



Higher and Further Education Disability Services Association

HEDSA

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To HEDSA friends and colleagues

It is with great sadness and excitement that we share the second HEDSA Newsflash for 2019. We would like to thank institutions for contributing to this newsflash.

But some sad news first.....

IN MEMORIAM – REINETTE POPPLESTONE

It is with great sadness that we received the news of Reinette Popplestone's passing on 25 July 2019.

She served as the HEDSA Chairperson for the 2015/2016 period and tackled a lot of important issues, including that of establishing a task team to draft the first ever guideline for the appointment of Sign Language interpreters at higher education institutions. This amongst others and her responsibility as the Head of the Disability Unit at the University of Cape Town. There is a beautiful article on the website of UCT, which explains the work and commitment of Reinette, in the advancement and improvement of the experience of students with disabilities <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2016-11-14-popplestone-a-masterpiece-written-in-the-margins>

Here are some messages shared on social media, which speak to the commitment and kind of human being she was:

"Reinette was the one who made it possible for UCT Deaf students to receive full access. We all had good interpreters, notetakers as well as real time captioners! She was an inspiring woman. Condolences to her family" - Robyn Swannack (UCT Alumni)

"Upon waking up this morning, the first thing I learned was that Reinette has passed away. I do not know what I'm supposed to do or how I'm supposed to cope with the rest of my day. She meant so much to me and was instrumental in my transfer to and success at UCT.

I dare say, I wouldn't have transferred from the North West University if it wasn't for her, and wouldn't have had accommodation at UCT and all other support. My transfer was a last-minute thing and unplanned, I basically knew for sure that I'd be leaving NWU on the day I was supposed to register there.

She always went the extra mile for me and was always the person I relied on, and was always speedy to respond to anything I requested. I adored her so much and I dare say she made me her own child when I moved to Cape Town.

My deepest condolences to her friends and family. This was very untimely, I could never be ready for it." – Qobo Buntu Ningiza (UCT Alumni)

“A selfless human being. Your door was always open and your ear always sympathetic. You opened up so many doors and possibilities for the students you served, making sure they had what they needed to ensure their full participation. I will be forever grateful for what I gained in the short time I knew you.

Rest well Reinette xxx” – Trudie Theunissen (UCT South African Sign Language Interpreter 2013 – 2016)

From the HEDSA community we salute you Reinette!

HEDSA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE PROGRESS

HEDSA's Executive Committee has met for the second time on 26 July 2019 since the previous Newsflash and the following matters have been deliberated on, decided and executed:

- The HEDSA website has been updated with relevant documents and the amended HEDSA constitution.
- Encouraging regional collaboration.
- Currently collecting information to develop a guideline for a more uniform approach to delivering services to students with disabilities and guideline for lecturers.
- Sharing of best practices through our list serve communication regarding the responsibility of reasonable accommodation of staff with disabilities at institutions.

As promised – we are announcing our 2020 Symposium hosting institution. We would like to thank Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (Eastern Cape region) for being willing to host the next HEDSA Symposium. So we encourage you to start planning and preparing to attend the Symposium in September 2020. More concise details will follow in due course.

As the current EXCO we want to kindly remind and again request members to please pay membership fees as per emails communicated in this regard. All Higher Education and TVET institutions may affiliate with HEDSA. Membership has the following advantages:

- To form part of the “list serve”, which is a platform used to share experiences and obtain valuable information to assist institutions to benchmark and set-up services in a more cost effective way.
- To obtain funding towards collaboration in regions.
- To obtain guidelines / procedures / policies towards the provision of services by Disability Units.

In addition, we received numerous payments in 2019 without a reference number. If your institution did not receive a receipt, kindly forward proof of payment to annelinet@bolandcollege.com.

PROGRESS ON THE CARL & EMILY FUCHS FOUNDATION GRANT RECEIVED

The grant of R50 000 received from the Carl & Emily Fuchs Foundation, which was received towards the TVET and Community College Support / Training initiatives. The HEDSA EXCO has decided to combine the support / training initiatives with establishing regional collaborations within the regions of Gauteng, Eastern Cape, Free State, Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal to ensure continued support to TVET and Community Colleges.

The grant has assisted regions to establish and launch their regional collaborations, to provide a platform for training to TVET and Community Colleges. Currently Gauteng and Eastern Cape regions have established their regional collaborations. The partnerships established are assisting to identify potential resources to be shared and sharing of best practices. It assists staff working with students with disabilities in the PSET sector (and especially the TVET and Community Colleges) with the necessary information to improve on their services provided to students with disabilities.

The Eastern Cape Disability Regional Committee (ECDRC) had a 2-day workshop, which was held on 28 – 29 May 2019 at the Lovedale TVET College in King Williams Town. An impressive attendance of over 40 delegates from various Colleges and Universities, including NGO's and the DHET and the Eastern Cape Premier's Office with various topics covered regarding disability. Topics included:

- The Strategic Policy Framework on Disability for the Post-School Education & Training System - Implementation Plan (Ms Sesi Mahlobogoane of the DHET Head Office)
- NSFAS Applications and payment processes (Mr Hirohito Dikobo of NSFAS).
- Opportunities of students with disabilities was presented by the dynamic Ms Zininzi Mpurwana of the Eastern Cape Disability Economic Empowerment Trust and Ms Nokulunga Mjwara from Ituba Access Matters.
- Processes and Procedures for academic concessions (Department of Basic Education)
- Highlights on the Pilot work in TVET Colleges in the area of disability (Mr Alex Sembe from DHET Eastern Cape)
- Deafness Education (Ms Asanda Katshwa from the E.C. Premier's Office)

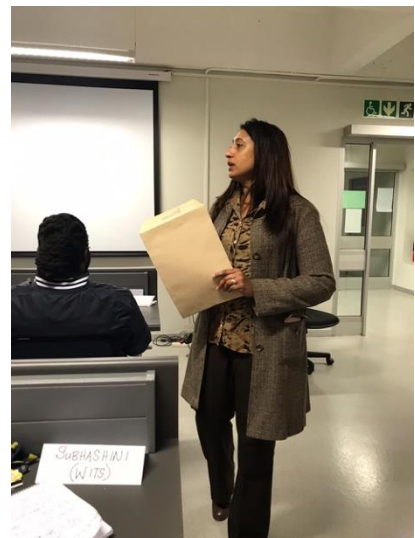
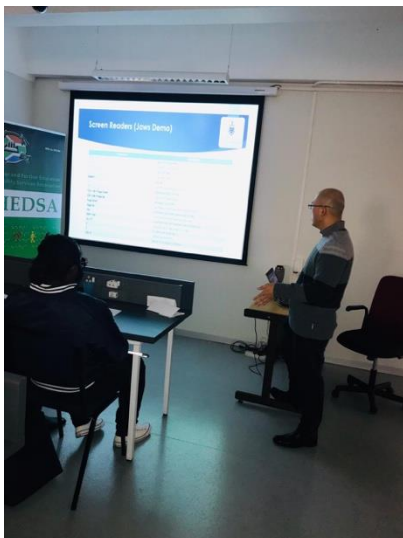
The meeting also had By-elections for the position of Secretary where V. Israel from Rhodes University was nominated and elected as Secretary for the ECDRC.

The Gauteng regional collaboration (hosted at Wits University), including Gauteng, Limpopo and Mpumalanga provinces, in June and served as a learning/training opportunity for attendees. The meeting was well attended, with a larger representation of support staff from TVET and Community Colleges. There was also representation from the Limpopo Premiers office. Topics included:

- The Strategic Policy Framework on Disability for the Post-School Education & Training System - Implementation Plan and NSFAS Applications and payment processes (Ms Sesi Mahlobogoane of the DHET Head Office)
- Experiences were shared on the application, granting and implementation of Student Concessions for tests and exams and exposure to the assistive technology for visual impairments
- Disability Tax relief for parents of students with disabilities and disabled young professionals.
- Wits as the host organisation shared information about the accessible design of their Disability Rights Unit (DRU) facilities and a mini tour of the Wits campus were done, highlighting aspects of universal access.

The Gauteng, Limpopo and Mpumalanga region was successful in electing a Chairperson, Ms Leila Abdool Gafoor from the University of Johannesburg (UJ) and a Regional secretary, Ms Dikeledi Molamu from Waterberg TVET. These regional representatives will serve the HEDSA Gauteng, Limpopo and Mpumalanga region, for a two year term and drive the process for continued regional collaborations. The next regional meeting is already planned to be hosted by North West University (NWU) before the end of the year. Pictured below are some shapshots from the Gauteng regional meeting.





Furthermore, HEDSA EXCO is more than willing to visit and support provincial initiatives undertaken to assist TVET and Community Colleges. The Limpopo Province's Office of the Premier hosted a one day workshop in Polokwane (June 2019), which was attended by the HEDSA Chairperson to provide the necessary guidance and encourage collaboration, the sharing of resources and best practices within the province.

We eagerly await the KwaZulu-Natal, Western Cape and Free State regions to establish their collaborations.

Each region has R10 000 for the year, which can be claimed for meetings / training at these meetings. We encourage regions to try to meet at least 3 times for the year.

To obtain the available funds, submit claims to the Treasurer, Anneline Taljaard, by emailing her at annelinet@bolandcollege.com.

Each region must also elect a chairperson and a secretary with the responsibility to provide feedback/reporting to HEDSA from the regional meetings held. The next round of reports to be submitted by end of **September 2019** for purposes of providing a progress report to CEFF. Your collaborations, cooperation and adherence to the deadline will be much appreciated.

I would like to thank Gauteng and Eastern Cape regions for the reports submitted and congratulate them on their successful meetings hosted.

CEFF 50th ANNIVERSARY ATTENDED

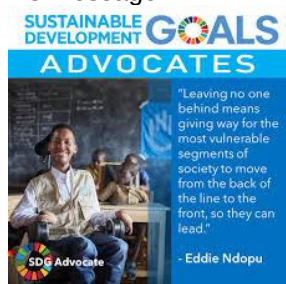
The Carl & Emily Fuchs Foundation celebrated its 50th Anniversary by hosting a very classy luncheon at Shepstone Gardens in Johannesburg on the 1st of August. The event was attended by a 100 invited guests and shared the wonderful projects the CEFF has supported over the past 50 years and with the former Miss World (2014), Rolene Strauss, as the programme director and graced by the CEO of CEFF, Dr Riaan Els, hosting the guests. Chaeli Mycroft inspiring keynote address confirming yet again how people with disabilities CAN!. Pictured below are Dr Anlia Pretorius (Wits), Martie Miranda (UFS), Leila Abdool Gafoor (UJ) and Nevil Balakrishna (UKZN).



UNITED NATIONS NEWS

The UN SG earlier this year appointed Eddie Ndopu as one of the SDG Advocates (<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/blog/2019/05/new-sdg-advocates/>).

As the youngest, the only disabled and quite possibly the only open non-binary SDG Advocate, we need to find platforms through which he can inspire young people with different inter-sectionalities with his message.



He did a presentation with Lydia Pretorius, Chief Director: Advocacy and Mainstreaming Rights of Persons with Disabilities at the Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities at the 3rd Annual Afrika Tikkun Disability Symposium, in which he unpacks the **Beyond Zero** concept he developed. It is a message that they hope will resonate with public policy-makers and programme implementers!

Eddie can be directly contacted on edwardkndopu@gmail.com or 079 416 5149.

SPECIALISED TRAINING FOR STUDENTS WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENTS AT BOLAND COLLEGE

Boland College, one of the top TVET colleges in South Africa will be offering specialized training programs for post matric students with visual impairments. A partnership was formed between the College and the Hein Wagner Academy (HWA) in Worcester. This came after the disability community received shocking news towards the end of 2018 that due to restructuring, the Innovation for the Blind post school training facility in Worcester, closed down. Students with a severe lack of vision were literally left in the dark regarding post school training opportunities.

The partnership with the HWA entails that the College will offer the programs and the HWA will provide the facilities, e.g. buildings, residence, computers, braille text books, audio software etc. Boland College appointed specialist lecturers who have more than 30 years' experience in lecturing to blind and visually impaired students. The first group have started in July 2019 studying towards National Diplomas in Marketing Management or Management Assistant. Qualifying students can apply to NSFAS for study and accommodation bursaries.



Mrs Wendy Adams, Vice-Principal of Boland College (back, right) standing next to officials from NSFAS. Also in the picture are some of the 22 students whom are visually impaired / blind, and who came to Worcester campus to register on 10 July 2019.

Boland College is extremely proud to partner with Hein Wagner to establish an excellent training opportunity for students who are blind. With this partnership, students who are visually impaired will now have the opportunity to obtain a qualification that will enable them to take up their responsibilities to become productive citizens in our country. Prospective students with a matric certificate can contact Anneline Taljaard at the Disability Unit at Boland College Head Office at 021 886 7111, or send an email to corne@heinwagneracademy.org for more information.



Velvet accompanied her owner, Jo-Lize Bronkhorst on registration day at Worcester Campus.

HEDSA'S WAY OF SHARING INFORMATION

As the HEDSA community we make use of a list serve to share best practices, ask questions, advise, guide learn from others and just share knowledge and information. Please make contact with Subhashini Ellan (Publicity and Communications) at Subhashini.Ellan@wits.ac.za if you would like to be added to the list serve.

Again in concluding this newsletter, I would like to urge colleagues to send us your news for this publication. Share with us your achievements, your challenges and your plans. Please also share photos of regional meetings held.

With sincere best wishes

Martie Miranda

Chair

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