

VOICE OF

ALUMNI

SUMMER EDITION 2020





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Update from Alumni Relations

Dear VUT Alumni,

Greetings in the COVID-19 dispensation. 2020 has been a tough year and your valuable efforts in line with the global and national calls to exercise reasonable protocols in the fight against the pandemic has not gone unnoticed. Regardless of the challenges posed, we remain committed to the vision, mission, and strategic objectives of our institution, to keep our alumni connected to the university, and each other to support the students through our pre-alumni activations who will become future VUT graduates. We can, on the other hand, admit that we have learned valuable lessons and are better informed on how to connect with stakeholders virtually.

Alumni Relations Department would like to acknowledge that it could not achieve what we had set, due to several challenges which amongst others, led to the university being

under administration. A true reflection of the main university challenges confirmed that there are gaps in the way we communicate with our alumni, directly impacting engagement and participation in alumni activities. We learned from our sister universities through our professional bodies, that the challenges we are facing are not unique to South African universities but are common to all institutions of higher learning. With institutions experiencing new pressures, new pandemics, and technological challenges, we need a diverse ear to listen, engage, and communicate with our communities, especially those that have different views to our own.

Allow me to invite you to be part of the #changevut# as we endeavor to build upon new ideas, new projects, and initiatives. Rolling out the new VUT brand, will ensure that Alumni Relations, Convocation, and office bearers

continue to serve its members effectively. One of my first steps as Head of Alumni Relations is to upgrade our social networking capabilities via Facebook and LinkedIn and to work on pre-alumni activities for Alumni members to be engaged in future activities. To strengthen our Alumni community, engagement, and participation, we need to speak the same language with all other stakeholders affirming that their voices are equally heard. We thus invite you to assist us to rebuild valuable networking opportunities that can and will harness solid professional relationships as well as educational topics (Teaching & Learning) that can improve our role as Alumni Relations Office and your relationship with the institution. The goal is to contribute to VUT's strategic objective (SO 1): to increase student success through strategic partnerships.



Mr Peter Masombuka
HOD: Alumni Relations

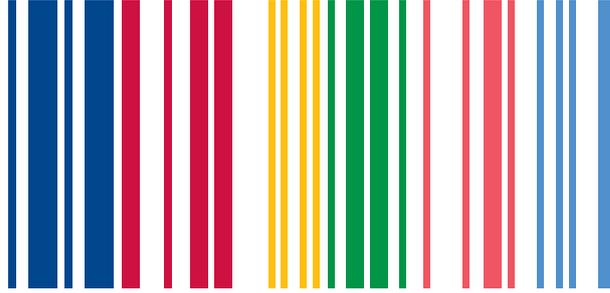


Mr Comfort Madalane
Alumni Co-ordinator



Vaal University of Technology

Your world to a better future



VUT Refreshing its Brand

#changevut

Driven by the outcome of the 2016 Brand Audit, our stakeholders reported that in terms of what we look like, feel like and sounds like, we are outdated and out of touch.

Change can mean many things to many people as it is interpreted and experienced differently based on your understanding of why we need to 'change VUT'. In any relationship, as soon as there is a disconnect, things must change!

Our strategy is to build our new brand around a digital world, from the inside out, with communities surrounding our brand.

The #changevut campaign is a call to internal stakeholders to become the CHANGE AGENTS as they have been part of the process from the beginning. During the COME VOTE campaign in 2018, they voted for INSPIRE INNOVATIVE ACTION FOR A PURPOSE.

The aim is to create a 360-degree positive spin on all aspects at VUT which will deliver extraordinary results. #changevut will bring about a renewed sense of belonging, pride and brand loyalty. The focus will be the YOU in VUT.

Although our name, Vaal University of Technology will remain, the rebranding is focused around the process of improving the corporate image by creating a refreshed identity for the university to reposition it in the market, becoming more relevant and more competitive.

As an African university, we see a future in a nation no longer emerging, but emerged. A nation anxiously waiting for an inspired generation to take them forward through intent.

VUT does not follow, it forges. It does not borrow, it lends. It is not quiet, it is loud. It draws people in and engages and inspires a vision of innovation. To not only better themselves, but society and country.

It drives MaVUTi's and brings them onto the world's stage through a purposeful skillset. It debuts new approaches and game-changers. Most importantly, it does things differently by inspiring innovative action.

We are determined to craft a BRAND NEW VUT through the #changevut campaign and are looking forward to introducing the NEW VUT in 2021.



Alumni Speaks out on Higher Education

A perspective from our former technikon graduate and student leader

Author Mr Lehloma Ramajoe

INTRODUCTION

When addressing the question on the role of higher education the first temptation and expectation would be to unpack the primary role of universities founded in three elements of teaching and learning research, and community engagement. These critical elements have been well documented in many research articles and academic opinion papers. This article will not attempt to engage the extensively researched topic on these primary elements in the role of universities.

With this article we acknowledge the concern raised by the former Harvard President, Drew Faust, when she spoke before the Royal Irish Academy at Trinity College. she said, "As stewards of centuries-old traditions of higher learning, we must work to assure that the understandable effort to promote what is valuable does not eclipse our support for what is invaluable".

When we define higher education's role primarily as driving economic development and

solving society's most persistent problems, we risk losing sight of broader questions, of the kinds of inquiry that enable the critical stance, that build the humane perspective, that foster the restless scepticism and boundless curiosity from which our deepest understandings so often emerge. This paper also intends to open a discussion on the role of alumni and convocation in modern universities. Traditionally The role of the Convocation is to provide a formal channel through which its members may communicate their views and opinions and support the work of Universities and safeguard their good reputation. It is my wish to use this article to encourage the Vaal University of Technology alumni and convocation to think beyond the traditional role of convocations as defined above.

HIGHER EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

Higher education is more than the next level in the learning process. It is a critical component of human development worldwide. It provides not

only the high-level skills necessary for every labour market but also the training of essential professional with skills that are critical for societal welfare. While supporting Economic growth, scientific and technological advances and production of high-level skills is necessary, it is not a sufficient purpose for higher education.

The persisting societal challenges of inequality, unemployment, poverty, and corruption and violence against women and children should indicate to us that the role of higher education in producing critical skills required for economic growth is not sufficient. It is not enough to produce doctors and nurses while the majority in our society cannot access proper health care, it is not sufficient to produce engineers while majority in poor communities lack basic infrastructure. Auditing and law curriculum are inoperable if it cannot assist government to address the challenge of corruption in the public service. The current scourge of violence against women and children should signal the

need to review the curriculum for psychology and social science.

Higher education should therefore endeavour to produce graduates who are not only technically proficient but have capacity and analytical skills that drive local economies, support civil society, teach children, lead effective governments, and make important decisions which affect entire societies.

Higher education is a focal point of knowledge and its application, an institution which makes a great contribution to the economic growth and development through fostering innovation and increasing higher skills. An efficient higher education should be a source of solutions that improve the quality of life and address major social and global challenges.

The significance of humanities and the arts are central to all human cultures throughout time. Their study can facilitate deeper intercultural understanding and lay the groundwork for a civically engaged life. They can also prepare graduate to think critically, act creatively, and succeed in a rapidly changing world. We cannot create minds capable of innovation if they are unable to imagine a world different from the one in which we live now.

History teaches contingency, it demonstrates that the world

has been different and could and will be different again. Anthropology can show that societies are and have been different elsewhere, across space as well as time. Literature can teach us many things, but not the least of these is empathy, how to picture ourselves inside another person's head, life, experience, how to see the world through a different lens, which is what the study of the arts offers us as well. These are elements that Drew Faust regards as invaluable and it is my argument that universities should expose all their students to these elements if they are to assist in solving society's most persistent problems.

THE MANAGEMENT OF INFORMATION

As society, we are bombarded with information that is a defining aspect of the new global knowledge economy and the digital platforms on which it rests. Students and young people in general spend most of their days attached to some information-generating device. The rapid improvements of these gadgets as well as freely accessible search engines increase the ability to access information easily and quickly. These new ways of accessing information are associated with what we have come to embrace as the fourth industrial revolution.

If we are to depend on a knowledge economy, how are we to understand what knowl-

edge is, and how do we differentiate it with what is mere information. How do we digest and evaluate it? What as society are, we meant to do with all this easily accessible information. At the heart of the liberal arts and fundamental to the humanities, and indeed central to much of scientific thought, is the capacity for interpretation, for making meaning and making sense out of the world around us.

It is my submission that higher education that is measured only as an instrument of economic growth neglects the importance of developing aforesaid capacities. It misses the fact that we are all interpreters; it ignores that some things are not about "facts" but about understanding and meaning. Some of the information produced by different search engines and accessed easily through mobile and other convenient devices poses a threat to our society, and failure by higher education institutions appreciate the need to interpret and make sense this information could lead to unintended consequences.

THE ROLE OF ALUMNI AND CONVOCATION

At this point it is prudent to share my thoughts on the role of alumni and convocation. The Vaal University Technology states the mission of convocation as to support and enhance the university's mission through maintaining and ex-

panding positive relationships with its members and through utilising and maximising their expertise, goodwill, and influence in support of the university.

As convocation we should promote civil engagement as a method of linking the intellectual and educational role of university on one hand and the development of society on the other. There is growing evidence that university education, through its role in empowering domestic constituencies, building institutions, and nurturing favourable regulatory frameworks and governance structures, is vital to a country's efforts to increase social capital and to promote social cohesion, which is proving to be an important deter-

minant of economic growth and development.

It should be the role of Convocation members to be key role player in society to ensure universities continues to produce relevant knowledge, create special programmes, and build the right skills that can help country to improve economic prosperity and social cohesion.

CONCLUSION

Economic growth and scientific and technological advances are necessary but not sufficient purposes for a university. And within the domain of science, universities have a distinctive obligation to nurture and satisfy the deep human desire to understand ourselves

and the world we inhabit and inherit, from the smallest elementary particle to the sweep of the galaxies. This should be so, even when there is no practical application close in view and even as we rightly accelerate our efforts to harvest new technologies from knowledge in its most basic form. It is worth remembering that the most transformative of scientific discoveries often trace their origins to research born of sheer curiosity about who we are and how we can fathom the most intriguing mysteries of the natural world. The article is inspired by the writings of, Drew Faust. I have chosen her writings because of a number of women that we have chosen to profile with this first edition.

“As stewards of centuries-old traditions of higher learning, we must work to assure that the understandable effort to promote what is valuable does not eclipse our support for what is invaluable.”

“VUT needs young people to shake it up” says Dr Baloyi

1. Please introduce yourself to the VUT Alumni community by telling us what keeps you busy during the day to earn a living.

A: Dr. Siwela Jeffrey Baloyi is a Senior Researcher: Chemical Engineer at CSIR.

2. Looking back five years ago, how would you sum up your journey thus far?

A: My past five years have been too focused on improving the lives of our people through scientific research. I believe the contribution I have made this far has inspired hope, this evident from current recognition as Mail and Guardian 200 Young South Africans in the category of Science and Technology.

3. What words of advice can you give to fellow Alumni about the journey of progress and success?

A: Fellow Alumni always remember that through perseverance many people win success out of what seemed destined to be a certain failure. You rather be seen as a slow walker, but I never walk back.

4. Please tell us how it came about that you ended up studying at the Vaal University of Technology? In your answer, please tell us about your high school days,

career guidance, and what you did to enroll at VUT.

A: I had always wished to study at the University of Johannesburg (UJ) after matric. However, due to my family background, I couldn't manage to enroll at UJ. At the time UJ registration was about R4500 while at VUT was only R1500 and this was a deciding factor on where to study. Because I left Limpopo with only R4000 with bags full of tin fishes and maize meal. However, I was not discouraged to enroll at VUT due to so many successful people I have known and admired who graduated from VUT. Moreover, VUT was well known for offering a high quality of Engineering qualifications. I have attended my high school in a deeply rural area attacked by extreme poverty, therefore, I have done both science and mathematics in school without science laboratories and libraries. I was amongst four learners studying science and mathematics in higher grade. I have never received any career guidance nor attending one organized by professionals.

5. What impression did you have of VUT when you were a student? Was that matching the perception you had before you studied there?

A: For a Chemical Engineering student like myself I was

so impressed with our campus surrounding i.e SASOL the world's largest chemical company and ESKOM power station. I was impressed to notice that these big companies trusted the institution by enrolling most of their employees at VUT to study further.

6. What type of student would you say you were, and how did that help you to adapt and to navigate your student life?

A: I was a philanthropist during my time at VUT. I have led various students' organizations, which assisted me to adapt very quickly and embrace diversity.

7. What is your fondest memory of your student life at VUT?

A: Contributing to the current engineering curriculum through the chemical engineering department. Also winning an international award in research.

8. What is the biggest challenge you ever faced when you were a student?

A: Having to walk about 10 km every day to campus for two years, because I couldn't afford accommodation close to campus.

9. How would you characterize student politics and/

or the governance culture of the institution at the time you were there?

A: There was too much interference of outside campus politics, boundaries were not respected which in the most cases priority was on a national politics rather than students politics. However, we had great student leaders who represented us well.

10. How do you see VUT today, in comparison to how it was to you when you were studying there?

A: There has been great improvement in terms of resources and transparency. However, there is a decline in the culture of learning and teaching. Somewhere, the institution lost focus and shifted its attention to the supply chain.

11. What ideas, or programmes, do you think the VUT Alumni could champion to benefit the institution, and why?

A: We need to appreciate the talents we have and regroup ourselves. It can't be that Alumni are only reduced to former political student activists with a focus on occupying convocation seats for personal benefits. Alumni can focus on allocating alumni who can play role in enhancing revenue generated by VUT. A good relationship between VUT and various industries can be achieved through Alumni programs. Moreover, we must invest in our current students (future alumni) apart from

the academic credentials with skills, values, and virtues that will enable them to clinch top-notch jobs in the market, align their careers with realities in the job markets, invest in psychometric and assessment centers to help them discover their passion and potential while still at VUT. Carry out leadership assessments, develop them, and provide them with opportunities to deploy their passion, skills, and competence in terms of internship and industrial attachments. To sustain and generate good revenues in the future, VUT graduates must be the best and most sought after in the global market.

12. How can those ideas and programmes be implemented successfully, in your opinion?

A: Robust public relations to champion Alumni programs is an urgent need. Alumni chapter of VUT needs to run its affairs and have independent social media platforms. All programs must be virtual unless it is a celebration with an aim of networking.

Picture of interviewee: I will email it separately
Name of interviewee: Dr. Jeffrey Siwela Baloyi
A quote by interviewee: "It's not that I'm so smart, it's just that I stay with problems longer." -Albert Einstein (1879-1955), physicist



“VUT changed my story” says Ms Mafahla Hlongwane

1. ***Tell us about your current profession?***

I work for Tetra Pak South Africa as a Cluster Food Protection Laboratory Associate. My scope of work includes laboratory analyses of food related products with the focus among others, being more on the microbiological aspect of the said products.

2. ***What qualification did you get from VUT (Vaal Triangle Technikon)***

I hold both the National Diploma and Bachelor of Technology Degree in Biotechnology from the Vaal University of Technology attained in 2013 and 2015 respectively.

3. ***In what way do you think your studies contributed to your achievements?***

Given both the past and current systematic injustices, as a black woman I do not think I would be where I am today without any form of higher learning qualification.

4. ***Do you think your educational expectations were fulfilled by studying at VUT?***

Yes.

5. ***If Yes, in what way?***

Even from the beginning of my career as an in-service trainee (WIL programme) I was able to execute my task and I believe the practicals sessions coupled

with the theoretical knowledge obtained at VUT contributed immensely in this regard.

6. ***Why did you choose VUT as your preferred institution of higher learning?***

I matriculated in 2010, although at that time I was a mere 18-year girl, who had big dreams to fulfil, I knew at that time that I had to take into account the financial situation at home while trying to accomplish my dreams. I attended a few “open day programmes” at different institutions of higher learning and the Vaal University of Technology came out to be the most convenient for me in that it offered the course I was willing to pursue. Moreover, the application fee and the subsequent registration fee at that time were affordable. While in matric, the aim was to work hard to enable me to attain a bursary (which I did with the help of Ms Kediemetse Mokotsi) but having attended these open day programmes I learned that for the bursary to be effective I’d have to be registered at an institution of higher learning.

7. ***How was the then Vaal Triangle Technikon in your experience?***

I only joined the institution in 2011 as the VUT. The experience was overwhelming. The first semester was the hard-

est. Having to adapt from the secondary school environment to the university life remains to me the biggest challenge. I will however forever remain grateful for choosing VUT as I found the environment to be less stressful for a teenage girl. The peer-pressure was not that much as I believe the majority of the people, I was surrounded with were from similar background as mine.

8. ***What is your view regarding the current VUT versus the then Vaal Triangle Technikon?***

I believe there is always room for improvement, as such I highly believe that VUT could do better as an institution in terms of the curriculum content and infrastructure so that it can be recognised as one of the few best universities in South Africa

9. ***What changes would you like see at VUT?***

I would just like to see VUT giving more financial assistance to students who cannot afford it. No amount of words can describe the pain of not being able to pursue one’s dream due to lack of funds.

10. ***Which Alumni programmes / activities would you like to contribute your skills to?***

Shortly after I graduated for

my National Diploma, we had a motivational session for the grade 10-12 learners of Khula Weekend School. I was afforded the chance to be one of the speakers in the session. I owe my gratitude to Ms Mokotsi for giving me the opportunity to share my experience with those learners. It is these kind of sessions that profusely motivate and inspire young individuals to be better beings in the society.

11. Why is it important for successful VUT former students to keep contact with the institution?

I believe successful stories are encouraging. I still become exhilarated and motivated when I meet a successful fellow VUT alumni.

12. From your experience, how would you rate VUT against other institutions?

I am yet to be exposed to other institutions to be able to make an objective comparison.



VUT former Miss Big – Consulate General in Los Angeles



1. Please introduce yourself to the VUT Alumni community by telling us what keeps you busy during the day to earn a living.

My name is Thandile Babalwa Sunduza, my position: Consul General for South Africa in the United States of America, the Head of the Los Angeles Consulate General, responsible for 14 States of the West

2. Looking back five years ago, how would you sum up your journey thus far?

It has not been easy but the Grace of GOD has been upon me.

3. What words of advice can you give to fellow Alumni about the journey of progress and success?

I would advise them not to despise small beginnings, have room for diversion in the career or studies as possibilities are always there. The most important thing is never to give up and you need to have Faith. Challenges will be there as they explore, they will meet different characters, cultures and must make room for all.

4. Please tell us how it came about that you ended up studying at Vaal University of Technology? In your answer, please tell us about your high school days, career guidance and what you did to enroll at VUT.

I was doing Matric and I was not sure what to study, I was an active Sports Player and made it to the school teams.

Growing up I wanted to be a doctor, then law was on the cards until I came across a brochure of the former Rand-Afrikaans Universiteit which is UJ now. The brochure was about careers in Sports. I changed my mind and back then there were only 5 Institutions 'I think' that provided the Course and VUT then Vaal Tech being amongst them and one of the best and I opted for Vaal Tech. High School Days were my most interesting days where all happens from being a teen to become a young adult, learning responsibilities and also in a way needed to be understood you are independent which parents won't give in. I sang in the School Choirs, played Sports and after school still did community work. It's a time where one is being proposed to be in a relationship by boys, has crushes on boys as well and wrote and received love letters and your heart gets broken as one reaches adolescence stages. It's a time where one had to focus and sturdy and be cautious about Teenage Pregnancy, drugs, alcohol, family planning which are things you couldn't discuss with African Parents but find a way to learn about them.

5. What impression did you have of VUT when you were a student? Was that matching

the perception you had before you studied there?

I was not sure because of the political history of South Africa and VUT being a historical white University and there was a time of tension as well among the students black versus whites and it was televised. I was not sure about the Vaal area as well as I was looking to study towards the coast then. As I got to the institution, I was young had a challenge with accommodation at first that was my main issue and stayed in Sharpeville then apartment in town. I loved the diversity of the institution and the number of foreign students as well. From being a historically white institutions it was receptive and loved the environment although the students were not really politicized but moving with the flow. I loved the food at the cafeteria there was a pink Russian and chips my weight piled there. The lecturers were good but there was a certain undertone amongst some which I challenged. I loved the political space given to students to participate politically. Fridays will have Gumba at the basement which was one of the best parts of my social life I don't remember going to church though on campus.

6. What type of a student would you say you were, and how did that help you to adapt and to navigate your student life?

I was a very happy student there, in the first 6 months my stress was accommodation until Student Lake was built. I enjoyed participating politi-

cally I was a Member of SASCO in the BEC later PEC, I was in the SRC as the Media and Publicity Secretary and Acting Sports Officer. I was a House Committee Chairperson for Day Students I started the aerobics club there it was ladies at first and Men Joined later I was the first Ms Big is Beautiful there. Later I was one of the first group that Graduated BTech in Sports Management when it was introduced. I was happy as a student and the wellbeing of other students, I travelled a lot when we had students who lost their lives to bury them. Watching Transformation of the institution was an Honour

7. What is your fondest memory of your student life at VUT?

I must say the Gumbas on Fridays will always be my smiling moment. Being the first Ms Big in SA through VUT I must say it can't be one but countless. Taking care of housing students who had no place to sleep looking for accommodation we housed them in halls took care of them still makes me smile. Graduating for BTech degree and thereafter became an MP.

8. What is the biggest challenge you ever faced when you were a student?

As I have mentioned, it was accommodation challenges in the first year and transport after a certain time taxi were no longer operating, Walking to Sharpeville or Town was risky

9. How would you characterise student politics and/ or the governance culture of the in-

stitution at the time you were there

I must say that was one of the best moments, it was through a Transformation Phase of Higher Education conflict with Management was almost Weekly. Student Politics were highly organized, tough as we had parties on campus when I came SASCO and PASMA were strong BMF as well later AZASCO and the DA Students. We would lead students protests but some students didn't understand what we are fighting for, but some were scared of lectures and would be locked in classes as we marched and sang because we wanted that oneness. The sad part the same students who faced discrimination by some lecturers are the ones who didn't come participate when we raise issues. We fought for all and we had untransformed Management. Governance was good but I think they were not prepared for such numbers and it became a challenge.

10. How do you see VUT today, in comparison to how it was to you when you were studying there?

I must say it was sad when I saw stories of rape, crime and all that I read about the campus and the community around targeting students as well recently a charlatan around students. I saw there's various accommodation buildings. I'm not sure about student life now as I haven't been there some time. I read about governance issues which I hope will be resolved

11. What ideas, or programmes, do you think the VUT Alumni could champion to benefit the institution, and why?

The Alumni must increase their database and communicate more and advocate for regular meetings/gatherings of the Members around certain town for instance, if you have us in Durban encourage us to meet. Partnerships with companies and students in prominent positions. Revive relations with companies like Anglo that use to sponsor us, make relations with South African Graduates Development Association. Lead against GBV on Campuses and mentor current students about social ills. Partner with an international institution for exchange programs, encourage community partnerships with community around to protect students.

12. How can those ideas and programmes be implemented successfully, in your opinion?

Patriotism and sense of ownership, there more we gather the more ideas come

Picture of interviewee:

Name of interviewee:

Thandile Babalwa Sunduza

A quote by interviewee:

‘Never look back face forward and have Faith in GOD’

The rebirth of Lucia Mabunda:

Entrepreneur, an Author, a Business Coach, and a Motivational speaker

1. Please introduce yourself to the VUT Alumni community by telling us what keeps you busy during the day to earn a living.

I am an Entrepreneur, an Author, a Business Coach, and a Motivational speaker.

I transform and change the lives of our future leaders through my Kids Academy which I started to build and develop children between the age of 3 months to grade 7. Our programmes focus on impacting their lives physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually where we incorporate talents, gift and academic excellence of our learners to give them a good foundation and teach them high-performance culture for them to be more independent individuals and who are well informed with their surroundings and build confidence for them to get ready for the future that is full of possibilities.

I also transform the lives of the youth and young adults to thrive and champion the space of entrepreneurship through the Lucia Mabunda Foundation using the book that I wrote titled “The Confident Entrepreneur” which is a guide that helps one to start a business from an idea to a well-es-

tablished business which has different chapters that have key topics that answer most of the questions most entrepreneurs struggle with.

My role also includes business coaching and mentorship where I also work together with NYDA as their mentor.

2. Looking back five years ago, how would you sum up your journey thus far?

I would say my life was like the life of a Phoenix because in the last 5 years it was a rebirth of Lucia to her real self or to her being born to her purpose. It was the time when I discovered my true self and started to understand my true self-identity. It took exactly 5 years when I started this journey of tapping into my true calling of entrepreneurship.

It has been a challenging journey but a very good character-building journey because I wouldn't be where I am if it wasn't for all the challenges that I went through to rebuild and rebrand my life from being an academic to the entrepreneur that I am today.

3. What words of advice can you give to fellow Alumni about the journey of progress and success?

Do what you love and never be afraid to discover yourself and start afresh because success comes when passion meets with purpose.

4. Please tell us how it came about that you ended up studying at Vaal University of Technology?

In your answer, please tell us about your high school days, career guidance, and what you did to enroll at VUT.

I used to be good in chemistry in high school and one day we had a school excursion and attended Orientation day at TUT, so the analytical chemistry students were showcasing different solutions which I tested and got all of them right so from that day I was convinced that I was meant to be a Scientist.

So, I had applied at MEDUNSA for Pharmacy and Radiographer but during orientation week I realized it was not for me. I went to different institutions and they were all full so the only option that was left for me was VUT and that's how I got there and decided to do chemistry.

5. What impression did you have of VUT when you were a student? Was that

matching the perception you had before you studied there?

I thought because it is the main campus we will have a good mix of multiracial people only to find out that it's a black-dominated university which raised a lot of questions like are they providing quality education etc, but when I got

to do the actual work I realized that it is a good institution with great qualified lectures.

6. What type of student would you say you were, and how did that help you to adapt and to navigate your student life?

I was a hard worker and that kept me grounded because I was scared of failing so as a result I never attended parties at all but that paid off in the end because in 2017 I became one of the best 20 chemistry students in the country where GlaxoSmithKline took us to London for Chemistry Training in their facilities. So, we had top students from UCT, WITS, UP, UKZN, and VUT was the only university of Technology that participated and only the two of us went through. This for me was amazing because it was my first international trip.

7. What is your fondest memory of your student life at VUT?

Being part of GSK best chemistry student training and I also I enjoyed my B-Tech research which I passed with a distinction.

8. What is the biggest challenge you ever faced when you were a student?



When I was doing my B-Tech I was working and studying full time at the same time so I happen to get married and fell pregnant. I had the pressure of finishing before giving birth because I was due the following year in January and it was hectic I had to start work 6 am -12 am in Secunda then drive 2 hours to Vaal for my class until 6 pm and drive back to Secunda every day with my tummy getting bigger and bigger but thank God I managed to pass with 3 distinctions that semester.

I always say that if you are waiting for a suitable situation to pursue your dreams you will never get anything done but we need to develop an attitude of breaking boundaries and doing whatever it takes to get what we want.

9. How would you characterize student politics and/or the governance culture of the institution at the time you were there?

I was not involved in politics because I was focused on my books and I was never includ-

ed but I knew My SRC Leaders and made friends with most of them.

10. How do you see VUT today, in comparison to how it was to you when you were studying there?

Honestly, I have never been to the campus after I completed my studies mainly because I had no reason that needed me to go back but I think they still produce great students, and the fact that they managed to track me means they care about not only their students but their alumni and what they do so that we can come back and give courage to the existing students to show that they too can because of great people of substance in this life coming from the institution.

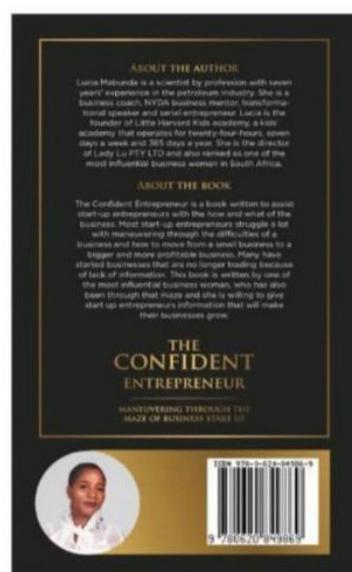
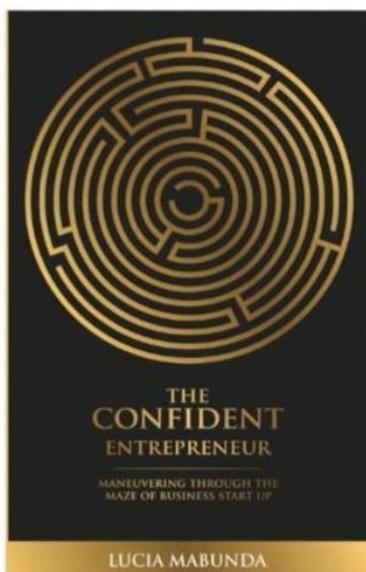
11. What ideas, or programmes, do you think the VUT Alumni could champion to benefit the institution, and why?

Mentorship and coaching for students not only career-wise but life in general so that we can prop their minds as well and show them that they need

to think beyond what they study and think of how they will make a difference with what they are studying. I think this generation should study to give solutions and solve some of the problems that our country is facing, for instance, they need to study to be employers and not employees. We have so many people who are unemployed and they have to be the solution, They need to invent new systems, new products, etc to solve the social and economic challenges that we are facing as a country and they need people like us to say you can because we did it.

12. How can those ideas and programmes be implemented successfully, in your opinion?

Bring us as alumni to tell our stories, mentor and coach the students. We might not change everyone but those two might change the world and the livelihood of our country because we don't know who God ordained to change this country.



THE CONFIDENT ENTREPRENEUR

“Studying at VUT has opened doors for me to be employable” says Progress Mpangane

1. Tell us about your current profession?

- I am a Senior Stakeholder Relations Officer at the North West University responsible for promoting and profiling the NWU brand through corporate events. I organise the NWU Vice Chancellor Business dinners (In Potchefstroom, Cape Town, Vanderbijlpark, Mafikeng, Johannesburg, Durban and Pretoria). I also organise Industry Workshops and dinners with employers and potential employers.

2. What qualification did you get from VUT (Vaal Triangle Technikon)?

- I have a degree in Public Relations

3. In what way do you think your studies contributed to your achievements?

- My studies have prepared me for the reality of corporate world and boosted my confidence to work in different organisations without doubting my qualification and knowledge gained.

4. Do you think your educational expectations were fulfilled by studying at VUT?

- Without any doubt a BIG yes.

5. If Yes, in what way?

- Today I am employed in a society whereby employ-

ment is a hustle to secure and studying in VUT has opened doors for me to be employable.

6. Why did you choose VUT as your preferred institution of higher learning?

- To be honest my brother who studied Photography here at VUT- convinced me to come



study

here saying is the best university and with my qualification from VUT I will be employable after completing.

7. How was the then Vaal Triangle Technikon / VUT in your experience (in case you studied in both dispensations)?

- In VUT my experiences can take the whole day explaining. I had the best of my life as a PR student, radical student activist and as an employee at the Cooperative Education. My life cannot be complete without mentioning VUT.

8. What is your view regarding the current VUT versus the then Vaal Triangle Technikon?

- I cannot say much about the VTT. I can say that, VUT now is the future with a clear vision to be the leading provider of innovative research and cutting edge NDT education in Africa.

9. What changes would you like to see at VUT?

- There is a lot that needs to be changed and the current administrator is working on some changes.

10. Which Alumni programmes / activities or initiatives would you like to contribute your skills to?

- Eish, any activity which needs PR skills I am available to plough back to my alma mater.

11. Why is it important for successful VUT former students to keep contact with the institution?

- To be a link between the corporate world and the university.

12. From your experience, how would you rate VUT against other institutions?

- VUT my alma mater, has prepared me to compete for employment with other graduates from other universities and yes, I rate the VUT the best university.

A message of appreciation for the “Champion A Student” Campaign

Office of the Director: Marketing and Public Relations

The Vaal University of Technology (VUT), through the office of the former Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Prof Zide, launched a “Champion a Student Campaign” in 2017. The objective was to steer the VUT Council approved Student Debt Reduction Strategy, intending to assist students who are academically deserving but financially needy. Both Management and Student Leadership agreed to establish a Fundraising Committee to boost and bolster the effort of the Director: Resources Mobilisation. The office of the Director: Marketing and Public Relations was then tasked with the responsibility to manage the relationships between the VUT and prospective funders.

The first company that pledged their support in 2017 was Liquid Telecom South Africa

(LTSA), a Telecommunications Company based in Midrand. VUT and LTSA sealed the relationship by signing a Memorandum of Understanding, on Wednesday, 7th of March 2018 which brought about a huge change in the lives of the first IT students to benefit from the partnership. Through the MoU, LTSA gives funding to academically performing and financially deserving students in the field of ICT.

The campaign attracted funders like De Beers Group, Frigoglass SA, CBI, Afrisam and IBM who are eager to reach out to academically deserving and financially needy students of VUT to help them realize their goals of been educated. To date, 156 students across all the fields of studies have benefited from the campaign, at both undergraduates and postgraduate levels.

On behalf of the VUT community, I would like to express my sincere gratitude for the financial support, field trips and placement of the beneficiaries for work-integrated learning and/or internships since the inception of the campaign.

While we are excited as a University for the above-mentioned support, we take cognizance of the fact that VUT has produced several graduates who are, in their own right, occupying high-ranking positions in various organizations and thus contributing to the growth and development of our Country’s economy. It is our wish to invite them to support and grow the efforts of the campaign to help VUT make “*Your world to a better future*” a reality for all deserving students.



Ms Kediemetsi Mokotsi
Director: Marketing & Public Relations



Mrs Thenji Motaung
Administrator to Director:
Marketing & Public Relations

MaVuti Giftshop

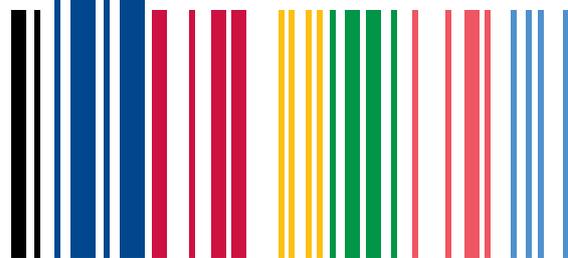
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Year End Packages



VUT



Vaal University of Technology

Your world to a better future

VUT Alumni-Convocation Professional & Business listing update

PERSONAL DETAILS (NAME, INITIALS AND SURNAME)	DESIGNATION/POSITION	NAME OF BUSINESS YOU OWN OR ARE SHAREHOLDER IN (IF SELF-EMPLOYED)
Aaron Kole	Senior software developer	Cliff dekker hofmeyr
Anthony Takalani Ramabulana	Director	Department of Sports, Art, Culture and Recreation
Boward Gana (Makhekhe)	Financial Advisor	Vukheta Risk Services Pty Ltd
Cornelius C Hlebela	Head of IT	African Sales Company
Dennis S Sebela	HR Manager	Letaba TVET College
E Mosia	Portfolio Management	Kenani Solutions
Ephraim, E.N Motlounq	Director	Dotcom Services
Foster Tiyani Makaringe	Accountant	Kariba Management Consultants
G. A. Moseki	Managing director	Moseki Holdings
Gabriel Papa Mokgotho	ICT Support	Centre for Supplier Development
Herman Lechelele	Metallurgist	Scaw Metal Group
Ian Njombo Mabasa	Train Driver assistant	Transnet
Itumeleng I.b Matutoane	Lab analyst	Scichem
Jeremiah Sebola	Aviation Engineer	BP
Kgaligelo Mashamaite	Enrolled Nurse	Fezi Ngubentombi Hospital
Kgomotso Mafora	Procurement Officer	BroadReach Healthcare Pty Ltd
Khume Ramulifho	Member of Gauteng Provincial Legislature	Gauteng Provincial Legislature
Kyungu Lazare, KL Yamungu	Marketing Agent	Rose Liputa
Lebogang Portia Thindisa	Budget Manager	Department of Military Veterans
Lekopane Mokonopi	Senior Supervisor	Eskom
LM Muligidi	Senior Business Manager	FNB
Matela Mthwalo	Sales	Matela Mthwalo
Matsemela	BBC	Capitec Bank Pty Ltd
Miranda Mashele	Administrator	Tupperware
Moeketsi Mahlangu (Setlhare)	Manager IDP	JB MARKS MUNICIPALITY
Moffat Siboniso M. S Nkosi	Labour Inspector	Motor Industry Bargaining Council
Mokgalaka	Software Developer	SITA
Motlalepula, MA Mofokeng	Director	Ndyebo Group
Ms Masesebe Wa Ramahuma	Managing Director	Masram Group (PTY) Ltd.

Mzwandile, M Ncala	Researcher	Emfuleni Local Municipality
Nkoebe Motlhajoa	Regional Service Manager	Standard Bank
Nndwamato Dangale	Management Accountant	Rand Merchant Bank
Nozizwe Mahlaba	SAP analyst	Johnson Matthey
Nozuko Makhunga	Sales Manager	ABSA
Ntwanano NH Mathebula	PHP developer	Parallel software
Organ,MO Masala	ASD	Gauteng Education
Patrick Siti Phakathi	Reverent	PATSDi Consulting
Paul Rantso	Governance Office of the MEC	Gauteng Health
Peter H.P Mashinini	Professional Property Practitioner	Rawson Properties-Vaal
Phosa Donald(MD)	HR Manager	Lewis Group (Pty) Ltd.
Presca Matjea	Liaison Officer	Trans-Caledon Tunnel Authority
Rabelani, RD Mashamba	Energy Regulator	NERSA
Rasivhaga	Director	Mame
Rodney Penold R.P Sibuyi	Web Application Developer	Microsoft S.A
Rofhiwa RT Machivha	Technical Specialist	Toyota South Africa Motors
Sakhile I Mlauzi	IT Manager	MQA
Sasabona Manganye	Chief Information Officer	Gauteng Gambling Board
Shumani Percy Mashavha	Electrical Technician	Sasol SSO
Sifiso Somakahle	Managing Director	Colmil Trading (Pty) Ltd.
Siwela Jeffrey SJ Baloyi	Senior Chemical Engineer	CSIR
Siyabonga Zwane	Finance Operations Manager	Avanade Australia
Steven Malatsi	Senior Supervisor	Eskom
Tebello Mothabeng	Trainer	Training camp
Tebogo, TO, Lesabane	Senior ICT Engineer	PPECB
Teboho Malekele	Director	Azania Process Automation
Themba T Gazide	Senior Admin Clerk	Department of Home affairs
Themba T Zondo	Chief Executive Officer	Phepha Risk Solutions
Thulani M. Hlatshwayo	Business partner	BASF South Africa (PTY)
Thulani Mavimbela	Developer	Phumelani Group
Tlangelani Peck Malungane	Project Manager	Hilltop420 pty Ltd
Tshepho M Ledwaba	Regional Key Accounts Manager	Sanlam Group
Tshepo, TS, Makwela	Operational Manager	SARS
Zwelinjani Kenneth, Z.K Gwiba	IT Technician	Maluti TVET College

What's your story?

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ekhaya
alumni



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vents
ekhaya
alumni

VUT

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