Jonathan Okonkwo, in preparation for the upcoming international competition. “I have also been speaking at various online seminars and conferences on sensitizing society about the importance of not neglecting eco-friendly practices even in the midst of the pandemic”, she said.

Multiple radio and television channels have presented Pinky with the platform to communicate about her research. The elated go-getter expressed her excitement: “I was reminded of what a privilege it is to be a woman in science, who can blaze a trail for upcoming researchers and other young women who aspire to work in such spaces”.

Her immediate plan is to broaden her presence in the digital media space. “I am excited to be launching into a season of widening my science communication horizon. A YouTube channel, blog and podcast channels are in the pipeline, and I look forward to partnering with communities, industry professionals and the Government in spearheading projects that will bring science to the greater society and ordinary citizens of our country”, she added.

The enthusiastic Atteridgeville born Impact Radio talk show host is no stranger to fame. She was the 2018/19 Miss Earth: Water, the second runner-up, a portfolio which she served diligently through numerous community engagement projects.

Pinky expressed her gratitude to Professor Okonkwo and the Department of Environmental, Water and Earth Sciences and the entire University. She wrote: “I am absolutely excited, and thankful to the TUT and the support it has given me during this time. What an enriching journey #FameLabSA 2020 has been. I am so privileged to have made it this far”.

Scores of students and supporters took to Facebook to congratulate Pinky on her accomplishment. An excited Mpule Matlhola wrote: “Because TUT breeds doers, takers and havers! I am so proud of you”.

About #FameLab

The Fame Lab is an initiative that aims to identify and grow talent for science communication, assisting scientists to find conducive ways to engage with the public. Fame Lab was started in 2005 in the UK and has since spread to over 30 countries worldwide. South Africa has run the competition since 2013 as a partnership between Jive Media Africa communications agency, National Research Foundation - South African Agency for Science and Technology (NRF- SAASTA) and the British Council.

#FameLabSA 2020
An overwhelming majority of organisations still do not regard advancing women in leadership roles as a formal business priority, with females only occupying 18% of the senior leadership positions among 2300 entities surveyed globally. These research findings were revealed at the recent TUT livestream Zoom webinar which was broadcast on multiple TUT social media platforms, TUT FM and Tshwane FM. Three alumnae presenters led a round table discussion as part of the University’s Women’s Month commemoration. Facilitated by the vibrant TUT Journalism Alumna and the University's Brand & Communication Specialist, Phaphama Tshisikhawe, the presenters, who are leaders in private and public sectors respectively, deliberated on the topic; Women leaders and how they grapple with gender equality in the workplace. Twenty-six years into democracy, yet South African women leaders still face patriarchy and gender discrimination at their places of work. In her opening remarks, Tshisikhawe expressed that women deserve equal opportunities and can contribute just as much as their male counterparts. Maletsema Phofu, a renowned cyber security professional, mentioned that failure at ‘the human rights level’ in society is likely to proliferate to discrimination and subsequently gender inequality in the workplace. She indicated that micro-aggression against women have thrived in the workplace, which may influence women to doubt their leadership capabilities. Maletsema also expressed concern about women not advancing into the critical STEM fields, especially during the current era of digital transformation and 4IR. She emphasised that women still feel that their gender is a barrier to their advancement in the workplace. Cape Town-born international dance artist, Mamela Nyamza, expressed how women have to deal with the ills associated with gender inequality almost on a daily basis. “In the workplaces, our voices are diminished all the time”, she said. She added that patriarchy of the boardroom results from upbringing. She shared the gloomy picture of how sometimes female artists are taken advantage of during auditions to land a role in acting or performing arts. Though not currently formally employed in South Africa, Mamela’s work continues to enjoy recognition in the international space. A professional Civil Engineering Technologist, Shereen NaNgwenya, shared how she came across inequality at different work fields, starting from school where her maths teacher gave extra lessons to boys only. After successfully running a consulting company for over 10 years prior to joining the public service, NaNgwenya believes that equality is critical for the economic growth of the country. “In today’s dynamic business environment, achieving gender equality is considered to be an essential factor for the competitiveness and growth of any organisation”, she said. She encouraged women to forge ahead and claim their rightful place in the corporate space. All the speakers were concerned about the huge wage gaps that still exist between men and women doing the same jobs, proposing that the law should address such pressing issues. The audience on social media appreciated the event and were looking forward to the next instalment of the topic.

It could take more than 50 years to close this gap.
Presenter's profiles

Shireen Mhlongoloana NaNgwenya Motsela is a professional Civil Engineering Technologist registered with the Engineering Council of South Africa (ECSA) since 2006. With 24 years of experience in built environment and a seasoned businesswoman. She is the winner of SA’s Most Influential Women in Business and Government in 2008, Black Business Quarterlyy and passing the Torch’s Women Infrastructure Development for Gauteng Department. NaNgwenya served on the Construction Industry Development Board from 2007-2014 and chaired the Risk Committee and she is a trained traditional healer, prophetess and ordained priest.

Maletsema Phoza is an experienced cybersecurity professional at one of South Africa’s leading banks. She has previously worked for a telecommunications, IT service provider and Eskom with an IT & cybersecurity career spanning over 18 years. Maletsema likes getting people excited about things she is passionate about. Right now it is anything and everything about rethinking cybersecurity profession and its role in 4IR. Maletsema has an interest in digital transformation, e-education and the use of technology to enable restoration of human dignity and self-sufficiency. She is an advocate that women can bring the much-needed economic changes in Africa when empowered with literacy and access to appropriate technology. She is always looking for opportunities to brush up on travel adventures, cooking and cocktail mixing.

LinkedIn: https://www.linkedin.com/in/maletsema-phofu-02033116/ 
Twitter: @maletsema

Mamela Nyangza is an award winning international choreographer and art activist, who got her formal Ballet training at Tshwane University of Technology and acquired the National Diploma in Ballet in 1997. Her ground-breaking works such as the “The Dying Swan” innovation in the dance in 1998, “The Hatched” against patriarchy in 2007, “The Meal” against elitist ballet in 2012, and her collaborated work “The last attitude” against gender inequality in the dance in 2015. She was recognised by the DAILY REVIEW of Australia as one of 30 international artists to track in 2018 to positively changing the world.

Her Accolades include:
• 2000 - FNB Dance Indaba Award for Outstanding Performance by a Female Dancer in Contemporary Style
• 2011 - Standard Bank Young Artist for the DANCE
• 2013 - Oprah Winfrey Magazine one of the Women of the Year
• 2016 – Imbokodo Award for Dance

Movers and Shakers

Meet TUT’s Journalism alumna, Tsakane Khambane, who is a dedicated public servant, working in the highest office of the land, The Presidency of the Republic of South Africa, as a Media Liaison, Communications Researcher and Speechwriter.

She extols her studies at TUT, adding that her acquired skills and knowledge have capacitated her for global exposure. Tsakane has travelled to all seven continents of the world, witnessing State and Global Governance Actors on the international fora such as the United Nations, African Union, BRICS, G20, South Africa’s bilateral engagements with various countries in the pursue of achieving foreign policy strategic objectives.

With her studies in Philosophy, Politics and Economics, she aspires to add to the deficient number of African women philosophers. This, she feels will be a contribution to a 21st century Southern African philosophical perspective by a Black African Woman, many of whom who have been overlooked and marginalised by mainstream philosophy historgraphy.

Source: Movers and Shakers

Tsakane recently facilitated the TUT online Webinar on gender-based violence with a renowned team of panellists from different spheres of society. The power-house panel comprised of authors, motivational speakers, entrepreneurs, representatives of NGOs and the Gauteng Legislature.
Covid-19 has packed a mean punch to society and its normality, but could the enemy overcome a team of daddy and daughter?

A Pretoria father, Lufuno Manyuha and his daughter Mpho, a TUT student, were some of many locals to undergo a trying experience with the deadly corona virus that has been ravaging the planet and eradicating precious human lives at a rather fast pace.

Nevertheless, Lufuno describes his daughter, as an amazing Covid-19 partner. The pair had their worst fears when they tested positive for Covid-19 after coming into contact with a carrier.

For the 23-year old Mpho, waiting for the test results was ‘thrilling’ and ‘frightening’.

“There is really no way you can ever be prepared for such a thing” she said. Expressing his initial shock following the outcome of the results, Lufuno said: “To be honest, I could only see death. I was so stressed that I couldn’t even drink coffee. I told Mpho that we needed to fight this unknown enemy with everything within us”.

Shortly after their 10 days of isolation, team Manyuha engaged in light training sessions and taking short walks around the neighbourhood in Pretoria West. “Going through Covid 19 with my father was a blessing, although we were not in the same space together for we would shout from across our rooms to check in on each other”, said Mpho. They also followed WHO guidelines and complemented with home remedies and organic herbs, including Vitamin C supplements, multivitamins, lengana, lerumo la madi, eucalyptus, ginger, garlic and lemon. Family and friends also supported them immensely during this period. To calm their nerves, the family stopped watching the news and focused on recovery. Mpho explained: “Knowing that I have so much more to offer to this world gave me the drive and willingness to fight this virus. There is still so many lives I can touch, goals I need to achieve. Life is for the living!”

Lufuno warns those who still disregard the protocols. “This thing is real, people are dying. Please observe the lockdown protocols, you might not be as lucky as us. Please wear your mask, sanitise, wash your hands and be safe. Avoid parties and funerals”, he said.
Young entrepreneur finds creative ways TO SUSTAIN HIS BUSINESS AMIDST COVID19

UT’s Final year Entrepreneurship student, Katlego Ngakane, has seized the opportunity to grow his Events Management business despite the trading restrictions challenges posed by the nationwide lockdown.

The West Rand born enthusiast trades in a number of areas including fast food, events planning, catering and facilitating business workshops for aspiring young entrepreneurs. He runs a mini mobile restaurant Katlego Events Kitchen (KEK), selling exotic food mainly dominantly to TUT students outside campuses in Pretoria. Like many other local entities in the food industry, KEK suffered a great financial loss due to the sudden lockdown earlier this year. “After the students were released to go home, there was a lot stock left with no customers to buy and eventually resulting in waste”, said Katlego.

Despite these adversities, Katlego redirected his energy advancing KEK into the digital space. He explained that “Since the beginning of the lockdown we had to find other ways to sell the products and we ended up going online. We advertised our catering business online, conducted our meetings on the Zoom app and conveying messages on the social media platforms such as YouTube, Facebook and Twitter”.

Under the current lockdown alert level 1, his business has since resumed with walk-in sales. However, through online presence the customers are still able to buy food online and KEK has started making deliveries as the lockdown regulations were relaxed.

Soon thereafter, the Entrepreneurship seminars also went fully digital for the first time, unlike in the past three years where there was physical interaction with the participants “Since inception in 2017, Entrepreneurship seminars aimed at empowering and mentoring the youth about the business world. We also encourage them to create job opportunities”. He elaborated that the KEK crew also engages with renowned business people to improve their skills and broaden their business networks.

He advised that, those who were severely affected by the lockdown should not dwell on how badly it impacts them but find new ways to survive and generate new ideas. From time to time, Katlego takes to Facebook to talk to some for his peers.

To watch more of his motivational speeches follow on the link below https://www.facebook.com/katlego.benedict.5/videos/26344116664754/

Alumnus heads war against GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE in Gauteng

UT’s MBA graduate, Matsobane Ledwaba, is the project manager of the newly-established GBV programme for the Gauteng Department of Community Safety. The initiative aims to curb gender-based violence and also advocate for women’s rights and safety in local communities, following recent unprecedented reports of abuse on women and children in the province.

Matsobane is the Deputy Director: Transformation and Gender Budgeting Mainstreaming at the office of the MEC, Gauteng Department of Community Safety. His major responsibility is to ensure that the department develops programmes aimed at emancipating women, youth and the LGBTQI community. “With the recently adopted Women’s Charter, we are accelerating 50/50 employment of women and budget mainstreaming in favour of female-owned entities. My work involves monitoring and evaluation of interventions made and thus advise accordingly”, he elaborated.

As the project manager, Matsobane will oversee the launch of Gauteng battalion of volunteers known as ‘GBV brigades’ across the province. “Our strategy is to go beyond the limitations of media advertising and meet face-to-face with communities to understand their suffering and intervene appropriately, through correct referrals,” he said. The brigades will conduct house-to-house visits during weekdays and again on weekends to accommodate those who are employed.

In addition to providing education and awareness to communities, the initiative is expected to significantly reduce incidences of gender-based violence and provide support to victims, among other things. The duration of the project will depend on the availability of funds and its quantifiable successes over time.
Investment in stakeholder relationships

KEY TO ORGANISATIONAL SUSTAINABILITY POST COVID-19

The Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic has illustrated the communication department as a critical function in building organisational reputation, especially during a crisis.

A crisis leads to uncertainty and ambiguity thus to organisational stakeholders needing more information, even worse during this era where technology is often used to spread fake news. The response time in providing relevant information has an impact on the reputation of the organisation.

Communication function remains overlooked as it is assumed to be the “make me feel and look good” function. Some communication departments hired journalists to develop media advisories in the past, though this has changed, it still remains true in some organisations.

It is only when organisations are placed in the spotlight that there is a realisation of the critical role of communication.

Communication should not be approached as an event but a continuous process during an organisation’s existence, sufficient investment is required from a time and financial perspective.

It is also true that the two directors of communication and marketing wrestle with each over who is responsible for what! Even worse, when the communication function is reporting to the marketing director. This points to the failure to appreciate that the communication department is responsible for all stakeholders of the organisation as part of good governance.

Stakeholder Governance

Governing stakeholder relationships has been elaborately discussed in Chapter 8 of the King III Report. These relationships involve internal stakeholders which include employees and unions whilst external stakeholders comprise customers, communities, government, media, shareholders, and others.

The chapter paints a vivid picture that there is a need for organisations to engage with their stakeholders by focusing on the following six principles of good stakeholder governance:

• The board should appreciate that stakeholders’ perceptions affect a company’s reputation.
• The board should delegate to management to proactively deal with stakeholder relationships.
• The board should strive to achieve the appropriate balance between its various stakeholder groupings, in the best interests of the company.
• Companies should ensure the equitable treatment of shareholders.
• Transparent and effective communication with stakeholders is essential for building and maintaining their trust and confidence.
• The board should ensure disputes are resolved as effectively, efficiently and expeditiously as possible.

The inclusivity concept in King IV builds on governing stakeholder relationships in King III, ensuring that equality is given to all sources of value creation, social and relation capital. This is the differentiator between communication and the marketing department, with the latter focusing more on customers or the human resources department that focus on employees.

Communication departments engage with all stakeholders in order to build a positive reputation of the organisation, otherwise known as intangible assets. This has a direct impact on the profitability of the organisation, which leads to sustainable organisations.

With many media houses closing down, communication practitioners need to leverage on owned media such as websites, social media and other platforms to tell their stories. This means organisations should ensure that the role of communication is strategic.

The role of strategic communication

The communication department should play a critical role of engaging all organisational stakeholders, which is important to building the organisation’s positive reputation.

Unfortunately, thus far there are few boards that have a communication portfolio and communication is only brought into the boardroom on invitation.

The value of communication is found when a communication strategy is linked to organisational vision, mission and values as a starting point.

Communication might not necessarily be a financial function, but it can derive its financial value through reputation and crisis management whilst according to Businessman, Harvey Mackay, “You can’t buy a good reputation; you must earn it.”

Managing or treating risks and crisis management is not exclusive to the risk management or disaster management departments, hence the introduction of risk communication and crisis communication concepts.

In an organisational context, if not managed or treated correctly, a risk or crisis can halt operations, resulting in possible financial or reputational damage.

Though risk or crisis is uncertain and its impact can be sudden, the importance of proactive risk and crisis communication planning cannot be overemphasised. A proactive approach goes a long way in mitigating the negative effect on business continuity and organisational sustainability.

Communication training for leaders

Communication training for leaders has been neglected, with business schools tasked with leadership training largely focusing on finance, people management and marketing in their curriculum, rarely paying attention to communication and if they do the focus is on public speaking.

Communication training for leaders is important as it will allow them to have an understanding of the value of nurturing stakeholder relationships, reputation management and corporate social responsibility including its contribution to the bottom-line and mitigation of crisis.

The development of leadership competence should therefore include strategic communication post Covid-19 and as author James C. Humes said, “The art of communication is the language of leadership.”

Organisations that will survive post Covid-19 are those that have invested in their strategic communication, whilst some organisations are going to suffer consequences of their lack of investment in stakeholder relationships.