

INCOKO

DEVELOPING THE YOUNG TO BECOME CRITICAL PROBLEM-SOLVERS OF THE FUTURE

The launch of NMMU's BEd Foundation Phase building at the Missionvale campus brings a state of the art early learning environment to where it is most needed - Khanyisa Manzini

The headline: "60% of SA kids in Grade 4 can't read" from a recent The Herald article sent us into collective shock once again. When digging a little deeper to establish the veracity of this claim one is confronted with a plethora of information that articulates the extent of the problem of learner literacy levels at the most basic level of the public education system – the Foundation Phase. The recent comparative study of reading literacy, the preProgress in International Reading Literacy Study (prePIRLS) 2011, placed South African Grade 4 learners' results at 461 points.

The study cited this score as substantially below the international standard centre point of 500. In yet another report, published by Research on Socio-Economic Policy (ReSEP) Group in May 2016 and titled "Laying Firm Foundations – Getting Reading Right", causes for the poor performance of learners in Grade 1-3 in South Africa were again detailed. According to this report many of our country's children "... complete these grades without being able to read properly in their home-language, with little understanding of the language in which they will be taught from Grade 4 (English), and with an inability to move from basic counting to true calculation using the four operations."

Data from the same report revealed a grim picture of the magnitude of the problem at the provincial level. In the Eastern Cape not only do 60% of sample grade 4 learners battle to read for meaning but 32% were in fact reading illiterate. Further, the report also found that the Eastern Cape and Limpopo provinces had extremely large grade 1-3 classes with over 60 children. The Department of Basic Education found that the average percentage score of grade 3 learners in Home Language and Mathematics in the Eastern Cape in 2013 stood at 47% and 50.6% respectively. The Annual National Assessment (ANA) 2013 Eastern Cape results also indicated a significant amount of under-performance of grade 3 learners in Mathematics as 16.1% scored in the 'not achieved' category.

The Foundation Phase is undoubtedly critical in a child's academic and cognitive development as it ushers children into the world of schooling. It is at this phase (grade R – 3) that a child is taught to read, write and count; with the ability to read for meaning being essential as it forms the basis for all other learning.

Dr Muki Moeng, Dean of NMMU's Faculty of Education says the new Foundation Phase curriculum is designed to also "develop the young to become critical problem solvers of the future."

Based on these daunting findings from a variety of reports that have been published, it is then a much welcomed decision to have a Foundation Phase course being offered at NMMU and specifically at the Missionvale Campus.

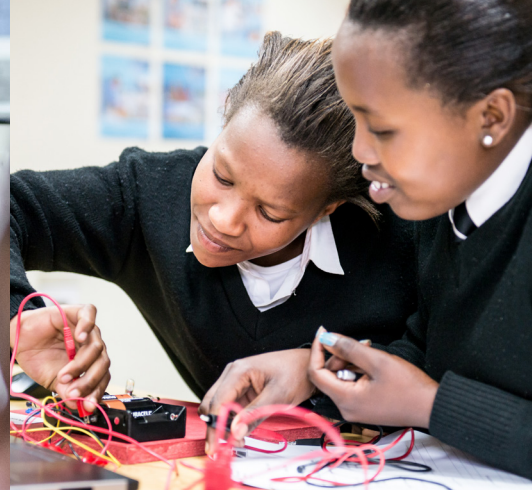
The Missionvale area and its surrounds is home to many children from low socio-economic backgrounds and whose families daily rely on the public education system to provide education. According to Statistics South Africa, the Eastern Cape has the highest percentage of people who receive a social grant (40%); and specifically the child social grant. Tied to this, is the fact that the percentage of children, 5 years and older, who attend school and receive social grants increased from 3,1% in 2003 to 61,3% in 2013. Additionally, in many of these homes, the parents (due to their low literacy levels) are not able to provide the requisite scholastic support to their children. This visionary step by NMMU to bring quality student academic preparation closer to where it is most needed is envisaged to yield results that could reverse the tide of under-preparedness of many children. It is also strategic to expose the soon-to-be educators to the realities they will face once they have graduated.

The new Foundation Phase building was officially opened in April at a ceremony that was attended by key stakeholders from the Provincial Department of Education. Dignitaries from NMMU included: NMMU Member of Council Mr Richard Piyose, the Vice-Chancellor Prof Derrick Swartz, and Executive Dean of EBEIT Dr Oswald Franks, and the Missionvale Campus Director Dr Phakama Ntshongwana. During the unveiling of the plaque the significance of this event was once again highlighted through the narrative of the history of the land on which Missionvale Campus was built; thus further fortifying the message of NMMU being an African university.

The Foundation Phase building with its modern architecture and state-of-the-art interior has certainly enhanced the physical landscape of the campus. It is therefore with fervent anticipation that the foundational education landscape of this region will also be transformed as more graduates are produced through this course.

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SPREADING THE MAGIC OF SCIENCE & MATHS

The Science, Technology, Engineering and related Management/Mathematics (STEM) In Action project is successfully introducing the marvels of maths and science to learners and teachers in the Eastern Cape - Khanyisa Manzini and Taryn Roberts

A significant amount of classroom time was lost due to the community protest in the Northern Areas of Nelson Mandela Bay metro at the beginning of this year. To date six high schools totalling 1 295 learners from the Northern Areas had been regular participants of STEM in ACTION dating back to the programme's inception.

The mission of STEM is to operate as a workforce continuum from school into higher education by preparing learners and especially selected learners for careers in Science, Technology, Engineering and related Management/Mathematics (STEM) fields.

During March, STEM consulted with the Physical Science educators from 4 of these schools and together developed a strategy which could assist both the learners as well as the Physical Science educators, without infringing on any of the schools' individual "catch-up" strategies. Learners from these schools then attended Physical Science experiment sessions on Friday afternoons instead of the regular morning sessions. A further customised Autumn School was developed and took place during the 2nd week of the school holidays. Hundred and ten learners attended sessions which allowed for consolidation of much of the Term 1 Physics content. The interest for this intervention was so high the schools even asked the STEM to consider running more sessions during the year, as a result STEM in ACTION ran a follow up Winter School from 11 - 14 July.

In 2016 a record total of 2 538 learners were enrolled on STEM in Action!

The program has seen significant growth over the years since its first group of 216 learners in 2010. STEM is determined to push for even greater numbers as the need for such an intervention becomes increasingly important.

The project has employed a total of 38 student assistants to date, to support with the daily operations

of the programme. These students who are in their 2nd and final years of study are primarily sourced from EBEIT & Health Sciences but are even attracting Psychology & IT students. These students are employed while they are studying, thus STEM slots into their academic timetable and not the other way around. STEM has seen the need to further train these assistants in not just basic laboratory techniques but also workplace skills like time management, communication, organisational skills and general workplace etiquette, as well providing opportunities for their self-development. As a result, some have since gained meaningful employment in the private sector; something which they gladly attribute to their learning experience whilst at STEM.

Teacher's Perspective

Educator development has been part of STEM's comprehensive intervention plan from the beginning. Teachers are seen as a critical component of the program as they have to ensure continuity. Teachers are therefore encouraged to actively participate as co-facilitators during class times.

Raymond Mali is the proud runner up of the 2015 SANRAL STEM Teacher's Award; an award to recognise outstanding support of teachers in Maths and Science.

Raymond teaches physical science to grade 10, 11 and 12s at Khumbulani High School. The school does not have a science laboratory. Raymond finds that the access to equipment and technology coupled by the hands-on approach of the STEM team to be extremely helpful to his learners. He credits STEM for stimulating the level of interest in science in his learners. The actual experience of being inside a laboratory and participating in experiments reinforces all that is covered within a school classroom.

Raymond says although he introduces the learners to the world of science prior to STEM, it is only when they are in STEM that it is all brought to life.



“STEM reduces the amount of time it takes for me to teach the physical science curriculum to the learners.

The kids like it when I join them for lessons as they say “at least my teacher is part and parcel of this struggle”.

It is my vision to increase the amount of kids that take maths and science in my school.

Raymond Mali





Grade 11 learners from Loyiso and KwaMagxaki High Schools

TEACHING MATRICS EXAM COPING TOOLS

For the majority of the school going population Grade 12 represents the pinnacle of the 13-year journey in basic education. This particular year holds the key to unlock future doors in further education and ultimately the world of work. The June exam, September trials and December final examination sittings are critical and often extremely stressful times in the life of a Grade 12 learner.

The Write of Passage event, the first of its kind to be hosted under the High School Engagement Programme was hosted on Missionvale Campus in May. The event brought together 46 grade 12 learners from four local high schools and their accompanying teachers. The workshop was done in collaboration with the Community Psychology Centre. The facilitators (Elzaan Cothill and Sihle Ntlangu) skillfully guided the learners through study skills, time

and stress management and infused a bit of fun whilst tackling serious issues.

Learners participated with ease as the session encouraged them to draw on their own experiences and to find means to incorporate the new methods that were shared on that day. Some of the problems that learners voiced were around non-conducive study environments at home; not actually having enough time to study due to other tasks and chores; and the lack of self-discipline with regards to allocating time spent on social media. The adults in the room unanimously nodded on the excessive social media bit!

A number of learners wanted to know more about constructing mind-maps; better concentration and how to hand exam pressure.

DREAM BELIEVE ACHIEVE

Missionvale campus welcomed six learners to experience what it is like to work at a university as part of the Cell C Take a Girl child to work initiative.

'Dream, Believe, Achieve' was the bold theme for this year's CellC Take a Girl Child to Work annual event. The broader aim of this initiative is to expose girl learners to the different professions thereby expanding their knowledge of career options that are available to them. It is also part of CellC's strategy to use this event as a platform for dialogue on issues of gender equality and women empowerment.

According to Suzette van der Merwe, Managing Executive of the Cell C Foundation, believes that women can be vibrant contributors to the economy and leading job creators for South Africa. "By empowering young women to think about the future that they would like for themselves, Cell C believes that this possibility will become a reality."

This year, Missionvale Campus joined the list of 650 country-wide partners who registered to take part in introducing girl learners to the place of work. Six learners, hailing from three local high schools: KwaMagxaki, Loyiso and Tyhilulwazi were shown the different parts that make up the Campus (and by extension a university). The learners were warmly received by staff from the Foundation Phase, Library, Disability Unit and STEM in Action.

The girls were treated to a lunch hosted by the Campus Director, Dr Phakama Ntshongwana. The girls had an opportunity to interact and reflect on the day's activities. Most of them had not been inside university grounds although they dreamt of furthering their studies. Their choice of career varied from medical doctor, chartered accountant to even being a soldier. Dr Ntshongwana encouraged them to vigorously pursue their dreams and to always value self-knowledge as that would aid them in realising their full potential as human beings.

The remark by one of the girls: "I'm in a board-room! Just like in Generations!" was a strong reminder that more efforts need to be put into developing young girl children so they can take their rightful place in society.

There is clearly a need for more workshops of this kind judging from the feedback from students summed up by these quotes from participants:

"I would like to come here more because I found motivation and I would like to find a tutor".

"Being here today had taught me so many things which will groom me to be a better person. I am looking forward to working and being helped by this programme".

"This session was the best and I felt free and I learned more from the other learners too".

"You guys helped us. I wish you could visit school and give them what you fed us"

"I still want to know more on how to convince my parents to stop being hard on me to let them see how education is important to me".

"Everything was awesome and I learned a lot. I am now ready to face my studying time with good techniques. Thank you guys for all that you have done".

✓ A Teacher and grade 12 Learners from Tyhilulwazi High School





Prof Vuyisa Lineo Mazwi-Tanga, Cape Peninsula University of Technology's first Rector and Vice-Chancellor (2006-2013)

UNITE AGAINST RACISM

Prof Vuyisa Lineo Mazwi-Tanga, the keynote speaker of The Public Lecture Series held at the Missionvale campus in March, highlights the need to tackle deeply entrenched racism at historically white universities

"We have a responsibility to those not yet born. To spit into their mouths, the truth not the distorted truth. So that when these problems re-emerge centuries later they will say we remember what our forebears taught us and told us about racism in South Africa." (paraphrased from a poem by Iyamide Hazeley)

These were the opening remarks of Prof Vuyisa Mazwi-Tanga, the keynote speaker of The Public Lecture Series, held by Missionvale Campus in partnership with Cipset and Department of Arts and Culture (DAC). The lecture was one of many held throughout the country at public higher education institutions during Human Rights Month in March.

Prof Mazwi-Tanga described racism as an "antithesis to social cohesion, economic emancipation and nation building." She reminded the audience that in South Africa racism was not simply a belief but an ideology which systematically determined where people worked, lived and socialized based on the colour of their skin. The main ingredients of this racism were exclusion and prohibition – economic, social, political; and its genesis was not in 1948 but centuries prior.

"The advent of a democratic dispensation in 1994 made us all believe we were endowed with this miraculous cleansing that would remove all the entrenched prejudices learnt during the apartheid and colonial eras. Subsequently the world cheered us. The fantasy of a rainbow nation was born." According to Prof Mazwi –Tanga we avoided the "real questions of race-based prejudice and the consequences emanating from that and we became reluctant to talk about racism – it simply no longer existed."

Prof Mazwi-Tanga also challenged the current mindset of only recognizing racism in the increasing public incidence of hate speech like the use of the 'k-word'

or when black people are being likened to monkeys. She asserted that as a nation we seem to struggle to decipher the deeply entrenched practices of racism in this country.

Going further, Prof Mazwi-Tanga honed in on higher education institutions and specifically universities. She said, and quoting Professor Crain Soudien of the Soudien Report: "universities, particularly historically white institutions were not geared toward including African students." These universities having admitted African students still used prejudicial and discriminatory systems and practices thereby "conspiring against students." This was evident in student throughput data showing significant disparities between whites and black Africans graduate passes. The recent student mass movements of #RhodesMustFall and #FeesMustFall have also served as a further indication that more work needs to be done to transform institutions of higher learning in South Africa.

In conclusion Prof Mazwi-Tanga appealed: "we need to take action as the writing is on the wall."

The discussion paper presented by Prof Mazwi-Tanga opened up further engagement with the audience with a number of people concurring with her remarks on the complexity of racism. Some of the concepts that were unpacked included: non-racism; wide and inclusive public participation in discussing racism; the intolerance and unlearning of racist practices irrespective of originator; and the economic redress as a result of racially stratified socio-economic systems. Academics were challenged to re-enter and contribute to the race discourse in South Africa.

* Prof Mazwi-Tanga was the Cape Peninsula University of Technology's first Rector and Vice-Chancellor (2006-2013).

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(paraphrased from a poem by Iyamide Hazeley)



Far Right : >>
Mr Allan Zinn
Director: Centre for the
Advancement of Non-Racialism and
Democracy (CANRAD)

Right :
Dr Abraham Serote
Director : Social Cohesion
and Nation Building
Department of Arts and Culture
(DAC)

*Missionvale Incoko is edited by Khanyisa Manzini
Opinions expressed in Incoko are not necessary those of the editor nor NMMU.
Please email your comments of this edition of Incoko to
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WALKING THE TALK WITH COMMUNITIES

(When Life Gives You Lemons)

*You can make SAFE electricity with wires and a lemon. It won't hurt you.
Push one zinc and one copper wire into each lemon and then connect them.*

Now, bring the wires to your tongue. Feel anything?

The tingling feeling on your tongue is electrical energy coming from the lemon.

*The energy comes up the copper wire, passes through your tongue and goes
back to the zinc wire. We call this an electric circuit.*

The flow of electric energy is an electric current.

*DIY complete! Courtesy of: Making Connections 'Electricity Basics Manual',
developed by Neil Murtough (CIPSET)*

So, what does making a lemon battery have in common with adult education, you ask? It sounds simple and child-like. And fun.

The answer to that lies at the core of the design of The Centre for Integrated Post-School Education and Training, CIPSET's Community Education Program (CEP). The actual activity of 'making' a product is the end-result of a process that started with walks with community members through their community. There was no agenda other than listening and observing.

The analysis of information from these initial walks yielded four themes: environmental justice; food and hunger; children and families and critical citizenship.

Honing on these themes allowed for exploration. Environmental justice was the first to be unpacked using the sub-theme 'access to and use of energy resources' as a basic human right. Through lengthy discussions and documentation another milestone

was reached. The group agreed to develop an open adult education event tackling the issue of unauthorized electricity connections. This led to collectively producing a workbook and running a practical workshop to gain an understanding on the concept of 'electricity'. Hence, the lemon battery. The same applies to the making of board games from recycled material to support children's play.

The process described may sound simplistic and like common sense. What may not be evident is the length of time and depth of critical debate with the community members. This is the true essence of what the CEP is contributing to the non-formal education sector. CEP argues that knowledge production for adult learning should be relevant and purposeful. The springboard for engagement is around community 'issues' and the knowledge creation is with community members around these 'issues'.

*“The place to
debate adult education
should be within society
and with the people
that are most directly
affected.”*

Irna Senekal



THE SOCIAL BIOSCOPE BREAKING BOUNDARIES AND BARRIERS

By Zolisa Marawu

Academic debate across disciplines has got a lot more interesting with the launch of The Social Bioscope, a way of exploring the challenges of modern society using documentaries and movies. An initiative of The Centre for Integrated Post-School Education and Training (CIPSET), the Social Bioscope is designed for people from all walks of life to engage on a range of social issues.

The documentaries cover issues such as global warming, ecological sustainability, the global economic crisis, human trafficking, education and freedom, global politics, race & exploitation, gender and exploitation, identity and globalization.

Thus far, there have been two screenings held at The Missionvale Campus conference centre in March. *Miners Shot Down* and *Ivory Tower*. *Miners Shot Down* explored the relationship between education, work and society through a look at the crisis that led to the Marikana Massacre. Issues discussed by students and academics from across various disciplines involved the history of migrant labour in South Africa and the role of education and the labour market.

Ivory Tower delved into the discourses that emanated from the 2015 #feesmustfall campaign. This screening explored the relevance of decolonisation in higher education as well as the relationship between current fee structures in higher and basic education to the realisation of education as a social good.

Social Bioscope is essentially an experiment on how to teach socially engaged thinking using non-conventional tools (i.e documentaries) that empowers different audiences to participate without the intimidation of academic surroundings, "where we learn about things that matter beyond disciplinary boundaries".

Anyone interested in viewing the documentaries and accessing further readings on topics debated can like the Social Bioscope Facebook page.

NURSES' CONFERENCE - "SEWING A FUTURE TOGETHER"

Nurse Educators Association (NEA) of South Africa hosted its very first Combined Student Conference at Missionvale Campus in May this year. In attendance were undergraduate nursing students affiliated to NEA in Port Elizabeth that are from NMMU and Lilitha College of Nursing as well as nursing professionals from NMMU, Netcare, Life Healthcare and Life College of Learning.

The main purpose of the conference was to unite the nursing students in a program of their interest. The programme included a welcome note by Dr Suzette du Rand (Chairperson of NEA). This was followed by various presentations by senior nursing professionals unpacking current trends in nursing practice and future career prospects for the wide range of Nursing Specialties. The lineup also included a panel discussion under the theme: The Generation Gap - Being a Student/Educator/Clinician Today.



ENABLING FOR LIFE

By Ruth Sauls

The Disability Unit's mission is to break down barriers and to encourage its student and staff with disabilities to self-advocate, to promote disability rights and to collaborate with all NMMU support departments, and to guide students in embracing a full student life whilst at NMMU.

Since March 2016, Ruth Sauls, the Disability Support Coordinator has occupied the Missionvale office on a daily basis, whilst Sheri-Anne Pietersen calls on the campus each Wednesday.

Soon DU will supply the campus with large key keyboards for partially sighted users.

NMMU's Disability Unit offers the following services:

- >> Assistance with extra time concessions for tests and exams
- >> Access to assistive technologies such as large-key keyboards, Zoomtext, Dragon, JAWS, among other
- >> Assistance with placement into barrier-free and accessible student housing/residence
- >> Support with Scribes during tests
- >> Accessible transport through its wheelchair-friendly kombi service
- >> Workshops to educate NMMU community on such matters as Disability etiquette

Anyone who needs support or assistance from the DU can find Ruth Sauls at
0104 First Floor,
New Admin Building (502)
Missionvale Campus
041 504 2562



CAMPUS LIFE IN CAMERA



HEALTHY STUDENT BODY, HEALTHY STUDENT MIND.

Fitness Information Workshop –
held at the Student Life Centre.

Demonstrations and information on exercises – at the gym and in my
private space and on nutrition and supplements.



Mr Yanga Lusasa, Student Life and Events

*“If it
doesn’t
challenge you
it doesn’t
change
you.”*



Roving Camera on Campus, >>
Missionvale students at their very best.



Roving Camera on Campus, >>
Missionvale students at their very best.

<< CellC Take A girl Child to Work, Campus Director Dr Phakama Ntshongwana talking Dream, Believe, Achieve! with a Grade 11 Learner from Loyiso High School.

NMMU Ukonga – A Musical Connection, Cowan High School Choir



CellC Take a Girl Child to Work, learners from KwaMagxaki, Loyiso and Tyhilulwazi enjoying the experience of being in the Missionvale boardroom.

Gino Fransman and Sonja MacLachlan from the Writing Centre on Missionvale.

<< NMMU Ukonga – A Musical Connection, NMMU Wind Symphony, with Conductor Gareth Williams

The Academic Literacies and Writing Centre runs twice weekly on the Missionvale Campus

Mondays 11:30 - 16:30 & Fridays 8:30 - 13:30

Find us at the bottom of the library stairs, just inside the door.
Lecturers are encouraged to make group appointments for classes requiring assignment writing support.

Email : Gino.Fransman@nmmu.ac.za to request times for your students to visit or to arrange for in-class support.

See you there!

