

## IS YOUTH DAY WORTH CELEBRATING?



Image Source: nextnationalday.com

By Somila Tiwani

A community's strength is determined by its youngest members. Young people have a significant and far-reaching impact on their communities. When South Africa gained its independence in 1994, there was no denying that young people had played a significant role. Countless tough battles were fought by black youth to gain a better tomorrow, but they were not definitely won.

Despite being declared to be a democratic country 29 years ago, South Africa still faces numerous challenges. Challenges like unemployment, financial exclusions from higher education, depression, substance abuse, crime and poverty affect South Africa's youth. Investing in South Africa's educational system was positively impacted by the government. The black youth now have a higher level of educational attainment than ever in the history of South Africa. However, the most significant discouragement for pursuing higher education in South Africa could possibly be the youth unemployment rate.

The terrifying and difficult reality is that, as the unemployment rate increases most young people across the country's struggle towards financial independence. According to Statistics South Africa, South Africa's unemployment rate in the first quarter of 2023 was recorded at 32.9%. This percentage consisted of an alarming 62.1% of unemployed young people. Due to the serious and imminent economic threat caused by youth unemployment, it is crucial to address it immediately.

Young people in South Africa struggle with unemployment for a variety of reasons, but they also have employment challenges that are equally severe. They face difficulties in securing and building a profession over time due to obstacles and short-cuts such as short-term training contracts and underpaid/unpaid internships. As we honour and commemorate the youth of 1976 during this youth month, it is crucial to also reflect on ways to empower young people in the present as well as the future.

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## LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to another exciting edition of Madibaz News!

With the excitement of Grad Season dying down, we are now heading into exams – a whirlwind of stress, anxiety and overwhelming emotions. Remember to keep calm, look after yourself, tap into your support systems (and request them) and manage your expectations. Exams are one hurdle – you managed to jump over all the others.

As the semester draws to a close, and a new one on the horizon, we also have a few new additions to the team. With a number of new journalists joining from the next edition, we welcome the new team members with open arms and wish them all the best for the way forward.

We also extend a special welcome to our former Editor in Chief and Lifestyle & Entertainment Editor, Ashley Malepe, who is taking on the role of interim Lifestyle & Entertainment Editor. We are excited for his brief return, and thank him for his efforts.

We would also like to wish everyone a Happy International Pride Month and remember that everyone should embrace their own identity.

We then direct you to the wonderful edition ahead, and thank our journalists and editors for all their efforts. Please do enjoy this edition, and look out for our future competitions and follow our social media pages. Keep well, and stay safe!

Leigh Nakeetah Jason

## NELSON MANDELA UNIVERSITY LAUNCHES AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT CENTER- EASTERN CAPE CHAIR

By Ashley Malepe

**Nelson Mandela University has launched a new AIDC-EC (Automotive Industry Development Center) Chair in Automotive Engineering, providing a significant boost to research, innovation, and development in the automotive industry. With a financial investment of R14 million, the Faculty of Engineering, the Built Environment and Technology at the university will host the endowed research chair for an initial three-year period. This substantial support further solidifies the university's reputation as an automotive industry center of excellence.**

Mr. Martine Sanne, the newly appointed Automotive Industry Development Center Chair of Automotive Engineering, brings 33 years of engineering and management experience to his role. He commended the university's existing laboratories and emphasized the need to integrate them to create a more solution-driven approach. Sanne highlighted key areas of research and innovation focus, including 4IR, digital transformation, advanced manufacturing, and innovation in product, process, and organizational domains. He also discussed the emerging trend of "software-defined" vehicles, referencing Elon Musk's vision of cars that appreciate in value with added features.

Thabo Shenxane expressed gratitude to chairman Phumzile Zitumane for supporting the creation of the Chair. Shenxane emphasized their commitment to training, manufacturing, and engineering, highlighting Sanne's appointment as a clear indication of their vision. In addition to the Automotive Chair, the partnership between Nelson Mandela University and Automotive Industry Development Center includes funding for postgraduate bursaries and support for undergraduate capstone projects in the School of



Engineering. Dr. Thandi Mgwebi, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor of Research, Innovation, and Internationalisation, emphasized the importance of industry partnerships, fostering collaboration and a multidisciplinary approach to problem-solving.

The Automotive Chair, hosted by the Advanced Mechatronic Technology Centre (AMTC), will connect higher education with the automotive manufacturing industry, particularly in the Eastern Cape. Focus areas include engineering, manufacturing, and e-mobility learning. The Chair will lead research, innovation, and technology in automotive and manufacturing sectors, manage research projects, engage with industry for product development and commercialization, and facilitate knowledge exchange through collaborations with external institutions and international student and staff exchange programs.

The launch of the Automotive Chair in Automotive Engineering at Nelson Mandela University marks a significant step toward advancing research and innovation in the automotive industry, fostering collaboration between academia and industry, and driving progress in key areas of engineering and manufacturing.

## ENACTUS: WOMEN OF WORTH

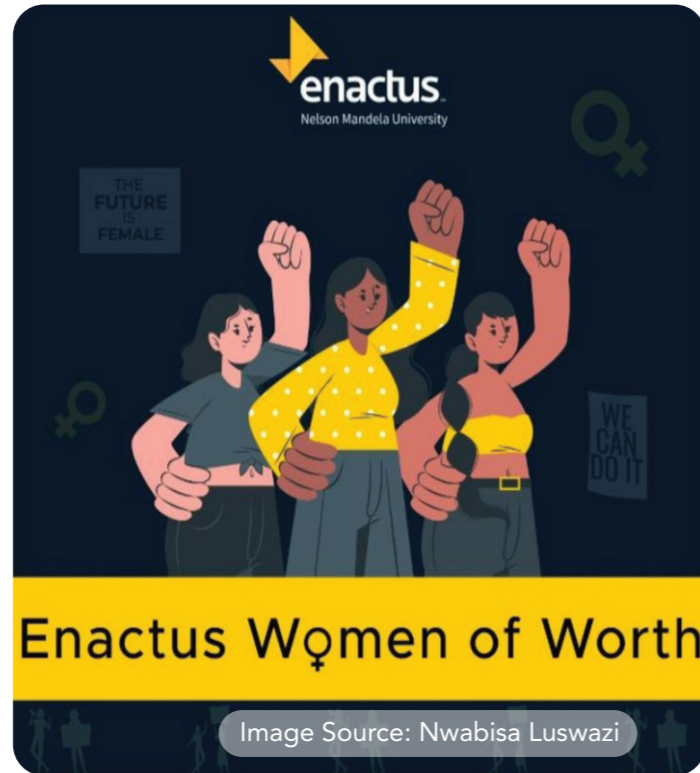
By Somila Tiwani

Are you a woman of worth and want to develop a sisterhood and build strong relationships with like-minded women? Enactus Nelson Mandela University has got you!

Enactus is a community of students, academic and business leaders committed to using the power of entrepreneurial action to transform lives and shape a better more sustainable world. The society had recently established a non-governmental organisation (NGO) called, Women of Worth (WOW).

Women of Worth is an Non-Governmental Organization that aims to help women unite and help each other cope with day-to-day social issues, encourages collaboration, sharing stories and resources. Nwabisa Luswazi, a member of Enactus and a project leader for WOW states that the NGO shares original stories that inspire and inform women, to improve problem solving and gender equity. "Our sustainable development goals are no poverty, gender equality and decent work and economic growth."

WOW has a program called 'Women Talk Wednesday, open to all its members and other female students. In these discussions, they tackle social issues and offer each other comfort, support and solutions. Tips on how to cope with academics and life in general are also offered. "There can never be enough mental talk, as young women we give so much of ourselves that we end up pouring from an empty cup. We carry a lot on our shoulders that we need a safe space to let go, and unwind."



According to Luswazi, this is what WOW provides for young women; a safe space to vent, create friends, and a sisterhood where your cup gets a refill.

Joining WOW is a great way to develop new friendships and build strong relationships with like-minded women and it's also an excellent opportunity to network professionally, exchange ideas and advice, and support other women-run businesses. It is important to belong somewhere, especially when we are far from home, we need the support and acknowledgement. "For anyone who would like to join WOW, our WhatsApp number is 060 318 0138. On social media, we are Enactus Nelson Mandela University," concludes Luswazi.

## EXAMS CAN BE FUN TOO



By Akahlulwa Radana

**For many, exams mean scoffing down fast food with pulling all-nighters as we attempt to cram as much information as possible. But what if I told you that studying does not need to be so stressful? And that you can actually have fun with it!**

I know some of you reading this are probably thinking, "Exams? Studying? Fun?" That's understandable, however, I implore you to hear me out. There are a lot of ways one can have fun while studying, activities like listening to good music are just the surface. Listening to music that you enjoy does not only make things more fun, but it can also increase your concentration together with improving your mood.

If we are being honest, nobody enjoys studying if they are in a foul mood. And about that essay that is due next week? You can write it while singing along to your favourite artist and have a smart response to your mother when she says she hopes that you know your schoolwork like you know the song. Next, you can turn your studies into a game. This is referred to as the gamification of learning. Video Gamers will know the thrill that goes along with playing video games. Gamification of learning involves the incorporation of video game principles into studying such as design, narrative, reward schemes etc, to increase motivation and productivity.

Lastly, ensure you break up your study sessions with enjoyable activities to avoid burning out. Spending excessive time buried in books without dedicating enough time to exercise or simply taking breaks can be detrimental to your well-being. Studying does not have to be taxing. All you need is creativity, time management and an epic playlist. And on that note, remember to write your essay and not a lyric from a song.

## POETRY – THE POWER OF WORDS AND MEANING

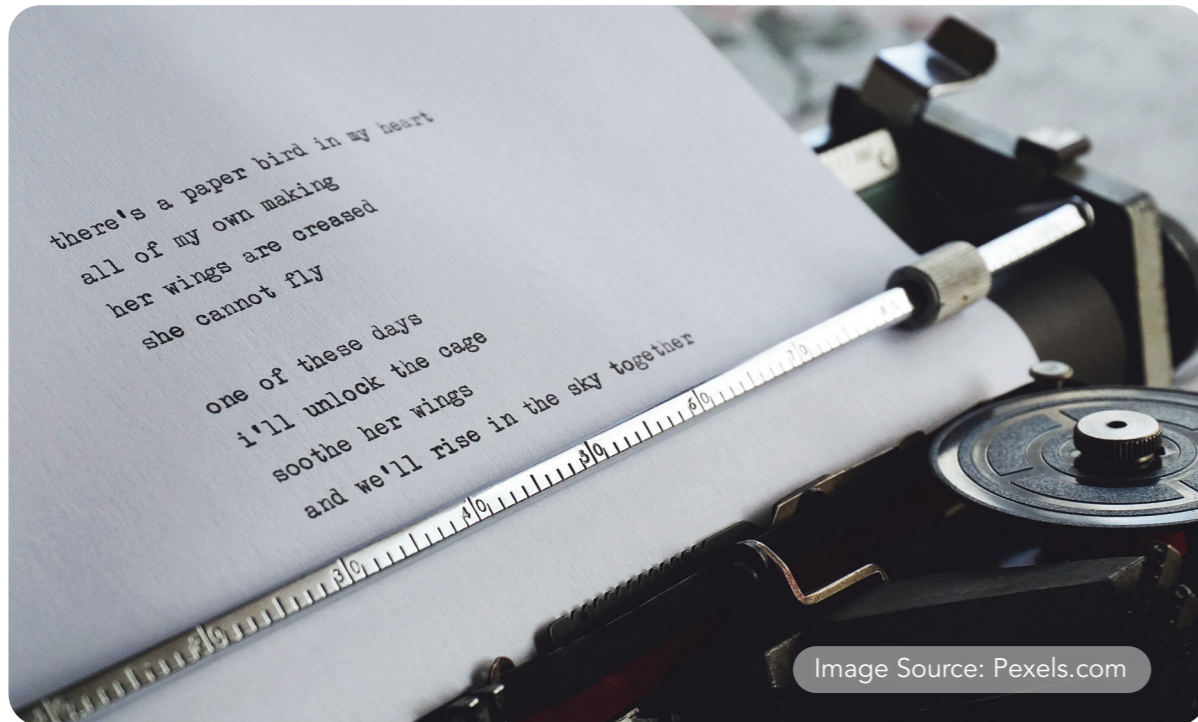


Image Source: Pexels.com

By Ciko K. Ndlovu

**For centuries, humans have been using words to communicate with each other. The art of linguistics has allowed the transferring of messages to and from anywhere in the world. However, many wanted to articulate themselves in a way that has never been seen before. Thus, cultivating a new art form that has since taken literary studies by storm – Poetry.**

Poetry is a world of its own. A rhythmic language that allows one to look beyond the mundanity of reality. Poetry challenges the writer to express, feel, love and lose themselves in a sheet of paper. The reader becomes immersed in intricate stories and becomes one with the message. Poetry is a community that accepts the storytellers for who they are, and unifies people through meaning. Even though this sense of meaning is different for everyone. It is a boundless form that grants the freedom to be whatever it wants to – an emotion, an art or a lifestyle.

It is important to celebrate world-renowned poets such as Maya Angelou, William Shakespeare and other rising poets in our generation. Nelson Mandela University has done an amazing job of creating spaces for these poets to shine their own light. Events, like the Invasive Voices Poetry Slam Competition, provide opportunities for young poets to showcase their talents.

The Poetry Society of Nelson Mandela University, and the Poetry and Music Department of the Nelson Mandela University Drama Society, are other communities within the university that bring these artists together to cultivate them into future greats.

## WHAT'S YOUR ZODIAC SIGN?

By Ciko K. Ndlovu

The concept of Zodiac Signs has become a conversation starter amongst young people. As more information becomes available about the topic online, more people are beginning to have distinct feelings about it.

For some, Astrology is a fun way of getting to know yourself and others. Seeing your behavioural patterns and emotions linked to something explanatory creates a sense of comfort, considering how these characteristics are shared with others of the same star sign. What also makes Astrology vert fascinating, is how it has grown beyond the twelve Zodiac signs.

Thanks to the internet, many are now aware of the true complexity behind the signs. This includes the planet's positioning in the solar system (known as the birth chart). This has evolved into some people asking for your 'Big 3' (Sun Sign, Moon Sign, Rising Sign).

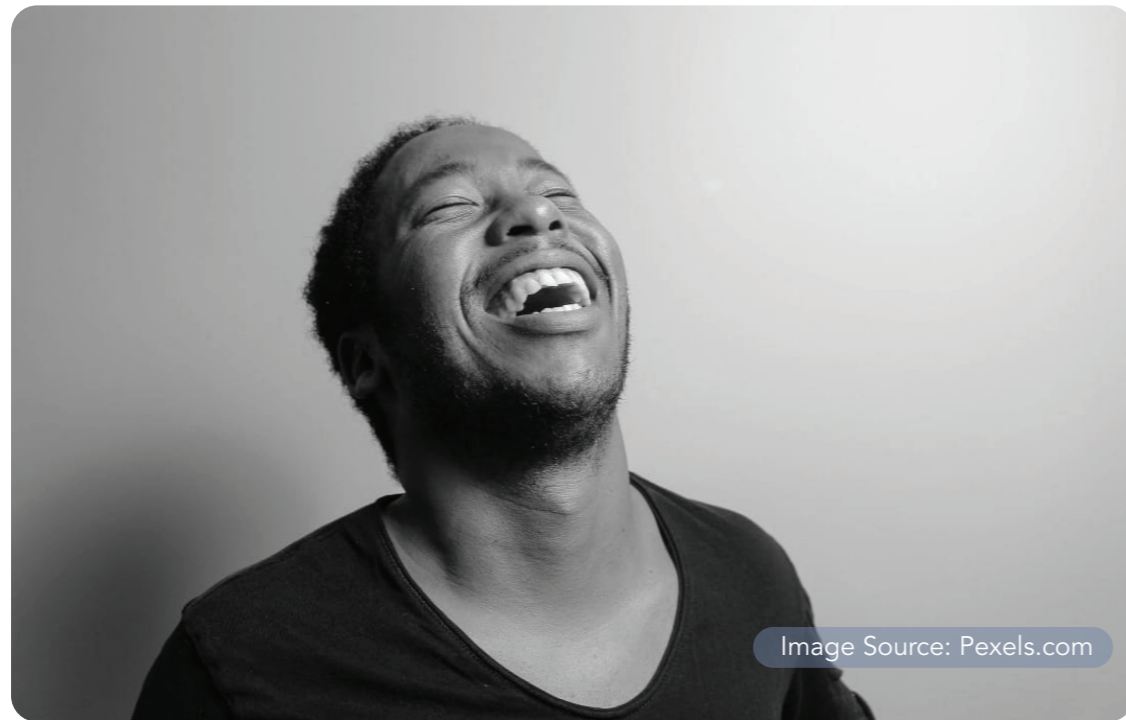
As an avid Astrology fanatic, studying it for four years (and as a Taurus Sun, Aries Moon and Leo Rising), I also see the criticisms many have against the study – the main one being that many people feel the study boxes individuals based on twelve categories. Some astrology fans have associated negative stigmas towards certain zodiac signs, due to having a single unfavourable experience with a certain sign.

These stereotypes can limit engagement with people as their zodiac sign will deter your perception of them (especially Gemini's and Scorpio's which are signs that get the most hate).

Just like any other belief, Astrology has created a community that allows individuals to dive within themselves. So long as you avoid building an unhealthy obsession with it, it is an exciting way to understand yourself and your loved ones better.

Image Source: askastrology.com

# LAUGHTER IS THE BEST MEDICINE



By Akahlulwa Radana

**With World Laughter Day steadily approaching, we need to delve into the concept of laughing. We all like a good laugh now and then, whether we're watching *The Hangover* or *Horrible Bosses*, what precisely is it, that makes laughter so important? How helpful is it to laugh at oneself?**

Laughter is good for one's health, in addition to its power to connect people, encourage hope and lighten responsibilities, it boosts the immune system by decreasing stress hormones, while increasing immunological cells and infection-fighting antibodies, increasing disease resistance. Yes, the doctor was right when he said that laughter is the best medicine. Endorphins are released as a result of laughter. Endorphins improve overall well-being and can temporarily relieve pain.

Consider instances when you may have stubbed your toe. If a stream of swear words did not come to mind, you could have tried to relieve the pounding sensation with a few giggles and it could have helped. That is the strength of laughter. Life is not without its difficulties. Having the ability to laugh at yourself once in a while can help you deal with challenging circumstances or moments when you are feeling self-doubt.

Laughing at yourself, according to studies, can increase your mental health, self-awareness, and confidence. Laughing at yourself also demonstrates that you are a positive person and can make you virtually impervious to unwelcome remarks. You are late for work or class, and you know it, but there's always that one individual who makes it their mission to point out the obvious. Instead of anger, agree with them and try to crack a quick joke before continuing with your day because being upset, will not make you any less late.

To summarize, if that one individual is getting on your nerves – laugh it off. They aren't worth compromising your immune system. If life becomes too demanding, laugh and keep going.

# GETTING TO KNOW YOUR LECTURER PROF. NOMALANGA MKHIZE

By Mfundo Ndima

From the rural area defined by values of respect, community, and boldness to being a black academic respected in her space, Professor Nomalanga Mkhize is a lecturer and the acting director at Nelson Mandela University. She had an interesting childhood growing up in Zimbabwe, Swaziland, and South Africa. By the tender age of 11, she had already attended six different schools.

Mkhize's career serves as an inspiration to young historians and sociologists. With a master's degree in history from Rhodes University and a PhD in Sociology from the University of Cape Town, she currently serves as the acting director of the School of Governmental and Social Sciences. Reflecting on her experience at Nelson Mandela University, she has encountered a mix of challenges.

Students' conservatism and racism, rooted in the university's history as an Afrikaner institution transitioning to a diverse and prestigious one in South Africa, have been prominent. Nevertheless, this experience has allowed her to grow both personally and professionally, transitioning from an academic to an academic administrator. "I come from a rural area so generally my values lean towards community, respect, boldness, independence, nokuthanda abantu nje" said Prof Mkhize in a recorded interview.

These are the values we should imitate from Mkhize so we build a conducive environment in the university that will bring social cohesion. In her department, she has inspired a lot of female students to stretch their boundaries, so they achieve greatness. Her message to the students is "You don't pick the time you're born in, but you can choose who you are in those times." This message emphasises that we as students can change ourselves and the environment for the better. In her success, we as students can learn that we can be our greatest despite the boundaries set for us, we should value our community-ubuntu.



## BE THE CHANGE YOU WANT TO SEE IN THE WORLD



Image Source: pexel.com

By Imkhitha Mbangula

**In a world that has seen better days, we reflect on the past and wonder what our grandparents and forefathers would think of the current state of affairs. What has this world become? With the way the universe has been evolving, our grandparents and forefathers would undoubtedly disapprove.**

However, there is a timeless saying that holds true “Live your life and be the change you want to see in the world.” This thought-provoking statement serves as a powerful reminder that each and every one of us has the capacity to make a difference, shaping the future we long for. Your actions impact everyone around you as well as the generations to come.

Whether it is volunteering at a food bank, establishing a nonprofit organisation, or simply nurturing and caring for our children, these acts create an impact and evoke deep emotions. However, it can be daunting to think that just one person can make a difference in a world heavily influenced by international crises. Fortunately, social impact and change do not have to occur immediately, nor can you achieve it by yourself.

Take things one day at a time while thinking about how you can make a difference. Even if you don't see immediate results, every small step you take adds up over time. Imagine a world where everyone does one act of kindness every day. It will be a world transformed by the power of collective efforts. You do not need to consider the entire world when trying to figure out how to change the world. Your contributions add up and have the potential to create long-lasting change.

## UNVEILING HIDDEN GEMS: LOCAL HANGOUTS IN THE EASTERN CAPE

By Ashley Malepe

With the winter holidays approaching, it's only natural to be seeking and planning on new exciting places to hang out with friends, unwind and create lasting memories. While popular spots often dominate our social scene, there is something truly special about discovering hidden gems right in our own backyard – the Eastern Cape being that yard. Let's unveil local hangouts that are sure to captivate and delight young people seeking unique experiences.

- **The Secret Garden Café, Port Elizabeth**  
Nestled in the heart of Port Elizabeth, The Secret Garden Café is a quaint and charming hideaway that offers a serene atmosphere for relaxation and enjoyment. With its lush greenery, delightful menu options, and warm ambiance, this hidden gem is perfect for indulging in a delicious meal, sipping on a cup of coffee, or simply spending quality time with friends.

- **The Wild Coast Sun, Port Edward**  
For those seeking a thrilling adventure along the coastline, The Wild Coast Sun in Port Edward is a must-visit destination. This hidden gem offers a range of exhilarating activities such as zip-lining, hiking trails with breathtaking views, and even a thrilling water park. It's the perfect spot to unleash your inner adrenaline junkie and create unforgettable memories with friends.

- **Nanaga Farmstall, Thornhill**  
Escape the hustle and bustle of city life and embark on a road trip to Nanaga Farmstall in Thornhill. This charming farm stall is renowned for its mouthwatering homemade pies, delectable treats, and fresh produce. Enjoy a delightful picnic on the picturesque grounds or explore the various stalls offering unique crafts and local products. It's a perfect spot



Image Source: Bona Magazine

to experience the rustic charm of the Eastern Cape's countryside.

- **The Chokka Trail, St. Francis Bay**  
Nature enthusiasts will be enthralled by The Chokka Trail in St. Francis Bay. This coastal hiking trail allows you to immerse yourself in the region's diverse flora and fauna while enjoying stunning views of the coastline. Embark on a multi-day adventure, camping under the stars and exploring the beauty of the Eastern Cape's untamed wilderness.

- **The Donkin Reserve, Port Elizabeth**  
For history buffs and culture enthusiasts, The Donkin Reserve in Port Elizabeth offers a rich blend of heritage, art, and panoramic views. Explore the iconic Donkin Lighthouse, marvel at the vibrant street art in the nearby alleys, and soak in the breathtaking vistas of the city and the harbor. It's a perfect spot for a leisurely stroll or a picnic with friends.

We are fortunate to have a plethora of hidden gems waiting to be discovered right in our own province. Whether you're seeking tranquility, adventure, culinary delights, or cultural experiences, the Eastern Cape offers an array of local hangouts that will surely leave you captivated and inspired. So, after your exams, gather your friends, embark on an exploration, and uncover the magic that awaits you in these few hidden gems of the Eastern Cape.

## MONEY TALKS: FINANCIAL TIPS FOR VARSITY STUDENTS

By Nompumelelo Mculu

Being a varsity student can be an exciting and overwhelming time when it comes to managing your finances.

With newfound independence, you're now responsible for making financial decisions that will have a lasting impact on your future. Whether you're receiving financial aid, working part-time, or even starting your own business, it's crucial to develop good financial habits and strategies that will set you up for long-term success.

Understanding where your money comes from and where it goes is essential as a varsity student. Take the time to create a budget and identify all your sources of income, such as book and living allowances, work-study programs, part-time jobs, and any other earnings. Additionally, it's crucial to track your expenses, including food, rent, tuition fees, textbooks, transportation, and other costs.

Creating a budget is a fundamental step in effective financial management. Start by identifying your essential expenses,

such as groceries and monthly bills. Then, factor in your non-essential expenses, like entertainment and dining out. Be sure to allocate money for savings and paying off any debts. It's important to create a realistic budget that suits your needs and stick to it.

Avoiding overspending is one of the biggest challenges in adhering to a budget. Self-discipline is key, but there are a few tricks that can help. Consider setting up automatic payments for essential bills, creating a shopping list and sticking to it, cooking at home instead of eating out, and tracking your spending.

To steer clear of debt and financial distress, developing good financial habits early on is crucial. Create a budget and stick to it, avoid unnecessary purchases, and pay bills on time. Avoid carrying a balance on your credit cards and only borrow what you realistically need.

When it comes to loans, never borrow more than you can realistically afford to repay. These practices will help ensure a solid financial foundation for your future.

Image Source: Supplied

## NIGHTCLUBS: THE DILEMMA OF VARSITY STUDENTS

By Nompumelelo Mculu

Nightclubs create a dilemma for varsity students. Balancing the demands of academic life with a busy social life is already challenging, and it becomes even more daunting when a part-time job is added to the mix. This is a common predicament faced by many varsity students, particularly those who work night shifts or frequently visit nightclubs. While nightlife and night shifts offer opportunities for fun and financial gain, they can also negatively affect academic performance and overall well-being.

Varsity students have a reputation for their love of partying and socializing. With more disposable income and a desire to unwind after a week of studying, it's no surprise that nightlife has become a popular activity among these young adults. However, the allure of nightclubs and parties brings the risk of poor academic performance and other associated dangers.

Nightclubs offer a unique experience that appeals to young people. Dancing to loud music, drinking with friends, and meeting new people create an adrenaline rush and excitement that make a night out irresistible. Many students view it as a fun way to relieve stress and temporarily forget about their responsibilities.

While nightlife can be enjoyable, it also carries certain risks. According to Lushano Naidoo, author of "The Dangers of Partying Too Hard in High School and Varsity," "Students who engage in excessive partying are more likely to experience poor academic performance, substance abuse, and engage in other dangerous behaviors." Moreover, staying out late and drinking excessively can lead to health issues such as fatigue, depression, and anxiety.

Despite the enjoyment derived from nightlife, it can have a detrimental impact on academic performance. "Poor grades, missed classes, and late assignments are just a few of the consequences that can result from overindulging in the party scene", Lushano Naidoo.

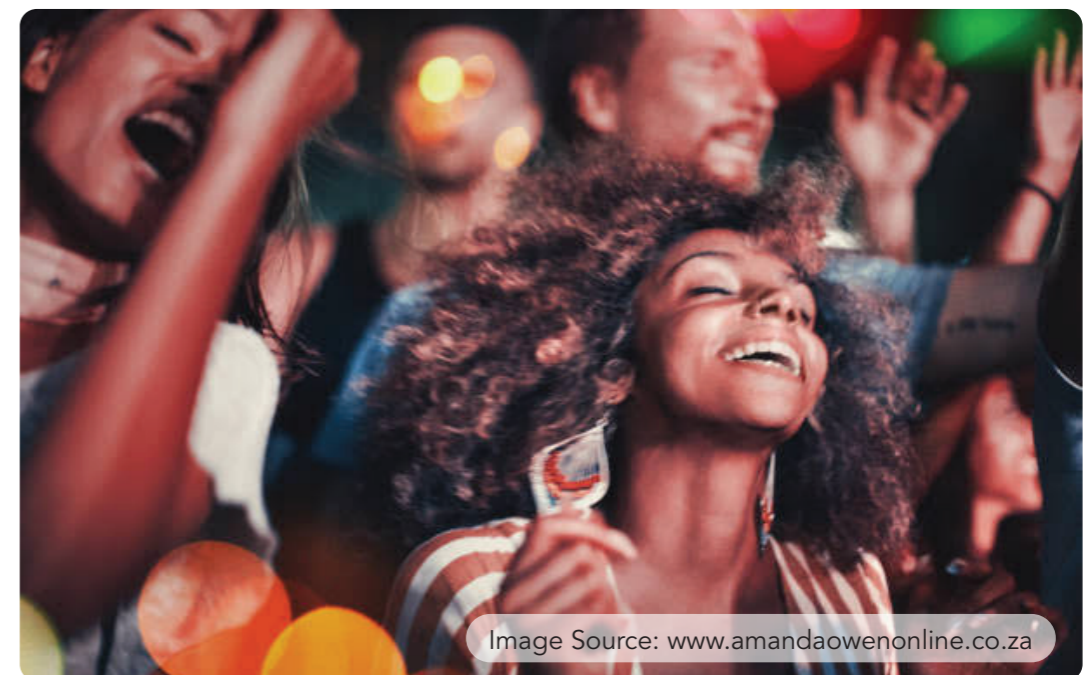


Image Source: [www.amandaowenonline.co.za](http://www.amandaowenonline.co.za)

## BABALWA MBUKU: PIONEERING CHANGE IN THE EASTERN CAPE

By Bantu Ndiki

Even after multiple doors slammed shut on her path, Babalwa Mbuku, the first black woman to establish a sanitary towel in the Eastern Cape, refused to abandon her vision. Unwavering in her determination, she put everything on the line – from selling her car, to exhausting her savings – to bring her venture 'Ntombam' to life.

Ntombam Sanitary towel brand is listed and available in selected retailers in the Eastern Cape and Western Cape. Named one of South Africa's most influential young individuals in Social Enterprise and Philanthropy, Babalwa's roles stretch far beyond being the Chief Executive Officer of Ntombam. She is a menstrual coach, author, motivational speaker, brand ambassador and influencer. Her list of accolades continues to expand.

An engaging personality, who is also mentoring start-up business using her experience. One of her mentees Yah Qanna Perfumes by Palesa Maluleke is currently making waves and name for her brand. Babalwa is all about Empowerment and known for her mantra "Kuyaqaleleka" it's Ok to start over.

Babalwa is known for making grand entrances. Her recent arrival at a motivational event, flanked by professional bodyguards, was more than just a spectacle. It was a message to the world about pursuing and achieving one's dreams.

The seed of 'Ntombam' was planted after a profound encounter with a young girl who stated she'd prefer free sanitary towels from the government over free education. This statement resonated deeply with Babalwa, inspiring her to research the sanitary needs



Image Source: Babalwa Mbuku Facebook

in Eastern Cape schools. Founded in 2018 'Ntombam' has been on a growth trajectory since, operating out of East London in the Eastern Cape. Babalwa's mission is not solely about business success. She uses her influential platform for community outreach, with a focus on uplifting women, true to her deep-rooted passion for social impact.

Babalwa Mbuku is an authentic leader who continues to inspire many, with her unwavering determination and success. Her story proves that even when faced with adversity, one's dreams can manifest into reality.

## THALASSOPHOBIA HAS ENTERED THE CHAT

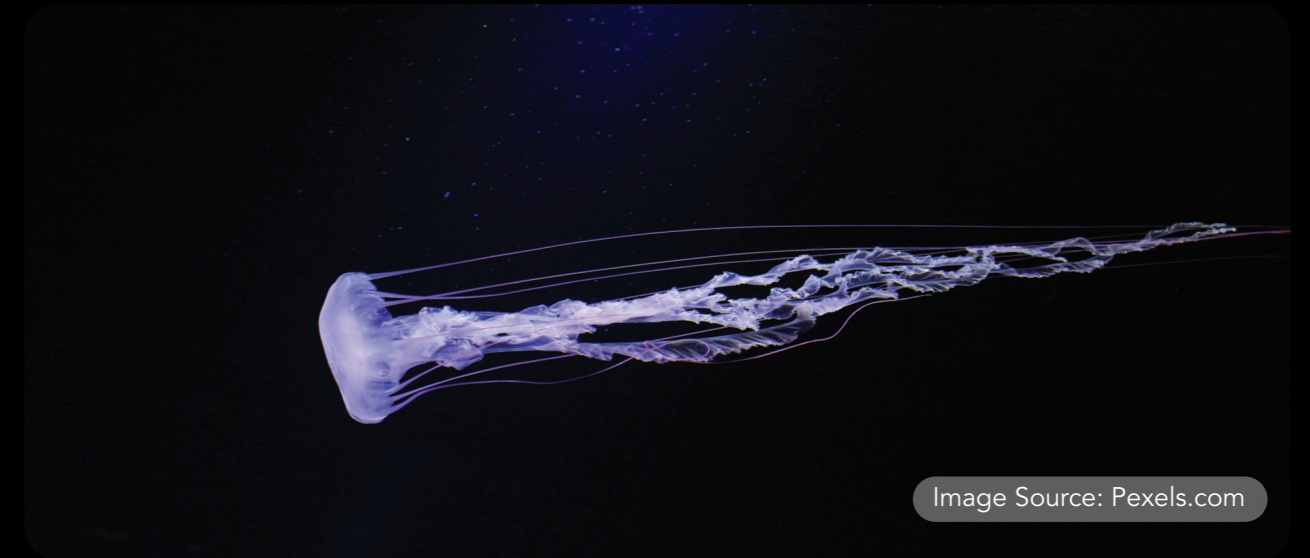


Image Source: Pexels.com

By Phuthego Precious Nthoke

Thalassophobia is the immense fear of the ocean, the emptiness thereof, and the animals that dwell within. More than 18 000 new species of animal and plant were discovered and named in 2020 alone. One of the most interesting, old creatures, the siphonophore, has been around for centuries, and has been studied since the 19th century. They can vary greatly in size, depending on the species, with some being only a few centimeters long, and others reaching lengths of over 40 meters.

The siphonophore is a colony that consists of nectophores, ('zooids'), which are individual organisms that are genetically identical, working together to form a single colony. These zooids each have specific functions that they perform, like reproducing, feeding, defense and movement. Some species thereof, like the Portuguese man o' war, are notorious for their painful stings, and can be dangerous to humans. Despite their potential hazards, siphonophores are fascinating creatures that have attracted the attention of scientists and nature enthusiasts alike.

Siphonophores are found in marine environments throughout the world, from shallow waters close to the shore, to the deep sea. They are usually found in warm, tropical or subtropical waters, although some species are also found in colder areas. They are pelagic, meaning that they live in the open water, rather than on the sea floor. They are often found floating near the surface of the water, although some species can be found deeper in the ocean.

Another fun fact – siphonophores are important predators in the ocean, using their long tentacles to capture small fish and other planktonic organisms. We are less likely to encounter a lot of different species of siphonophores washed out on Pollock or Hobie Beach. Siphonophores are pelagic - they live in the open water rather than on the sea floor. They are often found floating near the surface of the water, although some species can also be found deeper in the ocean, but I guarantee if we did, many people would be left slightly traumatized, or develop full-blown thalassophobia, but hopefully it would be a while before we encounter a situation like that.



## HUMAN EVOLUTION THROUGH NATURAL SELECTION



Image Source: unsplash.com

By Sonia Van Der Linde

Throughout history, science has showed us that, through natural selection, traits within creatures tend to increase in frequency if that trait is beneficial to the survival of the creature, and whether or not that trait inhibits a creature from producing healthy offspring. Positive mutations are therefore more likely to be carried through to new generations.

Many well researched examples exist, like the ability to digest lactose, which is a beneficial trait as it exists within food that provides an additional nutritional source. After a certain age, mammals lose the ability to digest lactose and only a handful maintain it. Through gene mutation studies, it has been found that this is caused by a certain mutation in the LCT gene, which is becoming increasingly more common within humans.

The presence of disease throughout history, like the Bubonic plague, the Corona Virus, Malaria etc, has proved the theory of 'survival of the fittest', where those with lower susceptibility are more likely to survive in order to produce healthy and strong off. The presence of disease throughout history, such as the bubonic plague, Covid-19, malaria, etc., has proved the theory of the "survival of the fittest", where those with lower susceptibility are more likely to survive in order to produce healthy and strong offspring with the same desirable genetics.

This so-called "arms race" between animals and pathogens have always been and continue to one of the main factors in determining how a species adapts and evolves. All living beings are influenced by each other and their surrounding environment, and the best way to predict and prepare for our futures is to look back into our pasts.



Image Source: istockphoto.com

## NEURALINK SET TO START HUMAN TRIALS FOR THE N1 CHIP

By Sonia Van Der Linde

**Neuralink Corporation, founded in 2016 by tech mogul Elon Musk, Max Hodak and a team of scientists promises a safely implantable chip that allows the brain to control your electronic devices.**

This chip, known as the Neuralink 1 (N1) chip, can be implanted into the surface of the human brain, with the goal of creating a safe brain-computer interface that allows people with paralysis to use their electronic devices through neural activity within the brain. The N1 chip, which can be wirelessly charged from a computer, is sealed within an airtight device approximately the size of the pad of your thumb, possesses multiple threads that directly link to your brain tissue in order to pick up neural activity. Bluetooth signals transmitted from this chip are received by a brain-computer interface (BCI) within a specialized computer, allowing you to control movements and tasks on the device.

Neuralink not only strives to enable brain-computer interface, but also to aid in the field of medical science, in the hopes of treating several brain disorders such as Alzheimer's disease, as well as blindness and mental health disorders. As of June 2023, human trials for this project has officially been approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), following previous rejections due to complications within animal testing. Safety concerns from many organizations, as well as the public, has delayed human trials and sparked a debate concerning the safety and ethics of implanting a foreign device, designed and produced by an independent corporation, into an extremely sensitive organ, and that, if done incorrectly, could cause irreversible neurological damage.

The hopeful claims made by Neuralink and its founders is bound to raise scepticism within many, especially when considering the many botched trials done on pigs, which ultimately lead the euthanasia. As there is still so much that we do not understand about the brain yet, many critics believe that the approval of early human trials need to be reconsidered.

## MADIBAZ MISS OUT ON VARSITY CUP PROMOTION



Image Source: Varsity Cup

By Prudence Maluleke

In a stunning display of rugby prowess, the Central University of Technology (CUT) rugby team dominated Madibaz Rugby in a high stakes promotion/relegation matchup. The Bloemfonteinians finished in 7th place in their Varsity Cup campaign, while Madibaz ended the Varsity Shield season as runners-up to the title.

CUT came out of the gate with a burst of energy, taking a commanding 42-10 lead at halftime. Tries from Kevin Strydom, Jandré de Beer, Xavier Swartbooi, combined with expert conversions from Christian Rheeder, set the tone for the game. Despite their best efforts, Madibaz struggled to gain traction, until Chadwyn November finally broke through with a crucial try, followed by a conversion and penalty from Kehan Myburg.

The second half proved to be just as intense as the first, with CUT showing no signs of slowing down. Ricoman Titus, Jan Bessenger, and Zac Bester each scored impressive tries, ending the game with an emphatic 91-10 scoreline. It was a masterful performance that showcased the team's skill and determination, leaving Madibaz with plenty to do if they hope to bounce back from the loss.

Madibaz Rugby player, Chadwick Winnaar, admitted the disappointment that came with the defeat to CUT. "The loss was a tough one to take for us as it meant we'd remain in the Varsity Shield for another season," he said. "But the players and coaching staff are motivated and driven to win the Grand Challenge Cup this year. Despite their valiant efforts, Madibaz were unable to secure the victory they needed to advance to the Varsity Cup and will instead be competing in the FNB Varsity Shield next year.

## MAARTENS' SECOND DATE WITH DESTINY

By Full Stop Communication

Decorated Madibaz Water Polo goalkeeper, Meghan Maartens, will be in defensive mode when she leaves for her international assignment. Olympian has a second date with Tokyo when she represents South Africa at the World Aquatics Championships in Fukuoka from July 14 to 30.

Maartens, an integral member of the national squad, said one could never be complacent about selection. "Every time it happens it feels like the first time," she said. "To be able to sing the national anthem on the international stage always brings me to tears." She added that it was a privilege to compete against the best in the world, but even more to represent everyone back home.

With the Olympics ticked, Maartens is aware of the need to set new goals. "That is what I'm currently working on," she said without going into specifics. Maartens felt that the team was starting to come together "really well" as they intensified their training ahead of the Worlds.

"I'm excited by the challenge. It's awesome to be part of this." Maartens, obliged to share her ambitions with the demands of a postgraduate certificate in education, has been focusing on strength and conditioning work in honing her game ahead of the global event.

Although the South Africans failed to qualify for the World Cup in Los Angeles after only managing to beat Uzbekistan and Ukraine, the trip to Germany proved worthwhile, as they improved hand over first, throughout. "We ended up in the top four, which is really good considering we only had two days of training before the tournament began."



Image Source: Supplied

Madibaz Sport water polo manager, Melinda Goosen, mentioned it had been a delight to witness the development of Maartens to world-class athlete. "Meghan is such a talent and has grown so much over the years to become the player she is today.

To have been able to watch her has been such a privilege." Her selection showed what could be achieved if you applied yourself, said Goosen, who believed her accomplishments would inspire a new generation. "She is someone that the younger players can definitely look up to."

# MADIBAZ CAMPUS FOOTBALL LEAGUE GOES 'PROFESSIONAL'

By Full Stop Communication

Nelson Mandela University's campus football league recently connected with the MySafa registration platform. The official South African Football Association's FIFA-integrated player registration and competition system, manages all levels of sport.

All SAFA leagues use it to register players, publish fixtures and capture results. Players on the database are issued FIFA Connect ID's to record transfers, identify talents, and ensure clubs are rewarded for developing players. Mark Tommy, Madibaz Sport football manager, said that the league growth created the need for the competition to run more professionally. Women play futsal, a type of indoor soccer on a smaller court.

With women's football classed a development code in terms of on-campus students, this format benefits them, promoting contact with the ball. "In addition, the increase of on-campus student accommodation has seen a huge overflow and demand for playing football," he said. "From this year, we have transitioned the league, which is restricted to bona-fide Mandela University students, into a strength versus strength structure," Tommy mentioned the league tied in with Madibaz Football's pillars of creating performance leagues for Sifa players, developing mass participation leagues for campus residences, engaging with youngsters through the schools-based football talent identification and recruitment programme.

Inqaku general manager, Shane Felix, whose company developed the software for the platform, said he was delighted to connect with the university. The tertiary institution is the first to use MySafa, offering benefits like ensuring the eligibility of players, providing regular, updated information on the team's progress. "That creates excitement and hype around the competition as it builds a soccer community with a vested interest in these leagues," Felix said. "

This system also provides a record of players from any team, so the progress of anyone can be tracked. "If a player is signed by a professional club, the FIFA training and rewards programme makes it possible to compensate clubs involved in the development of that player. Felix said his company was honoured to pilot the platform with the university to give its league better structure and exposure. This inspired other universities. Keep track of Madibaz Campus Football league at [www.inqaku.com](http://www.inqaku.com).



Image Source: Supplied

# NEW RACE A TIMELY BOOST FOR ROADRUNNING

By Full Stop Communication

To make contribution to a discipline that took strain during lockdown, the Madibaz Athletics Club took the initiative to introduce the 21.1km road running event, that will be staged alongside a 10km race. Taking place hot on the heels of the Spar's Women's Challenge and NMB-half marathon, the event on 1 July is one to look out for.

Madibaz Sport Athletics Manager Bernard Petersen mentioned that the new races were part of strategy to invest in the sport. Races under the EPA banner are organized by different clubs, and as a member of the provincial body, the university came on board.

The idea behind tagging a 10km event onto the half, is to encourage everyone to participate. Besides the province's leading long-distance runners, many Madibaz athletes should be at the pointy end of the field.

Amongst the many, is Sakhe Mahote, a junior and a regular podium finisher this season. The expectation is that he will be in the mix during the business end of the race. Others to watch from the university are Sicelo Mashaba and Asanda Zamisa. From the higher echelons in the region, Petersen expects to see the likes of Melikhaya Frans, Desmond Zibi, Andile Motwana, Caitlyn Wolff and Thabang Mosiako on the starting line

The route provides a combination of flat stretches and short drags. The Madibaz Stadium will host the start, where the runners

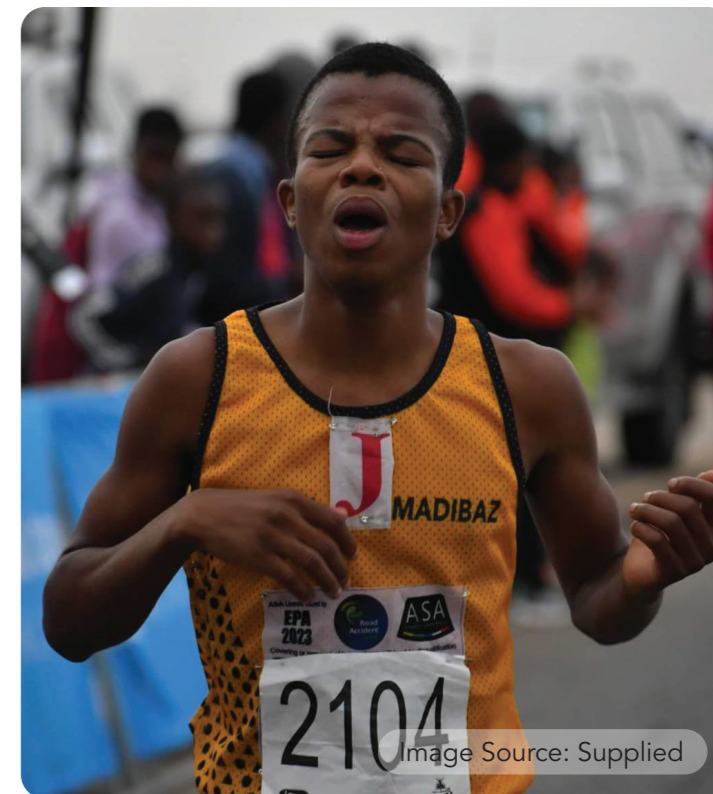


Image Source: Supplied

will head to Admiralty Way via Gomery Avenue and University Way. They then go onto Marine Drive to reach midway, at the entrance to the Noordhoek Ski Boat club, and then, retrace their steps to the stadium.

Plenty of prizes will be offered, while the men's and women's winners will take home R1500 each. The first 200 entries in the half will receive a t-shirt, and the first 200km in the 10km, a buff. The half starts at 7AM, and the 10km at 07h15.

Entry forms can be obtained from local sports shops and online at [ww.webtickets.co.za](http://ww.webtickets.co.za). Also available from the athletics office at Mandela University. For enquiries, contact Petersen on 076 402 7317 or Graham Terblanche on 072 650 6551.