



RHODES EXCHANGE

Bringing you news about research, progress and development

***ISSUE 005 / APRIL 2014**



PG 2: REACHING OUT THROUGH SCIENCE



PG 3: OUR STUDENTS CARE



PG 4: ALLAN GRAY CENTRE FOR LEADERSHIP ETHICS



PG 5: SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

Welcome to our Community Engagement edition of the Rhodes Exchange. We speak to the Director of Community Engagement at Rhodes about the impact of community engagement in responding to the social and economic challenges of our broader community. Read about how community engagement projects in the departments of Psychology and in Zoology and Entomology have gained recognition for the changes they are effecting in the community. We also look at how serious Rhodes and Allan Gray Centre for Leadership Ethics are about grooming leaders with integrity. Meet this year's Honorary Doctorates whose exemplary careers teach our graduates to think big about the changes they too can make in this world. And finally we introduce you to three more of our SARChI research chairs whose work demonstrate how the three pillars of research, community engagement, and teaching and learning at Rhodes are seamlessly interwoven.

Imagine a world that responds to the social and economic challenges of all ...

Watch Grahamstown unite on these video clips of The Human Chain

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6NQZmpvQxi0>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ojhBPq4jxHM>

Follow this link to watch the opening of Community Engagement Week 2014

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UStUsqxKRFY>

MAKING RHODES A HOME FOR ALL



While we had a very easy transition to democracy in South Africa, we need to accept that it cannot be business as usual. All organs of society need to rethink how they conduct their core business differently in a young democracy, in a transforming society. At Rhodes we have taken this very seriously, as a University our business is to generate and disseminate knowledge so the question we are grappling with is how we do this in a way that responds to the social and economic challenges of our broader community and helps to build, shape and remake a more equal and just society. NGOs and CBOs play a critical role in shaping a new society, we work very closely with them in mutually beneficial and reciprocal partnerships. These partnership are important as they enrich the scholarship at the University while adding value to the development of communities. Mrs Diana Hornby, the Director of Community Engagement talks us through some of the projects underway and explains how more and more members of the institution are bringing their contributions to the table to make Rhodes a home for all.

Q: WHAT HAS THE IMPACT OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AT RHODES BEEN THIS FAR?

A: Historically the University has been viewed as an elite establishment for the privileged

few and I would like to think the introduction of community engagement has contributed to making the university more accessible and an integral part of the broader community. Initiatives have been introduced to help blur the lines between the University, town and township. Academic departments have introduced service learning projects where Rhodes students work in the township and School pupils are brought onto campus for teaching and learning. An exciting initiative is the establishment of two Hubs in Joza, which offer creative spaces for collaboration between academics, development practitioners, departments and community groups. We aim to challenge the way people think about one another; just because an individual is materially poor does not mean that they don't have skills and capabilities to share. The Trading Live initiative is an institutional event that happens annually over Mandela Day and the purpose of this event is to build relationships, get to meet and share skills and opportunities with diverse people and groups across the city. This initiative started in 2012 with 40 events, grew to 94 events in 2013 and anticipating further growth this year we have decided to extend the initiative from one day to a week. A lovely story came out of this last year when the English Department offered 67



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VC'S DISTINGUISHED AWARD FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Professor Martin Hill and the Biological Control Research Group (BCRG), including Drs Julie Coetzee, Jaclyn Hill and Grant Martin, from the Department of Zoology and Entomology, received the 2013 Vice Chancellor's Distinguished Award for Community Engagement.

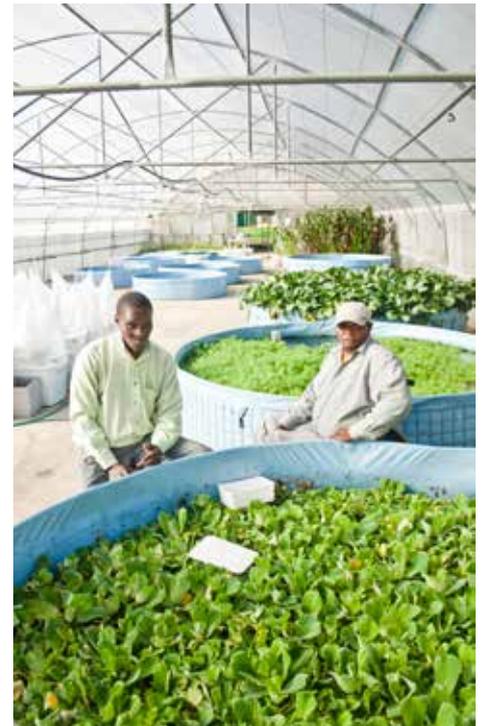
The BCRG focuses on understanding the ecology, biology and management of invasive aquatic weeds. These weeds pose a threat to the integrity of South African aquatic ecosystems and the quantity and quality of potable water, costing the government millions of Rands to control each year. Their research develops biological control methods for these invasive plants, which can then be implemented by governmental organisations, local communities to private landowners. They have been called upon to assist in the control of these weeds throughout Africa, Europe, the USA, Australia and New Zealand.

The BCRG also maintain that biological control, and the science behind it, has the ability to empower local communities to manage their own natural resources. They run a fully accredited Weed Biological Control Short Course through Rhodes University which teaches community members the basic tenets of invasive weed ecology and biological control. They also run the Disabled People's Weed

Biological Control Short Course in partnership with Grahamstown Area Distress Relief Association (GADRA) to help provide trained individuals with job opportunities within the greater Grahamstown community, as well as South Africa.

Their mass-rearing programs, in which biological control agents are cultivated for study and distribution, have been run in partnership with Working for Water (WfW), SAEON Elwandle Node, GADRA, and local Grahamstown schools. The mass rearing programs have employed people with disabilities (PWD) from the Grahamstown local community to assist in the general maintenance of the mass-rearing facility, as well as the collection of insects for release. Further, a mass rearing programme has been initiated at Ntsika Secondary School, where biological control agents for water hyacinth, South Africa's worst aquatic weed, and agents for various cactus species, will be mass reared for release around the country.

The research group also works hard to demystify the science and demonstrate that, by using the appropriate techniques, the layman can also play an active role in the production and distribution of biocontrol agents, ultimately enabling anyone



MAKING RHODES A HOME FOR ALL (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

minutes of poetry lessons to poets in the township. These poets, lecturers and students now gather once a week at venues in the township and at the University and have developed a reciprocal relationship that has enriched the scholarship of both. The Human Chain event was run for the first time this year and although Rhodes initiated it, the event was organised and owned by Grahamstown. We were delighted with the response of over 4000 people lining the streets on a rainy and miserable day in February. The plan is to run the event annually as a way to build bridges and have some fun together.

Q: HOW IS IT CHANGING STAFF AND STUDENTS?

A: A student could arrive at Rhodes and lead a very secluded life attending lectures and going to town, never crossing Raglan Road into the township. Much the same can happen with staff who generally work very hard and have little time to spare. Trading Live, Human Chain and Community Engagement week events offer opportunities to get to know different people with different views and we trust this will bring more understanding and build a gentler and more thoughtful culture at the University. Rhodes is very conscious of the type of students they grow – critical, informed

citizens who understand their context and can use their agency to make a difference. We cannot talk about being a transforming influence in the broader society if our own organisational culture is not changing.

Q: WHAT IS THE RELEVANCE OF THIS WORK?

A: There is a widening gap between the rich and the poor, we have the unenviable reputation of being the worst in this respect worldwide. We all know that the level of inequality in this county is unsustainable. Understandably, young people are getting angry and restless as they face hunger and abuse, a failing schooling system and unemployment, these and other societal ills need to be addressed with urgency. As knowledge institutions we have a role to play, we have a responsibility to engage with these social and economic challenges and together with communities be part of the solution. The problem is huge but it is not insurmountable if all stakeholders are willing to engage and take responsibility for the part they can play in effecting change and accelerating transformation. Good examples of engagement and problem solving are happening in many academic departments. Ms Alex Sutherland is using

theatre and drama as an approach for healing and equipping psychiatric patients, offenders in correctional facilities and youth at risk. Prof Sheona Shackleton and her team in Environmental Science have mastered the strategy of social learning by working with two rural villages around climate change and poverty. We have been able to document the strategy and share it with 25 community development practitioners from various parts of the Eastern Cape. Prof Alfredo Terzoli from the Computer Science department has developed a connectivity model for rural communities that has greatly enhanced communication, education and development in 17 rural communities in the Mbashe Municipality. Tally Palmer from the Institute of Water research has been engaged in a large, ambitious projects with several community and government partners to investigate new paradigms for integrated water management in South Africa. In Zoology and Entomology, Prof Martin Hill and his research group, has just won the VC's Distinguished Community Engagement Award for their innovative community work (see story below). These are stories of just a few of the academics at Rhodes working in engaged ways to solve some of the intractable problems we face as a society.



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VC'S DISTINGUISHED AWARD FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

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PAGE 2: TWO SUCCESSFUL RECIPIENTS OF THE DISABLED PEOPLE'S WEED BIOLOGICAL CONTROL SHORT COURSE WHO ARE NOW EMPLOYED AT THE UNIT • PAGE 3: PROF MARTIN HILL OBSERVING TWO STUDENTS WHO SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED THE DISABLED PEOPLE'S WEED BIOLOGICAL SHORT COURSE.

to take responsibility for the control of invasive alien weeds in South Africa. Their Biology Internship Programme run in collaboration with Victoria Girls High School, Graeme College and Ntsika Secondary School encourages environmental stewardship in our local community, improving the quality of young science graduates and initiating a positive and productive relationship between a tertiary institution and grade school learners. Further collaboration with VGHS has led to a small lecture series during which researchers from the Department of Zoology & Entomology, Rhodes University and the South African Institute for Aquatic Biodiversity (SAIAB) present overviews of their current work to high school students during science class.

Give5 2014

Students Raising Money For Students!

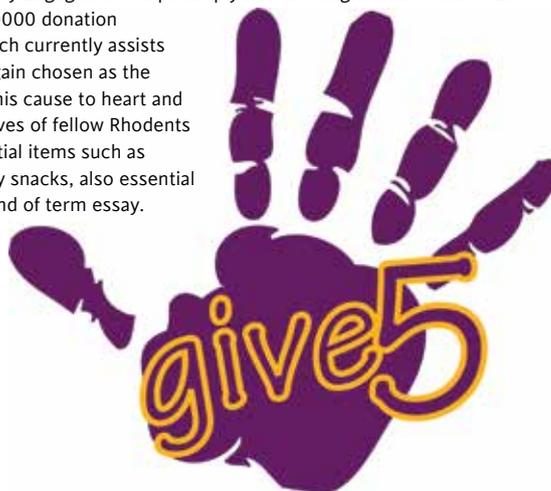
The 2014 Give5 Campaign in the first week of March hit the sweet spot this year and they raised over R85600. The Committee, Senior Students and Community Engagement Reps simply had the magic touch whilst GBS Bank topped up the amount with their own R10000 donation

The Annual Fund's Pocket Money Fund, which currently assists 150 students with R170 per month was once again chosen as the campaign recipient. Our students have taken this cause to heart and were determined to make a difference in the lives of fellow Rhodents who might not have the means to afford essential items such as toiletries or the occasional extras such as study snacks, also essential when you're burning the midnight oil on that end of term essay.

The Alumni Office and Give5 committee were thrilled that every single residence, including our Oppidans got behind the initiative, making it a 100% contribution from our students.

LINK TO VIDEO OF GIVE 5 FIRE WALK

Watch our students dare the coals at the Give 5 Fire Walk: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=19L3BVeI1jk>



MAKING RHODES A HOME FOR ALL

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Q: HOW IS IT CHANGING LIFE IN THE TOWNSHIP?

A: A visit to the township is a stark reminder of how unequal our society in Grahamstown really is. I cannot honestly say that much has changed for the people that live in Rhini. It is heartbreaking to see school pupils who have a dream and apply themselves, but the quality of the tuition simply gives them no chance of attaining a good matric, thus destroying any plans for further study. The fact of the matter is that Rhodes is a key stakeholder in this town, but it is only one of the players in the greater system. The frustrating part of a system is that you can only maximise your impact when all key stakeholders are committed and performing optimally. Unfortunately, local government is failing the city and without this 'backbone' of service, shared and collective grand plans are difficult. This said, it is not all doom and gloom because there is a growing realisation, commitment and energy at Rhodes to be part of the solution. A major contribution by Rhodes to changing life in the township is access to the University for local pupils. The number of local students entering Rhodes has grown over the years and the impact of these first-generation graduates on their families and in their community must be considerable. Academic research and capacity building programmes run by academics have strengthened and supported the NGO's and CBO's sector which is also positive.

Q: HOW WILL THIS WORK CHANGE OUR WORLDS?

A: The introduction of Community Engagement has encouraged Universities to reimagine themselves and what it means to be an African University. There is evidence that working in more participatory and engaged ways with communities has enriched the academic programme. I also think that we are more conscious as a university of the kinds of students that we are shaping and moulding. Principled, informed students who understand their context, can work collectively and make decisions for the greater good. Meaningful impact that universities can make towards changing our world will be felt through the transformative leadership of our graduates as they build their careers and contribute at a national and international level.



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LEADING WITH INTEGRITY

Rhodes University affirmed its position as an institution of choice for leaders with the establishment of the first ever Allan Gray Centre for Leadership Ethics in 2012. The Centre is funded by a renewable R12.5 million bequest from Allan Gray, a Rhodes University alumnus, honorary doctorate holder and founder of the Allan Gray investment company. Dr Saleem Badat describes the main objective of the establishment as “investigating and elaborating what constitutes ethical and responsible leadership, to promote such leadership in diverse contexts and circumstances, and to also develop education and training initiatives to foster such leadership”. He added that the University and Allan Gray have recognised the need for an institution that will provide training dedicated towards producing a generation of leaders with integrity.

The Centre is spearheaded by Prof Pedro Tabensky who defines his role as one of investigating and conceptualising what constitutes ethical and responsible leadership, to promote such leadership in diverse contexts, and to develop education and training programmes to foster such leadership.

In a bid to further unlock potential at Rhodes University and increase the Foundation’s footprint in the Eastern Cape, the Allan Gray Orbis Foundation have also awarded 50 fellowships to the Institution. Currently 17 candidate fellows are registered at the University for Studies in Commerce, Science and Journalism. The fellowship programme includes support in entrepreneurial and personal development as part of a full undergraduate university scholarship. Scholars are also mentored, both by individually assigned Foundation employed staff and by a mentor with specific industry experience.

In a landmark meeting held at Rhodes recently, both organisations agreed to invest in a more strategic partnership that will be multifaceted and mutually beneficial in a further attempt to provide more Eastern Cape Youth with an opportunity to gain a university education.

The Centre will also host the “Circle of Excellence” conference in September, when it will be held outside of Cape Town for the first time ever. The objective of the conference is to provide a platform for leaders in education to come together and learn about strategies which promote excellence in education for South Africa and to understand the role of entrepreneurial leadership in moving from excellence to influence within the regional educational environment.



MS VERA ADAMS, DEVELOPMENT MANAGER, PROF PEDRO TABENSKY, DIRECTOR OF THE CENTRE FOR ETHICAL LEADERSHIP, GRAEME DE BRUYN, HEAD OF PROGRAMMES AT AGOF, DR SALEEM BADAT, CHARLENE NEL, FELLOWSHIP REGIONAL MANAGER FOR THE WESTERN CAPE AND GUY WHITE, DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT.

ABSA AWARD FOR RHODES

The Psychology Department’s Masibambane Community Project scooped the ABSA award for the Best Child Development Training and Intervention Programme in South Africa.

The Masibambane community engagement project is coordinated jointly by Mrs Agata Runowicz from the Department of Health and the Association for People with Physical Disabilities, and Dr Lisa Saville Young from the Psychology Department at Rhodes University. This is a mutually beneficial partnership which has added value to the scholarship in the department and the service offered by the community partner.

“Children with disabilities and their caregivers, particularly those living in socio-economically deprived contexts, are frequently marginalised and this award brings much needed attention to the demands and rewards of caring for these children,” said Mrs Runowicz.

The project involves psychology students ‘adopting a child’ with disabilities whom they visit once a week during term time. The psychology students receive training on working with children with disabilities and are supervised by social workers, occupational therapists, speech therapists and/or a psychologist so as to implement a suitable intervention for the child which might include appropriate stimulation, the development of communication and independence, the development of self esteem and/or increased family involvement. The award includes R60000 to be spent on studies, training and/or minor improvements or equipment directly related to the project.

The project was shortlisted as a provincial finalist from over 4500 Early Childhood Development applicants for the South African Early Childhood Development Awards. These awards are given by ABSA in association with the Department of Social Development, Department of Basic Education, UNICEF, South African Congress of ECD and NDA. Selection for this award involved a visit by the provincial adjudication team at the end of last year.

Read the full story on the Rhodes University Community Engagement webpage:
<http://www.ru.ac.za/communityengagement/>



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BIOLOGY AND SUSTAINABILITY IN AGRICULTURE

The introduction of non-native species often has negative impacts on biodiversity, agricultural productivity, and of special concern in South Africa, on the availability of water. Biological control is not a panacea, but when successful, it can offer long-term control, with none of the harmful effects generated by chemical alternatives. Insects continue to reduce the quantity and quality of food produced, and their control costs money that pushes up prices and reduces competitiveness. The role of natural enemies of pests in fields and orchards is of increasing importance, but requires much better understanding of the biology of the insects when compared to using chemical sprays.

Professor Steve Compton has a general interest in the ways that plants and animals interact. Under the SARChI research chair in Sustainable Agriculture he has joined forces with a very active group at Leeds working on applied aspects of plant-insect interactions, in particular the biological control of alien weeds using insects and also the role of insect enemies in helping to control agricultural pest species. "My experience is largely as an ecologist, and I am hoping to take advantage of these study systems to ask ecological as well as applied questions," he said.

Prof Compton has joined the group run by Prof Martin Hill that already contains more than 10 postgraduate students, technicians and assistants. He says it is still early days, but they have made several key appointments and their projects are now underway.

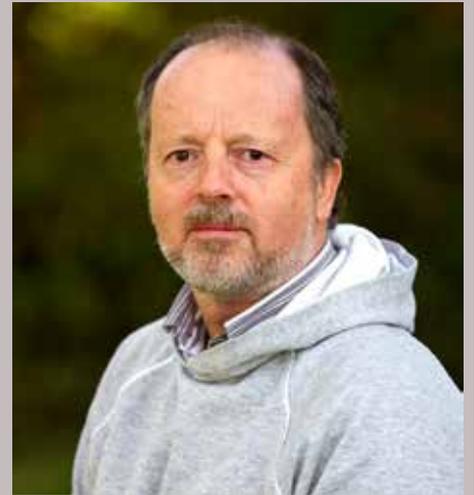


PROFESSOR STEVE COMPTON

Natural resources and poverty alleviation

Professor Charlie Shackleton was awarded the Research Chair in Interdisciplinary Science in Land and Natural Resource Use for Sustainable Livelihoods. The objective of the research is to develop interdisciplinary understandings of the role, value and importance of natural resources in rural and urban livelihoods for poverty alleviation. Simplistically, this requires research into the growth and production of specific natural resources, the household use of natural resources for consumptive and non-consumptive purposes, small-scale trade in natural resources, and the social and environmental contexts that influence each these subsystems and how they interact with one another and change in time and space. Additionally, the spatial and temporal shocks (short-term) and drivers of change (long-term) buffeting each subsystem require deep understanding and debate as they have potentially profound influences on livelihood decisions, trade-offs, use patterns and poverty outcomes. Lastly, the role of governance, management and government (all levels) in shaping the drivers of

change and the subsystems themselves and the range of possible responses at the household or community level will be teased out to ultimately be able to offer informed policy options.



LEGISLATION TO PROTECT OUR SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS

Despite the introduction of enabling sexual and reproductive health legislation, and the implementation of a range of public health, non-governmental and educational interventions, South Africa is faced with multiple challenges surrounding sexuality and reproduction. Led by Professor Catriona Macleod, Professor of Psychology at Rhodes University, the overarching goal of the Critical Studies in Sexualities and Reproduction (CSSR) research programme is to conduct critical research that addresses the social and human dynamics underpinning our slow progress towards full sexual and reproductive citizenship for all.

The multiple challenges faced by South Africans include high levels of forced sexual debut, sexual coercion and violence; transactional sex; HIV infection; rape (including child rape); hate crimes against lesbian women and gay men (including 'corrective' rape); unwanted and unsupportable pregnancies; and a high maternal mortality rate. Barriers to sexual and reproductive health service provision include structural factors such as travelling distances and cost incursion in reaching a facility and a range of social dynamics, for example, abortion is seen in some areas as destructive of cultural values and traditions. These hurdles are simultaneously rooted in, and serve to perpetuate, a range of social inequities centred on race, class, ability, sexual orientation, age and gender. This research programme is a multi-disciplinary programme funded by the National Research Foundation South African Research Chair Initiative (SARChI), the Andrew W Mellon Foundation, SANPAD, Rhodes University and the British Academy International Mobility Grant. It draws on the expertise of a number of researchers both within Rhodes University and at universities/NGOs in South Africa and across the world.

In our next issue ... In our next issue we take a look at the Rhodes experience 20 years into our South African democracy. We also look at Internationalisation at Rhodes and hear from a foreign student's perspective of her time here.



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HONOURING HOME-GROWN WORLD LEADERS

The celebrations at the Rhodes Graduation ceremonies this April marked a record 2367 graduates this year. Graduates at the final ceremony were addressed by none other than Nobel Prize winner Dr Sydney Brenner, who was awarded an honorary doctorate in science for his involvement in the coelacanth genome-sequencing project, which involved experts from 40 institutions around the world, including Rhodes Professor Rosemary Dorrington. Born in South Africa, Dr Brenner received his Nobel Prize for Physiology/Medicine in 2002.

Dr Gcina Mhlope, the celebrated poet, actress and story teller was recognised by Rhodes for the extraordinary contributions she has made to the revival of the African storytelling tradition. She has published 18 books, including children's books, adult poetry, short stories and plays that have been translated into six different languages across the world.

Professor Neil Turok, a world-leading mathematical physicist was honoured for his enormous contribution to his field. He currently heads up the Perimeter Institute for Theoretical Physics in Ontario, Canada. The South African born son of struggle stalwarts, Ben and Mary Turok, said his parents' life work taught him "the meaning of commitment to a cause bigger than yourself, to the future of humankind, to others."



TOP: DR GCINA MHLOPE IS A WELL-KNOWN SOUTH AFRICAN FREEDOM FIGHTER, ACTIVIST, ACTOR, STORYTELLER, POET, PLAYWRIGHT, DIRECTOR AND AUTHOR.
ABOVE: PROF NEIL TUROK IS A SOUTH AFRICAN PHYSICIST, AND THE DIRECTOR OF PERIMETER INSTITUTE FOR THEORETICAL PHYSICS.
ABOVE RIGHT: DR SYDNEY BRENNER IS A SOUTH AFRICAN BIOLOGIST AND A 2002 NOBEL PRIZE IN PHYSIOLOGY OR MEDICINE LAUREATE.

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If you have any questions, comments or suggestions, please contact: The Manager, Development Services, Development & Alumni Relations Division, Rhodes University at v.adams@ru.ac.za or +27 46 603 8510

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TO CONTACT US:
Kerry Peter | 083 794 0005 | kerry@kerrypeter.com
www.kerrypeter.com

Robyn Oosthuysen | 082 454 8242
robyn@creativesonclick.com
www.creativesonclick.com