

PROMATHS ALUMNI

Newsletter 2018



Out of the Ordinary



"...as a leader you have a group of people who are entirely dependent on you to make decisions with the help of other committee members."

UNIVERSITY OF WITWATERSRAND

Tomorrows leaders, today

The Promaths Alumni Chapter at Wits University prides itself with great leaders in various organisations on campus. They lead with honour, courage and dedication. These remarkable young individuals have proven that great things can come from small beginnings. Mina Madlala is a third-year Biomedical Engineering student, Promaths Alumni- Wits Chapter 2018 deputy chairperson and chairperson of the South Point Ambassador programme. She attributes her leadership skills to her time spent at Kutlwano and says that, "Promaths gave me the platform to express, act and improve my skills as a leader. We started a choir and I used to address the students on important issues and motivated them during the assembly gatherings that were held every Saturday morning".

Maletsatsi Hlomuka is a second-year Actuarial Sciences student and DASO Wits chapter chairperson highlighted the fact that "as a leader you have a group of people who are entirely dependent on you to make decisions with the help of other committee members."

Kholofelo Motsibi is a third-year Civil Engineering student and Wits SAICE Student Chapter secretary and said that, "leadership is about being a server and adding value to people's lives through empowering them to become better versions of themselves"

Wits SRC Transformation Officer, Mmeli Gebashe, said that "being a member of the Promaths community has contributed so much to the person I am, not only academically but in all spheres of life. It gave me the courage to reach out to the next person to give the support they need. It also taught me to be approachable and accommodating to others, no matter the socio-economic background. This gives me a sense of belonging and the confidence to take any form and level of initiative where ever I go."

Images of Mina Madlala, Maletsatsi Hlomuka, Meli Gumedede and Kholofelo Motsibi.





**UNIVERSITY
OF KWA-ZULU
NATAL**



*“Don't chase success, chase
excellence and success will follow.”
– Mfanafuthi Mhlongo*

Mfanafuthi Mhlongo was born and raised in the township of Umlazi, Durban. He is currently pursuing an Honours in Bachelor of Commerce in business finance at the University of KwaZulu-Natal Westville Campus. He is the president of Executive Committee of the UKZN chapter of Promaths Alumni.

He matriculated in 2012 while attending the Kutlwanong Centre at Reunion Centre in Umlazi. Thanks to the extra classes that Kutlwanong afforded, his marks improved dramatically. Mfanafuthi became the top student at his school that year was the only student to obtain a distinction for both mathematics and physical sciences.

Mr Mnguni, from the Kutlwanong Centre saw potential in him and told him to work hard to prove that he was worthy to be part of the program. It's those words that motivated him throughout his matric year, even though he was from one of the worst performing schools. This taught him that as much as his past and present are part of him, they do not determine his future. He strived to always give 110% and became the Kutlwanong Top Regional Student for the Reunion Centre in 2012.

After matriculating, in 2013 he got and accepted to the University of KwaZulu-Natal to pursue a BSc in Electronic Engineering. Thanks to Kutlwanong and their extra classes, which boosted his marks greatly, he was able to obtain a full bursary from Eskom. During his first and second year he struggled a lot and felt that there was a big gap between high school and university and the lack of information about support structures available to help students didn't help. In 2015, he changed degrees and registered for a BCom: Economics and Finance that he finished in record time last year. That motivated him enough to start a Kutlwanong Alumni Society at UKZN in 2015 to act as a support structure. The aim was to provide a support structure to younger students who were facing the same challenges and to help them overcome.

This year on 19 April 2018, he officially became the first graduate in his family and the first university graduate from his school in over a decade. He says that “looking back, I can confidently say that I attribute all my success to Kutlwanong and the values that the program instilled in us. Kutlwanong taught me I should never take things for granted in life, never treat life as a right but as a privilege, always aspire to inspire and try every day to better myself not only academically but also spiritually and most importantly psychologically.”

Bhota! I am Amkele Nokrala a Mechatronics Engineering student at Cape Peninsula University of Technology. I am from the Philippi centre in Cape Town. Just like most of Promaths learners, I got good marks in matric, which opened doors for me to study at any of the South African institution. I chose CPUT since it was ranked as one of the top universities for technology. Just like any other student, I chose the beaten path to success - get the qualification, get a good job, move to a suburb and then have enough money to feed myself and family.

However, a call from Promaths is all it took to change my destiny. I was offered a chance to launch a society that would accommodate UWC and CPUT students, as there was no society at the time. I did not know where to start and I did not even know what an executive committee was. I must admit that I was reluctant at first, as I was not interested in the politics of starting a society on campus. I thought a lot about turning down the offer, until I shared the news with my friends and found that a lot of people believed in me more than I believed in myself. This is when my 'why' became stronger than the 'how'. It was no longer about me, but about the students that I was going to deny the opportunity of having a family on campus. So, I embarked on the journey and launched the society.

I often experienced a lot of criticism from my classmates for committing myself to something that doesn't pay me, but whenever they did that, I worked harder. I believed that the skills that I was going to learn from the society were worth more than the money that I would earn from a part-time job.

I should say that I learnt a lot from leading the society and even my idea of success now has changed. I am now more interested in creating changes for the benefit of those around me. Today, I don't dream about a good job, but creating good jobs. I don't dream about moving to suburbs but transforming my township into a suburb. Today, through leading the society, I understand that I have power to create any change that I want to see, and it all depends on me. I thank you Promaths for everything.

*"I understand that I have the power to create any change that I want to see."
– Amkele Nokrala*

CAPE PENINSULA UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY





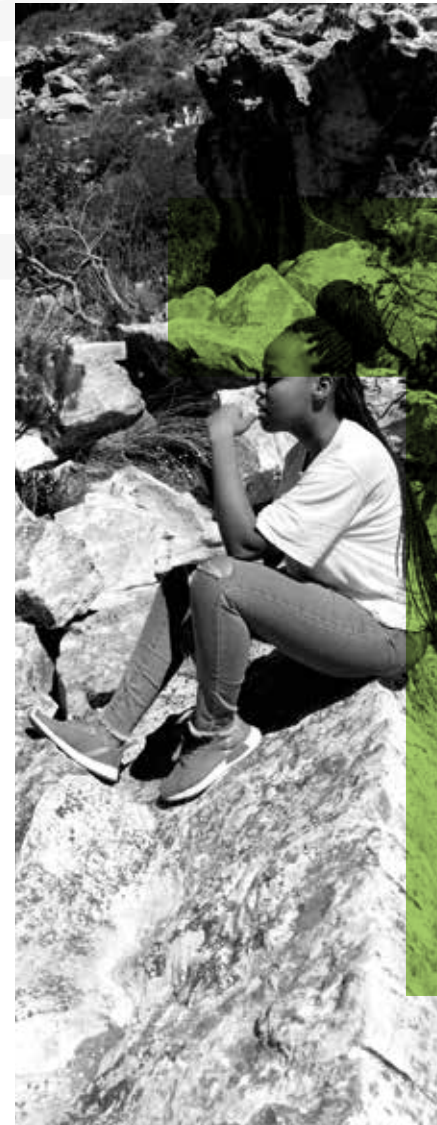
A home away from home

At the beginning of the semester the UCT Promaths Alumni Executive engaged in extensive discussions on how to grow our Alumni Chapter. We concluded that certain initiatives, which resonate with our pillars had to be introduced and I can proudly say that the Mentorship, Tutor and Promaths Cares initiatives are up and running. Each Promaths Alumni first year student has a mentor, we have our very own Promaths tutors who assist in a wide range of courses available at UCT and we also give toiletries to any Promaths Alumni in need. These actions show that Promaths continues to exist even beyond the walls of secondary school. My fellow alumnus can agree with me that seeing a Promaths t-shirt on campus makes one feel safe and welcome in that space. Promaths is more than just a society or chapter it is a moving machine that will never stop climbing the ladders of success. Promaths is home.

By Michael Makhaba

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN

Paging Dr Shange



I am Thobeka Tracy Shange, a first year medical student at UCT. I was part of Kutlwanong Promaths Umbumbulu Center from grade 10 and it has been the best years of my life.

The Kutlwanong Promaths programme helped perform exceptionally well in maths and physical sciences, making it easy to get distinctions in both subjects. It was just a sure thing that I'll get an A, as we had the best teachers who are excellent at what they do. They were our 'second parents' who believed in us and always encourage us to give it our all.

I was one of the privileged learners to qualify for the Cape Town Weekend to Remember Trip. It was such an amazing experience. During our trip we visited the University of Cape Town (my dream varsity) and I got to see it for the first time. At that moment I knew that was going to come back and now I'm studying medicine at UCT. Dreams do come true, provided you are willing to work hard and Kutlwanong helped me make it possible.

Promaths is not just a maths and science programme, its life, love, fun, success and everything else. I'm forever grateful that I'm a part of this family.

All the way from Qwaqwa

I am in my second year studying Mechatronic Engineering, proudly sponsored by Investec.

I joined Promaths in Qwaqwa in grade 10 and my grades were average at best, and like any other pupil I struggled with mathematics. I wanted more for myself and I just did not know how to achieve better. I was confined to mediocrity.

I joined Kutlwanong and my horizon expanded. It provided an environment where dreaming big and expecting more wasn't weird. Distinctions became normal to us – all thanks to Promaths.

I looked forward to weekends and school holidays. I enjoyed being around people who had dreams that seemed unreachable – yet they believed so much that they would reach them. We were all looking forward to being one of the first few people to go to university in our neighbourhoods and local schools.

After I went to my first incentive dinner – I promised myself that I would go to every dinner that followed. I may have missed one or two dinners, but I learned to take every setback as a learning experience. My teachers motivated me to try harder every time and I have never given up on anything since.

My chances of succeeding seemed very slim as my parents weren't rich, I was a terrible soccer player and I couldn't even sing. I knew that I had to make something out of the intellectual capacity that God had given me and Kutlwanong helped me keep the faith.

I learned about the #fillup the bus to UCT. Although some of my friends liked Wits more, we kept the movement going. It was our new motto. We'd talk about our seniors who had filled up the bus before us. We were next – it was almost unbelievable, but we are here in UCT, others are in Wits, UFS and other universities around the country.

Being a part of the Promaths community helped me realise my potential. I could have never dreamed of studying in Cape Town if I hadn't joined Kutlwanong. I would have never even thought of enrolling in the school of engineering, but I got in with an entrance scholarship worth an amount I could hardly count by myself.

Joining Kutlwanong was my best decision ever. I am forever grateful.

Tefo Motaung



*"It provided an environment where
dreaming big and expecting more
wasn't weird".*

NELSON MANDELA UNIVERSITY

A chance to give back

The Promaths alumni chapter was recently registered as a society at NMU and has already been chosen by the Dean of students to help with one of the schools in Port Elizabeth. This can be attributed to the society's commitment to academic excellence and the spirit of lending a helping hand.

The Gqwesa Education Project involves tutoring maths, sciences, account and hosting a career workshop at Kwa-Ndwesi High School in Motherwell every Saturday from 09h00 to 15h00.

Here's what some of the tutors had to say about the project:



Accounting

"I am a product of Kutlwanong and being a tutor at Kwa-Ndwesi High School is a great opportunity for me to involve myself in my community. I have the chance to continue the ripple that was started by Kutlwanong program during my school days, through specialised tactics of studying and methods of answering questions of the final exam papers by grade 12's."



Mathematics

"I understand that maths, science and accounting are challenging subjects as I struggled with them a lot in high school, until I joined Kutlwanong. The centre helped me get better marks for these subjects, encouraged me to look at them from another perspective which is where most students/learners fail. These subjects need commitment and hard work and a motivated learner. I really want to help learners because I know and understand what problems they are facing and how frustrating it is to deal with the challenges on your own."



Physical Science

"I've learnt that understanding capabilities of learners differ, not every learner understands what they are being taught by their teachers. So, I offer a different platform for them to understand at their own pace, also creating different study methods/material to everyone, which in return guarantees better results."

This is a great opportunity to help the Eastern Cape to raise the bar by helping one school at the time.

UNIVERSITY OF THE WESTERN CAPE



"...It is never about what you go through but what you learn in the process."

Courage and resilience build character

I'm Siphosethu Matomela, a second-year BSc Applied Geology student at the University of Western Cape and I'm currently the chairperson of the CPUT+UWC Promaths alumni society.

The challenges I faced at school made me believe that I was never going to succeed and that my financial background had everything to do with that. I went to one of the worst performing high schools in Soweto.

My life changed in 2013, when I was introduced to Promaths at the Dobsonville centre. My first year in Promaths was the toughest because although I was in the top five at school, I didn't have a good foundation and I failed most of my tests. However, one of the Promaths teachers, Mr Nkomo, was aware of the situation at my school and so he was patient and very understanding. He made me believe in the beauty of my dreams, and every time I was convinced that I couldn't go on, I did. I attended the programme until I matriculated in 2015, it wasn't easy, but I didn't give up.

In 2017, I did a late 'walk-in' application at UWC and got accepted. When I got to UWC, I was lucky enough to find a Promaths alumni family. The journey has been an awesome one, I've met amazing souls from different centres and I've found sisters and brothers that I could always cry to when times get tough. Having this society on campus has really helped me in terms of acquiring leadership, communication, and mentoring skills.

The point is, through all the challenges I faced, I grew a fighting spirit, it is never about what you go through but what you learn in the process. I refused to give up on my dreams and now I'm half way to becoming a geologist. I didn't allow my circumstances to define me, but I can relate to almost all the challenges that students go through on daily basis. I know it's tough but remember this, 'a smooth sea never made a skilful sailor'.

UNIVERSITY OF JOHANNESBURG



Activating UJ alumni

This year started with a great milestone for the UJ Promaths Alumni Chapter, we were able to register as one of the societies and we are now recognized by the university. The main aim for this year was to increase the number of people recruited in the previous years. We wanted at least 50 new members, fresh from high schools and 20 senior students who have not been part of the alumni in the previous years.

We embarked on a recruitment drive and asked all senior student representatives of Promaths to wear their Promaths t-shirts twice a week on campus. The strategy worked, and word quickly spread encouraging us to launch this initiative on social media platforms too.

Backed by the success of the campaigns on the Doornfontein and Auckland Park campuses, the executive committee hosted a welcome event. We were not disappointed by the great turn out and a total of 91 students were at the event. This level of participation is a great improvement from previous years and promises to keep the society alive.

The welcome event gave students the opportunity to meet each other, meet their executive and play interactive games. The students did not go home empty handed and got Promaths bags at the event.



"Your dream is yours alone, persevere it alone, and reap the fruits... It is possible black child."



Top achiever award

Meet Legohang Mosia, one of the top achievers at the Promaths programme. He recently received the Top Achievers Award for Chemistry at UJ.

Tells us a little bit of your history of Promaths

I was chosen in Grade 10 based on the results I had obtained in grade 9 for maths. It was a great thing, I was the top learner at my school and but being exposed to students from my centre was a different story.

What was the drive that led you to apply to University of Johannesburg?

Thanks to Promaths, they applied for me for to University of Johannesburg and they were constantly reminding me and my peers to always aim for the stars. The University of Johannesburg offers the best education in Biochemistry and it is close to home as there was, and still is, no money for me to consider living on campus.

What were you hoping to expect from University of Johannesburg?

The best education to get my degree in record time. I am hoping to become the best scientist and make discoveries that would one day change the world. The University of Johannesburg is a leader in silver cancer research, which shows the determination the university has, and I am grateful to get this quality of education.

Tell us about the experiences you have had so far at University of Johannesburg?

It has been a rollercoaster. One minute you understand the next you don't. I think my experiences are the same as all the other students. The most difficult thing that I have experienced at this university has to be compiling practical reports and following through. It is extra hard to finish a report and study theory for another module.

Top Achievers Award, how did you do it?

I think what is important is falling in love with your studies. It is important to catch up and always know what is happening. Maintaining your grades is always difficult but it must be done. The plan is to always focus on the goal.

What can you say to other Promaths Alumni members to motivate them?

Your dream is yours alone, persevere it alone, and reap the fruits. Asking for help and giving help is okay. As sons and daughter of Promaths we must always look out for each other. The famous quote, "it is possible black child", is what pushes me.

The Promaths Alumni University of Johannesburg Chapter has a very committed and dedicated executive committee. They are working really hard to keep the chapter going so it can be beneficial to students.

Hey neighbour

All Promaths Alumni know that this is a family, and this time was no different when the UP Promaths Alumni society reached out to the TUT Promaths Alumni society. The message was simple, "hey, we live next door and we would love to get to know you better because we are one".

What culminated from this message was a final year end event for Promaths students from both institutions.

Nhlanhla from TUT loved the event saying that, "when I first heard the idea I was excited because I know it was a start of a new relationship and when it happened, it showed that Promaths is indeed a family."

"...it was a start of a new relationship... it showed that Promaths is indeed a family."



A fresh start to 2018

Magnolia Dell Park in Pretoria was the place to be on Saturday 14 April 2018, for all UP Promaths Alumni members. The Executive Committee organised an event to welcome all our first-year students from the different centres, so they could meet senior members to share their university experiences.

We were strangers when we first met, but for life – how awesome. We played games and interacted with each other. Working towards team building, we played games that taught us how to overcome challenges posed by the opponent. The games also forced us to step outside our comfort zones.

Two of the games were unfamiliar to the members, which were Kubb and Croquet. This meant that members had to help each other in figuring out how to win the games. The games also included Ring Throw, which was not as easy as it looks and gave people a hard time. Tin created a lot of excitement as it was easy to play, and it generated more points. However, checkers/draughts was the crowd pleaser as it created a lot of nostalgia for most people. It's a game we are familiar with and enjoy playing. Instead of making draughts a two-player-game, teams had to decide on a move together.

Any alumni will tell you that you will never leave Promaths with an empty stomach and an empty head, so yes, we left that park with full tummies, new friends and a head full of new knowledge. At the end of the day we still had the energy and power to say Halala Promaths!! Halala!!.



Alumni Graduate Interview

"I instantly knew I have found home away from home."

Name: Sense Itumeleng Rapetsoa
Kutlwanong centre attended: Dobsonville (Makhoarane)
University qualification: BSc Mathematical Statistics

What is Promaths Alumni Society to you?

The society for me was a go-to place for a helping hand. I remember one of the first private tutorial sessions where I was with one of the alumni, Mkhululi. When I started first year, it was hard to fit in and get used to the environment but after hearing that there is a Promaths Alumni Society, I instantly knew I have found home away from home. The society is family, I looked forward to the gatherings, just so I could have a good laugh and stay motivated to keep going. The big meals helped through "tough times" too. LOL!

What made you decide to be in an Executive Committee Member?

I joined the executive committee with the intention to bring about change in the society. Not only that, but I also wanted to be part of a team that was pushing the brand, making a difference and inspiring people. I am glad I served as I grew and learned a great deal from the team as well as the society at large.

Advice for a first-year student....

Use the society, as its primary purpose is to help you. Seek help and don't shy away, we all need a helping hand at some point. Stay positive and believe in yourself. It will be hard at times but believe in your dream, you will make it.

HALALA PROMATHS, HALALA!!!!!!!!!!

B

Friendship to brotherhood

On a Friday afternoon, three students wore their Promaths t-shirts to the TUT Soshanguve campus. They did not know each other but the familiarity of those t-shirts instantly drew them to one another and Lehlohonolo Mmadi, Lehlohonolo Masopha and Tshepiso Mahlalela struck up an instant friendship.

The young gentlemen all come from different Promaths centres and discovered that they all registered for IT. This encouraged them to rely on each other for support as Lehlohonolo Mashopha says that, “ever since I met my Promaths brothers, the year has been great because we motivate and help each other.” They all have different interests and Tshepiso is also an aspiring writer and rapper. Lehlohonolo Mmadi says that “for now his qualification is his main priority.” He wants to finish his studies and give back to the community by opening a foundation for underprivileged children. Tshepiso, who wants to “have his own company manufacturing products that are unseasonal, into programming and writing” also had this to share – “Our lives are not determined by a paper but a paper can determine our lives, it’s not a sin to jail but it’s a sin to give up, we were never born to give up.”

By Nhlanhla Ntuli

*“Our lives are
not determined by a
paper but a paper can
determine our lives.”*

TSHWANE UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY





First princess

She leads the future

*"...you might
fail but to me
failure is the
beginning of
great things
ahead..."*

"God favours his children", are the words of Nusicelo Judith Mzala a third year Food Technology student at Tshwane University of Technology. On the 28 October 2017, the Student Governance and Leadership Development (SGLD) hosted awards in Building 7 (TB Hall). Nusicelo's leadership showed when she took home three awards namely: Woman In Leadership, Most Outstanding Peer Facilitator for Top Junior Leadership Programme and Peer Facilitator for Top Junior Leadership Programme.

When she received her first award she said "I was happy, the feeling was just overwhelming hey, there was a time I felt a bit emotional and wished my parents could see me growing up but hey, it's God's plans. I am very thankful to the parents I have now who made me who I am today, Mr and Mrs Ntaopane. God favours his children and all I could do was to keep thanking him." Working hard and giving all the best is what landed her these awards.

Winning these awards has become a changing moment in her life. "It feels like it's the beginning of everything coming. It shows me that I'm capable of things just sometimes I tend to limit myself I guess it's time to get out of my comfort zone," she says.

She continues to advise other students, encouraging them to "never give up on God, He always has plans for us, all we should do is persevere and work hard, always believe in yourself that you can do it." On risk taking she says, "though you might fail but to me failure is the beginning of great things ahead. All we have to do is keep going and never underestimate other people".

"There is no magic or some sort of muthi used here or any luck, this is the result of hard work."

Mokobake Thabo

Graduation - next level things

Today we celebrate the achievements of our society members, the executive is proud and excited to see our members prospering and reaching to the top, indeed the sky is the limit.

We thank Kutlwanong and our sponsors for this wonderful society, a society that unites people, so they can prosper academically and in other aspects of life. We thank our former chairperson, Tshehla Frank, for establishing the Promaths Society UL chapter.

Kutlwanong centre gives learners an opportunity to grow academically and realise their potential. Mmathabo Namane said that, "Kutlwanong centre made me intellectually wiser and stronger and the time I spent at the centre was not wasted, I give thanks to the highly skilled educators for their efforts and the time they spent paving our journey." Indeed, Kutlwanong is a pillar of our success, as Mameko Lehlogonolo said that, "I am who I am today because of Kutlwanong, I now know that nothing is impossible if you work hard. Kutlwanong motivated me to work hard in everything I want to achieve."



UNIVERSITY OF LIMPOPO

The pride of the UFS Promaths community

This is Tholoana a qualified graduate in Bcom Accounting, currently pursuing her honours. Not only did she manage to excel in her academic life, she also managed to handle her leadership role in the promaths community, currently she is part of the university of the free state executive committee under the portfolio vice- chairperson truly this demonstrates the power of a mind with a vision and dedication to prosper and achieve towards greater boundaries of life.

I carried out an interview with her to ask her on the techniques on how actually to survive university life without the influences of the other negative parties in one's life especially First year because we know that's where the struggle actually begins whether it is academically or socially, and so her response was that, "my first year at university of the free state on the 2nd of February 2015, doing my Bachelor of Accounting. My first year was very difficult for me as I only ever started doing accounting in my first year. I was depressed and confused most of the time, I didn't believe in myself during that time. I remember towards the end of the year applied for another health related course at the University of Limpopo because I didn't believe that I was going to make it to the next year. At the end of that year I was able to pass all my modules and eventually proceeded to the next year". The second question was on how she managed to get her bursary and even able maintain it till this day, "in my first year around April, my friend had an interview with this other company that collect revenue on behalf of the government, she went to the interview and when she came back, she then told me to go to that interview bearing in mind that I didn't then have a bursary then I decided to go with my grade 12 results and with god's grace my interview went well and I got awarded the bursary, in which it served me also as a motivation to carry on and strive through the hard work and struggles of passing until I eventually got my degree in record time."

With this entire challenges she incurred she still managed to succeed she therefore continues to inspire us daily her dedication lead her to her victory, in which now serves as pillar footsteps to walk through and in this manner it will conclude to a recipe for success for all.

UNIVERSITY OF THE FREE STATE

Tutoring programme

This year, we started on a good note as our chairperson, Diketseng Motaung and Rudzani Magau introduced a new tutoring programme. Its purpose is to ease our first-year members into the tertiary academic workload.

Tutors were chosen according to their academic strengths in their various fields of study. Classes began in the second quarter and we are also introducing Saturday classes, just like the Kutlwano centres students attended. The sessions will be from 08h00 to 15h00 and all classes will be compulsory for first year students.

By Sibongile Witbooi



