

# UNIT FOR OPEN DISTANCE LEARNING

The BUZZ @ UODL

Quarterly Newsletter



## OUR SPECIAL EDITION TO COMMEMORATE WOMEN'S MONTH

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*When women unite, the  
unimaginable can  
happen...  
They are precious gems  
that continue to shine  
despite adversities!*



# Message from the UODL Director

**Dr Joany Fransman**

## Celebrating Women's Month

The month of August holds special significance for women across the globe. We get to celebrate the value, uniqueness, and varied attributes of women in all walks of life.

We as women can be strong and our feminism is all about changing the perception of the way the world views our competencies, ingenuity, vulnerability, and influence over the numerous situations that we find ourselves in and to ensure positive visibility of women.

Life throws many challenges our way. Yes, life can be tough, but so are you, my sisters. Our strength is tested when we rebuild ourselves and as such, we become the creators of our future.

It is not our physical appearance that makes us beautiful, but rather our kindness that leaves situations better than we found it.

The true essence of a woman exists in her willingness to listen, her patience taken to understand, her eagerness to support, the heart to feel, to care and cure as well as her ability to always be there when needed.

This edition of the "Buzz @ UODL" has been specially commissioned to celebrate our female leadership, academics, support staff, students, and all stakeholders by acknowledging and commending their contributions.

At the UODL, we will surely empower disadvantaged women to help eliminate poverty, inequality, and violence against women. We aim to foster progress in our women, both in the workplace and beyond by equipping and educating the future generation of leaders to reach their full potential.

Keep shining sisters...not just today...everyday.... Shine On!



About Us



OUR JOURNEY THUS FAR

## WOMEN LEADERS MAKING A DIFFERENCE

As the female leadership of the UODL Executive Committee (EXCO), my team shares a glimpse into how their minds work. We share experiences, thoughts and ideals about our lives and where we are along the path in our respective journeys. All said in the hope that it can enlighten readers on their pursuit to achieve their best life.

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## Dr Joany Fransman

### Director

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#### **Tell us about yourself?**

I care deeply about many things, always wanting to see the best in people and comfortable with opening up to others. I am authentically me, able to feel freely, full of emotion with a great zest for life. I am Joany Fransman, the third eldest child of Willem and Eva Beukes. A wife to Aubrey Fransman, the mother to three beautiful children: Santino, Gabriela and Zilandrè, the stepmother to another two lovely children, Jermaine and Latoya, grandma to four of the cutest little ones, Melantè, Christiano, Dantè and Airabella. and most importantly I am a spiritual child of God.

I have been in the teaching profession for 13 years and joined NWU in 2005 as a Mathematics lecturer. I love to read a good novel, spending time with my grandkids and going out with my husband to what is locally known as “Langarm dances”, which we haven’t done in a while due to Covid 19 restrictions.

#### **What attracted you to work at NWU/UODL?**

An opportunity arose in 2002 to work for MCPT (Mathematics Centre for Professional Teachers. In 2005, I accepted a challenge as a Mathematics lecturer at the then PU for CHE (Old name for NWU), I saw this as an avenue to expand my ability to empower more mathematics teachers and reach out in a higher learning institution.

#### **Tell us a bit about your role at UODL/NWU?**

I am the Director of UODL for Teaching and Learning. I see my role more as a mother trying to guide her children to give off their best and to make good use of the talents that were given to them. I also ensure that we at the UODL commit to using each avenue to the advancement and betterment of all students, staff, and stakeholders at the UODL.

#### **Three words that best describe you?**

Tenacious, competitive, and helpful.

#### **What are you passionate about?**

I am deeply passionate about “self-actualisation”. To be able to move up in life against all odds, despite one’s circumstances (whatever that might be) and make that positive difference. For me this is the ultimate victory.

#### **Your message to our existing students or words of advice/wisdom to the students.**

Shape up, get up and show up, no matter what. Often, the only ones that hold us back are ourselves.

#### **Where do you see yourself in the next couple of years?**

I wish to take each day as it comes and giving off my best in all interactions. I hope to have served my preordained purpose. Leaving every situation better than I found it. My successes will direct the path for my future.

#### **Share the value of your department /faculty**

The Directors office prides itself with superior support, service, and professionalism. We live by a strong set of values and practice an ethic of care in all that we do.

#### **Fond memories at work with colleagues/students that you would like to share.**

The School for Continuing Education back in the day allowed us the privilege to visit the Learning Centres with our colleagues, where we would educate and support our students. It was at these times that I have bonded and networked with my fellow colleagues quite well. It has allowed me to nurture and hold steadfast onto these relationships.

#### **Who is your role model/mentor and Why?**

Without a doubt, my mum. She has a presence that demonstrates both strength and humility. She has experienced great loss in her life, when all four sons and husband departed. Mummy is not an educated woman but together with my father enabled us to gain a quality education. Today, both my sister and I achieved our doctorates. Mum is a woman of few words, and her calmness allows her to be a pillar of strength which encourages us to soldier on when life’s pressures take a toll on us.





## Dr Khumo Shopo Academic Manager

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### **Tell us about yourself?**

I am a mother of 3 handsome boys who give me joy and reason to wake up every morning. At heart, a gentle and considerate woman who opts to see the positive out of every situation. Professionally, I am a dedicated and hardworking individual who thrives under pressure.

### **What attracted you to work at NWU/UODL?**

I joined the NWU as a lecturer in 2014 and have since been teaching students through UODL. The reason I joined academia was that I was looking for professional growth and development. I believe that the NWU is where I can reach my professional and personal goals. The diversity and exposure to challenging situations makes my work very interesting.

### **Tell us a bit about your role at UODL/NWU?**

My role as an Academic Manager is very interesting. I like that it brings me into contact with diverse people with different challenges. When students' have academic or administrative concerns, this leads me to having to interact with many stakeholders and allowing me to learn more. I always need to ensure that programmes run smoothly. I work on building strong relationships with our lecturers and students as they are not based at UODL but at different Faculties and Schools.

### **Three words that best describe you?**

Humble, courageous, God-fearing.

### **What are you passionate about?**

Nursing! My profession! Excites me till this day. My wish is for all the future nurses to be as passionate about their profession as I am. When I was still in clinical practice, nothing made me happier than seeing someone who was sick getting better and being discharged to go home and happy with the care they received. Maternity work and helping women to give birth is truly rewarding.

### **Your message to our existing students or words of advice/wisdom to the students**

Strive to be the best version of yourself personally and professionally. I disagree that the sky is the limit. I say, go beyond the sky, aim higher and release your capabilities because you can do it!

### **Where do you see yourself in the next couple of years?**

Now that I have obtained my PhD degree, I plan to grow as a researcher. Of course, I also want to contribute in terms of teaching the Specialists Nurses with the hope that what we will bring positive outcomes in the SA health systems and consequently the health of everyone in the country.

### **Share the value of your department /faculty**

UODL affords people who are working full-time an opportunity to study and develop themselves further. Not everyone has the luxury of resigning from their work and focus on studying full-time. UODL again closes the access gap for people who are staying in areas where there's no higher institutions of learning. I have also studied through UODL from 2009 – 2011, and I must say that was the best decision I made to study with NWU through UODL. You can be assured to get quality teaching and learning experiences even though you are not physically on campus, that is the true value of UODL.

### **Fond memories at work with colleagues/students that you would like to share.**

Ooh, there's so many of them! The students that we teach/support at UODL are based all over the country. I will cherish memories of interacting with our students, whilst at the School of Nursing. There was a period each semester when we had practical weeks and the students had to come to campus where we exchanged ideas. The student's passion was evident which filled me with hope.

### **Who is your role model/mentor and Why?**

I have role models in management and research. Dr Elsabe Bornman, Deputy Director of School of Nursing is my mentor. She has shown me the ropes in academia ever since I joined NWU as well as when I was programme manager at SONS. I am inspired by her work ethic and the fact that she affords people in her unit an opportunity to grow and be innovative especially for the benefit of our patients. My research role model is Prof Petra Bester. She was my supervisor when I did my Masters' and she continued to mentor me in my PhD studies. I continuously learn much from her in terms of research.



## Dr Susan Greyling Academic Manager

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### Tell us about yourself?

I am Susan Greyling and have been involved in Foundation Phase teaching for 21 years where I also held a position of HOD. After completing my BEdHons (Education Management), I was appointed as a junior lecturer at the NWU that was responsible for the Foundation Phase programmes, Grade R and Early Childhood Development and Education that are delivered via distance learning. As the Programme Leader for the Diploma in Grade R Teaching and for ECCE was responsible for the design, delivery and presentation of the degree and diploma in ECCE. My research interests include Early Childhood Education as well as Educational Management. I done my PhD in Educational Management at UNISA.

### What attracted you to work at NWU/UODL?

I wanted to reach more children per year than just the ones that I was teaching. I aim for my students to become excellent teachers by sharing my expertise and passion and showing genuine interest in them as individuals. My classes are challenging but fair and fun and prove to become valuable beyond their time at UODL. I strive to provide high quality education, by designing meaningful learning experiences that cater to the needs of a diverse student population, and to engage in blended learning as part of the teaching and learning environment.

### Tell us a bit about your role at UODL/NWU?

As the Academic Manager for the Faculty of Education I manage all communication and information provided by the Faculty for the distance programmes and students. This includes collaboration with an Executive Dean, Deputy Dean, five Directors and nine programme leaders at the Potchefstroom Campus to serve approximately 10 000 students in the Faculty of Education representing more than 11 different distance programmes. I currently work closely with the SALA staff and understand the operations and procedures including applications and admissions services, registrations, student record-keeping processes and the logistical administrative support. I compile the timetable for the paper-based programmes, information booklets and correspondence to students and lecturers. In my role, I have gained mature knowledge of all functional areas within the student administration domain at UODL. I manage the biggest component of distance programmes offered at NWU. I also work closely with the director and staff of UODL, collaborate with the e-Learning division, study centre coordinator, as well as the project and short-learning programme management. Much effort is placed on adhering to quality management to ensure that the quality processes of the UODL are in place and monitored.

### Three words that best describe you?

I maintain a high level of integrity and trustworthiness with a strong sense of determination.

### What are you passionate about?

I am results-driven and my strong problem solving, analytical and abstract reasoning skills equip me to be passionate about serving our distance students on all levels of need.

### Your message to our existing students or words of advice/wisdom to the students.

Remember to focus on what is the best for you in the long run, instead of what feels easy, or right in the moment. Start projects and homework early so that if you need help you have time to seek out support. Do not procrastinate. Get your assignments done, study for those assessments, and then you can enjoy your time without concern.

When something goes wrong or there is a problem, never be afraid to discuss it or ask for help. Small problems tend to grow into big problems unless we work at resolving them.

### Where do you see yourself in the next couple of years?

I will continue to really give off my best in all tasks and would love to become an Associate Professor in the next couple of years.

### Share the value of your department /faculty

Making smart decisions is central to the success of NWU UODL. It is the compass through which I can guide our business in search of growth and is a key marker of what sets apart good leadership. The faculty contributes to the educational needs of the country by providing broader access to higher education by means of open distance learning (ODL). The UODL establishes and maintains policies, systems, activities, structures, processes, and procedures directed towards achieving, maintaining, monitoring, and promoting ODL at the NWU.

### Who is your role model/mentor and Why?

God is my role model, and the Bible is my instruction guide. To be a godly leader God needs to be my instructor and my faith is in Him:

"Be strong and take heart, all you who hope in the Lord." Ps 31:24 "So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand." Isaiah 41:10 "For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline." 2 Timothy 1:7 "What shall we say about such wonderful things as these? If God is for us, who can ever be against us?" Romans 8:31





## Dr Petria Theron Academic Manager

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When I meet someone new, the first question will often be: "Where were you born?" When I tell them, they will react surprised and say: "Oh, I thought you are Dutch." It took me quite a while before I realised, it is my Uppington accent that confuses people. I grew up in the Cape and went to Stellenbosch University to become a Maths teacher. My first teaching post was at Outeniqua High School in George. There I taught Mathematics and where I later became the Guidance counsellor.

In 1994 I went to Mozambique as a missionary. First in Maputo, as a Maths teacher, (teaching in English), and later in Vila Ulónguè (about 2000km north of Potchefstroom), as a lecturer in Educational Psychology at a Teacher's Training College. After two years I became a lecturer in Pastoral Counselling at a Theological Seminary (teaching in Portuguese). Whether I speak Afrikaans, English or Portuguese, the Uppington accent always comes through...(LOL)

I loved teaching and it was wonderful to see how learners and students experienced the "aha-moment", when they suddenly understood something. That is the best feeling a teacher or a lecturer can get.

After 17 years in Mozambique, I returned to South Africa in 2011 where I became a Postdoc at the Faculty of Theology. Over time, my focus area of my research changed to Gerontology, the study of old age, including the process of ageing and the challenges faced by elderly people. I loved research and found it very stimulating and exciting - always new things to discover.

But then, in 2015, I got the opportunity to get a permanent position at the NWU in the UODL as Academic Manager for Theology. Currently I play a supportive role, enabling students to get their training so that they can live out their dream and calling. I am happy to be there for them, to help them step by step to get to the place where they are equipped for ministry in churches, to work and serve in communities and to make the world a better place in my own special way.

I am passionate about education, assisting students to get their qualifications so that they again can make a difference. This role requires from me a sense dedication, commitment, honesty, and a willingness to walk the extra mile, which I gladly offer with love.

To my colleagues I would like to say, do to others what you would have them do to you.  
To our students I would like to say, always just do your best!

## Zanobia Kanjee Head: e-Learning

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### Tell us a about yourself

I am known to make things happen; the word "impossible" does not exist in my vocabulary. My idea of relaxing is tinkering with online platforms and finding that next technological solution. I am driven to achieve both professionally and personally. I am a wife and a doting mother to two children.

### What are you passionate about?

Automating processes is one of my passions as well as finding solutions to technological conundrums. Empowering others to use ICTs and the delight on their faces once they realise that they are able to do so, is priceless!

### Three words that best describe you?

Forward-Thinking, Dependable and Creative

### Share the value of your division

We are a proactive team that our stakeholders can always depend on; we go out of our way to provide excellent services and solutions. Our core focus is ensuring that teaching & learning continues smoothly with the use of technology, despite the uncertain times we find ourselves in.

### Your message to our existing or prospective students?

Believe in yourself and never give up! If you set your mind on undertaking your tertiary qualification, it may seem difficult especially whilst holding down a full-time job but it can be done. I speak from experience having completed my Degree at the pace of a full-time student! It is so worth it at the end of the journey. Each day brings new possibilities and as such, it is never too late to reach for your dream.





# Staff Honouring a Special Woman ...



## Shepherd Mthethwa: Assessments

It was in 1997, I met my wife, Wendy Mthethwa who changed my life completely. Prior to this time, my life lacked focus. Together we started building a good family. We were blessed with our first born in 1999 and our second child in 2006.

What makes Wendy so special is her faith and bringing our family closer to the worship of the Almighty God. She has a great ability to lift us up when we stress and are down.



## Moodiline Rutherford: Office of the SALA Director

To My Mother:  
She filled my heart with joy,  
And she filled my life with love.  
She taught me how to love.  
She taught me not to give up,  
She taught me words of wisdom,  
And attend to my every need.  
She filled my world with laughter,  
And she brightened up my world.  
Every woman's day our family gather to celebrate my mother's life, because we are still lucky to have her around as she is the rock of our family.



## Thabang Letsosa: Timetables & Assessments

Mrs Winnie Nomazamo Madikizela-Mandela- She portrays the character of a true African woman, resilient, an undying spirit and protective over her family.

With her social work qualification, she could have continued earning a salary and ignore the injustices ordinary people were going through. Winnie however decided to jeopardize her career and fight for the oppressed. When her husband was arrested, she continued to keep his name and their mission alive.

The Apartheid government couldn't break her spirit through the harassments she and her children went through.

Indeed, she was a MBOKOTO. I wish that her spirit can be in every woman to fight challenges faced by women of today.



## Simphiwe Moleko e-Learning

My mum, Patience Moleko is the special woman that I would like to celebrate. She is my absolute favourite person. She has taught me to be responsible, honest, to be respectful of others, to always love God and to always be kind. She is smart, so funny, hardworking, kind, and compassionate to name a few. She has always ensured that my sister and I have anything that we have needed growing up, even when it meant she sacrificed everything to put our needs before her own. I am, the young lady that I am today because of her love and constant support. I get my resilience from her. We love you, mamma always and forever.

## Bernie Swarts: Director's Office

My mother Clara Swarts, has infused my life with wisdom and wonder. I pay tribute to the substantial deposit my mother so generously made in my life and the wise lessons she and many other women has imparted and passed on to us. Faith is essential in our lives. Mum upheld the highest levels of integrity and her deep-set faith guided me to believe in God. I count it as one of the greatest gifts to me because love, peace, growth, change, and destiny flows from the power of believing in God. She has taught me a healthy sense of self-worth and the value of self-confidence. "Pull yourself together!" "Don't you dare quit!" "Don't give up on your dreams!" For every moment of doubt, for every moment of fear I have had, those words have always illuminated my soul and erased my fear, concerns, and hesitations. Loving yourself is one of the greatest lessons she has taught me. I would therefore, like to honour and celebrate the countless women who have gone before us. Women whose unselfish actions have influenced an entire generation of strong and courageous women. We owe everything to these women who have made all the difference in our lives.



## Dumisani Makhoba Assessments

My special lady would be Miss T Rahlogo. She is my first lady. My pillar of strength.

My message to her:  
Nunu, you should never doubt that you are valuable and powerful. You are deserving of every chance and opportunity this world has to offer. Continue to pursue and achieve your own dreams with me by your side to support you, every single step of the way.



"Honor women!  
They entwine and weave  
heavenly roses in our earthly  
lives"  
-Friedrich Schiller

# Introducing UODL Frontline Divisions



## Applications and Registrations Office

### Keshni Scholtz Senior Administrative Officer

#### What is your motto or personal mantra?

I have two:

"If you live fearing the storm...you will never enjoy the sunshine" and the second one "Everyone you meet is fighting a battle you know nothing about. Be Kind. Always."

#### Your impression of distance learning/education?

As a distance student myself, I am grateful that there is such a platform or tool available, because many people were not able to study when they were younger or just out of school and now, they have this platform available to them to further educate themselves and improve their skill sets. This form of teaching and learning is also becoming more applicable in this era of pandemics and social distancing.

#### How do you and your team add value to OUDL?

Since we are the first point of contact for a student, the work we do is paramount to the student experience going forward with their studies as we set the standard. We embody the NWU slogan: "It all starts here". Therefore, we play a crucial role within the UODL and the NWU. Everything we do affects other processes, from applications to registrations to assessments and finally to graduation.

#### If you could choose any female to be your mentor, who would you pick?

This is difficult to answer because I am fortunate to have been raised and surrounded by strong, kind, and bold women, from my grandmothers, mother, sister, family, friends, and colleagues. I have met and worked with women who have impacted me and have helped me to grow and inspired me. I believe in the saying, when women support each other, incredible things happen.

#### How do others describe you and what you stand for?

Efficient and honest. I do my best to resolve the challenges our team and stakeholder's encounter. I am open and honest with everyone, try to make things easier for our team by having open lines of communication and keeping them informed.

#### My team in a nutshell

We consider ourselves a team of "superhero's" much like the Avengers, where we all have our individual strengths, which is good and gets the job done. When we combine our strengths, we form one great force. We are hardworking, dedicated, enthusiastic while we support each other, assist each other all for the greater good of our team, our department, the Unit and most importantly the student.

**Yolandy:** The courteous, sweet-tempered, and knowledgeable, team leader.

**Griselda:** Helpful and dependable; our go to person for anything. Always makes us laugh.

**Nisha:** Truthful and passionate, the voice that keeps us in check.

**Primrose:** Our motherly figure. gently sings during her tasks, brings a sense of calm.

**Chrizzell-Dean:** Enthusiastic and considerate and always smiling.

**Kagiso:** Special K; Straight forward and hardworking

**Tania:** Meticulous, everything she does, is done with high standards.

**Pule:** Reliable and a witty guy.

**Joseph:** Respectful and friendly.

**Sylvia:** Positive, sincere, and kind.

**Sone:** Quiet and willing

**Debbie:** Honest, trustworthy, and committed.

Everything we do is done with integrity and honesty. We actually call ourselves the "SUPER A OFFICE"



# Introducing UODL Frontline Divisions



## Applications and Registrations Office

### Annemarie Jacobs Senior Administrative Officer

#### What is your motto or personal mantra?

There is always something to be grateful for.

#### Your impression of distance learning/education?

Distance education is changing the way in which education is viewed especially in view of the current Covid-19 pandemic. With the proper support, distance learning provides an opportunity for many students, who otherwise would not have access to higher education and the value of distance education can therefore not be over-emphasized. For effective and successful distance learning, it is imperative that institutions understand the unique needs of the distance student population, especially in a country such as South-Africa where students are faced with many unique challenges.

#### How do you and your team add value to UODL?

Experts are clear that ample technical and administrative support are crucial elements for success in distance learning. My Team and I strive to uphold the values of the NWU by supporting our students in a caring and professional manner because we understand that administrative problems can lead to unnecessary frustration and stress for our students. We want our students to know that we are committed to them and that they can rely on us for professional service, in line with our ethics of care.

#### If you could choose any female to be your mentor, who would you pick?

I find the life story of Malala Yousafzai, activist for female education truly inspirational, since she epitomizes fearlessness in all her actions. From a young age, Malala has been passionate about education equality for girls, so much so that she continued fighting for her cause even after receiving death threats and having been shot on her way home from school in 2012. With her unwavering faith in her cause, Malala boldly fought to the brink of death and then past it to bring about change in her community. Her determination led to the establishment of the Malala Fund, a charity dedicated to giving girls an opportunity to achieve a future she chooses. At the age of 17, she became the youngest person ever to be awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

#### How do others describe you and what you stand for?

I have been told that I am a humble, optimistic, and trustworthy person. Colleagues have told me that I am dedicated and organized in my work.

#### My team in a nutshell

I am fortunate to be working with a team of nine passionate colleagues who all have a strong work ethic and positive attitude towards their work.

1. **Malcolm:** Professional and dedicated. Leads by example, motivates team members.
2. **Rozanne:** Dedicated, efficient, and productive. Her warm nature makes it easy to connect.
3. **Nthabiseng:** Unpretentious, forthright, and honest. She is willing to go above and beyond.
4. **Wendy:** Reliable and responsible, sticks to her word and see things through to the end.
5. **Naazira:** Resourceful and enthusiastic. She can think on her feet and has initiative.
6. **Soné:** Can skilfully adjust to different situations reliable and committed to her values.
7. **Chanelle:** Do things in a calmly with a positive attitude. She is supportive and dependable.
8. **Onke:** Confident and direct. He knows how get things done in an efficient way.
9. **Ashlene:** Reliable and committed. She optimistic, genuine, and easy to get along with.

As a Team, we are focused on supporting our students and ensuring they have a positive experience with the UODL.



# The SRC

## An Imperfect Offering ...



Women's day messages are always filled with the best words of proud, strong, tenacious women who are so confident in their approach that they beam with pure radiance. I often sit and read those messages in awe. I wish that I was a "perfect" woman in all aspects of my life, work, home and mothering. The reality however, is that no person in this world is perfect. We are all imperfect offerings and most importantly we are human beings with fears, emotions, weaknesses, failings and shortcomings.

The best message I can deliver to each woman reading this is, know that it is OK to not be a perfect woman, we all have the ability to make mistakes, and it is life. So instead of judging women who don't conform to our perceptions of "perfect", we need to actively change the narrative by uplifting each other in our adversities, we need to move away from labelling women negatively when we feel wronged because we are all imperfect offerings. The moment we are able to fix each other's crowns, is the moment there'll be no limitations to our successes!

**Jill Andrews**

### Messages from our UODL Divisions

We pay tribute to every Woman and to acknowledge her immense contribution in shaping the society. The following quote comes to mind from Diane Mariechild - "A woman is the full circle. Within her is the power to create, nurture, and transform." I hope that each woman at the UODL had a blessed month and even a better year ahead.

Quality Office

August is an important month in the life of the women of our country, but also in the life of our nation. Women deserve respect for their contribution to building a beautiful society. And Women's Day brings that opportunity to show tribute to all women for what they do for us. Whether she is a colleague, a doctor, or a teacher, women have made enormous contributions in shaping our nation.

On behalf of the Projects and Tender Management division, we would like to wish Happy Women's month to all women.

Projects & Tender Management Office

Women play many important roles in our daily lives. To all, a happy women's month.

Learner Support Centres Office

Women are like angels, when someone breaks our wings, we continue to fly around on our broomsticks because we're flexible like that" - Sophie Monroe,

To all women. You are greatly appreciated!  
A blessed woman's month to all.

The Call Centre

Dear NWU student.

Information literacy is crucial for success in your studies at NWU. To ask questions, find information, forming opinions, evaluating sources, and making decisions. To be an effective contributor, a confident individual and a responsible student. "Intelligence is not the ability to store information, but to know where to find it." - Albert Einstein. Each day is a challenge, and each day is also an opportunity. Wishing you success with your studies during these uncertain times. Happy Women's month.

Applications & Registrations

As we celebrate Women's month, the e-Learning Team@UODL would like to pay tribute to all our female colleagues and students. We encourage our stalwarts out there to continue making strides despite challenges that may come their way. We further salute our men who support and stand by these phenomenal women.

If we all adopted this stance, to continue to encourage and support each other, every day, imagine what a beautiful world it would be for generations to come!

e-Learning Team

# Audience with Alumini

## Juanita Kapp



It is my pleasure to share my experience of the Unit for Open Distance Learning at the North – West University Potchefstroom with you. I am Juanita Kapp. I have been a student at North-West University since 2014 and have loved every moment of it! I am an ordained Pastor in the Full Gospel Church, a Level 5 CPSC Religious Professional and currently serve as the Vice-President of the Alumni Committee for Golden Key International Honour Society in the Eastern Cape. Through the wonderful initiative of the North-West University Unit for Open Distance Learning I was able to successfully complete my Bachelors degree in Theology; my Honours degree in Theology (Cum Laude) as well as the Masters in Theology (Dogmatics).

I chose to study via the Unit for Open Distance Learning since I have always been a full-time Pastor and wanted to pursue academic learning whilst simultaneously furthering my career. The Unit for Open Distance Learning made it possible for me to make my dream come true of living out my passion as a researcher and theologian whilst faithfully serving as the Pastor of my congregation. My experience with the Unit for Open Distance Learning has only ever been pleasant and I relished in the fact that all communication and teachings were conducted in a very professional yet accommodating and personal manner. Clear instructions and feedback have always been at the order of the day and has thus propelled other students like me into the future with great success.

I encourage all students who want to pursue Open Distance Learning with North-West University to become a part of the program as soon as possible. The Unit for Open Distance Learning is a valuable asset to the tertiary learning platform and is in my opinion going to ever-increase in popularity especially now in the time of the Covid-19 pandemic. It is due to the dedication and loyalty of the North-West University staff that the Unit for Open Distance Learning is available to students who do not have the opportunity to study on campus.

In my walk with North-West University there have been many beautiful memories created that I will cherish for the rest of my life. I have had the opportunity to meet the loveliest people, who I will remember and cherish forevermore. They have shaped my life and have contributed to my personal growth as a student. I know my experiences as a student of the Unit for Open Distance Learning will make good stories for my grandchildren one day. I remember one instance when I needed urgent information from the North-West University. I found myself in a state of panic and didn't know how to resolve the issue. Thank God I met Dr Petria Theron, who swiftly and effortlessly assisted me and resolved my query with great success. It made such an impression on me that I felt valued as a student. It is these events that portray the true character and values of North-West University and that make a lasting and positive difference in the lives of students.

August is Women's month and as a mother and a woman of God I feel the need to speak life into the studies and ventures of all students at North-West University yet even more so that of the female students. Ladies, you are more powerful than you know. You are unique and talented. Nothing is impossible for you.

Start believing in yourself and your capabilities. Without you the world would be a grey and dreary place. Never let an opportunity to shine pass you by. Share your precious smile with confidence and live out your passion. You are wonderful. Thank you for the positive difference that you make in this world. Because of you the future is bright and inviting.

Thank you from the bottom of my heart for the opportunity to share my life and story with you. It has truly been an honour to be a part of this wonderful faculty. I know my journey with North-West University is only starting. God bless.

# Audience with Alumini

## Emilia Fakiera



### A short introduction of yourself

Emilia Fakiera is a wife, a mother, a pillar of strength and support that bonds families. Her professional background includes, Ministry, legal, supply chain & logistics and hospitality. For the past three years, Emilia has chosen to serve God. Through becoming a channel of God's blessings, being used as an instrument where God can serve His purpose.

### Your current role/position

Currently Emilia is the acting Pastor of the Portuguese Speaking Christian Community in AFM-Sunnyside Pretoria. She is in training doing her final year of Ministry integrative learning (MILL) to be ordained as a Pastor in 2022.

### What you studied at NWU/UODL

In 2020 Emilia did her Bachelor of Theology Honours in Christian ministry, surprising herself with a cum laud after enjoying the journey, she decided to continue her study at NWU through UODL doing her masters in Pastoral studies.

### Why you chose to study via distance learning

I chose because of the flexibility and freedom of academic independence. You follow the classes from any location with internet access, I can advance at my own pace, preventing the class's performance from being influenced. Less distraction unlike school. Students can focus better without interference from outside distractions in the school environment. Content subject can be customised according to my own goals and personal tastes. In distance learning especially at NWU, there is also the possibility of working with synchronous and asynchronous classes and activities that use active learning methodologies, such as the Whiteboard Efundi etc.

### Your experience with UODL

I had a wonderful experience studying with UODL, and amazed by the availability of the lectures, their dedication, and the encouragement. I had to learn to dedicate myself as much as in a face-to-face course, in addition to developing skills of autonomy, planning and organization. I am now the protagonist of my studies, and I can plan accordingly. This is what I will cherish for a lifetime.

### Why prospective students should study via UODL?

Prospective student should know that studying via UODL or postgraduate course has many advantages. Attracted by countless benefits, such as flexibility and affordable tuition, social inclusion tool, work, and study more peacefully. There is no doubt that distance learning is a gateway to the job market. Distance learning has also broken down some barriers in education, such as geographic limitations and factors such as age, as younger people often end up having more time available to attend college. UODL does not completely replace the social interaction and comprehensive training that the school offers. However, UODL can be an important tool to optimise learning and ensure that teaching takes place regardless of the circumstances of the moment, and especially now during this covid-19 pandemic, distance learning is the way adapting to the new trend in life

### Any other good memories that you would like to share

A good and lifelong memory I have is of the huge impact that lecturer have made on us. Pro. Elma Cornelius and Amanda Du Plessis, they went that extra mile to give us (student) much wisdom as they do knowledge. We had to show that we understood the subject. As adults, it was funny, but the outcome was humble, satisfaction and success. I chose to be a good educator today because of the skills I learned from the UODL lectures of the NWU. They persisted, instead and did not desist when we had struggles and challenges. Oh yes, but we needed to stay disciplined and dedicated to our studies.

### A message to our readers for Woman's month.

As once said by Audre Lorde, "As a woman, I am not free if another woman is not free, even when her chains are very different from mine".

Women, you are not alone, the world is following the risks of loss of freedom and human rights. We are together, connected with the female struggle that crosses and pervades generations. The cultural formation of female identity needs to be reflected, deputised, deepened, but not cancelled based on a priori. This month deserves to be remembered to recognise the efforts of women who fought for us to achieve what we have today. We are women and equality will always be our banner. Happy woman's month! Thank you, women, for being so special!



# Audience with Alumini



## Ronel Prince

My name is Ronele Prince. I'm a mom of 4 beautiful children and wife of an amazing and supportive husband. Family is extremely important to me and so whenever we can we spend it with our extended families. I love to read, run, and of course eat! While I'm so grateful for all the good things in my life, I'm also deeply concerned for the youth in our country, and this has influenced my direction of study.

Currently I run the medical sales division for a multinational company because of my previous professional experience in healthcare as a sonographer.

Because of my other university qualifications, I was able to write the B-status exam which allowed me entry to the BA (Hons) Theology programme. I then went on to complete my Master's Theology (Missiology) as well at NWU.

There are various reasons why I chose to study at NWU:

- It was one of the few institutions that provided distant learning for my intended course;
- Distance learning best suited my personal and professional life (with 4 children at school and a household to manage it would have been very challenging to do inContact studies);
- It meant I didn't have to travel saving lots of time and money; and
- I had access to renowned and acclaimed lecturers who are experts in their fields. If you think about it before COVID-19 made online learning a norm, NWU was ahead of the curve providing the same.

My involvement with the UODL was largely positive. Most of my lecturers were extremely supportive and approachable. I have a few fond memories of my experiences, but one stands out. It was a telephonic chat I had with the Dr Petria Theron, UODL HOD. I was researching the various universities at that time and had so many questions related to the merits of distance vs contact learning; the course types and the avenue of Honours level study through the B-status exam. Of all the interactions I had with staff members of various institutions she never let me feel like I was wasting her time. She was attentive and knowledgeable. It seemed as if she understood my reservations but was able to alleviate my concerns without being overbearing. I completed my registration the very next day!

Prospective students should consider the UODL if they want to have access to renowned and supportive lecturers; and if they want access to friendly, knowledgeable, and supportive staff as my experiences have shown. The UODL offers busy parents; professionals or students the opportunity to study outside of contact classes.

A message for our readers? Studies in any field is challenging but only you can decide if it is worthwhile. Sometimes distance learning is harder because you miss the support and interaction of your peers, so choose discipline and focus. Do what you love and reach out for help when needed. All the best in your future endeavours!



# Message from the Editor

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## A Poetic Tribute: Amazing Women (Reflection of Perfection)

“

*Soul searching is hard work but necessary to push you toward what and whom you are meant to be and where you are required to make a difference ... Together we create magic!*

- YRM

”

We salute you, to all our mothers, sisters, wives, and daughters.

To our colleagues, besties, confidants, and soul mates, we salute you. For your undying spirit, courage, love, and selfless deeds and actions.

We appreciate all that you embody and stand for, we salute you!

The mothers of our nation, catalyst for change, nurturers, and natural caregivers.

We admire your tenacity, beauty, and motivation as you strive for the betterment of all.

We salute you!

We are always in awe of your ability to rise, despite the consequences and the remarkable outcomes of your endeavours, we salute you!

You continue to teach and amaze us in all that you do, so it is only right that we take notice, we stand up in acknowledgement and we recognise you.

To all woman, continue being positive, keeping fighting for the worthy causes.

Continue being brave and ambitious, stand strong and never lose your focus.

Continue to create this generation of equality where woman encourage social and economic growth as mothers, wives, and leaders in the corporate world.

It amazes us how you embrace your flaws, display vulnerability, and turn your mistakes into stepping-stones to reach your goals of creating a better world.

You love and stand up for people you never met and connect with others through continuous prayers.

With faith, become trailblazers and unleash the best version of yourselves.

We honour all that you are and will become.

We applaud your efforts, we raise a glass to you, we salute you!

We pay homage to you, Amazing Women.

We see a reflection of perfection!

Yaseen "Yaya" Rassulmia

Special Projects

(Directorate)

## We value your input!

We would like to hear your comments, thoughts and suggestions for our publication.

Kindly [click here](#) to submit your contributions. We look forward to hearing from you!