

Change the future

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OR AWARDS
ALUMNI WHO BRING HONOUR TO RHODES



INTERVARSITY RIVALS
RU RUGBY VICTORY



LELONA FUFU
BENEFIT LUNCHEON
CELEBRATING WOMEN



RHODES UNIVERSITY
Where leaders learn

Alumni Update

RHODES ALUMNI DEVELOPMENT E-NEWSLETTER



Dear Rhodians and Friends

Founders Weekend for 2015 was a resounding success thanks to the continued support and interest you, our loyal alumni, show in your *alma mater*. It is in this proud familial spirit that we welcome our latest Old Rhodian awardees to the honour roll and celebrate their achievements. Approximately 60 convocants attended Convocation and many had the chance to revive old friendships and relive your student days. The Rhodes Business School celebrated their 15th anniversary with a reunion and launched the Business School Alumni Association. More importantly you also had the opportunity to connect with current day Rhodes, its successes, challenges and needs.

[Enjoy the read.](#)

[The Rhodes Alumni Team](#)

It is Spring and the gardens are just beginning to blossom in time for the onset of exam frenzy.

Outstanding Old Rhodians

The Old Rhodian Awards are the quintessential highlight of Founders' Weekend and this year we celebrate the achievements of five outstanding individuals.

Emerging Old Rhodian Awards

Prof Avinash Govindjee is the Deputy Head of the Labour and Social Security Law Unit at Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU) and a selfless advocate for the disenfranchised.

Ms Sikelelwa Mgabadelu is an award-winning financial journalist who keeps South Africans abreast of the latest financial indicators, demanding accountability from leaders while giving voice to ordinary people.

Distinguished Old Rhodian Awards

Revd Dr Simon Gqubule has dedicated his life as a teacher, lecturer and minister to securing opportunities for disadvantaged students. At 87 he is still an active leader in education as the founder of Ilitha Lemfundo Educational Enhancement Centre.

Dr Christopher Vaughan is a world authority in the biomechanics of human locomotion and also considered one of the pioneers of the medical device industry in South Africa. His new mammography system for detecting breast cancer is highly recognised globally.

Andrew Lofts Gray, a Senior Lecturer in the Division of Pharmacology at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, whose knowledge of pharmacology, drug policy and evidence-based medicine has been described by colleagues as encyclopaedic.

Prof Trevor Hastie is in the top 10 most cited list among all mathematical scientists. He has put modern computer-intensive statistical methods in the hands of disciplines as diverse as business, medicine, ecology and health care. He has received numerous accolades and awards, most recently the Emmanuel Parzon prize for Statistical Innovation.

[Read more](#) about these exemplary individuals.



Dr Christopher Vaughan, Revd Dr Simon Gqubule, Ms Siki Mgabadelu, Dr Sizwe Mabizela and Prof Avinash Govindjee.

Leadership for sustainability



The Rhodes University Business school celebrated its 15th anniversary with alumni, the 2015 MBA cohort, colleagues and friends. A highlight of the weekend was a visit from the Public Protector, Advocate Thuli Madonsela, who delivered the inaugural Archbishop Thabo Makgoba Trust Annual Lecture. In this lecture she introduced the young leaders of the future to the concept of Values Based Leadership. The Archbishop, who was the youngest Archbishop ever appointed in South Africa also attended. [Read more about Thuli Madonsela's lecture here](#)

The Business School has developed an internationally accredited Leadership for Sustainability Business School programme and it is based on the pillars of good corporate governance, responsibility, accountability, fairness and transparency. The school is in desperate need of a new building to accommodate the growing number of MBA students and would appreciate your support. Please click [here](#) to donate online or to do an electronic transfer. For further information, please contact the Director of the Business School, Prof Owen Skae o.skae@ru.ac.za



An essential link

The 65th Annual Meeting of Convocation was held jointly with the Annual General Meeting of the Old Rhodian Union (ORU) during Founders' Weekend.

The ORU is an essential link between past and present students and staff and relies on what the President, Professor Rod Walker, calls "the generosity and spirit of our alumni". As recent MBA graduate and Director of Amatola Water, Craig Thomson, who attended the ORU for the first time, said: "There is a lot of loyalty and belief here. It's important to get involved if you benefitted from the University, and contribute to future generations." Honorary Treasurer, John Gillam, said that the ORU had provided over R200 000 in bursaries for the children of Rhodes alumni and staff over the past year.

Providing comforting continuity, all committee members of the ORU stood for re-election and were reappointed by unanimous vote.

At the Meeting of Convocation Dr Mabizela reported on many important issues, from the 2015 graduation rates which proudly saw the Science Faculty boast more graduations than all the other Faculties combined, through the renovation of Cullen Bowles Residence, to the completion of our new Life Sciences Building.

The joy of reconnecting

We keep you connected with Rhodes at our regular alumni events around the country. Keep an eye on our web pages for an event near you, it's the perfect opportunity to show your purple pride, reconnect with old friends and hear about the latest news from Rhodes. We regularly update our [gallery](#) with photographs from all of our events

Oriel House Centenary

Oriel House celebrates its Centenary this year. Plans were all set to celebrate with Alumni over Founders' Weekend, but unfortunately due to time constraints, we have postponed the event to next year to coincide with the National Arts Festival on the weekend of 8 July. If you have not received your invitation, it means that you are not on our Oriel House database, so please email Mandilakhe at m.kila@ru.ac.za

East London Reunion

We were delighted to hold an East London reunion for the first time in several years. It is clear we have no shortage of loyalty and support from our East London alumni who embraced the opportunity to reconnect with us at the East London Golf Club on 31 July.

Give5 – Jan Smuts Fun Day

The compassion shown by students for others who are doing all they can just to afford a university education inspires us with hope for the engaged citizens and leaders we see in South Africa's future. On 1 August a fun day organised by Anelisiwe Zumana and the Jan Smuts House team united students in activities such as hoola hoop, an obstacle course and 30 seconds in a fundraising drive for Give5 and the Pocket Money Fund.



Lelona Fufu Benefit Luncheon



An overwhelming 120 staff, students and local community members celebrated National Women's Day on 8 August by attending the Lelona Fufu Benefit Luncheon. Fittingly held the day after the Silent Protest, this amazing event raised awareness for the Lelona Fufu Memorial Fund and commemorated the more than 20 000 South African women marched on the Union Buildings in 1956. Supported by the Alumni Relations office, the event was organised by the Black Management Forum and Segametsi Maloa. Guest speakers included three successful young leaders and business women: Thina Maqubela, Pamela Segone and Chuma Myoli with Mokgethwa 'Mke' Masemola offering a welcome, Mak Manaka sharing his poetry and performances by Siki Qwazi and Kay Mosiane. Please click [here](#) for more details.

Wathint'Abafazi
Wathint'imbokodo!
("you strike a woman,
you strike a rock")



Cape Town and Johannesburg

The power of social media has been embraced with gusto and a dash of competitive spirit by Old Rhodians in Cape Town and Johannesburg. Organised as a Facebook Event by Old Rhodian Sam Beckley with sponsorship from Red Bull, over 350 Rhodents exceeded our expectations and attended a reunion at The Slug and Lettuce, Newlands. This was a vibrant event with Rhodents of all ages coming together to celebrate their varsity days. Prof Matthew Lester from the Business School gave a short update on Rhodes today before the festivities continued and Terry! McCarthy from Alumni Relations kept the alumni flag flying. Given the vibe around the Cape Town reunion and for FOMO ('fear of missing out' for those not well versed in social media speak), a Johannesburg Reunion at the Sandton Sports Club was organised by Dylan Harrison and James Boyers. The miserable weather did not put off the approximately 90 attendees who revelled in the Old Rhodian atmosphere brought on by pit fires and excellent food and drink specials. Mandilakhe Kila from Alumni Relations could not resist the pull of the big city and went along to get a handle on the new phenomenon of a Facebook reunion event and connect with our alumni in person.

Intersvarsity rivalry is alive

Intersvarsity, held on the weekend of 14 August at Rhodes this year, delivered its usual spirited and hotly contested tournament between Rhodes, Walter Sisulu University (WSU), Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU) and the University of Fort Hare (UFH) across 19 sporting codes. NMMU emerged the overall winners of the trophy but this did not detract from the impressive rugby victory that Rhodes enjoyed. In fact Rhodes Rugby impressed us all with their runaway 17-7 win over WSU in the final. The Rhodes men's basketball also raised the purple flag, beating NMMU in a tight final 39-32. The women's team were not as lucky as they succumbed to a 27-34 defeat by NMMU. The Rhodes Chess team took third place behind NMMU and UFH respectively and the Rhodes men's hockey team fought tooth and nail to a 3-3 draw with NMMU in the finals. Additional results included the wins by all Rhodes rowing teams. <http://oppidanpress.com/nmmu-add-to-trophy-cabinet-as-overall-winners/>



Dinner with the Vice-Chancellor
Donors and active Old Rhodians who have taken a special interest in Rhodes were invited to the Vice-Chancellor's Dinner on 10 September at The Wild Fig in Cape Town. Dr Mabizela shared his vision and the grand challenges facing Rhodes and personally met with and engaged guests on these issues. During a Q&A session transformation was discussed deeply, honouring Rhodes's commitment to allowing all constituents to be heard.

Making sincere connections
A Legacy Luncheon was hosted by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Research and Development, Dr Peter Clayton on 11 September. We cherish these luncheons which are attended by the more senior of our Old Rhodians who take such a keen interest in Rhodes, its transformation and the needs of today's students. Such alumni provide valued connections between the generations, as many of our students are in a far less fortunate position to afford a tertiary education than in generations gone before.



USSA rowing regatta

The Boat Race Festival this year saw Rhodes reclaim the Kowie River as the men’s and women’s crews returned to their former top rowing form. Entering six teams in the three categories, Rhodes was placed in the top three for all men’s and women’s races out of the eight institutions that participated.

These included Wits, UP, UCT, NMMU, UK, Stellies and UKZN.

The Men’s A crew got to the highly anticipated final against the power house of rowing, University of Pretoria (Tuks), but had to settle for silver.

The Women’s A crew narrowly missed the finals by 53 seconds but took their bronze with a convincing lead.

The results were as follows:

Women’s A -3rd

Women’s B1 – 2nd

Women’s B2- 7th

Men’s A- 2nd

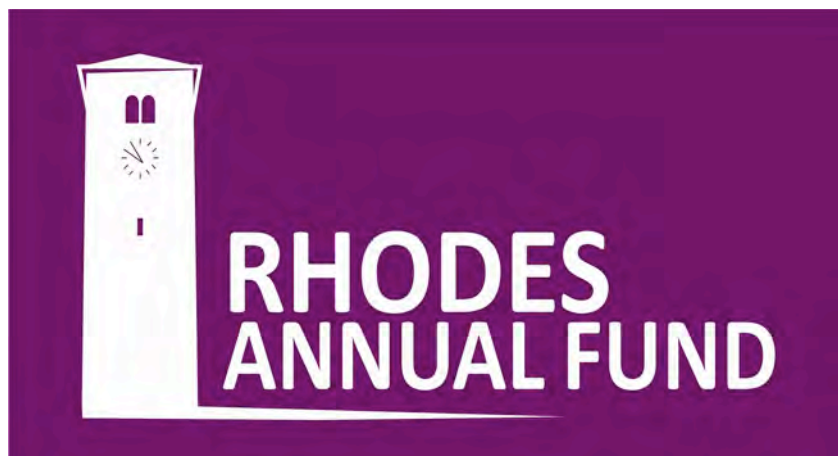
Men’s B- 3rd.

<http://www.grocotts.co.za/content/silver-rhodes-boat-race-2015-16-09-2015>

Rhodos is out



We have released another superb edition of *Rhodos*, our annual alumni publication, which is now available online. Read our exclusive interview with Dr Sizwe Mabizela, learn all about our latest research successes, catch up with fellow alumni who are making a difference through their personal and professional efforts, and discover the many different ways students, staff and alumni are giving to the Annual Fund and enhancing the Rhodes experience for needy students. We hope you will discover a way to contribute too – no matter what your donation, every little bit counts. If you would like a hard copy of *Rhodos* email alumni@ru.ac.za



Transformation and Name Change

The University continues to engage in open discussions with all of its stakeholders about transformation at Rhodes in the sincere interest of “fostering of an institutional culture which promotes tolerance and respect for fundamental human rights and creates an appropriate environment for teaching, research and learning”.

The Institutional Forum met with Council on 22 September and Council has approved the Terms of Reference for the Task Team. The process is proceeding apace and a call for names of suggested members for the Task Team was sent out to all University community stakeholders on 6 October. You, our alumni will have received an email calling for suggestions with links to the Terms of Reference and we hope that you were able to take the opportunity to put forward potential members of impeccable credentials to The Registrar. It is expected that a two year timeframe in which to conduct their research regarding a name change is likely.

The first stage of the process will entail an engagement with all University constituencies and stakeholders including students, academic and support staff, unions, alumni, convocation, Senate, Board of Governors, Council and the greater Grahamstown community to canvass their views on the name of our University. Please keep an eye on our website and your inboxes for our communications in this regard.

Dr Sizwe Mabizela, has received petitions in support of and against retaining the name of the institution. He has also received submissions from interested parties offering their views and encourages your participation. These will be passed onto the Task Team for consideration.

The Terms of Reference have been published on the website [here](#)
Read the VC's latest circular on transformation at Rhodes [here](#)

Change the future

We see the University's future as inextricably linked to that of Grahamstown and for so many in our community Rhodes is a beacon of hope. Every year, through the Annual Fund, the University distributes bursaries to talented students who would otherwise not have the opportunity to study at Rhodes. Without your support this would be impossible and our University would be poorer in all respects. Yet even with this support, over 130 students had to be turned away this year.

Times have been tough globally on the economic front and we have felt this keenly on the Annual Fund, raising R517 000 in 2015 as compared to R523 000 raised last year up to the end of September. Please join us and be part of our drive to help more students to graduate with a world-class degree and thus change their futures.

For every R5 you contribute, the Old Rhodian Union will give another R1 by raising additional funds from other sources. This year we've set our sights on raising R1 million – which means a total of R1.2 million will be available to the next generation of student, the leaders of tomorrow.

Please help us make a difference in the lives of our future leaders.

We appreciate MySchool Card holders who support Rhodes University by bringing in at least R1500 per month which is put towards bursaries. Click [here](#) for an online application form if you do not have a MySchool Card linked to Rhodes University. All revenue goes towards an Old Rhodian Bursary Award.



Alumni in the news

Your successes out in the world are also ours at Rhodes. It is important to us to hear about your news, appointments, achievements and philanthropic deeds.

We are excited to announce that Verashni Pillay (2004) was appointed editor-in-chief of the *M&G*. Verashni cut her teeth on digital journalism with Media24 for several years before joining the *M&G* in 2009. Her appointment signifies a shift in direction for the *M&G* – while also going back to its roots of hard-hitting investigative journalism. “I believe we need to rekindle that boldness and character, while advancing the complex debates at the centre of our national conversation,” said Verashni.

On the corporate front Barclays Africa has appointed Nomkhita Nqwani (1993) its head of wealth, investment management and insurance. And in research news Olaf Weyl was awarded the WRC 2015 Knowledge Tree Award for Informing Policy and Decision Making at the WRC Research Development and Innovation Symposium and Water-tech Summit. We regularly update our news pages with the latest news. The links below give you ongoing access to the newest stories and more.

[Alumni in the News](#)
[General RU News](#)
[USA Trust Web Site](#)
[UK Trust Web Site](#)
[Old Rhodian Authors](#)



We look forward to seeing you soon in person at our reunions and events. Please remember to update your contact details with the Alumni Office if they have changed to ensure you're invited to the events held in your area.

Talking points

Three new SARCHI Chairs

The recent award of three new SARCHI Chairs at Rhodes takes women chair holders to 50% of all SARCHI Chairs at the University. This is well above the national average which sees the percentage of women chair holders at 40%. Championed by Minister Naledi Pandor, the latest call for SARCHI Chairs was reserved for women in a push to elevate both established and emerging women researchers in South Africa. The newest Chairs, held by Professors Heila Lotz-Sisitka, Ruth Simbao and Adrienne Edkins, straddle the disciplines of education and environmental sustainability, geopolitics and the arts of Africa, and biomedical biotechnology. Rhodes now holds 14, or 7%, of the SARCHI chairs nationally. This is an impressive achievement for the smallest established institution in South Africa. For more information about the work of these cutting-edge researchers read the story at <http://www.ru.ac.za/news/latestnews/rhodesawardedthreemoresarchichairs-1.html>

Hain on the future of SA

Mr Peter Hain, former exiled anti-apartheid leader turned British Cabinet Minister visited Rhodes in September. His visit follows a meeting with Dr Sizwe Mabizela and Mr Guy White in the UK where discussions began around potential collaborations between Rhodes and Swansea University, of which Mr Hain is a newly appointed Fellow. His visit to South Africa, undertaken in his capacity as the Chair of the Donald Woods Foundation, has health and education projects at its heart. At Rhodes Mr Hain addressed students, academics, members of the public and invited guests on a talk titled *From Pretoria to London: Freedom Struggle and the Future of South Africa*.

Biko Commemoration

On 15 September, a few days after the anniversary of Biko's death, the Student Representative Council (SRC), students and academic staff gathered at the Biko Building to honour the fallen struggle hero at the Steve Biko Commemoration unveiling. SRC Activism and Transformation Councillor Japhta Lekalakala said that the SRC is compelled to learn from Biko in advancing the cause for a more just university and society in general. The portrait, which was painted by Rhodes student Staci Scallan, was unveiled alongside a timeline that was done by Rhodes student Thabiso Mafana. First year student Nhlakanipho Mahlangu ended with the song 'Glory'.

Fellowship in Turkey

Bioinformatics doctoral students Caroline Ross and David Penkler, will embark on international studies with Sabanci University, Istanbul, Turkey. Caroline has been awarded the Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey Research Fellowship for International Researchers and will attend Sabanci in 2016. Her research focuses on the investigation into novel drug targets in Picornaviruses, including polio and foot-and-mouth-disease. After submitting his MSc, David visited Sabanci earlier this year. The focus of his research is on the identification of key residues involved in the structural mechanics of heat shock proteins. He is particularly interested in inhibitor design against cancer.

For more of the latest news from Rhodes click [here](#)



TOP TO BOTTOM
 Prof Adrienne Edkins
 Prof Ruth Simbao
 Prof Heila Lotz-Sisitka
 Mr Peter Hain