

Launch of Community of Practice

National Symposium - HIV & AIDS and Education Research

13-14 September 2010 at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, Port Elizabeth, South Africa

The purpose of this Symposium was to continue building a network of researchers in the field of HIV and Education by formally launching a 'community of practice' in HIV&AIDS and Education. Furthermore, the aim was to reflect on 10 years of HIV&AIDS and Education Research, and to consider the way forward in the next decade. The event was hosted by the *HIV & AIDS Education Research Chair*, Centre for Research, Technology and Innovation (CERTI) at the NMMU Faculty of Education in collaboration with the HEAIDS Programme Director at HESA.

Altogether there were 52 delegates over the two days. The delegates attending the symposium consisted primarily of teacher educators from universities from all around South Africa. Delegates hailed from UKZN, US, UFS, CUT, UP, UJ, WITS, NWU, Rhodes and of course the NMMU. There were a couple of delegates from outside our borders too, including Tanzania (University of Dar es Salaam), Germany (University of Oldenberg) and Canada (McGill University). Our two honorary guests came from Kenya, who are teachers living and teaching with HIV. Representatives from HEAIDS and the HSRC were also present.

Prof Denise Zinn (Dean) welcomed the delegates at the start of the Symposium and this was followed by a series of acts by education students led by Dr Logan Athiemoolam. The students presented a variety of performances over the two days, including theatre, poetry, music and dance - all related to the issue of HIV and AIDS. Logan explained how he used drama in his classroom to teach the teachers-in-training how they can also use this medium as an education tool.

There were two keynote addresses, one on each of the two days of the Symposium. The first was by Prof Refilwe Phaswana-Mafuya, Director of Social Aspects of HIV/AIDS Research Alliance at the HSRC, Port Elizabeth. The title of her address was: *The health of our teachers*. This was an interesting presentation which helped to contextualise the teaching and learning situation in South Africa.

The second keynote address was presented by Dr Gail Andrews, HEAIDS Programme Director, and Prof Anastassios Pouris, Director of the Institute for Technological Innovation of the University of Pretoria. The title of their address was: *Mapping and analysis of HIV&AIDS research in Higher Education in South Africa*. This was also a fascinating overview of HIV-related research in higher



The established community of practice

education institutions in South Africa. The issue of cross-border research collaboration was a contentious topic, which is certainly a challenge for South African researchers.

A number of NMMU staff members, specifically from the Faculty of Education presented papers at the symposium. These included Naydene de Lange, Lesley Wood, Bill Holderness, Christine Jordaan, and Pam Austin.

One major outcome from the Symposium was the establishment of a 'community of practice' in HIV&AIDS and Education. The delegates were very enthusiastic about this aspect of the Symposium and one of the first fruits of this 'community of practice' will be the publishing of a number of the papers presented over the two days. ~ Naydene



From left: Prof Claudia Mitchell, Beldina Atieno and Martin Ptach (honorary guests), Dr Gail Andrews (Programme Director of HEAIDS), Prof Refilwe Phaswana-Mafuya (Director of SAHARA, PE, HSRC and NMMU Honorary Prof) and Prof Naydene de Lange

NPDE student from Qumbu top in the province

CELEBRATING ACADEMIC DISTINCTION

On the weekend of 11 September, Neville travelled to Qumbu to make a very special presentation to one of the NPDE students, **Ms Zoliswa Qhata**. Ms Qhata, a student at the Qumbu Centre, was the top NPDE student for 2008/2009.

Ms Yolisa Dudula, the Centre Manager, went to great lengths to add much motivational value out of this event for the current crop of NPDE students by putting together a very moving celebratory event. Devotions were led by **Mr Ligani**, a representative from the Qumbu DoE District Office and a celebratory bottle of champagne was 'popped' to toast the success achieved by Ms Qhata.

As a part of his address to the assembly, Neville also read a letter from the Dean, **Prof Denise Zinn**, in which, inter alia, the following was stated: *"I have reviewed your transcript and it shows that you received no fewer than 13 passes with distinction out of a total of 18 courses taken for your NPDE, with marks over 80% for most of these courses. This earned you your NPDE Cum Laude, an overall academic distinction obtained by only a very small percentage of students. Your results are quite remarkable, and this achievement brings honour not only to yourself and your family, but also to your school, the district and province, as well as to the Centre where you did your studies."*

In her address, Ms Qhata (pictured alongside) spoke of the challenges she experienced in completing the NPDE. She did not at the time qualify for a bursary and thus funded her own studies. She used to sell sweets at school to get money for the taxi to travel from Tsolo to Qumbu every Saturday. She also spoke eloquently of the importance of planning, discipline, commitment and focus as the guides to success.

Ms Qhata is currently enrolled with UNISA reading towards an ACE (LO). Again she is funding her own studies.

One of the highlights was when the students sang an isiXhosa song, *"Yiyo, yiyo lendlela, deda, deda santana"*, stating that 'this is the way, do not disturb me', referring to the path taken by Ms Qhata, and that they too should follow that path.

An amazing morning spent in the quiet, dusty town of Qumbu...

~ Neville Rudman



Ms Yolisa Dudula (left, leading Ms Zoliswa Qhata to the stage



Neville presents Ms Qhata with her certificate of merit

"Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness, that most frightens us. We ask ourselves, who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, and fabulous? Actually, who are you not to be? You are a child of God. Your playing small doesn't serve the world. There's nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure around you. We are all meant to shine, as children do. We are born to make manifest the glory of God that is within us. It's not just in some of us, it's in everyone. And as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others."

Barack Obama

Faculty award recipients

2010 Research, Teaching, Performing and Creative Arts Awards Evening

The glitzy awards dinner was held at the Radisson Blu Hotel earlier this month. The awards ceremony is held annually to honour lecturers and researchers at the university who have achieved in their respective fields.



Well done colleagues!

L-R: Dr Andre du Plessis (Emerging Teacher of the Year), Prof Lesley Wood (Faculty Researcher of the Year), Prof Denise Zinn (Dean), Dr Sylvan Bignaut (Emerging Researcher of the Year) and Ms Tobeka Mapasa (Faculty Teacher of the Year)

INWENT programme

Cordelia recently attended the INWENT Programme at UWC

"It was the experience of my life time and I really found it relevant to what I am presently doing in our institution. I felt so blessed to be with my colleagues from Malawi, Namibia, Tanzania, and Kenya. I learnt such a lot from them and found out that we are experiencing similar challenges in HIV and AIDS issues. I could relate and reflect on cultural issues and gender issues that still challenge us, the innovative strategies that can help us in our life skills lessons, the importance of breaking the silence in a safe space as well as creating safe schools.

I will make it a point that this experience benefits my students and the community at large. I am motivated to continue with my research as I was with an educated group of people from other countries. I could see that in their countries they prioritise education as some of them were very young lecturers and have studied overseas. I learnt such a lot from them and colleagues at UWC."

~ Cordelia

ICME-12

Lyn Webb has been invited to deliver a lecture at the next International Congress on Mathematical Education to be held in Seoul, July 2012. ICME is held every four years and is considered the premier international math education conference. Over 4000 delegates are expected in Seoul. *Well done Lyn!*

Research Briefs

SEMINAR SERIES

September's research seminar was presented by **Dr Reshma Sathiparsad** (UKZN) on the topic, *Making meaning of masculinity in the context of gender violence, HIV and teenage pregnancy*. Dr Sathiparsad hails from the Social Work Department and works across disciplines, as can be seen in a recent publication, *Diseases come from girls: Perspectives of male learners in rural KwaZulu-Natal on HIV infection and AIDS*. Gender plays a critical role in all our work and her presentation contributes to our understanding of masculinities.

NATIONAL DISCUSSION

Hosted by **Naydene**: *"Can Art stop AIDS? Exploring the impact of visual and arts-based participatory methodologies used in HIV and AIDS education and intervention research"*.

SERE's EXTERNAL EXPERTS PROGRAMME

Prof Claudia Mitchell from McGill University Canada presented on *Research as Social Change*. She is James McGill Professor of Visual Arts-based Methodologies, HIV & AIDS and Social Change. A stunning presenter with a wealth of experience of research projects all over the world!

OSLO TRIP

Pam and Laetitia will spend three weeks in Oslo at the end of September as part of the Oslo Celebration Grant awarded to them last year.

Acknowledging the Administrative Team

The management team of the faculty treated all administrative staff to a scrumptious early morning breakfast at Café Brazilia in celebration of Secretaries Day and Spring Day. It was indeed a very special occasion where much fun and collegiality was shared amongst the lavender delight.

And, what made it extra-ordinary was that, in lieu of traditional speeches, the Mgt Team chose to indicate their appreciation and acknowledgement of the contributions made by the faculty administrative staff in a unique and very creative way... they sang us a song ~ evidence alongside!

Our thanks to the Dean, Denise, the three Directors of School, Nonnie, Alette and Noluthando, as well as to Laetitia and Tobeka (for their organising and décor skills) ~ *All the Admin Team*



The Faculty Executive Team at their recent Strategic Planning Session held at Nduna Lodge

Shervani attended Ela Gandhi's lecture, 'Violence as protest by communities and trade unions in South Africa', hosted by CANRAD.

"Ela Gandhi's communitarian alternative to violent civil disobedience makes a significant contribution to the kind of humanist democracy that we aspire towards. Her focussed and strategic approach to non-violent engagement is also worth taking note of."



Information sharing sessions

Three information sharing sessions were held during September at George Campus, South Campus and Missionvale Campus to specifically highlight the post graduate and continuous professional development programmes on offer.

... the vibe at Missionvale was positive and worthwhile...



Well Done!

Basheera recently completed the Empowering Professional Personal Assistants course offered by the NMMU Business School. And... she passed with distinction!