

Gauteng Region Highlights Newsletter

Issue 1
Jan-June 2022



Define tomorrow.

The office of the Regional Director

MS MOIPONE MASALES

It is hard to believe that we are halfway through 2022!

Despite the various protests experienced at the start of the year, the region was able to press on in terms of servicing our various stakeholders. This attests to the dedication of our staff and their willingness to go beyond the call of duty for the sake of the Unisa brand and the reputation of our region. The leadership of this region once again acknowledges and applauds the selfless dedication of these colleagues in ensuring that the Gauteng Region delivers on its mandate. To this end, we have done exceptionally well in terms of supporting the university's priorities – previously known as the VC's priorities. Well done, Gautengers! There have been too many events, functions, individual achievements, involving the collective that I cannot mention all of them here.

We are all aware that entering a university for the first time can cause some students to panic and, in this light, it is important to recognise those of our colleagues who were involved in the orientation of our first-year students. We are also excited to note that the migration of the Gauteng Region into the eGain system is taking off at a rapid pace, with training already having taken place for both users and the supervisors. This will surely go a long way towards improving communication between the university and the students

The latter part of the year will be characterised by an increasingly frenetic pace and the expending of much energy as the realisation dawns that the end of 2022 is almost upon us and that we, as a Region, still have much to do to finalise our commitments while ensuring that our students and staff are prepared for the end of the year.



We would like to take this opportunity to encourage our colleagues to support the Raas Project – a new project in the Region aimed at ensuring that students receive support. This is achieved through collaboration with Unisa Radio and various colleges to ensure that Unisa's students receive the required services. Ms C Boonzaier, the project manager, can be contacted for more information on this.

Thank you once again for your diligent work and we look forward to your continued contribution to the excellence and stature of the Gauteng Region. Please stay warm!

Ms Moipone Masales
Regional Director : Gauteng Region

SUPPORT FOR OUR STUDENTS

STUDENT ORIENTATION

The virtual student orientation was held on 11 March 2022 via MS Teams and YouTube. The counselling unit successfully hosted this event together with different units in the region. A live question-and-answer session was conducted at the end of each presentation. Presenters were prerecorded and students were encouraged to post their questions on the chat. The student support members addressed each query. Sterling job! Well done!



Mr Monwabisi Mei, Counselling unit Programme Director

Ms. Sharon Tebele, Counselling unit Programme director



Mr Victor Mbuqe, Manager: Library Services-Gauteng Region opened the session.

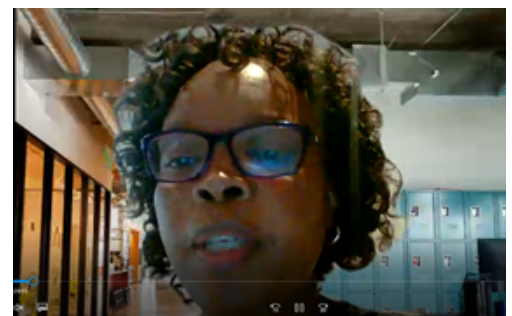
MENTAL WELLNESS WORKSHOPS AND PODCAST

Dealing with grief and bereavement, managing stress and dealing with suicide.



EXAM PREPARATION WORKSHOP

The workshop was held in collaboration with the Unisa Exams Division, and Ekurhuleni: Technology Enhanced Learning and Facilitation of Learning support departments. The workshop was designed to equip students with the confidence and knowledge they need to excel in their May/ June exams.



Ms Martha Nyandeni, Manager: Deputy Registrar Student Administration and System Integration

SUPPORT FOR OUR STUDENTS

FACILITATION OF LEARNING

The department hosted its tutorial classes on MS Teams. Classes took place in the evening during the week and on weekends classes started as early as 08:00 in the morning.



UNISA PRETORIA ALUMNI CHAPTER

The function was held on Saturday, 19 March 2022. The breakfast was held as a hybrid event with Mr. Wesley Moonsamy, co-founder of Its Chai Time, as the keynote speaker. Mr. Moonsamy focused on the theme "The harder you work, the luckier you get". The regional director informed the alumni of the developments in the Gauteng region.

ACADEMIC LITERACIES

Facilitation of Learning (FoL) successfully conducted workshops for all its facilitators in the Gauteng region. Undergraduate, and postgraduate students had workshops on academic literacies for reading and writing and quantitative literacies. Students attendance and interaction have always been a challenge at these workshops however, during the first semester FOL staff observed that students are interacting with their facilitators by asking questions, responding to questions, and solving problems through peer assistance. This is considered a breakthrough because it has been a challenge for many years. More than 10 facilitators were appointed in the region to service students as planned.



Ms Lynette Van Niekerk, Events Coordinator, Institutional Advancement

Ms Moipone Masalesa, Regional Director

Ms Cecilia Boucher, Alumni Liaison Officer, Strategic Partnerships, Special Projects and Alumni

PSYCHOLOGY PROFESSIONAL EVENT

Over the course of two days, this event provided information about the requirements for registering as a psychologist, counsellor, or psychometrist to the third and fourth year students.

GAUTENG REGION eGAIN PROJECT

Gauteng Region has successfully been migrated to the eGain system. Training for both users and supervisors took place successfully.



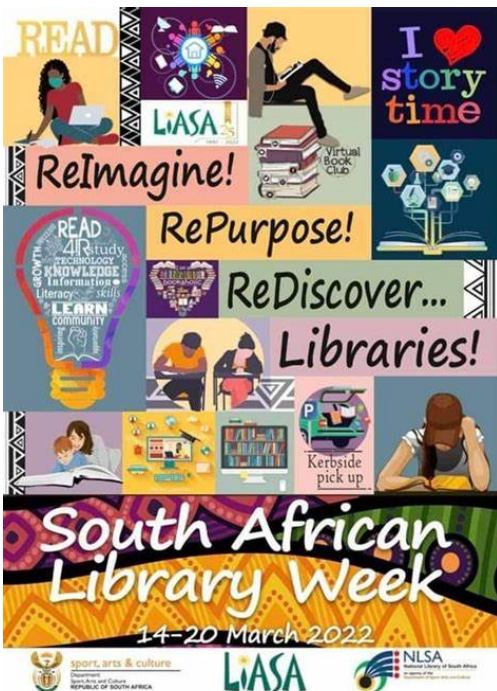
SUPPORT FOR OUR STUDENTS

We celebrated South African Library Week on 17 March 2022. The Gauteng Region Library hosted a Virtual Library Week.

"ReImagine! RePurpose! ReDiscover...Libraries!"

This challenged us to re-claim ownership of libraries across Unisa communities. This is extremely relevant now especially as we emerge from the imposed COVID-19 lockdown into a more hybrid world of thinking, doing, and being. Prof Lorette Jacobs was the keynote speaker for the virtual event hosted by Unisa Gauteng Region.

"What do you see or imagine as our future? ", was the question that was posed to the audience attending the event virtually. Much newly available technology was discussed and shared.



EMPLOYABILITY WORKSHOP

The College of Accounting Science in collaboration with PricewaterhouseCoopers hosted a workshop on empowering our students with skills to handle interviews through role-plays as well as how to search for employment.



Ms. Koketso Munonde, Counselling unit intern
Ms. Mahlatse Mphahlele, Counselling unit intern

QUALITY MATTERS

The Ethiopian delegation comprised team leader, Ato Tamrat Motal Bakallo, ETA Deputy Director-General; Ato Debay Grebremedhin ETA Director: Accreditation and Meseret Melese Fefera of Unisa's Ethiopia Regional Centre. Extending from 30 January to 4 February 2022, the programme featured visits to various Unisa facilities and campuses, and extensive discussions were held with executive management and management at assurance units and colleges at the institution. The programme also included a visit to the Gauteng Regional Hub at the Sunnyside Campus on Wednesday, 2 February 2022. After presentations on various student support services, the visitors were taken for a quick walkabout of the service areas- the computer lab, library and counselling unit.



The institutional audits started in Florida on 18 February, followed by a peer review that took place in Sunnyside on 16 March 2022. The last and final one for the region was on 11 April 2022. The panel visited the Gauteng Region. The facilities at Sunnyside Regional Hub were visited. The purpose of the audit was to provide an overall evaluation of the institution's quality management in the focus area(s) agreed upon between the Council on Higher Education and the university. An overall and all-inclusive evaluation of the institution, in the form of a narrative summary, will be part of the conclusion of the audit report.



QUALITY MATTERS

INSTITUTIONAL AUDIT



Self-evaluation Report Peer Review at the Sunnyside Campus

Ms Mevasana Sibanda, Manager: Planning Projects and Administration, Deputy Registrar Student Administration and System Integration

Ms Moipone Masalesa, Regional Director

Ms Pat Lethole, Regional Service Centre Manager

Prof Geoff Mapaya, University of Venda



Gauteng Region staff members during the last interview with the Council on Higher Education at Sunnyside Campus, 11 April 2022



Mr Lucas Rampe, Technology Enhanced Coordinator Showcasing state of the art facilities in the Gauteng Region



Prof Inderasan Naidoo, Specialist: Academic Quality Assurance and Enhancement. Office of the Vice Principal Teaching, Learning, Community Engagement and Student Support (TLCESS)

Ms Erin Naude, Deputy Director

Ms Moipone Masalesa, Regional Director

Prof Luvuyo Lumkile Lalendle, Executive Director: Planning and Quality Assurance



Dr Britta Zawada: Director: Institutional Audits, Council on Higher Education (CHE) at the Science campus . Presenting during the Orientation session

ENGAGED SCHOLARSHIP/ COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENTS

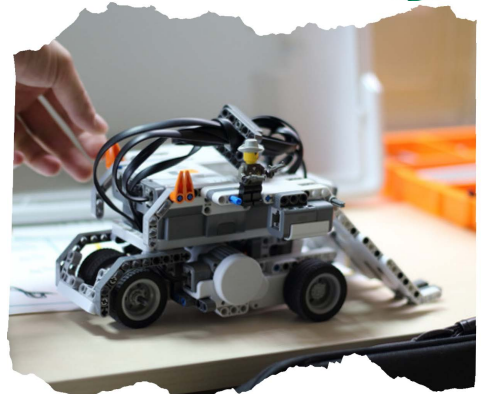
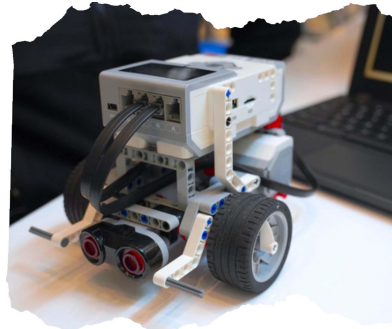
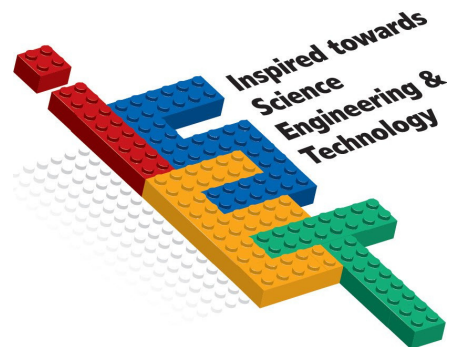
THE TSHIDZHIVHE PROJECT

The project is under the leadership of **Ms. Pat Lethole, Dr Bunki Pitsoane, and Prof Norma Romm**, Together with Australian and Indonesia counterparts a successful workshop on Gender-based Violence was hosted with the Tshidzivhe community in Venda.



COLLABORATION ON ROBOTICS

Facilitation of learning in collaboration with the College of Science Engineering and Technology will be training students on robotics and more specifically on how to build a robot through computer software. The training will take place from June 2022 starting at the Science Campus in Florida and finishing at the Vaal centre. This is a community engagement project which will also culminate in a research output since students who are trained will be expected to provide feedback to the trainers to improve the training process.



RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

A special appreciation to **Ms. Mosima Makola** and her team: **Mr. Philani Zulu, Ms. Lindelwa Mahonga, Ms. Maserame Dipale, Mr. Thabo Modibedi, Ms. Pat Lethole, Mr. Kagiso Meko, and Mr. Albert Nematandani** for all the research highlights that the region managed to achieve from January to June. Gauteng Research and Innovation Committee (GRIC) was established with the aim of encouraging staff members to participate in research activities. To this end, under the leadership of Ms Mosima Makola, the following highlights were achieved:

Gauteng Research and Innovation Committee (GRIC) presented Prof. Grace Khunou to the Regional Research COP to share her research experience. **Prof Grace Khunou**, currently Acting Director in Communication, Marketing, and Events at the University of South Africa, shared vital information on how to write for publication. Most importantly, she shared her creative and academic writing skills which makes her an outstanding C-rated researcher. The workshop, organised by Research COP, was presented to staff from all the regions and postgraduate students.



The region congratulates **Dr Bunkie Pitsoane** and **Ms. Pat Lethole**, who in collaboration with their co-authors, published 1 article and 2 book chapters.

RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

Stakeholder Engagement with Academic Development Open Virtual Hub (ADOVH)

March 2022

Tuition Support and Facilitation of Learning, Academic Development Open Virtual Hub (ADOVH) project invited members of staff that were willing to participate in the focus group discussion with students with a purpose of collecting data for research purposes.



Dr Bunkie Pitsoane and Ms. Pat Lethole

also presented a paper at the Teacher Education and Interdisciplinary Research Conference (TEIR) in March. Five Gauteng staff members attended the conference.



Gauteng Region staff at the conference



Gauteng Region staff at Royal Elephant Hotel in Centurion

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT HIGHLIGHTS

BUILDING TOMORROW'S LEADERS



Building Tomorrow's Leaders (BTL) aims to empower managers to become future leaders. Support staff as well as professionals will benefit from the programme. As part of this highly competitive and powerful leadership programme, Gauteng Region Management is proud to be represented. Upon successfully completing the program, delegates can apply their newly acquired skills and knowledge.



Mr Stanley Dubazane, Supervisor: Student Admin



Mr Kagiso Mekoa, Student Counsellor



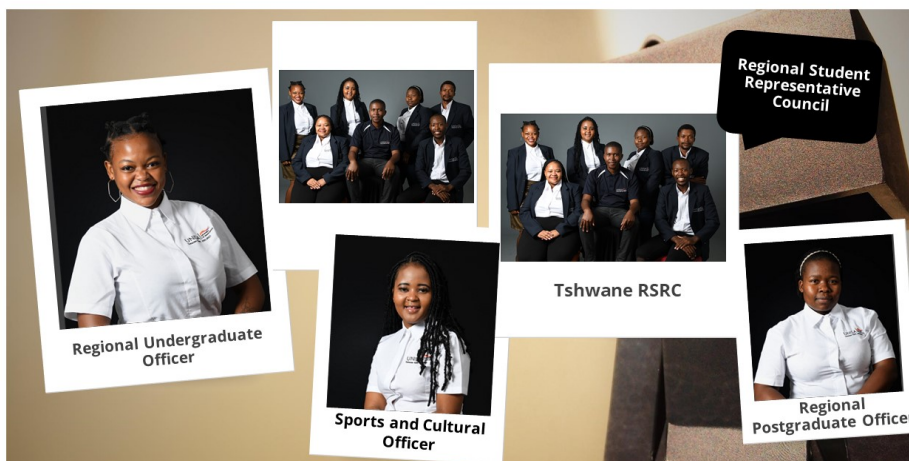
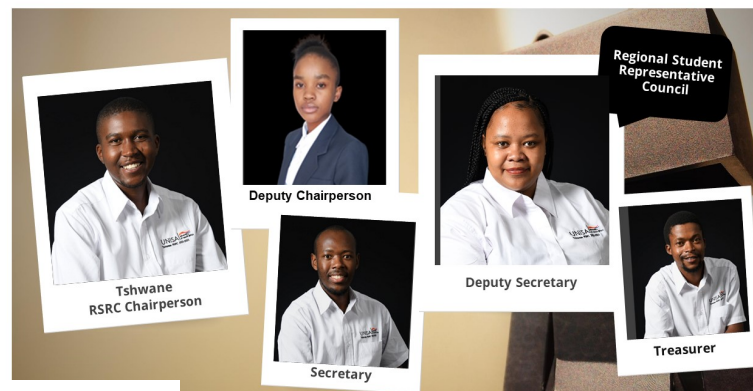
Ms. Erin Naude, Deputy Director: Academic and Technology Support (Gauteng Region) is on Research and development leave from 1 May up to the end of November to work on her Ph.D. studies. Commenting on the great news, **Ms. Moipone Masalesa**, Regional Director said "A PhD or Doctorate is the highest form of education, it is not just a degree but one of the sweetest fruit that someone gets after years and years of hard work. The Region wishes Ms. Naude all the best on her Ph.D. journey and we cannot wait to call her Dr. Naude !"

STUDENT LEADERSHIP



The Regional Student Representative Council looks after five campuses in Gauteng. Ekurhuleni, Florida, Johannesburg, Sunnyside, and Vaal.

"We're always on your side, putting your needs first! We spend our days organising momentous events especially for students, in an attempt to create a more welcoming, friendly university life. We have your back when you need it most and are a loud voice for all your concerns. We always strive to make beneficial changes, in response to needs of students."



If there is anything you wish to bring to the attention of the SRC, you can contact us via the regional centres or on myUnisa. Visit www.unisa.ac.za/src for more information on the SRC.

TSHWANE RSRC EVENT

29 March 2022

Students met in a hybrid venue at the Function Hall, Kgorong Building. There were over 60 students who attended in person, and all COVID protocols were adhered to. The workshop aimed to introduce students to the support services available in the regions and equip them with the tools to navigate their academic journey at Unisa.



MOOT COURT TRAINING

11-14 April 2022

MOOT court training took place at the Enoch Sontonga Conference Complex, Sunnyside Campus. Third and fourth-year Unisa law students recently experienced insights into what it is like handling a court case as legal practitioners. This is an annual initiative by the Unisa Law clinic.



In memoriam



*Our thoughts are with all our
colleagues who lost loved
ones in **2022**.*

Mr Laird Stevenson

As Gauteng Region, we pause to remember
our colleague from the Sunnyside campus,
Mr Laird Stevenson , Digital Learning Adviser
who sadly passed away.



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