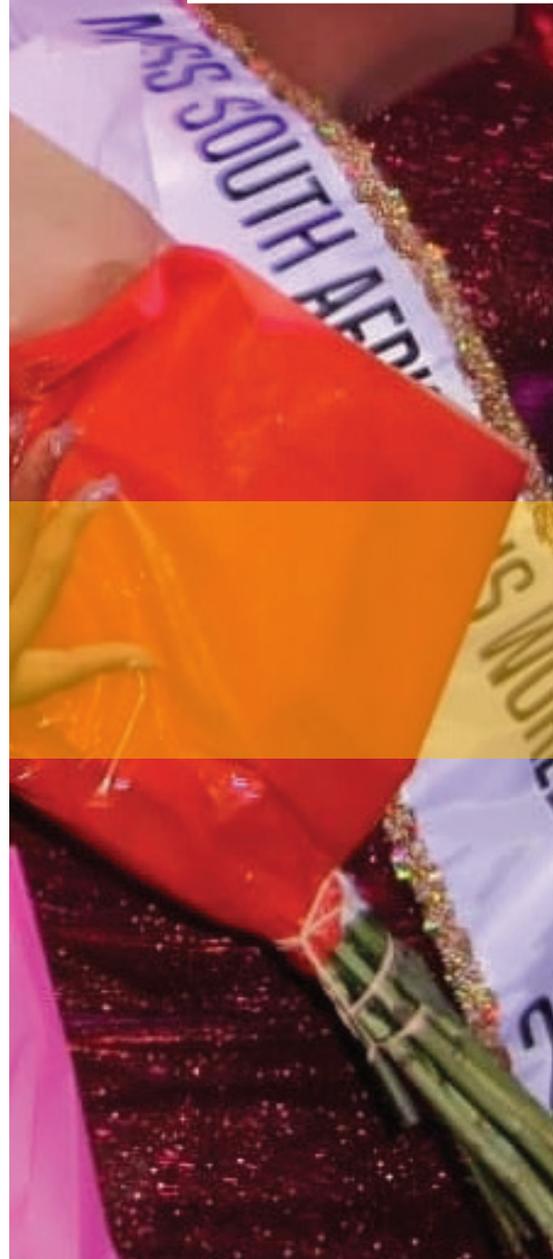


VOICE OF

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The Editorial Team:

Contributors to the publication:

Prefaces

:=
Mr P Masombuka /
Mr C Madalane

Branding =

Ms T Farrell

Posters / Banners:

VUT Gift Shop

Alumni Relations

Sponsors and Donors:

Marketing and Public Relations =
Ms K Mokotsi / Ms T Motaung

Content / Design:

Communication team =

Ms P Maphisa / Ms N Zondi

Editing = Mr P Masombuka

Mrs Zelda Kotze

Design = Mr David Moimane

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.



“We bring life where hope has been lost. There is life after matric and outside Kgakala Township.”

VUT North West Alumni Chapter gives back (Library) to their primary school Puleng Maphisa

In this decade, the new generation has new development changes and adopted technology. Modern ways of non-technology users are slowly fading away. Technology has taken over the world and the new generation do not use books but gadgets. They hardly visit libraries to read but uses technology more than books.

The Vaal University of Technology soldiered through with the Tseleme Social club to a primary container library launch which was delivered to Thakadu Primary School in Kgakala Township, Leeudoringstad, to promote reading and learning in our generation more especially in our African languages.

The donation was handed over to the Tseleme Social club formed by the key members of the North West Alumni Chapter which include; Cllr Kgosana Selebalo (B Tech Financial Information System),

Mr. Ntebogelang Riet (National Diploma Electrical Eng), Mr. Lekopane Mokonopi (National Diploma Electrical Eng), on behalf of the school. The event culminated in an official launch of the container library donated to the school by the Tseleme Social Club. The objective of the donation was to promote reading and learning amongst the young generation, especially in African languages.

The Tseleme Social Club is a foundation that was established to empower the dream of an Africa child by bringing development to the communities through the network of VUT Alumni. Membership consists of a group of male friends who initially intended to travel widely to explore the beauty of different countries, whilst giving back to charity-related foundations and communities. They have mostly visited SADC countries such as Botswana, Zimbabwe, Swaziland, Lesotho and Mo-

zambique, raising funds and doing hand-outs at schools and charitable houses respectively. They later realized the need to uplift their communities through fundraising initiatives. They have so far achieved a lot through Charity Golf Days, the Dress-a-Child-to-School campaign through the NW Alumni Chapter.

The day ended with a motivational talk for the matric class of 2021 at Tiragalo Secondary School, where all members of the Tseleme Social Club matriculated. Mr. Lekopane Mokonopi, VUT alumni, who studied Electrical Engineering and graduated in 2004, said that they have been visiting the school to motivate learners because many have lost hope. “Our area does not have many activities for the youth. We do not have sports facilities like we used to. Most kids have become drug addicts and commit crimes. We try to bring life where hope has been lost and prove that there is life





after matric outside Kgakala. Our learners should make use of opportunities that are available now to change our society so that it does not become a dying nation”, said Mr. Mokonopi.

Mr. Peter Masombuka, VUT HoD: Alumni Relations, reminded learners that they can still make it through the COVID-19 era. He said that it is only through perseverance

and hard work that they can achieve their dreams just like the members of the Tseleme Social Club that came to motivate them. “These brothers that came here today to motivate you are from your township, they were once seated at those benches you are sitting on and they know and understand your challenges, but they made it through,” he said. He reminded them of the importance of achieving

great marks that will enable them to have university entrance. He further said that by this time many should know what they want to study and check the VUT APS score for programmes that they are interested in. They should visit the website page www.vut.ac.za for more information on undergraduate studies and online applications.



“Graduates should open their minds to a broad world of opportunities”

Serge M Kabisoso

Director: Fashion Without Borders Africa

sergek@fwbafrika.com / efigyproductions@gmail.com

www.fwbafrika.com

My Name is Serge Kabisoso, husband and father of 3.

Tell us about your current profession?

“I am a Professional Model, based in Johannesburg. I am the co-founder of the Event FASHION WITHOUT BORDERS AFRICA. The event showcases the potential and talent of the youth and promotes optimism in the continent as a whole. FWB celebrates the future of African fashion, homegrown establishments, rising stars in the arts and highlights this as a sustainable career and business opportunity. The platform also provides mentorship in the fashion business, modeling for youth and provide a sustainable promotional avenue for showcasing and sales, leading to economic development”.

What qualification did you get from VUT? (Vaal College for Technical Advancement / Vaal Triangle Technikon)

“Well, I registered for Electrical Engineering but did not complete my studies, I ended

at a certificate level”.

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

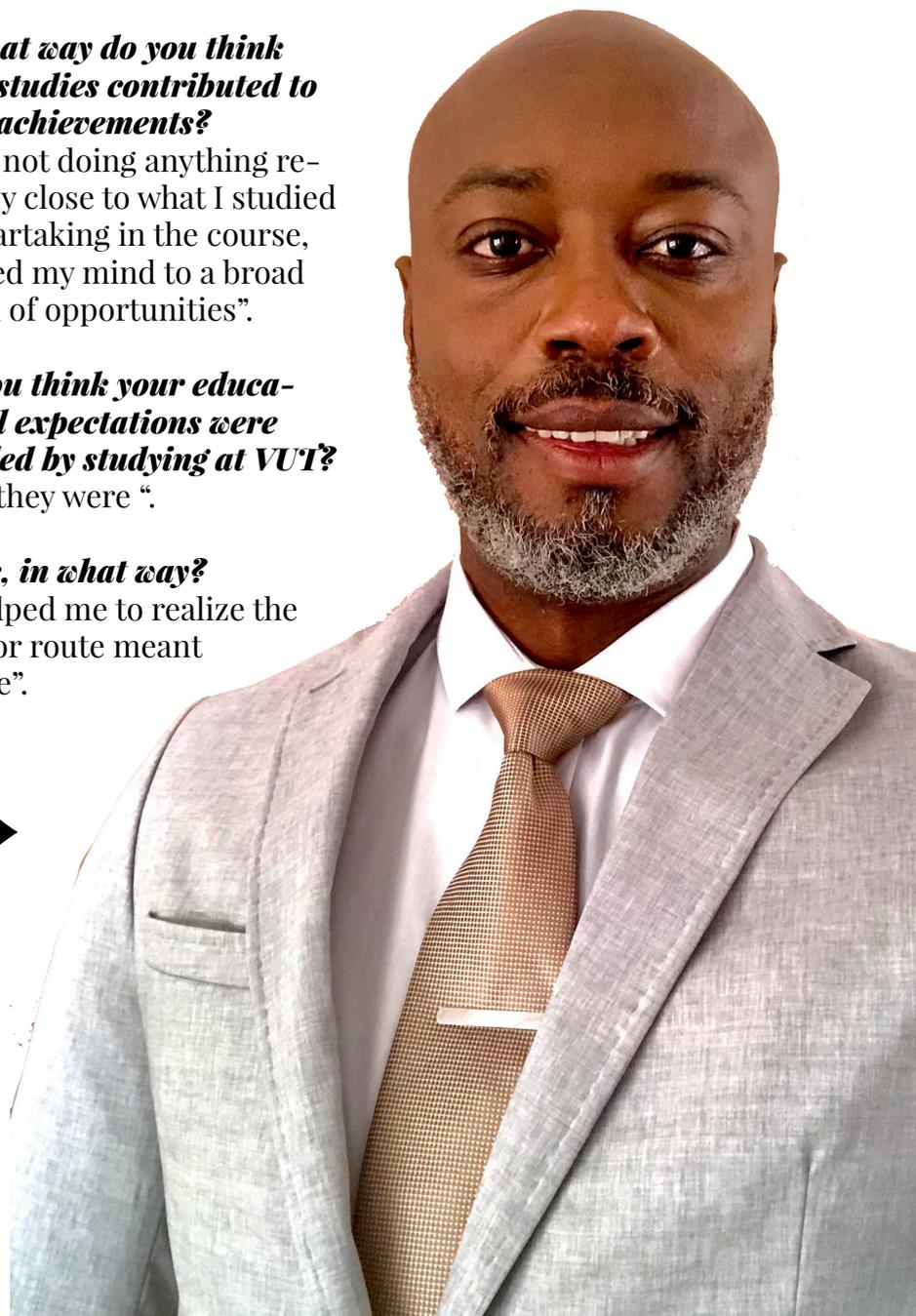
“I am not doing anything remotely close to what I studied but partaking in the course, opened my mind to a broad world of opportunities”.

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

“Yes, they were “.

If Yes, in what way?

“It helped me to realize the path or route meant for me”.





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

“I had friends and family members who studied there and who loved the institution”.

How was your student life experience of the Vaal College for Technical Advancement / Vaal Triangle Technikon?

“It was an important time in my life and molded me to the person I was to grow into”.

What is your view regarding the current VUT versus the then Vaal College for Technical Advancement Vaal Triangle Technikon?

I am not sure of the status quo so I can't speak to it”.

What changes would you like to see at VUT?

“I am not sure of the status quo so I can't speak to it”.

Which programmes/activities or initiatives would you like to contribute your skills and expertise to?

“During my time we had events that were created to help International students feel part of the VUT community and tackle issues they struggled with. I had the honor to organize Mr and Miss ISO and contributed to that which I was interested in”.

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

“To exchange experiences, as my experiences may be helpful to navigate through their time at VUT”.

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

“Well, that would be a difficult one as I don't have much experience with other institutions”.

What are your impressions of VUT after you graduated and experienced other institutions?

“Well, that would be a difficult one as I don't have much experience with other institutions”.

What Advice would you give to a prospective student that wishes to come to VUT?

“Focus on what you want to achieve and don't get distracted by meaningless things”.



“Former students/ graduates can offer a lot of opportunities for the university”

Mthobisi Roderick Nkumane
Lecturer

Mthobisi Roderick Nkumane is a lecturer at the Vaal University of Technology, faculty: Management Sciences, department: Human Resources Management.

What qualification did you obtain from VUT? (Vaal Triangle Technikon/Vaal College for Technical Advancement)

I obtained my National Diploma (Human Resources Management), Bachelor of Technology (Human Resources Development) and my Masters (Human Resources Management).

In what way do you think your studies contributed to your achievement?

Looking at the past and present challenges of life, I do not think I would have achieved what I have already achieved, and it has prepared me in terms of how I could face the corporate world.

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

Definitely

If Yes, in what way?

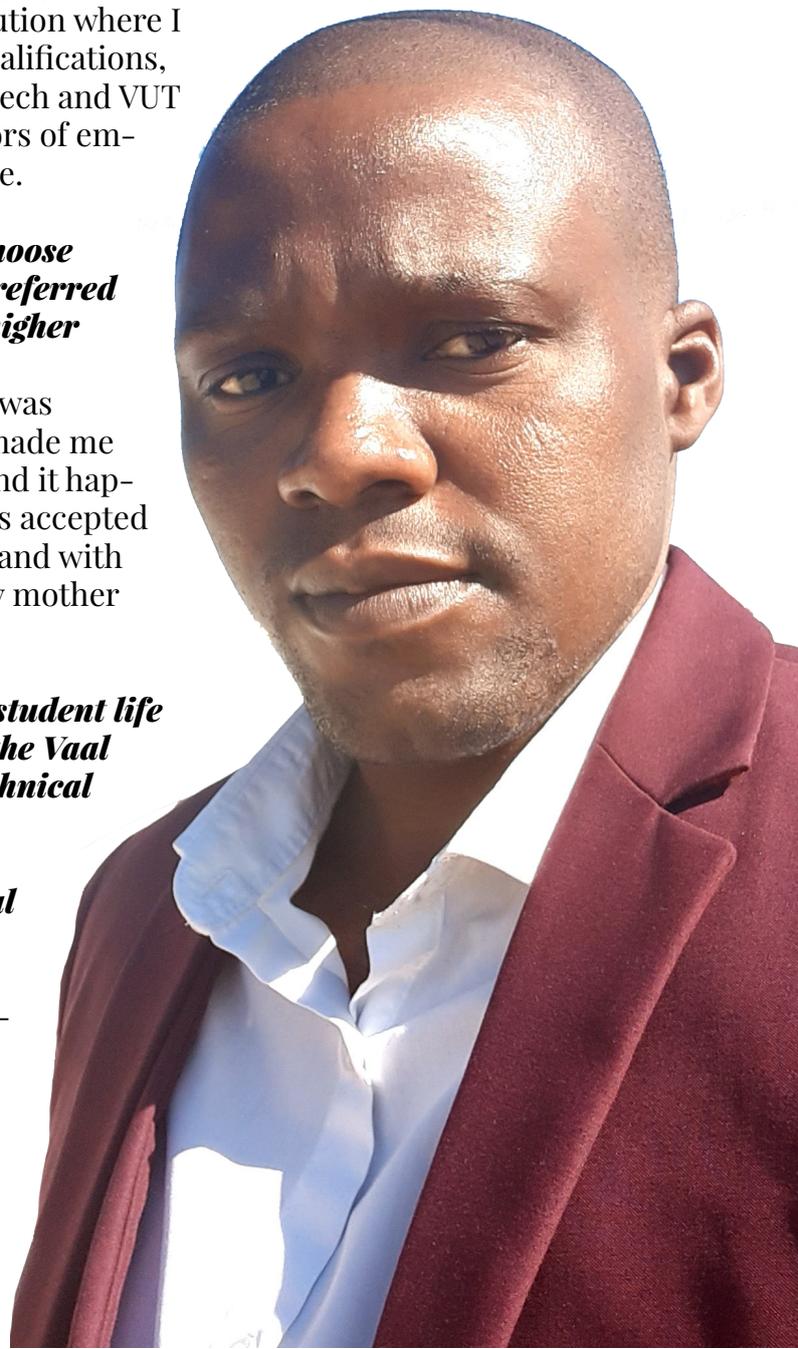
Today, I am employed by the same institution where I obtained my qualifications, B-Tech and MTech and VUT has opened doors of employment for me.

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

My cousin who was studying here made me aware of VUT and it happened that I was accepted when I applied and with God's grace, my mother agreed too.

How was your student life experience of the Vaal College for Technical Advancement/Vaal Triangle Technikon/Vaal University of Technology?

The time I studied here, it was already VUT. I had bad and good times but truly speaking, I learned a lot





and my life and even my obituary will not be complete without mentioning VUT.

What is your view regarding the current VUT versus the then Vaal College for Technical Advancement/Vaal Triangle Technikon?

I think it has improved although change can take days, weeks, months or even years but I would love VUT to be recognised as one of the best universities in South Africa in the future.

What changes would you like to see at VUT?

#CHANGEVUT is one of the ideas to improve the state of the university and I hope that the current Administrator gets all the support to do some changes.

Which programmes/activities or initiatives would you like to contribute your skills and expertise to?

Could be any programme depending on my availability.

Why is it important for successful former VUT students and graduates to keep contact with VUT?

Former students or graduates can offer a lot of opportunities for the university e.g. motivational speakers for current students or to be a link between the university and the corporate world.

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

I do not know how other institutions operate but to my experience, it is the best as I

am employable.

What are your impressions of VUT after you graduated and experienced other institutions?

So far, I have studied only at VUT.

What advice would you give to a prospective student that wishes to come to VUT?

As a student, you should never be afraid to discover yourself. Vaal University is like other institutions but to make that difference is within yourself (student) as to how much you want to succeed in life.



“Being a coach to those who are pursuing careers”

Colen Mosehlane

Entrepreneur, Internal Auditor, founder and Director At Internal Audit Independent Association PTY and a finance and intermediary Services Consultant at African Bank Limited

Tell us about your current profession? “I am an aspiring entrepreneur, Internal Auditor, Founder and Director at Internal Audit Independent Association PTY and a Finance & Intermediary Services Consultant at African Bank Limited. The private company herein, referred to as Internal Audit Independent Association (IAIA), was established in 2016 and officially registered with the requirements and compliance of the CIPC and the Companies Act of South Africa. IAIA was established and set up by Head & Founder, Colen Mosehlane in 2019, such awesome motivation exuded from when I was an inner examining student, mentor, peer assistant, tutor, and Leader of ISACA Student Chapter pioneer at the Vaal University of Technology. The IAIA is portrayed as including transformation and sustainability (motto). The business serves as growing, leading Internal Audit firm which provides services, i.e. Audit, Tax and Advisory”.

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

National Diploma and Bachelor of Technology in Internal Auditing.

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

“My studies have contributed emphatically to my accomplishments. However, within the past several years, I confronted several challenges. I did not take instruction genuinely, and I was lively and did not tune in to my teachers, guardians and peer’s advice. Particularly, in secondary education, I fizzled sometimes and re-hashed grades back in school, I can say.

The way I used to think about life and instruction led me to failure. My vision around these 2 viewpoints turned around





to be positive as a result of the deterioration I had experienced in my lifestyle back then.

My studies contributed emphatically, I can make superior and constructive choices, being a restrained individual setting goal and accomplishing them and so, I can gladly say that my studies contributed to where I am and where I am heading to and I did not come this far just to be this far. To be an effective entrepreneur you need to have a vision, patience, commitment, passion and be willing to take risks

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

Yes.

If Yes, in what way?

“My achievement of being able to help others develop a positive mindset, being a part to demonstrate, not as it were to myself, but to people who have no one to look up to or maybe they might have lost trust around their educational goals and life goals. I can gladly say that I am a declaration of what great instructive desires can do to a human being and especially to an African child. I did not lose trust or confidence, but I kept going indeed when I thought that the journey to victory may be simple, but I realized that there’s no simple journey to victory.

I can center on endeavors and not greatness, I have picked up certainty so that, wherever

er I come up short, I ought to be able to distinguish causes of destitution, work quality and be able to correct them. To guarantee that I accomplish incredible results and all through my journey at VUT, it has continuously been like that from the first year. In conclusion, I would like to say that I have learned to be reliable with my career and instructive objectives by guaranteeing that all objectives set are accomplished which all assignments relegated for work engagements and individual engagements are fulfilled conveniently and viably”.

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

“I chose VUT, since ‘it produces employable and entrepreneurial graduates who can make an impact in society’. VUT gives more quality, education and learning. A huge number of graduates are living their dreams and others are business people, a Long term contribution made by the University towards students benefits society too, through work creation and trade opportunities, to guarantee that the standard of living is made strides for distant better; a much better; a higher; a stronger; an improved much better living.

Most students come to think about and fulfill their dreams at VUT, having no certainty almost what they need to seek after or become, but they end up getting the de-

sired help from the student support center to ensure that they make proper choices for their future. I chose VUT since the environment is neighborly, movable, simple to learn, meet modern people, realize your dreams, and students are allowed openings to appear to showcase their talents, participate in educational programs and most critical having fun. The day I chose VUT I knew my life has changed for the better so that I can be able to create a positive impact within the society”.

How were then Vaal Triangle Technikon / VUT in your experience (in case you studied in both dispensations?)

“When I think about the involvement I had at VUT, my commitment to studying, friends I made, the involvement of attempting modern things for the primary time as an autonomous individual, all of these was a perpetual adventure. My encounter at VUT, hence was astonishing, in which I had more involvement and learned few things such as overseeing life, whereas, I am considering and remaining centered towards achieving my goals.

I thought 4 years was a long time, but it was briefer than I anticipated. I have made modern companions from diverse backgrounds; my addresses were incredible as I have learned in profundity compared to that of my secondary school. Through my experience at VUT, I was involved



and active in several academic activities such as being an active Chairperson of ISACA and part of IASA student group, mentor and tutor for first-year internal auditing and management accounting students”.

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

“The current VUT has emerged in becoming one of the largest African universities since the former corporation of Vaal Triangle Technikon and continues to draw a large number of students from all over the continent. It also contributes to human resources as a large number of successful graduates keep on making a positive impact inside and outside the institution.

VUT has changed the world and positively turned the life of its students and it keeps on making a positive impact. Several potential corporates come together to ensure that VUT students get priority in the job market by providing them with internships and other forms of employment opportunities. This is done in conjunction with the VUT Management, Student Support Services, and the Co-operative Education Department to ensure that the students’ lives are transformed. There have been a few faculties being implemented since the implementation of VUT compared to VTT and this has given students a lot of opportunities to choose from and promoted freedom to ed-

ucation”.

What changes would you like see at VUT?

“The alter I would like to see at VUT is the enhancement within the quality of education, to guarantee that what we are taught at the university is precisely collating with what is happening within the corporate world. The quality of education can be effectively accomplished in the case where the University can invest within the future of its workers, students, and through ceaseless educational development channels.

The University ought to proceed to construct a huge number of lecturer rooms as several students who enroll increase each year, this will too help in controlling the spread of Covid-19 infection since there will be enough space to guarantee social and physical distancing. The alter that VUT needs may be an enormous one, the introduction of more resources to suit courses which are requested by students who wish to engage their careers at VUT.

The university should recognize and reward hard-working students and lecturers to build confidence, changing the attitude and mindset about the culture of education at VUT. This recognition can be in a form of creating a spotlight for good performance, giving prizes or even salary increment for the lecturers and other employees”.

Which Alumni programs / activities or initiatives would you like to contribute your skills to?

Being a coach to those who are pursuing careers and, taking a toll in internal auditing, Accounting, Financial information systems, and business management. Contributing my aptitudes and experience to ISACA and IASA student group to guarantee that though we are confronted with a widespread Covid19 we will be able to still build esteem to the students by coming up with strategies to adapt to changing natural environmental issues. To help students and University to liaise with potential companies for opportunities, bursaries, internships and educational programs.

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

“Previous and current fruitful students provide financial assistance to the penniless students and the University by implies of subsidizing the cost for performing students. They moreover bring concrete corporate encounters that can be shared with other students and the university. The alluded effective students who keep up with the University moreover make opportunities that construct certainty to those students who have misplaced trust in their studies. Such opportunities may incorporate but not restricted to: Unused imaginative ideas, assist the institution in reducing the rate





of unemployment by pulling in potential companies to contribute and invest within the institution with implies of bursaries and internships”.

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

“From my personal experience, VUT is the best establishment and provides quality

education; this makes it one among the highest Universities in South Africa that attracts additional students from everywhere the continent”.

“You cannot fall in love with this game and then leave it, I disagree!”

Lungelo Magwaza

Who is Mosiuoa Motsapi?

Mosiuoa Motsapi, better known as Minge or 26, is a 48-year-old retired Softball Player who was born and bred in the Vaal Region. I am a father of two boys aged 18 and 11, and a beautiful little daughter who is 8 years old.

Your time at VUT, and what do you do for a living?

I spent my time at VUT as a part-time student, perusing my Advance Certificate in Education, between 1995 and 1996. Currently, I am a teacher by profession and a part-time taxi driver.

When did the Softball journey start?

My Softball journey started in 1980 as a ball boy for the Kalahari Softball Club. I was 8 years old at the time. I then moved on to play for few more



teams before joining VUT in 1993.

Why did you choose Softball?

Well, it started as a hobby, only to find out that I would fall in love with the game itself. My passion was drawn from the older folks I had met in the team, as they were supportive and took good care of me. Remember, I was only 8 years old at the time, so I felt the love and assurance I received from them.

What challenges did you face during your career?

It has always been a challenge keeping the game alive in the Vaal. Attracting sponsorships was hard, which made traveling almost impossible. Injuries also hampered my development as a player. I have had a total of 8 operations all resulting from Softball. My first operation was as early as 1988.

How did you commit to the sports for so long?

It is a beautiful game I must say, and very addictive. There are beautiful women too. But honestly, the game has been good to me. Having been blessed with mentors who were very patient with me taught me a lot, including everyday life matters. You cannot fall in love with this game and then leave it, I disagree!

How was your interaction with newcomers/1st Year Softball players?

It has always been fun meeting new team players. We "initiate" them, and you do not want to

know the stuff we do behind the scenes. But then again it serves the purpose because they all feel free and welcomed afterward.

What are some of your biggest and most memorable moments?

Truth be told, every moment around softballers is big and always memorable, but I will just highlight a few:

- Making the South African Softball team in 2000
- Winning the Most Valuable Player award at the National Club Championship
- Being appointed the General Manager of the SA U19 Boys Team
- Being appointed the assistant coach of the SA U18 Boys Team
- and of course, Being in 3 World Series Championships, traveling the world

You played a lot of games under the VUT banner, share your best 5 games?

The funny part is that the best 3 games of my career came very late, in fact, in the last 2 seasons of my mainstream career. The first 2 matches were against the Red Sox, a league match, and a knockout match. Followed by a match against the Hawks. Then the remaining 2 matches included an International Tournament, Giant Killers vs Paper Club, and the National Championships, Central Gauteng vs Western Cape.

Who are the Sport Officers you worked with during your time?

Each of these Sports Officers has contributed positively and massively towards the brand that the VUT Softball Club is today. They are Susan de Bruin, Star Hlongwane, Conti Kubheka, Mohau Mokgatla, and Tebogo Mapheto.

What is your motivation in life, and some word of advice to the youngsters?

Creating a friendly atmosphere around myself is a priority as it attracts a lot of positive energy. So, if you treat me well, I will treat you even better. To the youngsters, all I can say is that respect the game and always keep your focus. Play for the team and not just for yourself.

"My profile would not be complete if I do not mention one coach who had so much faith in me. I was 43 years-old in my last season in the mainstream, but he made me feel like I was 21 years old. He believed in me even when I did not believe in myself. He would call me early during the week on a Tuesday to plan for a weekend game, and at the end, he would tell me that I am closing the game. That always made me appreciate him even more, and I would give my all to justify his trust in me. His name is Selekg Molimi Nong, the current VUT Softball coach, and SA U23 coach."

“I learned to take the bull by its horns”

Ms Sadiki inspired by her mother to start her business
Puleng Maphisa

Ms. Tshifiwa Patience Sadiki, a third-year Computer Systems Engineering student, grew up in Thohoyandou, Dididi village and was raised by a very strong woman, Mrs Mmboniseni Betty Mulaudzi who never gave up in life, no matter how big the problem was. She took care of her children by selling food in town which inspired her daughter Tshifiwa to start her first business while the country was under level 5 lockdown. The idea came to mind during this tough period while she was thinking about what to do to improve the lives of her family members and her community. Tshifiwa, started her business in June 2020, with an allowance of R1 100 received from NFSAS which she used to buy raw materials to manufacture wax polish. She was able to make four 5L containers and three 2L containers of wax polish which she supplied to her family, friends and relatives to test the product. She generated her first profit after selling to other people within her village. The quality of her product made her popular and now her business has extended to three more villages around Thohoyandou.

Her business goals are to strive to be one of the best well-known brands that can

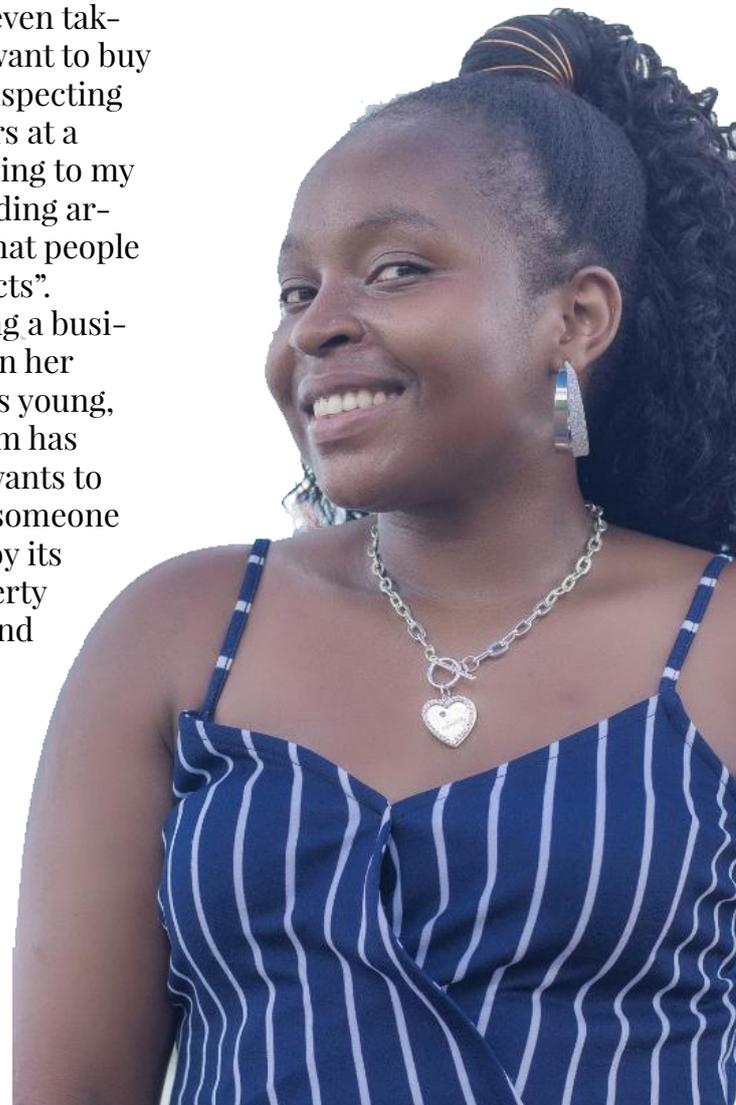
supply the whole world, employ more than 1000 workers around the country and be able to support youth to fulfill their dreams.

She added that “Throughout the process, I have learned that not having sufficient start-up capital has a direct impact on improving your productivity as the business grows. Another critical factor is the marketing of my brand because big retail stores tend to ignore us, some even taking advantage and want to buy products from unsuspecting young entrepreneurs at a lower price. But selling to my village and surrounding areas has taught me that people cherish local products”. She said that starting a business has always been her dream since she was young, and today that dream has been fulfilled. She wants to be remembered as someone who “took the bull by its horn” to defeat poverty in her community and surrounding areas. In conclusion, she said that her motto is: ***“I was born for a purpose and that purpose is to grow into a mountain, not to shrink to a grain of sand. There-***

fore I will apply all my efforts to become the highest mountain of all and I will strain my potential until it cries for mercy”.

For product inquiries please use the following contact details:

Contact No. 079 128 0011
Email: sadikitshifiwapatience20@gmail.com



2020 Miss South Africa Plus Karabo Ratikane

I am Karabo Ratikane age 26 years and currently I am a Plus Size Model, Human Resources Management graduate from the Vaal University of Technology and a philanthropist.

Social media handles:

Twitter- @RatikaneKarabo

Instagram- ratikane.karabo

Facebook- Karabo Ratikane

Tell me about where you grew up and what your family life was like?

Being the only child and my mother working in North West, I was fortunate to live with my grandmother, aunts, uncle and cousins in Kwa Zulu-Natal, Durban. There is never a dull moment with my family as strict as the elders are, love, jokes and humour are the epitome of our lives.

Who have been your strongest influences in life?

I was raised by phenomenal women and have crossed paths with them as well and they have impacted my life differently in their own right. To be specific my aunt Pontso Ratikane, my mother Gladys Manie Ratikane, my grandmother Selina Lipuo Ratikane and my close friend Mamello Patience Mokoena.

What are you most proud of accomplishing?

This is a good question and



having come this far in my life, I would say being able to bounce back from failure. I am blessed enough with strength and optimise to continue accomplishing my goals.

How would friends and acquaintances describe you?

(Laughing out loud). I am often described as a diva, joyous and valiant person.

How did you come up with the idea of joining Miss South Plus World?

Winning Miss Plus Size Face of Mafikeng 2019 came with the opportunity of entering Miss South Africa Plus World and I certainly entered.

What do you find most challenging about your title?

Resources and financial means to best serve my title.





What's the best/worst thing to happen since you started on your journey?

The best thing is certainly winning the title and nothing worse has happened yet since starting my journey.

What has surprised you most regarding your title?

"People's reception and excitement still puzzle me till this day".

What would you tell someone who is thinking of joining the Miss South Plus World or any Miss Plus pageant?

Being yourself is the true power. This will allow you to be your best and allow you to positively impact other people.

If you weren't a Miss South Africa Plus World, what would you be doing instead, or what would your life be like?

Wow, I most certainly would be a media personality, an actress or radio host while I neuter my other talents to propel me to where I want to be in the future.

What do you do when you aren't on the pageant?

I work on my women empowerment project as well, growing my brand as model and I love to travel.

Do you have any skills or talents that most people don't know about?

Yes, I do. I write poetry, have a passion for fashion and I love acting.

How do you want people to remember you?

As a woman who lived, enjoyed and fulfilled her purpose.

What's a goal you have for yourself that you want to accomplish in the next year?

To become a successful, commercial and fashion model.

What is motto?

"Put your best foot forward in everything you do."



“Computer Systems is broad - one can have a few careers out of it in IT”

Kagelelo D. Kentse

Service delivery coordinator, global information management, De Beers Group

Tell us about your current profession?

“I am currently in the employ of De Beers Group (Gaborone, Botswana) as IM(IT) Service Delivery SYSTEMS & INFRA-STRUCTURE Manager.

De Beers Group is the world’s leading diamond company, with unrivaled expertise across the diamond value chain. De Beers Group has been a leader in the exploration, mining, sale and marketing of rough diamonds since 1888. My current responsibility is to ensure the smooth functioning of the underlying infrastructure and operational platforms on which various applications and systems that enable business processes are deployed, as well as providing support to our clients, remotely and face-to-face. Delivery of business processes, communication, collaboration and knowledge management through the deployment, support and maintenance of enterprise technology, infra-

structure, applications and mine technical systems”.

What qualification did you get from VUT? (Vaal College for Technical Advancement / Vaal Triangle Technikon / VUT)

“I studied ND: Computer Systems Engineering. I also witnessed the transition from Technikon to a University of Technology”.

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

“Basically everything. Fundamentals of Programming, Computers and Databases form a large part of a career in IT





or Systems. So, this was very critical. The course gave the much-needed basics to enter the working world”.

Do you think your educational expectations were fulfilled by studying at VUT? “Yes”

If “Yes”, in what way?

“Computer Systems is broad – so one can have a few careers out of it in IT: System Applications, Programming and Instrumentation. So, there was a little bit of advantage as one could have a broad choice of careers”.

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

“Firstly, I was at the University of North West in Mafikeng and I heard about “Programming” during a lecture on Computer Skills, that, if you are a programmer, you earn a lot of money. I then looked around and the course wasn’t available at the time at NWU. I heard of Vaal Tech, a very technical institution in Gauteng. I applied and was accepted”.

How was your student life experience of the Vaal College for Technical Advancement / Vaal Triangle Technikon/ Vaal University of Technology in your experience?

“It was amazing. Luckily, I had both sides of the cake as I registered at Vaal Triangle Technikon but graduated from a university of technology. We had a series of events that took

place on campus to prepare us for the transition. It was breathtaking. At the time our Rector was Professor Mokadi and he led it like a true Eagle. History was made and I am glad to have been part of that as a student. I will later-on become the first international student SRC President in 2005 at VUT”.

What is your view regarding the current VUT versus the then Vaal Triangle Technikon / Vaal College for Technical Advancement?

“Not sure if I am qualified to make a point on this quite honestly.

I enjoyed my student life at VUT, in and out of campus, extramural activities, socialization, teaching and learning. It’s now more than 15 years that I have left the university, so I might give a skewed view. I do however hope that the university still excels and is still known for its prowess in technical training.

Living back in Botswana has limited my interactions with fellow Alumni and the university itself, but I will forever bet for VUT”.

What changes would you like to see at VUT?

“The only thing I can recommend will be that the university must work very closely with the private sector and the market, so it better understands the skills required and aligns its syllabi or curriculum. It’s painful to produce gradu-

ates who can’t be absorbed in the workplace. Also transform, what are skills for the future?”.

Which programmes/activities or initiatives would you like to contribute your skills and expertise to?

“Career guidance, Leadership Skills and Mentorship”.

Why is it important for successful former VUT students and graduates to keep contact with VUT?

“To plough back into the university. Alumni play a very important role for universities and it helps with growth and sustainability. It motivates and promotes the university as graduates can be deemed its ambassadors”.

From your experience, how would you rate VUT against other institutions? “VUT is a highly technical institution and this is a plus”.

What are your impressions of VUT after you graduated and experienced other institutions?

“VUT is the only institution I attended on a full-time basis, some has been online and distance. Not easy to compare”.

What advice would you give a prospective student, wanting to study at VUT?

“Go for it – it is a great institution. It’s not always about the institution you went to but more about YOU YOU YOU!”

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, ±200 students across all the fields of studies have benefited from the campaign, at both undergraduates and postgraduate levels.

On behalf of the VUT community, We 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. We also appreciate all the financial support received by the institution through the Resource Mobilisation and

Financial Aid Departments. Last but not least, a big thank you to President Hyper Vaal, Frigoglass SA and Rise Against Hunger and Thusong Projects that supports the VUT poverty alleviation project directed at assisting needy students over the years.

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 the public and private sector, 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 as well as the two components of the VUT Corporate Strategy: (to increase strategic engagement (SO11) and student success (SO1) and make the VUT’s motto “*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



What's your story?

VUT
ekhaya
alumni



peterm@vut.ac.za
comfortm@vut.ac.za

vents
ekhaya
alumni

VUT

www.vut.ac.za