

# FET College Times

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The Official Quarterly WCED FET College Newsletter

## Step in the right direction with FET College education



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Smiling students eager to register. Photograph supplied by Boland College.

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# Thousands register for FET College Education and Training

Welcome to the first edition of *FET College Times* for the Academic Year 2011. In this edition we have once more “packed a full punch” of delectable vocational education and training achievements, accolades, advances and debates (with a challenge or two to boot!). For this array we sincerely thank our loyal (and new) contributors who, in the midst of the enrolment fracas that typifies all educational institutions at the beginning of the year, found the time and took the trouble to submit their “pearls of wisdom”. We deeply appreciate the effort and trust that our readers will enjoy your contributions as much as we did. In many respects I believe we have achieved a new level of excellence, and I hope you will agree.

The focus at the start of the academic year falls on student registration and student support practices. Apart from three thought-provoking items in our Intellectual Debate column, we have included many other articles that in some way draw our attention to registration and student support.

Maintaining this theme, we feature an item on the Mot SA (read: life-skills) conference held at the end of 2010. Also in the Cutting Edge News column we introduce a student orientation with a difference generously assisted by the Minister of Tourism, as well as news of an overwhelming registration response to a new Engineering programme.

In Movers and Shakers we introduce a jeweller, a sailor/boat-builder and a professional child-carer. We complete the accolades with a student role-model of the year. All of these varied individuals have found for themselves a niche through FET Colleges that has spurred them on to remarkable achievements. In our Campus Matters column we start off with a focus on registration activities. (Read this and pick up some valuable tips for your own college or campus.) Life skills initiatives, drama and international and local partnerships feature as well.

For Policy and Operational Shifts we note a call for the formation of

a national support group for Open Learning Centre practitioners, see the benefits of multi-college collaboration for rural development, and end with a special focus page on “Internships”.

Lastly, as mentioned, we place Student Support Services under the proverbial microscope and trust that readers will be moved sufficiently to respond to the call for the establishment of a Provincial Forum in this regard.

It’s in your hands – along with the lives of thousands of newly registered and existing students! Here’s to a happy and successful 2011 for all!

## ERRATUM

*In the December edition it was reported that Charlene Beeming is the Manager of the College of Cape Town Linkages and Programmes Unit. She is in fact a researcher and curriculum specialist within that unit.*

## FROM THE CHIEF DIRECTOR’S DESK



The Academic Year is now in full swing. In fact some students must by now be preparing to submit their first assignments and assessments. We are all excited about this year because the Minister has given us, the FET Colleges, very clear directives and has placed FET Colleges at the centre of his performance agreement with the President. A huge task therefore befalls us – and as it does, it poses the necessary challenge to make an impact in the lives of many (and mostly young) people.

One area that was flagged as exceptionally urgent for this year was to focus on quality teaching and learning at our FET Colleges. This is a call of unquestionable merit for every employee and education and training partner who is an educationist at heart. The need to improve is paramount. The way we teach people of the hip-hop era can never be the same as those who appreciated the Rolling-Stones or Beatles! Our environment has completely changed, and as educators and instructors we need to always be mindful of that new rhythm. We are obliged to adjust our instinctive approach and get in step with that which will be appealing and accessible to our “modern” audience. These are

indeed exciting times. The excitement does, however, bring with it another aspect to the fore and that is the need to provide support to our students.

We all know that very few in the world have achieved anything without a support system. This is particularly so in education and training. We have a post-1994 history that has encouraged wider access and participation, giving effect to the Constitutional imperative. In keeping with this noble sentiment the momentum is growing and has this year reached “high priority” status. Meaningful student support becomes an important “cog” in the “institutional machine” that claims to welcome all. This is so because not all students have the same or similar background and domestic support structures. Guidance and support becomes invaluable to their academic performance.

FET Colleges in the Western Cape have fully grasped this. The evidence of this may be found in the robust activity, initiatives and practices that have become the norm at our colleges. I pay tribute to all who have taken so much effort in this regard to date, and I encourage all concerned to carry on. Go on looking for ways and means by which you can make our students



*Zozo Siyengo, Chief Director: Further Education and Training Colleges*

perform and achieve! Keep up the good work!

By now I think everyone must be aware that with the launch of National Skills Development Strategy III (NSDS III), and with a national SETA forum in place and the re-instatement of Report 191 programmes, life at colleges will not be the same. We need to be ready to serve regardless of what gets thrown at us. Our work has become Priority Number 1. We need to rise to the occasion and demonstrate that Vocational Education is central to any developing country. South Africa needs your energy to give skills development and artisan training a huge push so that we can meet the required targets. It can be done and you can do it.

## MOT SA Conference and Award Ceremony

WANDA MÖLLER

On 2 December 2010, MOT SA hosted the MOT Courage2B Conference and Award ceremony at Spier in the Western Cape. The main purpose of the MOT conference was to acknowledge, motivate and strengthen the educators for the critical role they play in the holistic development of the students in the Further Education and Training (FET) Colleges.

Students who have been part of the MOT programme had the opportunity to talk about their challenges and share their experiences on how the MOT programme has impacted on their lives. They spoke about how the MOT programme has strengthened them and given them the courage to say no to drugs, sex and negative group pressure. The MOT programme has also given them the courage to continue with, and excel in, their studies at college.

The keynote speaker at the conference, Dr John Demartini, spoke on how to inspire others to live an extraordinary life. According to Dr Demartini, every young person has a dream and the aspiration to do something extraordinary. Our young people need role models and mentors to learn from, and to help them along the way. He focused on each person's hierarchy of values and how one's highest values dictate one's choices, inspiration and destiny.

To live a life of inspiration, people need to set goals according to their highest values and according to what is most meaningful and valuable to them. Dr Demartini spoke directly to each

educator on how to uncover the genius present within each individual student and to encourage them to shine.

The conference delegates also had the opportunity to listen to the Norwegian founders of MOT. Rune Bratseth, the current chairperson of MOT Norway, reiterated that dreams, ability and ambition – qualities that are needed to be successful – are present in both the South African and Norwegian youth. He used the metaphor that an empty house is easy to occupy, referring to youth who are not inspired, cared for and kept interested, and who therefore could easily be subject to negative influences.

Bheki Sibiyi, CEO of the Chamber of Mines, gave a very inspiring and entertaining talk on courageous leadership. He focused on South African examples of courageous leaders who were prepared to be unpopular to make the right choices and, by doing so, changed the history of this country. Mr Sibiyi also identified the many challenges in South Africa today that require courageous leadership.

According to Dr Shegs James, Senior Specialist Scientist at the South African Medical Research Council, effective interventions are needed to address the high levels of risk behaviour in which the youth of South Africa engage. Dr James led the 2nd National Youth Risk Behaviour Survey in 2008, a scientific research study on the sexual behaviour, violence, mental health, alcohol and other illegal substance use by learners between the ages of 14 and 17 years. Dr James also stressed that we need to strengthen resilient behaviour, and

reinforce the systems which keep learners from risk behaviour.

At the Awards ceremony the best Student Role Model in the FET Colleges, as well as the best MOT Presenter Award winners, was announced. Elize Erasmus, lecturer at Northlink College, won the Best MOT Presenter award, and Olwethu Penxa, student at Boland

College, was the winner of the Best Student Role Model award.

For further information on the MOT programme or on how to become a supporter of this life-skills programme, contact Wanda Möller CEO MOT SA on telephone **021 696 6610** or email **wanda@mot.org.za** or visit the website at **www.mot.org.za**.



MOT SA Brand ambassadors, Sasha-Lee Davids, Soli Philander and Natalie Becker, assisted MOT SA with hosting the event

## Leading the way in Footwear Design

RUQAYA ADAMS

The College of Cape Town has joined forces with a leading footwear design and technology school to bring one of the most exciting programmes to date to the FET Sector. The Footwear Design programme is designed to capture the essence of the global footwear industry, giving students the cutting edge in design and technology.

The Footwear Design and Patternmaking Course, a two-month course offered through this partnership at the College of Cape Town, provides students with an opportunity to express creative and technical skills while acquiring a professional understanding of the decision-making process of designing, merchandising and production of footwear.

The partner in this programme is an elite design school where students are carefully selected to further their studies in footwear design. The school was established by Glyn Giani, an expert in the field with over fourteen years experience in the footwear industry and boasting an Advanced Diploma in Footwear Design from ARS

Sutoria, Milan, Italy, the leaders in footwear design.

Throughout his career Glyn has gained tremendous experience in all aspects of the industry, from establishing factories, design and development, technology, and marketing, to manufacturing. His global experience has been gained in far-flung countries including India and China.

The "secret ingredient" to becoming a successful footwear designer is to be curious and be able to spot current and new fashion trends. More importantly, the student should possess the ability to visualise, conceptualise and create, all elements carefully considered when this design course was developed.

Footwear designers are talented artisans, combining breathtaking creativity with technical skills to create wearable works of art that complete, enhance, and elevate an overall look. While there aren't many colleges and universities that offer specific and comprehensive training in footwear design, College of Cape Town is offering this unique course. Are you ready for the next step? Call us on **021 404 6700**.

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# Thirty hospitality students experience a One-&-Only orientation

OWN CORRESPONDENT

The 2011 academic year is off to a good start for thirty FET (Further Education and Training) college students from College of Cape Town, False Bay and Northlink Colleges.

The students were invited to an orientation with a difference, organised by WCED Curriculum Planner Karen Kleintjies. Invitations came from Mr Marthinus van Schalkwyk, the Minister of Tourism, and the initiative forms part of his vision to develop tourism in South Africa. The Minister accompanied the FET College students studying Tourism and Hospitality on a walkabout through the prestigious One & Only Hotel in Cape Town. The students were shown the various practical aspects of tourism and hospitality management, live!

The Tourism and Hospitality sector is a people-centred service industry, where staff form an integral part of the consumer experience. It therefore stands to reason that the tourism and hospitality sector must look to the people working in the industry to serve as the principal source of potential competitive advantage. In short the skills, know-how and conduct of those



Minister of Tourism, Marthinus van Schalkwyk, greets participating students. Front: Kaylyn Mukhram, Nicole Davids (shaking hands). Back left: Craig Cedras, Cameron Khan, Decklin Ross, Dustin Jewell

working in the industry must have the so-called "x factor" – something unique that will set the South African tourism/hospitality product apart from the offerings of competitor countries. Of course this will not happen overnight. Securing the competitive advantage through people requires careful and

deliberate investment in the education and training of the tourism/hospitality workforce.

Tourism and Hospitality depend considerably on the craft skills of their workforce, and on the quality and range of such skills, and these will largely determine whether the tourism workforce emerges as a key source of sustainable competitive advantage. It is obviously important, therefore, that the relationship between the industry and training providers should be carefully maintained. Tourism and Hospitality workers need to continue receiving the further education and training they need as well as be afforded the opportunity to progress to higher education programmes, where appropriate.

In this regard the 2006 skills audit report revealed that the essential skills required to ensure the competitiveness of the sector include culinary, language and managerial ability as well as critical fundamental attributes such as passion and enthusiasm.

To develop the required skills among its workforce, the Tourism and Hospitality sector relies heavily on providers of further and higher education. Through this initiative the Minister hopes to inspire those working in the Tourism and Hospitality industry to continue expanding their skills base. Through this initiative the Minister furthermore hopes to emphasise the key role and responsibility jointly held by the industry as well as training providers. This shared responsibility is to equip the Tourism and Hospitality workforce

with the relevant skills that will give South African tourism the edge over its competitors.

Hospitality students from False Bay College that were selected to participate in the activity were the top Hospitality achievers from the Muizenberg Campus. The students visited the different rooms and suites in the hotel, met hotel staff, were given tours of the kitchens and enjoyed a well-prepared lunch. "This was a tremendous opportunity for students to see first-hand how a top hotel and spa operates", commented Melanie Vermaak, False Bay College Muizenberg Campus Head.

Feedback from the students was that they were amazed at the luxury and opulence of the rooms and all of the facilities. The students felt that they would welcome the chance to work in this type of first-class establishment. The False Bay students in their service uniforms looked professional and fitted in well.

The FET College Hospitality departments are keen to establish strong ties with industry to ensure a good in-service work experience for the National Certificate (Vocational) level 4 students and the NQF level 4 Professional Cookery students.

Visits like this one pave the way for stronger links with industry and the important role players in the Hospitality and Tourism sector. It is also important that we recognise the wonderful academic achievements of these students.

## Engineering Access Programme paves the road to success

ANDRÉ SCHOLTZ

Universities and Universities of Technology have been inundated with students who wish to study Engineering at their various campuses but who do not qualify for admission. As a result it became apparent that these students must be given the opportunity to enter into a prerequisite programme to bridge the gap.

The Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT) in partnership with Northlink College has established such a programme known as the Engineering Access Programme. This has been on offer from the first quarter of 2010 at the Table Bay Campus of Northlink College. Last year close to 100 students completed the programme, which was managed by Northlink staff and quality-assured by CPUT.

Based on last year's referrals, a decision was made towards the end of 2010 to expand the programme to the Goodwood Campus as it soon became

apparent that the Table Bay Campus would not be able to accommodate such large numbers of students. With over 2,000 student referrals from CPUT this year, it was definitely a good call. The main purpose of the Engineering Access Programme is to address deficits in entry requirements in the following study fields: Communication, Mathematics, Engineering Science and Engineering Drawings (the latter being the most sought after).

Students in the programme who meet the minimum entrance requirements of a 50% pass will be guaranteed access to the programmes of the Engineering Faculty of CPUT in 2012. The other students will apply to CPUT following the standard procedures. Students that are not accepted at CPUT, or alternatively do not meet the grade for re-entry, are given the opportunity to continue their studies in tertiary education at Northlink College. For further information concerning this programme, contact Northlink College on 021 970 9000.



# How a skills programme changed a life

## Editor's Note:

*A provocative thought to ponder: the outcome of the programme described in this article is for students with poor literacy and numeracy levels to achieve personal dignity by acquiring a skill that translates into producing an income through employment. There are many thousands who have reasonable levels of numeracy and literacy and yet remain unemployable or unproductive, as they have no employable skill to offer. The educational ideal is both: that is, an employable skill with functional numeracy and literacy. But if (often desperate) circumstances demand one or the other, which one is it to be?*



*Ethel Sonkosi achieves fame and fortune through her jewellery skills*

DR ADRIAAN LANDMAN

The famous educator John Holt once said that there is no other way to acquire knowledge and skill than to learn something by doing it. In the current difficult economic climate in South Africa, Holt's principle could also be applied in the context of job creation and entrepreneurial opportunities. It is only by searching and learning new skills that new business or employment opportunities will be created. Craft production has over the past few years become a reputable source of income

for many jobless people in and around Cape Town and has established itself as a valuable career opportunity.

Ethel Sonkosi lives in Guguletu and was unemployed until 2009. In June 2009 she joined the Manufacture Indigenous Jewellery NQF level 2, outreach programme at the Guguletu Campus of the College of Cape Town. Since then she has excelled and proved herself an excellent jeweller. She laughs as she recalls how her family and friends told her that her hands were too big to do the delicate work required for jewellery. She proved them wrong. Ethel became a creative, hard-working student making innovative and artistic jewellery. She has also started her own business, making jewellery that she sells to people from her own community. In August 2010 she was introduced to the Cape Craft and Design Institute (CCDI) and has already attended an entrepreneurial course to further her business acumen. The College of Cape Town's Art & Design Department also agreed to help her to acquire more jewellery skills, to later qualify as one of

the first female goldsmiths in Guguletu.

As part of the educational outreach programmes in Guguletu, the Art and Design Department of the College of Cape Town identified an opportunity to train unemployed women from Guguletu in jewellery manufacture. Through the help of community centres, women that were unemployed for more than two years were found and tested by means of a dexterity test before being enrolled in a jewellery skills programme. The MQA (Mining Qualifications Authority) made funding available and the students could be enrolled for the Manufacture Indigenous Jewellery NQF level 2 qualification. As many of the women had little or no formal educational background, the skills programme provided an excellent starting point for training, as hand skills form the basis of these programmes. Many formal qualifications require language and mathematical skills, none of which of the students had. A further important aim was that the programme should enable students to enter other educational programmes and that they could earn credits to continue their studies.

The programme started at the Guguletu campus in the Jewellery Manufacture Department in July 2009. The Guguletu Campus has two fully furnished Jewellery studios, each with 16 workbenches, and one of these studios could be used for additional training. A selection panel interviewed 27 individuals and shortlisted 16 women

who then started the programme. After induction and orientation, production on Perspex necklace chains began in August 2009. The aim was to provide individuals with the skills and knowledge to make a saleable jewellery article according to retail standards. The Perspex necklaces were such a success that almost all were sold in reputable costume jewellery stores. They were even used in a photo fashion shoot and exhibited at Jewellery at the Sandton International Convention Centre in 2009.

The project was not always plain sailing. Working with more mature, and mostly older, individuals created certain challenges. Some individuals needed financial assistance to commute to and from the campus. Ill-health such as diabetes and high blood pressure caused some individuals to abandon the training programme. (The College had a 100% attendance policy.) The theoretical component seemed too challenging for some older members, and accuracy and precision required for jewellery articles was demanding for some.

Financial assistance will always be a problem, and the College decided that students should contribute towards a qualification by regularly attending and paying the travelling fee to and from the Guguletu Campus. The College paid all tuition fees and materials that the students used. One can't help recalling Albert Einstein's words: "In the middle of difficulty lies opportunity."

# Boat-Building student beats the ultimate challenge

TINA LITTLE

Leroy Rudolph, a False Bay College Level 4 Yacht and Boat-Building student of the College-run Academy, was privileged to be part of the Cape to Rio Race. As a young boy he was fascinated with fast sailing yachts and has been sailing himself for the past 10 years. He was invited by Dale Kushner, owner of the Ocean Cruiser, to be part of the crew.

The Cape to Rio race measures approximately 5343km and is the longest Atlantic-crossing race. Anyone growing up in South Africa has vivid memories of legendary stories surrounding it, with some close finishes and a couple of epic battles. The event starts in Table Bay and finishes – via any route – at Rio de Janeiro. Leroy left

on 15 January this year and returned in February in time to continue his studies.

"This is a step closer towards my goal of becoming a great yachtsman. I have 'rubbed shoulders' with some of the best sailors in the world. It was a great honour being chosen," commented Leroy. His race responsibilities included bowman (working on the front section of the boat and changing sails) and watch leader, which involved navigation and steering the boat.

"Leroy's commitment is fuelled by his love of sailing and, most of all, the lure of the big blue deep. It's not his first sailing achievement and I believe that there will be many more," commented Johan van Zyl, False Bay College Boat Building lecturer.



*Leroy Rudolph in action and in his element*

# Making a difference

NADIA LUBOWSKI

I started my Early Childhood Development Diploma at the College of Cape Town in June 2001. I was born in Namibia in 1980 and, after living in many places, started feeling at home in Cape Town. I am extremely fortunate to have an aunt that really believes in me and paid for my studies at the college. I completed the diploma at the end of 2002 and won the best student award. I was given a book as a prize and remember vividly one of my favourite lecturers saying, "I picked the book especially for you, because I know you will enjoy this type of thing". It was a book on play therapy. I still have it today and every time I see the book on my bookshelf or read something from it I remember my days at the college. The comment that she made set a very fundamental thought process in motion.

With a lot of convincing from my lecturer, I enrolled for my Bachelor of Primary Education degree. It was a UNISA degree, but we received lectures at the College of Cape Town. I completed the degree in 2005 and graduated early 2006. I could never have achieved what I have if it was not for the warmth and support from women at the college: to name just a few, Mrs de Villiers, Mrs Marescia and Mrs Nieuwoudt. I am eternally grateful for their contribution in my life.

While I did my degree, I embarked upon a process that sparked off the biggest passion I live today: I went to a small school in Sea Point to do my in-service training (our practical subject

at UNISA). I spent a lot of days and weeks observing, planning lessons and engaging with the learners. I noticed something that penetrated to the core of what is now my life passion: I noticed how some children in the classes were unable to speak English. Not only did they struggle to speak English, they also struggled to understand what the teacher was teaching and therefore could not understand the instruction that was being given. I even observed a teacher hitting a little boy over the head, shouting at him to pay attention because he did not listen. I could not believe that she was so insensitive and could not see that he was unable to keep up due to the language barrier that he was experiencing. Every afternoon as I was walking home I made plans about how I was going to remedy this problem as soon as I had finished my degree.

At the beginning of 2005 I went to Australia for three months to research ideas and methods on how to teach children effectively. I compiled a very basic and easy teacher training course that I offered at Child Welfare over a three-month period. The intention of the course was to provide teachers with a self-development and introspection opportunity regarding the question "Why am I a teacher?" I had felt so strongly during my in-service training months that it is the teacher's responsibility to engage with learners in a way that makes school a place that children want to attend. When I completed my degree I started looking for a job. I ended up applying for jobs in various places, and after completing an incredibly transformational course



Nadia Lubowski making a difference

myself I started to embark on making my vision of education in South Africa happen.

I was offered a position as principal at a small pre-school in Philippi (a small township on the outskirts of Cape Town), where I had to train and develop my staff in Early Childhood Development and engage with the community and families of the children in a way that would make a real difference for the children. The school was a very happy place. In the three years of teaching there we had many of the children graduate to Grade 1 and 2, and every afternoon the children returned to the school.

The need in the community is immeasurable, and teachers approached me daily to assist them in developing their schools in the way we had ours. There are thousands, millions of children that are in need of proper care and a quality education in South Africa today. I chose to do my

honours degree in Education at the University of Cape Town. I completed it in 2010, and am currently applying to complete my Masters. In 2007 I also started my own Non-Profit Organisation, the Anton Lubowski Educational Trust, with the vision to transform South Africa through education, in collaboration with many organisations. Anton Lubowski, my father, was a political activist in the 1980s, and he was assassinated in front of our home in 1989. He truly believed that education was the only way that we would transform Southern Africa. Since his murder has never been solved, the best way to honour what he stood for, and gave his life for, is to keep his legacy alive by giving children the best-quality education any child could ever wish for.

We are now working in partnership with the Department of Social Development, Matchbox, Roots and Wings Trust, Childrens' Campaign Trust and many others to begin the social change that South Africa needs.

## Boland College MOT Student Role Model of the Year

IVAN SWART & JANDRÉ BAKKER

"Adolescence was never easy – how much more difficult today when young people are faced with so many pressures and temptations!" Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu has said. Three years since it was first rolled out, the MOT programme has become an integral part in the holistic development especially of first year students at Boland College, and both staff and students are still inspired by the rewards yielded by the programme. "Never stop dreaming, no matter what happens in life!" This was the message that resounded from the award-winning MOT Student Role Model of 2010, Olwethu Penxa.

The first MOT international conference was hosted in December 2010 at the Spier Estate, near Stellenbosch, by

MOT South Africa. The purpose of the conference was to acknowledge, motivate and strengthen the educators and the MOT presenters for this critical task. These presenters were given the opportunity to exchange information with their Norwegian counterparts and obtain inspiration from some of the world's most renowned keynote speakers. The conference ended with a gala award ceremony. During this prestigious event Olwethu received two awards: Best Boland College role model and MOT Student Role Model of the Year.

"I was very excited and still can't believe that I won these prestigious awards", said Olwethu, adding, "I should like to thank my MOT presenters, Mrs Minnaar and Mrs Petersen, for their input in my life, and I should like to thank Boland College for giving me this opportunity".

According to Olwethu, MOT is not just for teenagers but for anyone that needs encouragement to overcome their fears and their past. Olwethu is currently studying NCV Tourism level 3 at the Boland College Paarl Campus and is seen as a very strong leader and role model in the student community.

Wanda Moller, CEO of MOT South Africa, explained the nomination process as follows: "The MOT Presenters at all the FET Colleges had the opportunity to nominate students for the MOT Student Role Model of the Year Award that was awarded for the first time in 2010.

They were given strict criteria in terms of the students' leadership abilities, responsibility, outlook on life, self-confidence, respect for people's differences and opinions, and exhibiting the MOT values of courage to live,

courage to care and courage to say no. After the nominations were received, personal interviews were conducted with all the nominees. Olwethu's positive outlook on life, her ambition and self-confidence, and her respect and care for others, among all her other qualities, made her a well-deserving winner of the Award."

Mr Brian Phike, MOT Co-ordinator and Deputy CEO Education and Training at Boland College, said that the colleges' involvement with MOT not only shows a commitment to building relationships with our counterparts abroad, but also shows the public that colleges are not merely for the academic development of the youth, but that they – especially Boland College – are committed to the holistic development of their students through programmes such as MOT and other student support initiatives.

# Boland College starts 2011 on solid footing

JANDRÉ BAKKER AND  
IVAN SWART

Boland College welcomed in the 2011 academic year with great excitement as the College geared up for the anticipated influx of student registrations. Not only were targets (as determined in accordance with new planning documents of the Department of Higher Education and Training) met before the end of the registration period, but a plan was made to accommodate the hundreds of additional students on the waiting-lists.

One of the highlights of the registration period for Boland College was the enlargement of certain class groups where this could be done without compromising quality. This was directly attributable to the increased demand of students who wished to further their education and training at the SABS-approved College. Despite the confusion that resulted from the 2010 announcement that the N4 programmes would no longer be offered at the FET Colleges, and the subsequent withdrawal of this announcement, the number of N4 students grew each day. The popular N4 programmes were supported by an unforeseen influx into the NC(V) programmes when many students had to be put on waiting-lists pending approval to take in the greater-than-planned numbers.

The placement of the NC(V) applicant students in the right career/programme choice was supported by the CAP (Competency and Placement)

test and the help and guidance of dedicated student support officers on the campuses. "This is one of our most important functions," said Ms Amanda de Villiers, Manager: Student Support Services. She continued: "Placing the student in the right field of study and identifying learning barriers in order for lecturers to tailor-make academic support programmes proves to be one of the best tools to ensure a high level of through-put." (Read Intellectual Debate in this issue.)

The CAP Test is the placement and diagnostic test we use for the correct placement of students. It is used to measure the numeracy and literacy levels of potential students to identify possible barriers to learning, so that lecturers and student support officers may know where a student needs to be developed academically. The CAP test results are also used to match students (especially at NCV levels) to the baseline entry requirement per programme. As Boland College does not test in order to exclude, if a student fails to make the grade on the CAP test he or she completes a second test known as the Learning Potential Computerised Adaptive Test (LPCAT). This shows the learning potential of a student.

This means that students who come from a poorer schooling background, and who consequently may not be at the desired academic level but show potential to learn, are admitted to Boland College but receive slightly more support. Should a student score low on the CAP test and then show

no learning potential (development potential) on the LPCAT, we admit the student to a skills course. This ensures that no student is rejected and that the injustice of enrolling students on a course in which they are unlikely to succeed is mitigated. Our battery of testing therefore increases the likelihood of throughput because it equips lecturers and other support staff with the tools to identify, diagnose and address challenges at the start of the learning process. All this testing is monitored and controlled by our registered professional psychometrist, Anneline Taljaard.

We are excited about the number of students that have registered and are pleased that we can help as many as possible to reach their dreams. The hard work of each staff member who supported the marketing, recruitment and enrolment initiatives has ensured

that the targeted profile of student has been registered. Boland College is actively involved with the Maties Community Service (Stellenbosch University's social responsibility arm) and participates in every activity to assist in raising money for this worthy cause. The "Venster" mini-plays were one of the highlights when thousands of people flocked to watch the students act their hearts out for this good cause.

Kolonieshof (male hostel of the Stellenbosch campus) won the Trolley Dash (the J&B Met of Jool) by "kicking dust in the eyes" of the other residences of the University. The colourful College float also created quite a stir in the town streets during the annual float parade. The float was shared with the ISA Carsten Health and Wellness Academy. These post-registration and orientation activities help Boland College to develop a well-balanced student.



*Kolonieshof (Boland College male hostel in Stellenbosch) teaming up with The ISA Carsten Health and Wellness Academy for Maties Jool in aid of Maties Community Service*

## False Bay College 2011 registration with a difference

TINA LITTLE

In January 2011 a festive atmosphere with the selling of boerewors-rolls,



*Marlene Mitchell, Lisa Elverson and Hein Brink enjoying the registration festivities*

folk music and staff-student interaction took place at False Bay College (FBC), Westlake Campus, during registration. Apart from making registration a fun

experience, funds need to be raised for our Level 4 Farewell function. False Bay College staff have taken on the initiative to help students with the fund-raising by co-arranging various activities.

There are costs to be covered and many of our students are not fortunate enough to pay the relevant fees. "We started selling boerewors-rolls at the Open Day two years ago. We raised approximately R10,000 at our Open Day last year and have made R3,500 at registration this year.

"The support has been great," commented Shannon Doolings, Westlake Campus Communications Programme Manager.

A fund-raising committee was formed in 2010. The FBC staff members have

been helpful in assisting where they can with deliveries, various contacts and other related tasks. "Not only can prospective students and parents enjoy this while registering, but we, the head office staff, get to take full advantage while supporting the students for whom this is all intended," said Lisa Elverson, False Bay College Human Resource Administrator.

Parents also help by donating sauces, rolls and cool-drinks. "It is extremely rewarding to see staff and students take shifts to work, socialise around a fire and share jokes – and what better way to get to know the other side of students and allow them to have fun while working? It is mostly the students who do the selling. Staff do the braaing, background planning and organising," commented Shannon.

# False Bay College SRC preparation camp guarantees quality leadership

## Editor's Note:

*This article demonstrates how a college Student Support Services unit can also render assistance in the development of student leadership. By following a tailor-made leadership development programme for SRC members, the college student community is assured of a fully functioning, informed and effective student leadership that is guaranteed to look after their interests.*

### WAYNE DU PLESSIS

The False Bay College Student Representative Council (SRC) attended a camp from 25 to 27 January at the Back-to-Basics campsite in Grabouw. The camp focused on leadership and communication skills. It allowed the individual campus SRC members not only to get to know their fellow SRC members but also to meet the SRC members of the other campuses.

The students engaged in activities that took them out of their comfort zones and stretched their thinking. These activities will stand them in

good stead for the year ahead, as both SRC members and students alike. The leadership programme included presentations on legislation regarding the SRC, the FET Colleges Act and the College Statute, governance structure of the college, and the roles and responsibilities of SRC members.

The students reviewed the SRC constitution and proposed changes that they felt were necessary. On the second night of the camp the students voted for their individual campus portfolios. This was a very important step as it gave the campus SRC critical direction for the year ahead. Mrs Melanie Vermaak, False Bay College Muizenberg

Campus Head, facilitated an excellent presentation on the expectations of the SRC at campus level, role-playing in critical situations and a discussion on different challenges which the SRC may face during the year. This session allowed the SRC members to ask any questions they wanted about the college and further reinforced one of our college guiding principles, namely transparency.

On the final morning the SRC executive committee was convened for the first time. This select group of students then voted among themselves for the further portfolios within the executive

committee structure. Commented Jacqui Layman, Student Support and Development Services manager: "False Bay College strongly believes in the development of the student leadership. This is shown through the commitment of our College Council, senior management and staff at all levels. Special coaching and mentoring is provided by the Student Support Services department. Our training programme for student leaders focuses not only on the SRC members but also on class representatives. Students thoroughly enjoyed the leadership camp and received more than what they expected."

## More drama, less cost!

### NOLENE DE COSTA

Northlink College has introduced the restructured and upgraded qualification in drama (performing arts), namely the BTech Higher National Diploma (HND) Performing Arts, with "Nated" subjects in Marketing N4-N5. The BTech HND Performing Arts is an internationally recognised and accredited qualification. Northlink College Drama offers a dual qualification in Marketing N4-N5 with the Performing Arts qualification. The course will encompass screening and practical education, training and experience in the workplace and world of art, culture and business.

The College is the first public FET College in South Africa to link with Edexcel UK, London, as business partners in education. Edexcel is part of the Pearson Group, the world's

largest education services provider. The advantage of the qualification is that students get the benefit of two registered and accredited qualifications at a cost normally charged per course.

In addition, after successful completion of both qualifications a certified Northlink student enters the labour market of performing arts and marketing as a performer, marketer and computer-literate individual who can market his or her skills and competencies in the national or international workplace. The career options include teaching at high schools, theatre crafts, acting for stage and film, dance, set-design, voice-overs and much more.

The addition of the new course is in line with one of Northlink's values, which are to ensure that innovation, creativity and responsiveness remain the driving force in all college matters.



False Bay College SRC 2011 in Camp

## Early Childhood Development Students inspired by Guguletu MOT Session

## Editor's Note:

*Rayana Kleinschmidt is a Student Support Officer at the College of Cape Town.*

### RAYANA KLEINSCHMIDT

The MOT sessions that took place at the Guguletu campus in 2010 were facilitated by the Student Support Officer. These sessions were conducted with all the NCV students as well as the Learnership classes. The first session dealing specifically with life-skills was held with the ECD Learnership female students, who thoroughly enjoyed the session. The students actively participated and the accompanying

teaching and learning material was fully and enthusiastically used. The students in the ECD Learnership group comprised mainly mature women who were furthering their education by attending weekly classes at the Guguletu campus. The lessons that were taught in the first session of MOT were of invaluable benefit. Most of the women head their own households and it is highly likely that the information gathered in the training session will be shared with their families.

One of the founding aims of MOT is to develop the Courage to Care. This aspect provided the focus of the first session. Sometimes the women, as mothers, are so preoccupied with daily household tasks that they may neglect the need to care for the others with whom they may come into contact, outside their immediate family. Courage to Care makes one aware of the needs of others while putting one's own needs in correct perspective.

One's experience as a MOT facilitator is different with every class group and every session that is facilitated. One of the most beautiful aspects of interacting with students is that one is not only relaying valuable information

to students but also constantly learning indispensable life lessons from them. This was especially true with the ECD Learnership group.

There was a constant flow of ideas, a positive attitude and a heartfelt desire to understand the material. I know from this particular experience that I have come away a better human being!

I would like to thank the MOT coordinator, Mr Pasha, for being a daily inspiration in carrying out the MOT programme at the College of Cape Town. And I don't forget all the students at the Guguletu campus who make presenting MOT at the College of Cape Town an amazing experience!

# College of Cape Town's Tourism and Hospitality Departments go global

## Editor's Note:

Melanie Anthony is a Programme Manager at the College of Cape Town.

### MELANIE ANTHONY

The Tourism and Hospitality departments at the College of Cape Town have for the past three years been making their mark in the international Technical and Vocational Education and Training sector. The departments have regular successful student and lecturer exchange programmes between the Tourism and Hospitality departments at colleges in Norway, the Netherlands and Germany. The students who are selected to partake in these exchange programmes (that include visiting the partner colleges and completing in-service training at international establishments) are given an opportunity to gain international exposure and work experience even before completing their course at the College of Cape Town.

Since 2009 the Tourism department has been hosting four Norwegian students from Haugaland College for the first semester of each year (2009 and 2010). The students are registered for selected unit standards within the Certificate in General Travel, NQF Level 5 course. They complete the

selected unit standards and specialised travel courses such as the Fares and Ticketing: Within Africa FARES 1 Course and the two-day Beginners Wine Course offered in collaboration with the Cape Wine Academy. During their studies the Norwegian students spend time with South African host families, who provide them with an intimate look into the daily life of Cape Town and its people.

The Hospitality department has, in turn, been involved in a project with Koning Willem 1 College in The Netherlands, which involved the creation of a Dutch/Afrikaans cookbook aptly titled *Eten ZA/NL*. The book was launched in the Netherlands in April 2009 and this event was attended by two Hospitality lecturers, two Hospitality and two Art & Design students. The Art & Design department was responsible for the photography featured in the cookbook. In July 2010 the book had its South African launch at a gala evening at the City Campus. The launch was attended by Marc Raaijmakers, Head of the Hospitality Department at Koning Willem 1 College, and Marino De Bruijn, Senior Lecturer at Koning



College of Cape Town students cooking in Germany: Khanyisa Mbiza, Darren Thebus, Bjorn (host student at table end), Wilna Neels

Willem 1 College, and others involved in the South African hospitality industry. The exchange with Koning Willem 1 is ongoing and 2011 has exciting new projects in store for the two colleges.

In February 2010 a group of ten hospitality students and two lecturers undertook a trip to Berlin, Germany. This time the exchange took place between Haus Krause, who was responsible for the coordinating and pedagogical training part of the programme, and the Hospitality College, OSZ Gastgewerbe "Brillat-Savarin-Schule". The exchange programme allows the students to experience the German hospitality industry and expand participant's professional competencies, thereby shaping a sustainable global hospitality industry.

In Berlin the South Africans were hosted by German students and their families.

The students were placed in various accommodation establishments where for ten days they gained valuable work experience.

The visit to Berlin was reciprocated by the Hospitality department at the City Campus in September 2010. The German students spent three weeks in Cape Town, where, besides enjoying the sights and experiencing the cultures of the Cape, they were placed at Cape Town hotels to do in-service training and thereby gaining first-hand experience of the South African hospitality industry. The students were placed at the Mount Nelson Hotel, the Coral International Hotel and the Winchester Mansions Hotel.

The exchange with the Germans continues, with a new group of students starting with preparations in 2011 for another visit to Berlin.

## Science and IT students visit Air Show

### DEON HALLS

In September 2010, Computer Science and Information Technology students at the Crawford Campus of the College of Cape Town were given a unique opportunity to visit the last International Africa Aerospace & Defence (AAD) Air show to be hosted at Ysterplaat Air Force Base in Cape Town. The event was held over five days from 21 to 25 September 2010 with focus areas on AAD. The Air Show further included exhibitions for international buyers, a Youth Development Programme and two "open days" during which the general public could enjoy fantastic aerial displays of the latest aviation developments and technologies.

Learners from selected schools and college students were invited through the intervention of Kevin Velensky of Pearson Education, in liaison with Col Bobby Keller of Africa Militaire on behalf of the Department of Defence. The youth programme was coordinated by

Mari van Wyk of the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal whose job it was to ensure that all the necessary house rules of a stringent and controlled military environment were observed. What learners could gain from the Air Show was the benefit of viewing the latest in aviation technologies as well as being exposed to career opportunities and advice from the professionals in the aviation industry.

On 14 September the Crawford Campus played host to both Col Keller and Mari van Wyk, who addressed teachers and lecturers on the rules and expectations of the planned visit, and on 15 September Crawford once again hosted two American C-17 military pilots, Lt Col Mitch Richardson and Col Dean, who addressed learners on their experience as pilots.

The visit by both the Department of Defence and the two American pilots presented an opportunity for them to expose learners to the Department's



Deon Halls, College of Cape Town (2nd from left), and Col. Bobby Keller (middle) with the two American pilots and their ground-crew assistant

strategic intent, namely, rejuvenating awareness of the Department of Defence with all South Africans and promoting career opportunities within the Department of Defence among the youth. By means of the talk and digital experience, the pilots "enthused" learners to explore the exciting and mysterious world of piloting. Students were encouraged to keep on dreaming and working hard, as this combination would certainly lead to success.

During the question and answer session, many learners probed the world of aviation in order to understand the lifestyle and responsibilities of a typical commercial and military pilot. At the end of the session participants had the opportunity to obtain signed autographs and to have their photos

taken with the pilots. The College of Cape Town would like to thank Col Keller for presenting the opportunity to our students at Crawford Campus, and we hope that some have been stimulated enough to want to enter the Air Force service as a career option. The various disciplines include, among others, ICT and Business Studies, and reservist duties, and in addition there are mainstream employment opportunities.

Col Keller, in his response, expressed his appreciation to the College of Cape Town, commented that the exercise had met its objectives and stressed the importance of young people being grounded in a sound value system and discipline that would enable them to "unlock" many opportunities in life.



# Support for Open Learning Centres

## Editor's Note:

*Marianne Elliot is the Open Learning Centre (OLC) co-ordinator for False Bay College. Marianne proposes the formation of a support group specifically tailored for the needs of public FET Colleges as part of the structures of the Library and Information Association of South Africa. This is an admirable intention. The formation of such a support group will go a long way towards creating a forum for the sharing of best practices and generally improving the performance of FET College Open Learning Centres and the way in which they render services to students. Readers are encouraged to support this initiative by registering your interest with Marianne. Email Marianne.elliott@falsebay.org.za*

### MARIANNE ELLIOTT

"Information literacy is often described as the literacy needed to function in the 'Information society'. It refers to the ability to access, use and evaluate information from different sources, to enhance learning, solve problems and generate new Knowledge." (Library and Information Transformation Charter, 2009). The FET curriculum requires students to develop these abilities. At False Bay College the Open Learning Centre (OLC) plays a critical role in supporting students in their academic endeavours and encourages them to improve their reading skills. This in the long run contributes towards preparing students for lifelong learning and personal growth.

To realise these goals a spectrum of tasks is involved. Besides collecting

appropriate resources, preparing them for use (cataloguing, covering, bar-coding, etc.), displaying and promoting them, the OLC Co-ordinators also assist students in information-searching (both in hard copy and digital format), and train them in using research tools.

At False Bay College one of the four OLC Co-ordinators is fortunate to attend the Library and Information Association of South Africa (LIASA) Conference each year. In September 2010 it was my turn to attend the conference, and while I was aware of available support for OLC Co-ordinators I only investigated these options at this time. After learning from colleagues that there was no interest group that directly caters for FET needs, I looked for the two interest groups which are the best at present and also at what it would require to start an interest group specifically for OLC Co-ordinators at FET colleges.

I found the following. Since a member of LIASA may choose a first- and second-choice interest group to get involved in, I will single out two interest groups that may be most useful for OLC Co-ordinators: HELIG (Higher Education Library Interest Group) and SLYSIG (School Library and Youth services). See the LIASA website for the full list of interest groups.

It makes sense to choose HELIG, because members belong to the same National Department. However, members of other Higher Education Institutions deal with more complex database systems and information-searching than FET colleges. (Western Cape HELIG does seek to cater for FET interests as well and is planning, for example, a workshop on Mobile Technology for later this year.) Although SLYSIG focuses on the full age spectrum in schools, it will support the setting up of a library which includes fiction (for leisure reading, leading to improved English usage and better results) and reading promotion. Here again we differ from the other Higher Education Institutions, which serve older, more mature students and exclude leisure books from their collections.

While OLC staff may already move towards the cutting edge of information services, receive training and support to act accordingly and connect with other colleagues in the information



*Jay Williams, Fish Hoek campus and OLC Assistant, and Marianne Elliott, OLC Co-ordinator of False Bay College*

field by attending LIASA conferences and workshops, the support will be better focused on FET needs if we have our own interest group. This can only happen if enough OLC Co-ordinators become members and are willing to serve on the committee, help form a constitution and manage the running of a national/regional branch. Proposals for establishing new interest groups are discussed during the AGM at the annual conference which takes place in October 2011.

Forming an interest group for FET Colleges will create a platform to share ideas, solutions and best-practice, and provide a venue to inspire and support one another. Together we will accomplish more than on our own!

If you are an OLC manager or practitioner (or hope to become involved) and are interested, please contact Marianne Elliott for more info at [marianne.elliott@falsebay.org.za](mailto:marianne.elliott@falsebay.org.za)

## Three FET Colleges collaborate for rural development

### IVAN SWART AND JANDRÉ BAKKER

The Department of Rural Development and Land Reform launched a life-skills programme last November which saw three rural Western Cape FET colleges – namely Boland College, South Cape College and West Coast College – co-host 600 student participants, some from as far off as Limpopo and Gauteng. Bringing the Colleges and the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform, with their investment of more than R3-million, together was the initiative of Mr Johan Ryk, Co-ordinator of the Western Cape SETA Cluster, in collaboration with Nonala Buthelezi, National Co-ordinator of the project, and Nyameko Mgoqi, provincial project co-ordinator.

The life-skills training programme featured Time Management; Conflict Management; Decision-making Skills; Problem-solving Skills; Presentation

Skills; HIV/Aids Awareness; and Introduction to Computers. A group of 229 of the 600 participating students took up residence in the Boland College Paarl and Worcester Campuses for the duration of the programme.

During the day these students would participate in the various life-skills workshops, and after-hours they would be taken out on various excursions and participate in community development activities such as a tree-planting ceremony, self-defence instruction, talent contests ("Boland's Got Talent") and visits to heritage sites and the seaside (which proved to be a first for some participants). The winners of the talent events were chosen to provide the entertainment during the glamorous mid-December award ceremony, hosted at the Boland College Worcester Campus. This award ceremony was attended by the Boland College and West Coast College participants, their programme leaders, and the Deputy

Minister of Rural Development and Land Reform, Mr Thembelani Nxesi.

Programmes like this, along with others such as the Wealth Management programme (which was offered separately and in collaboration with other Western Cape Public FET Colleges), admirably show off the huge capacity that the FET colleges education and training sub-system has, to make a meaningful impact in South African society when operating as a collective. "We are proud to have been part of this project with our sister-colleges," said Rhona van der Westhuizen, Senior Manager, Project Implementation at Boland College's Innovation and Development Department. The role of the Western Cape SETA Cluster in facilitating FET College collaboration with state organs and private enterprise – and in particular the role played by Mr Johan Ryk and Ms Lana van der Westhuizen, Regional Manager and Western Cape SETA Cluster

Chairperson, in this regard – is much appreciated. The Colleges look forward to further initiatives of this scale and scope.



*At the Certificate function were Johan Ryk, Western Cape SETA Cluster Co-ordinator, Nonala Buthelezi, Narysec Skills Development Manager, Lindelwa Bono (a student participant who despite physical challenges inspired fellow participants and facilitators) and Thembelani Nxesi, Deputy Minister of Rural development and Land Reform*

# Internship project serves Boland students

ANNELINE TALJAARD

Imagine you dreamt of becoming a chef. Imagine you sacrificed many hours preparing food. You refused numerous invitations to join your friends at the movies, go to the beach and share fun times together, because you were standing in a hot kitchen, practising your cooking skills over a hot stove.

You studied until the early-morning hours and had little sleep because you were chasing your dream. Then you receive your exam results: you have passed and can now start working as a chef! You eagerly grab the phone, expecting a positive response after sending out numerous CVs. But the

days, weeks, months pass and you hear nothing: no job, no opportunity to live your passion. No chance to sell your time in order to earn an income...

For fifty students of Boland College, together with 250 more from the other Western Cape FET colleges, a dream has come true. These students are now employed in different retail stores. Those who studied Human Resources are working in the HR divisions of Woolworths, Pick & Pay, Crazy Stores, Builders Warehouse, etc.

The marketers have the opportunity to help the employing companies with sales in Truworths, Foshini's and other businesses. The financial managers work in the financial function of

companies such as Checkers. Fifty students of Boland College have work for a whole year and have the opportunity to become what they always dreamt.

The WEEG (Workplace Experience Employment Grant) project is an initiative whereby the W&R SETA and DEDAT (Department of Economic Development and Tourism) are funding member companies to employ students for a year.

The students have the opportunity to gain valuable practical experience in the areas of their studies.

When a position is advertised in the company, they could apply for such

a position. It also gives them the opportunity to meet and liaise with different possible employers.

Without the financial support of the Wholesale and Retail SETA and DEDAT this opportunity would not exist.

Without the dedication of the staff of WCED and the colleges, dreams could not have materialised. But fifty Boland College students, who completed their studies last year, now have a testimony of hope. "I just love my job", says one of the students. "It is fantastic to be able to work at a real company in a real job. I now have hope for my future. I don't have the words to say how grateful I am! Thank you to everyone who made the WEEG project possible!"

## Internship history is made at the College of Cape Town

ALBIN BOWLER

An exciting internship placement opportunity was provided for fifty recent Business Studies graduates of the College of Cape Town by the Wholesale and Retail SETA (W&RSETA, Western Cape).

This initiative is known as the WEEG (Workplace Experience Employment Grant) for FET. After training, these graduates are placed at various companies registered with the W&RSETA for a period of thirteen months. While undergoing their internship, interns receive a stipend of R2,500 each per month.

The objective is to ensure that the interns (our students) receive the necessary experience to improve their chances of permanent employment by learning about and working in the wholesale and retail sector. What makes this programme unique is that it is the first of its kind in South Africa to place so large a number of graduates in the wholesale and retail sector.

This initiative is the result of a partnership between W&RSETA (Western Cape), the provincial Department of Economic Development and Tourism, Western Cape Education Department and the six public FET Colleges in the Western Cape. The costs of the stipend paid to interns during the thirteen-month period are shared by the W&RSETA and the Department of Economic Development and Tourism.

A total of 69 N6 Business Studies students were selected to undergo the five-day training sessions held from

27 September to 1 October 2010.

The break-down of student participation for the three College of Cape Town campuses was as follows:

City Campus - 35 students;  
Crawford Campus - 16 students;  
Guguletu Campus - 18 students.

Staff members facilitating the training included Mr Achmat Gafieldien (City Campus); Ms Hester Carolissen (Guguletu Campus); Ms Veronica van Aarde (City Campus); and this writer (Crawford Campus). The W&RSETA provided the facilitator guides and learner material.

This training programme covered the following five Unit Standards (US):

### Day 1:

US no. 114895  
Define core concepts of wholesale & retail environment

### Day 2:

US no. 246740  
Care for customers

### Day 3:

US no. 258162  
Sell products to customers in a wholesale & retail outlet

### Day 4:

US no.114495  
Control cash at a point of sale

### Day 5:

US no.114959  
Behave in professional manner in business environment

From the 69 students undergoing the training, 50 students were selected for the internship programme at W&RSETA member companies during 2011/2012. The demographics of the students were that they all represented previously disadvantaged groups, and 34 of the 50 students were female.

An auspicious launch function for the programme was held on 22 November 2010 at Moyo, Big Bay (near Bloubergstrand) to celebrate this ground-breaking programme. Mrs Lana van der Westhuizen, Regional Manager, W&RSETA Western Cape (who initiated the project), welcomed all the VIPs and guests.

Mr Joel Dikgole, CEO of W&RSETA, expressed his excitement and the hope that this initiative would help many young inexperienced graduates. He announced that the W&RSETA intended cascading this project to other provinces as a result of the enthusiasm and successful commissioning of the project in the Western Cape.

The keynote speaker was Mr Alan Winde, MEC Finance, Economic Development and Tourism. Other guests included Mrs Penny Vinjevold, Superintendent-General of the Western Cape Education Department.

Various well-known companies in the wholesale and retail sector are

participating in this historic internship programme.

Our graduates have been placed at:

- Coast & Country
- Crazy Store
- Edcon Group (Edgars, etc.)
- Epping Industrial Tools
- Foschini
- Glocell
- Lansdowne Boards
- Merchandising Tools
- New Clicks
- Steinbuild
- Truworths
- Waterfront Leathers
- Woolworths
- Waltons

Some of our graduates are placed at the head offices of some of these major companies, while others are placed at local stores. The feedback that we have received at this early stage from both interns and employers is very positive. This is a compliment and an affirmation for both the graduates and the training offered by College of Cape Town during their study period.

It is evident that the interns are gaining wonderful experience and employment grooming while in the workplace. This internship programme will most definitely ensure that our graduates have an advantage when applying for permanent jobs on completion of the programme.

All thanks go to the core partners W&RSETA, the Department of Economic Development and Tourism, and WCED and the College of Cape Town whose collaboration has made this possible.



## Editor's Note:

For our intellectual debate we offer the following article and case studies featuring the practice of Student Support and Development Services in three FET Colleges that are located in geographically and demographically diverse contexts. Any Further Education and Training College that fails to prioritise its operations around this issue could be said to be failing at the core of its operational activities. In publishing these items it is our intention to foster debate on this issue in the quest for determining and sharing best practices. It has been suggested that the formation of a Provincial Forum for the facilitation

of the sharing of best practices might be helpful. Do you agree? Comments and opinions are most welcome and can be directed to [Pjacobs@northlink.co.za](mailto:Pjacobs@northlink.co.za)

About the authors: Karen Hendricks is the DCEO for Innovation and Development at False Bay College. Anneline Taljaard is the resident Psychometrist at Boland College, and Patricia Jacobs is an educational psychologist and the Manager of Student Support Services at Northlink College.

# False Bay College Student Support and Development Services: A model of success

KAREN HENDRICKS

Student Support and Development Services is central to creating a supportive learning environment for students, particularly for those who are making a transition from school to college. It forms a vital component of the transformation of the public FET College sector into a dynamic and responsive sector.

"The support services which colleges put in place to support their students can have a significant influence on how well students achieve. Students are likely to achieve academically when they are supported by colleges to make the correct programme choices, are properly orientated to the college culture and environment, are supported academically and are provided with opportunities to participate in extra-curricular activities. These are some of the support services that colleges can offer students that will lead to higher retention and throughput rates. If FET colleges are to widen access to a more diverse student population, and if they are to become more effective and efficient institutions, they must place greater focus on student support services". (An extract from the Student Support Services Framework, Further Education and Training Colleges, Department of Higher Education and Training).

Apart from the Constitution itself, the need for student support is clearly referenced in a range of current legislation applicable to FET Colleges. As a college with a strong student-centred focus, False Bay College has made Student Support Development Services (SSDS) an integral part of our institutional vision and our college strategic planning. We strive to enhance the students' experience and promote success and achievement at all levels of their academic journey. We have developed clear SSDS policy and procedures including a student code

of conduct and disciplinary policy, a drug policy and a student charter. Our model of student support includes a variety of services offered at various stages, namely: pre-entry and entry, on course, exit and post-exit.

Our student support and development services department is led by a highly competent and professional team of staff under the guidance and leadership of Ms Jacqui Layman, the Student Support Manager. One of the key strengths of this department is the dedication, commitment and skills of the staff, and the fact that our team understands the FET mandate with regard to student support services. The College SSDS mission is to provide a range of support services to all our students so that they can become effective functioning individuals who are equipped with personal-social skills, able to adapt to changing life demands and to prepare them to enter the world of work. We aim to help students cope more proficiently with the demands of learning irrespective of their level of study, and our service is a way of helping students to maximise their potential and to address and eliminate barriers to learning, be it personal or socio-economic.

Key to the success of developing an effective student support services

model is the following:

SSDS must be part of the institution's overall strategic plan and vision. It is imperative that the goals of SSDS are supported by the senior management of the college. We believe that this is a strong contributing factor to the success of SSDS at our college. The objectives of SSDS must find their roots in current education legislation such as the FET Act, Education White Paper 6, Education White Paper 4, NSDSIII, and be underpinned by the institutional values. The DHET student support framework document provides in-depth guidance for integrating student support services. Furthermore SSDS must take cognisance of and be responsive to the diverse needs of the communities from which we recruit our students. SSDS must be properly funded.

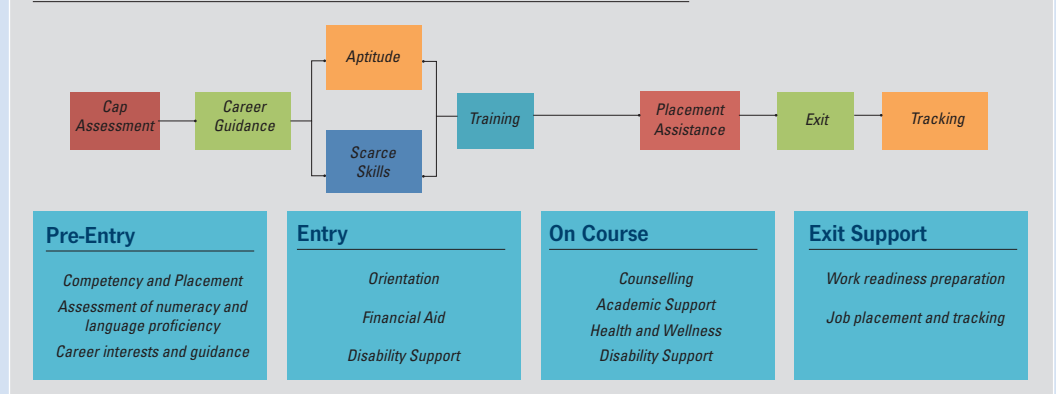
A strategy that is supported by proper funding will translate into meaningful support programmes on the ground. While funding remains a challenge for most FET Colleges, we also recognise that funding constraints create opportunities to form strategic and collaborative partnerships with business and industry, as well as with community structures. SSDS policy and procedures that is understood and implemented by the entire college community must be developed. At False Bay College we conduct annual

road shows to all our campuses to ensure that staff members on the ground are kept informed and up to date on developments within SSDS. All SSDS policies are posted on our quality management system. The SSDS department must have clearly defined objectives that are measurable, monitored and evaluated through the institution's quality management system. SSDS must be properly coordinated and adequately staffed by professionals with the relevant qualifications and skills to provide the various range of services. SSDS must be part of an integrated system of support within the institution and must not be viewed as an add-on. This is critical if the institution wishes to develop a student in a holistic manner. SSDS must provide services across the full spectrum of the student's academic experience from pre-entry to exit.

Effective student support services are the hallmark of a student-centred learning institution. As such, much more research is needed on the impact of student support services and academic development programmes on student outcomes in the FET College context.

For further information on this methodology contact Karen Hendricks at [Karen.hendricks@falsebay.org.za](mailto:Karen.hendricks@falsebay.org.za)

### False Bay College SSDS Model



# The role of the Psychologist / Psychometrist at FET Colleges as demonstrated in a simulated case study

ANNELINE TALJAARD

Thabo saw a pamphlet indicating that there were bursaries available at the FET College in a neighbouring town. Excited about this news, and also because he learnt that the College offered programmes that were based on scarce skills, he and his parents decided that he should enrol at the College as he would be better equipped to find a job after he finished the course.

On registration day he arrived at the college. There were hundreds of people. He didn't quite know where to go to but ended up in a hall where there were people sitting behind desks. The first assistant he saw asked him what he wanted to study. Thabo looked at the pamphlet. He saw the words Mechatronic, Electrical and Related Design, Financial and Economic Management... They all look unfamiliar and he had no clue what they meant. Wait, this looks familiar: Hospitality! His mum was a nurse. He would like to do

this. "Uhm, I want to study Hospitality," he said to the friendly assistant. "Well, that's wonderful! And why would you like to study hospitality?" came the question. "Because", he replied, "because I know hospitals." In spite of this warning sign, Thabo was eventually enrolled for the Hospitality course.

He didn't like working with food. After a few weeks he landed in trouble as he didn't submit the required projects. Because the lecturer took a stern stand, Thabo didn't enjoy the class and started skipping classes. When the June exams arrived he failed. Because of his poor year mark Thabo was not allowed to write the final examination. Disheartened, he returned home at the end of the year. The bursary money was gone, he couldn't go back to school, and he was in the middle of a career crisis, with no solutions.

Dear reader, what is wrong with this picture? Thabo needed information on the programmes being offered at the college, and guidance in making

an informed choice. When he started "bunking" classes there was no-one to follow up and determine the reasons. There was no academic structure in place to support Thabo. Furthermore, there was no possibility of job placement, leaving him with a sense of pointlessness regarding the whole experience.

The Further Education and Training Colleges Act 16 of 2006 prescription that it is the function of the Academic Board to "establish internal academic monitoring and quality promotion mechanisms" (Section 15 (1) (iii) of the Standard College Statute) implies inherently that there should be three phases of student support, namely:

- PRIOR to their registration at the college
- WHILE registered at the college
- AFTER registration at the college.

What then is the role of a psychologist/psychometric or registered Counsellor at the FET Colleges? Psychologists can offer support over a wide area. This may

extend from the area of career guidance prior to the students registration, through to personal counselling while the student is registered, and conclude with exit-interviews and workshops to smooth the transition to the world of work.

This support should be augmented with further specialist support such as Remedial Educators, Speech Therapists and Social Workers. Each has a specific, supportive role to fulfil. Open Learning Centre activities and Plato sessions of course also play their role and are within the domain of the lecturer. Students need to be placed in the right programmes from the outset. Thereafter they need to receive all support required for success in their studies. This may range from academic assistance (identifying and remedying learning obstacles) and diagnostic testing, to emotional counselling and social and/or welfare support. The appointment of the relevant personnel ensures the delivery of a comprehensive Student Support Service.

## Student support services: A catalyst for student success at FET Colleges

PATRICIA JACOBS

Student Support Services (SSS) comprises a comprehensive range of services aimed at motivating and providing opportunities for students to take ownership of their education. It assists students to make sound decisions and judgments that enhance academic and psycho-social success. At SSS we understand the challenges of college life and the obstacles that can occur. We provide a safe space where staff listen and interact with students. The academic, social, personal and emotional well-being of students is the particular concern of SSS staff. Our main goal is to equip students to be academically successful while they develop and mature emotionally and socially.

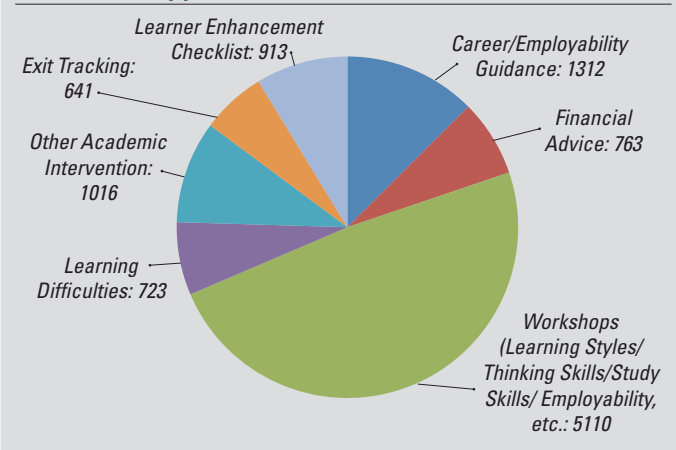
Student Support Services at Northlink public FET College is still in its infancy. Thirteen staff members render support to students on eight campuses situated in the northern suburbs of Cape Town. SSS Management Staff are stationed at the central office of the College in Bellville. Seven Academic Support facilitators provide Academic Intervention Programmes in well-equipped Academic Centres on campuses. The aim is to work in an integrated manner with academic activities on the campus to enhance student learning. Health and Wellness/Counselling services are provided by three qualified counsellors. The focus is on Awareness Programmes as well as the opportunity for students to receive counselling and direction with regard to resources, to help them cope with personal challenges. In addition a Sport Co-ordinator ensures the continuous delivery of sports and related activities across all campuses. For instance, Northlink students experienced the true spirit of the Soccer World Cup 2010 through the programme organised by the college. Our students are also affiliated to several sports clubs.

SSS takes on a supportive role to the SRC. We provide leadership training at formal leadership camps and throughout the year, and provide support for SRC lead projects such as the community service project known as the Dusk to Dawn Home which caters for abused women and children. SSS plays a pivotal role during Open Days and Orientation Days when we market our services and provide career and financial support information to students and their parents/guardians.

The Manager of SSS forms part of the management structures of the college and

### STATISTICS OF SERVICES TO STUDENTS AT THE ACADEMIC SUPPORT CENTRE FOR 2010.

#### Academic Support to Students



is in a position to provide leadership to SSS in line with College priorities, mission and vision. It is also a platform to sensitise a broad spectrum of staff towards the vital role SSS can play in realising the academic outcomes of the institution. One of the major challenges of SSS is to remain relevant to student needs while at the same time taking up the social responsibility challenge with which all colleges across the country must grapple. We have to be both innovative and creative. Financially speaking, FET Colleges must be accountable for the financial investment made by ensuring the achievement of healthy throughput and retention rate of students. Student Support Services enhance this goal by working in an integrated manner with lecturers. At campus level this collaboration has resulted in significant successful interventions for students such as the Work Integrated Learning and Job Placement programmes.

We support and have adopted the statement of the World Conference on Higher Education which states, "Education of students must be done holistically". The role of education must be that of enhancing Life, developing employability, transmitting and improving culture, and liberating the minds of students to become curious and responsible citizens. Our programmes are therefore student centred and students are seen as responsible partners of the SSS Team. The importance of effective student engagement in and outside of class is a key element of success.

When students enter the College they have a life experience of at least 16 years. We need to acknowledge this and build on these strengths that they bring to our institutions. At Northlink we developed a strength-based questionnaire. This is a success enhancement tool, and is completed with all our "first-intake" students. This immediately empowers them by making them realise that they have strengths even if they were not very successful at a main-stream school. This interview paves the way for these students in particular and it is followed up by SSS throughout the year. It also involves identifying support systems and the keeping of a "Journal on their road to Success". This speaks to the vital role of engaging with students at a different level, outside the lecture-room. The emphasis on the role of FET Colleges in addressing socio-cultural and economic development is addressed through career development, employability enhancement and skills empowerment within a framework of lifelong learning and forms the bedrock of SSS Programmes. SSS staff often act as the spokespersons on student needs and well-being matters as they affect the broader college community.

### ACADEMIC SUPPORT

SSS embraces the Academic Mission and Vision of the College. Academic Support is one of the key areas of intervention and plays a vital role in the academic success of students. A well-structured year planner, which is the result of an intensive planning and evaluation session at the end of the preceding year, facilitates this process. Academic support is done according to individual needs in the form of individual sessions but also in the form of well-planned academic workshops in well-equipped Academic Centres. The topics to be addressed are identified according to a needs assessment survey done at the beginning of each year as well as pro-active intervention strategies. Registers used to sign in as well as evaluation forms serve as guidelines for research and future planning. Many students enter the FET sector with huge academic backlogs. Many of them are also faced with specific learning problems that were never identified and dealt with at school level. SSS helps to steer this process by means of guidance to lecturers and the application for alternative education and assessment. Strategies such as individual and small-group support to students in various fields such as literacy, numeracy and specific learning skills are applied to alleviate the mentioned challenges. The centres serve as a resource centre as well as a place where students can study and do assignments. Students are mentored and monitored in a safe environment that promotes personal and academic growth. Our best performing student in 2010 typifies how SSS helps students discover their strengths via effective identification of barriers to learning and intervention by means of alternative assessment.

Education involves the holistic development of learners to enable them to live a meaningful life and to make a valuable contribution to our society. The high volume of students using Academic Support Services is evidence of the need for such a service. Teaching basic learning skills such as reading and writing is vital. Our society with its extraordinary scientific and technological developments challenges us to equip students with planning, thinking and decision-making skills and tools. Embedded in our work are the critical outcomes, which are inspired by our country's Constitution. Learners must be able to:

- Identify and solve problems and make decisions, using critical and creative thinking.
- Work effectively with others as members of a team, group, organisation and community.
- Organise and manage themselves and their activities responsibly and effectively.
- Collect, analyse, organise and critically evaluate information.
- Communicate effectively using visual, symbolic and/or language skills in various modes.
- Use science and technology effectively and critically, showing responsibility towards the environment and the health of others.
- Demonstrate and understand the world as a set of related systems by recognising that problem-solving contexts do not exist in isolation.

These basic principles grant staff ample opportunity to educate students holistically and to prepare them for the world of work and responsible citizenship.

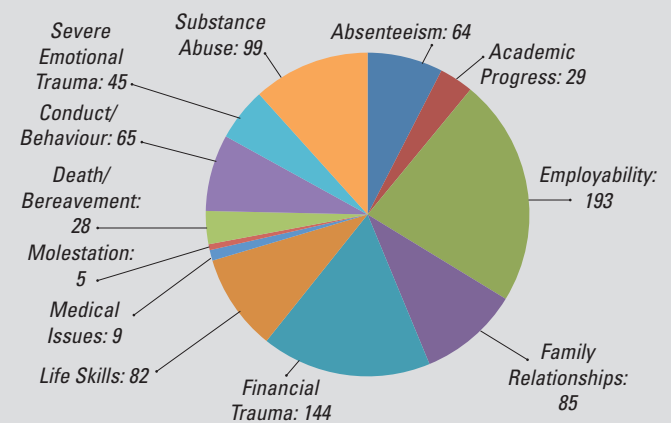
### HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Our children are exposed to serious and high levels of violence on a daily basis. If effective and efficient intervention strategies are not put in place, our communities

will remain violent and filled with pathology. We need to do something more sustainable to save this generation. Referrals of this nature need highly professional intervention. Services involve counselling/therapy, personal development, appropriate referrals, mental health and physical health. The approach is people-centred and promotes general well-being. Psychological, situational and personal problems are addressed. It plays a major role in the transition of students from schools to college. Development and Preventative programmes are offered in a well-organised manner. Crisis and trauma intervention are provided as needed. Ethical standards are maintained in terms of confidentiality and sound referral procedures. SSS is often instrumental in resolving conflict by means of positive discipline. Substance abuse remains a challenge. Awareness programmes accompanied by specialist intervention, and, where necessary, appropriate referrals are implemented. The prevailing high incidences of HIV/AIDS, crime and trauma necessitate an effective intervention programme. HIV/AIDS awareness is a vital, integral part of our Year Plan.

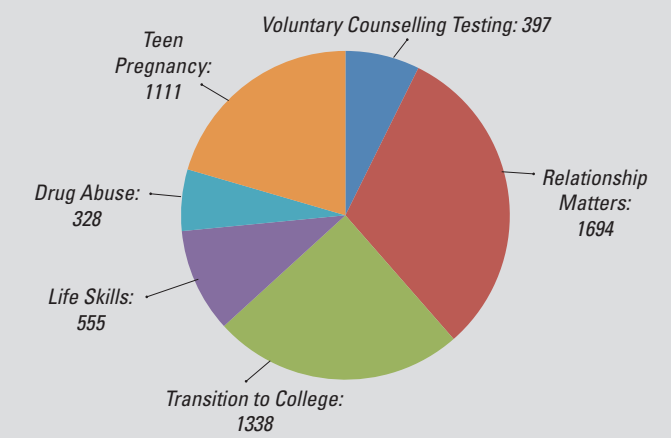
### HEALTH AND WELLNESS INTERVENTIONS FOR 2010

#### Individual Counselling/Therapy



SSS strives to work in a pro-active manner and therefore awareness and self-development workshops form an integral part of our Year Plan. In order for staff to reach more students, the workshops are conducted by means of group sessions. The numbers of students who attend these sessions as well as the positive feedback on the evaluation forms are an indication of the need for the expansion of students Support Services at the FET colleges.

#### H&W Workshops - Student Attendance



Students, as a product of our communities which are rife with pathology, find themselves in an environment where abrupt and often violent behaviour become a way of communication and conduct. SSS staff have the expertise to facilitate socialisation into alternative ways of communication and conflict management. Students often portray a strong personality and persevere despite their challenging day-to-day situation. However, they need support and guidance. Lack of self-confidence as a result of exposure to continuous failure contributes to withdrawal and insecurity. SSS provides hope. With proper guidance and assistance to view problems with the right perspective, they can excel.

The majority of NCV Students are still very childlike and sometimes act in a socially immature manner. They must be taught alternative strategies and means of responding to situations. The unfortunate perception of students and communities

that FET College Education is inferior and an educational option of last resort provides a significant challenge. It demands specialised skills to mobilise the huge paradigm shift required towards recognising the vibrant, high-quality opportunities offered by these institutions. For example, FET colleges provide an excellent progression and access gateway for engineering students at universities and universities of technology. This results in improved success rates at universities. SSS staff needs to become actively involved in higher education forums to foster partnerships in the best interest of students.

## CAREER GUIDANCE

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Career guidance is based on vital skills such as self-awareness, opportunity awareness, decision-making and transition learning as part of change management. These skills are vital for lifelong learning and how to sustain employability. Given the 25.2% unemployment rate of South Africa in the first quarter of 2010, SSS designed intervention programmes to equip students with skills to increase their chances of finding a job. It aims to familiarise students with employability requirements for the dynamic world of work. This approach will help students to excel in their occupations. It will also benefit themselves, the labour market, the community and the economy of our country.

## SRC

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SSS works closely with student leaders to pursue common goals. Leadership camps and guidance throughout the year empower students. Assistance is provided with the planning and actual student activities. Service to the community is facilitated, and exposure to community needs and engagement complements classroom learning. The SRC promotes student involvement in community building and helps to understand community dynamics, social issues and citizenship.

## SPORT AND CULTURE

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Sport and cultural activities serve as a vehicle for students to showcase their talent, have fun and build relationships. It is an excellent channel to transform negative energy into positive energy. At Northlink a well-organised sport structure supports these student needs. SSS plays a vital role in the advancement of talent at the College. The annual talent competition, Northlink's Got Talent, revealed excellent talent among students. Many students performed at various functions after this event. A few even re-aligned to a more commercial approach.

## PEER EDUCATION

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Peer education encompasses a voluntary service to fellow-students. In this programme more than forty peer educators are mentored and empowered to serve as supportive buddies. SSS intends expanding the buddy system in 2011 whereby first-intake students will be assigned a buddy. The main aim is to create a sense of belonging for our new students. Belonging and connectedness nurture a positive self-esteem that will lead to self-actualisation and ultimately success.

## FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

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Students are often hampered by financial barriers. A total of 907 students experienced severe stress because of financial barriers in 2010. Following its negative impact on academic performance, SSS helps students to find part-time employment opportunities. Assistance for the students in dire need is discreetly organised by SSS. These actions are accompanied by therapeutic intervention on how to cope with adversity. Workshops on how to manage finances are also presented.

## MOST VULNERABLE STUDENTS

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SSS decided to place special emphasis on empowering the most vulnerable students such as first-intake students. Most students drop out in the first year of study. If these students are supported effectively, more will complete their studies and be equipped to make an effective contribution to the development and positive growth of our society. The poverty alleviation drive assists the neediest students with amenities to survive.

## CREATING A SAFE SPACE

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SSS personnel are well equipped to play a vital role in creating a "Safe College Environment". They form a valuable link between community structures and the College. Furthermore, experience has shown that collaboration with community agencies helps with the co-ordination and prevention of substance abuse. The consultation skills of SSS personnel are used to facilitate change. Students are often overwhelmed by changes to their environment. This process ensures that college strategies and policies remain relevant. Programmes have built-in self-evaluation and self-efficacy processes to enhance self-worth, self-control and self-improvement. This is vital for informed decision-making on cognitive and affective

processes. Every student matters. SSS needs to ensure that this is the experience of all students, specifically those students whose "difference" may result in social exclusion. We cater for the diverse needs of students and therefore knowledge about students, their cultures, their needs and development is fundamental. We serve a diverse student community originating from twenty-four countries, and it is therefore imperative that cultural values and norms be advocated and celebrated. Feedback provided to academic staff is vital to programme development.

## RESEARCH AND RETENTION

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The Research gap can be filled via SSS practices. At Northlink we adopted the evidence-based approach to steer our intervention strategies and future planning needs. Instruments used include the Planning Needs Assessment Survey completed at the beginning of the year; monthly analyses of student referrals and statistics; and a comprehensive research study on the profile of the typical NCV L2 student, giving us a better understanding of the needs of our students.

Quantitative and qualitative research methods are used. All research is closely aligned to the academic mission of the College. Research enables us to objectively evaluate programme delivery. SSS is expected to demonstrate the value added to student and institutional success. Screening tests at the beginning of the year ensure the early identification and implementation of support programmes for students at risk. This role performed by SSS in conjunction with academic, financial, and counselling advisers during pre-entry and orientation phases is critical to their route to success.

Throughput and retention are a major challenge at FET colleges. Formal quarterly meetings as well as ongoing interaction are scheduled between academic staff and SSS in order to facilitate the early identification of drop-out risk factors such as absenteeism, truancy, suspensions, academic problems, psycho-social problems, alienation, disengagement and severe economic problems. Many students are affected by a combination of these factors. A multi-faceted intervention programme is thus planned, prepared and initiated by SSS. To reduce the rate of student drop-out and to improve throughput and success rates we developed a comprehensive approach to the difficulties of students. The link between academic success and healthy cognitive, social and emotional development is vital. Our institutions must be centres of connectedness, embracement and hope.

It is vital that we ensure learner support as well as learning support. While learner support focuses on the learner, it is equally critical that we look at the assistance provided by the Institution to ensure success. SSS is a valuable link to promote a systemic approach to addressing the retention rate. Nationally, SSS needs to share best practices on a regular basis. We also need to strategise and align major trends in our work. Research needs to be established at FET Colleges. At Northlink we have decided to start addressing this need with a small-scale conference for SSS staff in November 2011 in Cape Town.

## ETHICAL MATTERS

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Ethical issues regarding the sharing of information while maintaining confidentiality remain a challenge. The Consumer Protection Act serves as a guide. Given the high level of expertise needed to effectively steer SSS processes, suitable staff members must be appointed according to their level of training and expertise. It is difficult to attract and maintain suitably qualified professionals at the current conditions of employment for SSS staff. It is very pleasing to see some progress in this area, for example the Nkangala FET College advertisement in the Sunday Times (19 December 2010) for a psychologist at a more competitive scale and level of appointment.

The profession also requires staff to adhere and comply with the ethical codes of registration bodies such as HPCSA and SACSSP. Continuous professional development is compulsory for health professionals to retain their registration and to ensure effective service delivery. Currently it is not catered for at FET Colleges. The nature of current referrals and legislation often requires the services of registered specialists. Failing to work within the scope of practice can have far-reaching consequences for institutions and also disastrous effects on the student.

## CONCLUSION

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Student Support Services at Northlink College create a safe and supportive environment where we promote excellence in all spheres of student life while helping them with individual challenges. Our work covers all aspects of the College experience including academic support, career management, sport and cultural events, health and wellness, financial literacy and leadership skills. We are committed to equipping students with the skills and mind-sets to succeed at College, to develop into worthy citizens and strong leaders. We want to ensure that students have a rewarding and fulfilling experience, both personally and academically.

**Pull out and keep as a reference**

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