

NELSON MANDELA UNIVERSITY

ALUMNI AWARDS *Ceremony 2020*

PROGRAMME

Nelson Mandela University Alumni Awards recognise alumni who have gone the distance and beyond in their various fields, to the benefit of society at local, provincial, national and international level. A number of outstanding nominations were received by the Alumni Association Executive Committee and in the spirit of the University's values, it is proud to present its 2020 recipients.

26 November 2020 - 18:00 CAT

Online awards ceremony



ORDER OF PROCEEDINGS

PROGRAMME DIRECTOR:

MR PAUL GESWINDT (DIRECTOR: ALUMNI RELATIONS)

WELCOME BY ALUMNI ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT:

MR KHWEZI BLOSE

CONGRATULATORY MESSAGE FROM THE VICE-CHANCELLOR:

PROFESSOR SIBONGILE MUTHWA

PRESENTATION OF AWARDS

- RISING STAR AWARDS
- SPECIAL AWARD
- ACHIEVER AWARDS

VOTE OF THANKS BY ALUMNI ASSOCIATION VICE-PRESIDENT:

MS MICHELLE MBACO

Vision

To be a dynamic African university, recognised for its leadership in generating cutting-edge knowledge for a sustainable future

Mission

To offer a diverse range of life-changing education experiences for a better world

Values

Excellence
Diversity
Ubuntu
Social justice and equality
Integrity
Environmental stewardship

Diversity

Excellence

Ubuntu

**Social justice
and equality**

Integrity

**Environmental
stewardship**

RISING STAR AWARD RECIPIENTS



Dumisani Chauke

From the dusty streets of rural Limpopo to becoming a national netball coach, sport has taken Dumisani Chauke places she never dreamed – and now she is determined to empower and guide those following behind her, especially in the country's most under-served areas. Dumisani, who obtained her National Diploma in Sports Management from Mandela University in 2008, has been the Sport Organiser at Tshwane University of Technology since 2016. Since her school days, she has excelled in netball – successfully participating at university, provincial and national levels both as player and coach – and is currently assistant coach of the Spar Proteas, South Africa's national netball team. She has also been involved in basketball and in 2012, became the first woman to chair the Nelson Mandela Bay Basketball Association. In 2017, she registered her non-profit company, the Dumisani Chauke Netball Foundation, which has empowered thousands of young girls through netball skills training, life skills sessions and other community-based projects, including providing sanitary towels and pre-loved takkies to the girls. She received a Presidential award at the 2018 South African Youth Awards, for making a difference in the lives of South Africa's youth through sport.



Siyabulela Mandela

Building on the legacy of his great-grandfather Nelson Mandela, Siyabulela Mandela is continuing the fight for social justice and equality, both in South Africa and further afield. During his years at Nelson Mandela University, where he completed his Master's degree in Conflict Transformation and Management in 2016 and is now pursuing doctoral studies, he stood out as an exemplary student leader, becoming a voice for disadvantaged students and low-income workers, particularly during the #FeesMustFall movement. Over the past few years, he has spent time in a number of countries, including Sri Lanka, Ecuador, Canada and the United States, participating in research and discussions on social justice and reconciliation, while engaging with academics, and indigenous and government leaders. At the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, the international media development organisation Journalists for Human Rights approached Siyabulela to head up its South Sudan operations as country director. His role was to work with local media organizations, to ensure health information on COVID-19 was accurately reported. Based on his successes, he has since been appointed as the Regional Project Coordinator for East and Southern Africa and is heading up a project titled "Mobilizing media to fight COVID-19".

RISING STAR AWARD RECIPIENTS



Dr Sweta Patnaik

Since obtaining her masters and doctoral degrees in Textile Sciences from Mandela University, Dr Sweta Patnaik has been making significant and rapid strides to advance teaching and learning in higher education globally. Employed as a lecturer in Clothing and Textile Technology at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology since 2016, Sweta has spearheaded the curriculation and re-curriculation of several programmes, and championed the use of technology and innovative teaching methods – even before the COVID-19 pandemic forced a shift to distance learning. Her enormous efforts within the brief period she has been lecturing led to her earning a “Teaching Excellence” award in 2019. In August 2020, she was appointed Country Director (an honorary position) of the International Higher Education Teaching and Learning Association, a global community of education professionals dedicated to advancing the scholarship of teaching and learning in higher education. Sweta is also an active researcher, co-authoring a number of national and international papers and book chapters in fields as diverse as sustainability, waste management, e-learning, and the impact of COVID-19. She has also edited a book on advances in textile manufacturing technologies, which was published in the United States.



Conrad van Loggerenberg

Although he works at one of the world’s largest law firms, Conrad van Loggerenberg has never forgotten his roots in Port Elizabeth, where he is helping to transform the lives of thousands of vulnerable children. After completing his BCom and LLB studies at Mandela University in 2008, Conrad went on to complete his LLM degree at Duke University School of Law in the United States. He has been working for New York-based legal giant Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton and Garrison LLP since 2011, and was recently elected as a partner in their Corporate Department. Focusing mainly on the formation and operation of private investment funds, he also advises leading global investment firms in their mergers and acquisitions. Apart from Paul Weiss, Conrad has managed to run an active pro bono practice, representing not-for-profit interests and individuals, including recently helping a child seeking refuge from persecution in El Salvador to obtain asylum in the United States. He serves as a committee member and organiser for Port Elizabeth NGO Ubuntu Pathways, which is helping to create pathways out of poverty for over 2,000 children, by supporting their health and education from cradle to career.

SPECIAL AWARD RECIPIENT



Nomhle Zako

Nomhle Zako's remarkable journey at Nelson Mandela University began in 1981, when she started working as a cleaner in the campus residences. In the late 1990s, she took steps to complete her unfinished high school studies, gaining her matric certificate through Newell High's Adult Basic Education and Training programme in 1999. But she didn't stop there. In 2007, she graduated with a Bachelor of Public Administration from the University, paving the way towards new opportunities within the Residences Department, ranging from computer lab assistant to secretary. Since 2011, she has been working as the Residence Manager for Veritas Residence, helping to nurture and grow the students whose rooms she once used to clean. Through the years, she has continued to build her knowledge and skills, completing a range of short courses, including office administration, self-leadership, basic firefighting and first aid. She has also completed both the Basic and Advanced Programmes from the Student Housing Training Institute. Achieving against the odds, Nomhle is a shining example to all of us.

ALUMNI ACHIEVER AWARD RECIPIENTS



St Claire Adriaan

Growing up in the northern areas of Port Elizabeth during apartheid, St Claire Adriaan experienced firsthand what it was like to receive an inferior education at an under-resourced school. Despite these challenges, he understood the value of education, and decided to become a teacher educated to the highest level possible, with the aim of giving marginalised students the best instruction possible. This has become his life story. Since obtaining his BA, BA Honours and BEd degrees at Mandela University in the 1990s, he has equipped himself with a further five education degrees. These include earning a master's degree magna cum laude on restorative practices, which involves a more empathetic approach to classroom discipline. After leaving South Africa in the early 2000s to teach maths in the United States, St Claire has carved out a career teaching at the most diverse schools, where discrimination continues to keep children in minority groups behind. He has fulfilled various leadership roles at schools in Los Angeles, San Diego, Chicago and New Orleans – where he founded a new school in the wake of Hurricane Katrina – and is currently principal at an inner city school in New York City. St Claire brings what he calls “the J factor” into all his classrooms, “J” standing for “joy”, and strives to ensure each student feels cared for, trusted, and more than anything else, like they matter. Not surprisingly, he has won a string of teaching awards in the United States.



Dr Theresia Ott

How can global mining operations continue to run optimally, while reducing their impact on the environment and uplifting surrounding communities? This is the highly-complex domain of sustainability leader Dr Theresia Ott, who has become a recognised and sought-after voice on biodiversity and the mining sector. Theresia, who obtained her BSc and BSc Honours at Mandela University in the early 2000s, fulfills the role of Chief Advisor for Environment at Rio Tinto, one of the world's largest mining companies, with operations spanning five continents. Now based in Montreal, Canada, Theresia started her career as an ecologist at Richards Bay Minerals, Rio Tinto in 2012, where she set about involving local communities in successfully developing and meeting rehabilitation and ecological targets. She swiftly climbed the company ranks to Superintendent for Ecology and Rehabilitation in 2014, then Principal Advisor for Environment based in Johannesburg in 2016. Promoted to her current role in Canada in 2018, she has been instrumental in launching new environmental priorities, developing international platforms to connect environmental experts, and driving targets for water use, land redevelopment and biodiversity. She is also highly respected outside of the organisation, being called upon to give presentations, be on advisory panels and contribute to environmental literature. She serves on the International Council of Mining and Metals Environment Policy Committee and, in June 2020, was invited to participate at the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity.

IT IS IN YOUR HANDS

the fight against COVID-19

Since the announcement of the COVID-19 outbreak in January, Nelson Mandela University has been exploring ways in which it can contribute to the overall fight against the virus.

In addition to suit of services contributing to the provincial COVID-19 efforts, a great deal of this has been the dissemination of this has been the dissemination of relevant information from credible sources.

We urge everyone to take responsibility by educating yourself about the virus, and to heed all precautionary measures:

- Wash your hands regularly.
- Wear a mask when out in public.
- Practice physical distancing.
- Stay home as far as possible.

Let's work together to curb the potentially devastating effects of COVID-19 for the sake of our families and communities. Your safety, and that of those around you, is in your hands!

<https://www.mandela.ac.za/coronavirus>

