20 Years of Teaching Excellence

FEBRUARY 2020
Michelle Swart, from Hermanus Pre-Primary School, Western Cape, was the first place winner. She is passionate about focusing on perceptual and gross motor development for the ECD phase and would love to be involved in helping others bring this into the classroom. She has spent most of her teaching career working with younger children: an age group she enjoys because of their spontaneity and eagerness to learn. In her school, the major challenges confronting her are the different home languages that learners speak and their diverse social and economic backgrounds.

She also enjoys working with small groups with different learning paces which encourages the learners to build a vocabulary, learn very important values such as genuine caring, accepting and tolerance for their peers.

Ms. Swart brought about change in the school’s teaching approach and strategies through her different creative perceptive teaching methods. She has also reached out and made other schools aware of the need for young learners to have more real life and concrete experiences in the Grade R class as well as the younger ECD classes. She works closely with the Grade 1 teachers with school readiness in mind. She has also made a change in the community by involving parents in their children’s learning and making them aware of their progress.

Some of the challenges she confronts are the passivity of the learners, lack of parental involvement. She tries to involve learners to understand the content she shares with them. She is stimulated by the relationship she has with learners and enjoys interacting with them, learning from them and helping them to understand the content she shares with them.

Some of the challenges she confronts are the passivity of the learners, lack of parental involvement. She tries to involve the schools’ management team in cases where parental support is inadequate. Her participation in the NTA has been life changing also to her colleagues, learners and community. She promises to continue with her studies, continue being an inspiration to learners and colleagues, and do all she does best in the classroom - shaping the world of tomorrow.

Asja-Leah Katja Strydom, from Despatch Preparatory School, Eastern Cape, was the second place winner. She was so dedicated to succeed as a teacher she decided to learn isiXhosa, the language spoken by most of her learners.

Her biggest challenge until then was navigating the bridge between the language of the majority of her learners and her language. But it was self-motivation and her teachers - from Despatch Preparatory School in the Eastern Cape who inspired her to be a teacher. She adds that she is motivated by being one of the first people to discover a talent and has the opportunity to develop that potential.

Her strong point is her energy and passion for teaching and admits that she is obsessed with the profession. Her recognition that has culminated in her being a national finalist serves as motivation for those who come from a semi-rural environment such as Despatch.

Margaretha Susanna Janse Van Rensburg, from Fanie Malan Preparatory School, Northern Cape, was the finalistic winner. She plans to work with, help and guide smaller needy schools in the region so that they can become centres of excellence in the region so that they can become centres of excellence in the region. She is challenged by the unavailability of technology in her classroom but uses the computer room to expose the learners to a global environment.

Margaretha Susanna Janse Van Rensburg, of Fanie Malan Preparatory School in the Northern Cape loves to develop learners’ creativity and critical thinking skills by providing them with different materials so that they use their own initiative to think creatively. She chose the teaching profession to develop pride in the learners and to motivate them to be excellent in their school work and chosen careers in future.

Ms Janse van Rensburg points out that learners inspire her to give her best by teaching, guiding and supporting them to master new concepts and activities with which they are struggling.

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Beverly Van Wyk stood out and became a provincial winner because she always give 100% of herself to the Grade-R learners and her presentation is a reflection of what she does daily. “It fulfills me and I enjoy watching children grow from knowing nothing to end result of child knowing everything,” she said.

“As a teacher she has discovered that language is a barrier and a major challenge. The school is an English medium school and many learners are IsiZulu First Language learners. As an educator who is tri-lingual I am able to bridge that gap by swopping between languages when explaining anything to the learners”.

Participating in the NTA at national level means taking back the experience to other Grade-R educators and teaching them how to be excellent teachers.

Ms Beverly Van Wyk, Colenso Primary School, KwaZulu-Natal.

vanilla Nick enjoys nothing more than standing in front of the classroom using her knowledge, expertise, skills and aptitude to lead her learners from the unknown to the known. The source of her joy is to make a difference in the lives of South Africa’s future generations. “It is possible that the future president, innovator, inventor, national sportsman, humanitarian or hero could be sitting in my class at any given time”. Even though teaching was not her first career choice, Ms Naick validated a compliment she received from her lecturer during her first year at university.

“Mylecturer complimented my presentation by saying that I would be an excellent teacher and she thought that I was born to be a teacher”. She never looked back. “I made a wise decision and I am greatly indebted to my lecturer for steering me in the right career path”. Thirty-three years later, she is glad that she chose the path of education and teaching where she can also proudly say that it was indeed a calling.

Ms Naick is not a qualified English teacher, therefore teaching the subject was a major challenge. She overcame the challenge by self- study, personal empowerment and networking with various seasoned educators who assisted with appropriate teaching strategies and resources. She also gives learners expanded opportunities as a way of improving their language skills. As a result she has continuously produced excellent results in exams and winners in co-curricular activities over the years.

“I think that I stood out because of my self-confidence, eloquence and the excellent delivery of my presentation. “My participation in the NTA at national level will always be a treasure. I appreciate this national recognition which comes from my outstanding contribution to education, my high level of professionalism and the exceptional work that I have produced in my teaching career.”

Ms Naick is a Southern African English teacher who is a provincial winner in the NTA at national level.

Ms Naick, Umzintovale Primary School, KwaZulu-Natal.
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Third Place Winner

Makgotsi Solomon Matlakala
Free State

Makgotsi Solomon Matlakala who was awarded for Excellence in Primary School Teaching in Free State says he will use his participation in the NTA as motivation to learners to show them that one can succeed regardless of one’s background.

He chose the teaching profession because he believes that education is one of the tools he can use to liberate or change lives of people. He adds that he measures his success by the number of lives he has impacted and changed.

He enjoys being regarded as a role model by the learners and their improved performance fills him with pride.

Mr Matlakala is concerned with the high unemployment rate, teenage pregnancy, drug abuse and poverty that leads to a high dropout rate. He adds that the community has lost hope and he is faced with the challenge of letting learners believe that education can change the conditions. This is exacerbated by the absence of role models.

To address these challenges, he adopted a campaign called “Lidipoutsomu Ntstala” to address these social ills and motivate learners in diverse ways to show them the importance of education.

Mr Matlakala adds that his moral compass, passion, dedication, service and sacrifice are the contributing factors that have led him to participate in the NTA.

He is guided by the wise words of Prof Robert Mangalisa Sobukwe when he said: “Education means service to Africa.”

Finalist

Charmain Kruger
Laerskool Magalieskruin
Gauteng

Charmain Kruger’s teaching career dates back from an early age when she used to teach her teddy bears and dolls. Whilst busy with her studies, her focus of impacting in the young lives changed. “I knew that if I love what I do, I don’t have to work a day in my life!”

She enjoys the versatility of her job because there are so many platforms to impact on young lives. She indicated that the major challenges in teaching today is to ensure that not one child is left out whilst teaching. Again, teachers fill many social roles because of the absence of parents in most of the families.

As teachers we have to play roles towards our learners’ academic and social roles because of the absence of parents in most of the families. She is more than prepared to do her best with the time which keeps her going despite all the other challenges she faces across her teaching career.

“I know that I have much to give and many lives to impact”. She is more than prepared to do her best with the time which is still left in her career. She believes that there is no bigger reward than positive feedback from learners and parents.

Becoming a provincial winner has proven that giving your all to the learners will always reward you positively. “I do have a special talent which will make my province proud.” The support from her school, district and province made it possible. “Through hard work and persistence, it paid off”.

As a national participant, she has a responsibility to give back by mentoring, reaching out to colleagues and ensure that best practices are shared. “There is no sense in getting rewarded and keeping the knowledge to yourself.”

As a way of advocating the NTAs, she will start advising other teachers to believe in what they know, be humble, to gather evidence and take hands with the district co-ordinators and participate in the NTAs.

She concluded with the words of former president Nelson Mandela: “Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.”

Finalist

Ms Paulo from Masiphathisane Primary School
Western Cape

When Eugenia Leandra Paulo’s parent who is a teacher told her the profession included other disciplines such as drama, law, counselling and others she was intrigued.

Ms Paulo from Masiphathisane Primary School in the Western Cape enjoys the interaction with learners especially enriching their minds with new knowledge and insights, seeing them flourish and grow, being able to comfort, inspire and empower them whilst bridging the gap between them and the rest of the world. To her, the reward is the awe that resounds from and within them when they are able to do something they never thought possible.

The size of the classes is the major challenge confronting them. With such large classes, it is impossible to provide individual feedback to learners. To address this, she believes her strength lies in providing more quality than quantity in her lessons.

To enrich her teaching, she participates in online teaching platforms, and tries to incorporate teaching methods and learner support materials that will appeal to the level of the learners. She also invests time in establishing good relations with parents, colleagues and learners and avails herself at all times for projects/functions that will aid the holistic development of the school.
Ms Dlulwayo believes discipline is one of the key pillars to achieving success. She also involves the school management team, disciplinary committee and parents to foster collaboration and co-operation amongst all stakeholders involved.

She stood out and became a provincial winner because she incorporates real-life experiences with the curriculum. She ensures that her learners benefit educationally while playing at the same time. “Having come this far means that I am a valuable teacher in the education sector and I will continue to develop learners holistically and contribute to community building and shaping of the next generation.”

She plans to be more involved in community outreach programs that will benefit learners and the community as a whole.

Mrs. Chantel Botha of Laerskool Andalusia Primary School in the Northern Cape became a teacher to make a difference with visible results. She believes she can influence a child’s life in a positive way, every day.

She enjoys teaching Grade 4s because of their honesty and humour. They keep her on her toes. She adds that it is inspiring to look back and see the difference that she has made. The resources are a major challenge as she works in a rural environment, but she uses creativity to make the lessons interesting and fun.

Ms Botha is also actively involved in the community. Her plans include registering for a B.Ed Honours and serving as a subject advisor.

Ms Zinganto says her primary and high school teachers inspired her to fall in love with the profession. She enjoys making a difference in learners’ lives through moulding them, giving hope and inspiring them to reach for the stars.

The major challenges that confront her include dealing with large numbers and belligerent learner behaviour. In spite of this, she works strategically to meet all due dates prior, and does not ignore little warning signs. She also consults and refers for interventions.

Ms Mofokeng is greatly honoured by being a national NTA participant and promises to serve as a good example to the community of Boipatong. She hopes to serve as an example proving that Funza Lushaka candidates are the greatest assets that the department has ever produced. She will also motivate other teachers to study further as it broadens one’s knowledge generally and professionally.

“I was motivated by my former Accounting educator and my passion of always going to the chalkboard to write answers and patiently helping my friends with the subject. I just knew that I would make a great teacher,” she says. That made Ms Mofokeng to consider choosing teaching as a career.

Most of her black learners come from townships that do not have many successful or educated people whom they can have access to, so her role was then to assure the learners that it is possible to secure a brighter future. Having mandated herself to change the mindset of a young black child with quality education, she offers assistance to learners while applying for university admission and bursaries (NSFAS) for funding has also been one of her priorities.

She believes that her zeal and passion for working the stakeholders and her level of continuous professional development has contributed to winning and become a provincial representative. In addition she is currently studying towards her PhD in Education Management.

Her advice to other teachers is that they are the primary sources of information and their teaching must go beyond the curriculum and teach life principles as a way of building the learners’ characters.
Leo Jonathan Raynor was impressed by the excellent teachers he had when growing up and decided to follow their example. His goal was to mould the minds of the youth, and let them realise that they were important and that they could make a difference. He added that their voices need to be heard and not squashed. Being a teacher allows him to encourage learners to have the confidence to use their voice in a productive and constructive way.

He says teaching has become a profession that is not just one of sharing of information but rather one of mentorship and guidance along with the necessary imparting of important life skills and information. He enjoys conversations in the classroom which are around topics of current interest, historical significance and just the general concerns of young people. This means that each and every day is filled with thought-provoking questions and intense conversation. Being involved in extra-mural activities and tours allows him a unique opportunity to get to know learners in a more authentic environment to get to know learners in a more authentic environment and build bridges that extend beyond the classroom.

He feels that one of his strengths is his keeping up-to-date with technological advancements that can be used to share information with learners. He also strives to maintain positive relationships with every learner that he teaches.

Mr Raynor states that he has thoroughly enjoyed the NTA journey and learnt a lot through the process. He adds that he will cherish the experience for many years. He plans to continue to deliver excellence in the field of teaching and to mould the minds of the future.

Hebert Muzi Gumbi
Mlokathwa High School
KwaZulu-Natal

As a teacher in a rural school teacher Herbert Muzi Gumbi deals with learners with different social problems such as travelling for more than 20 kilometres to reach school. Some learners come from families headed by unemployed parents who do not afford to buy any learning materials. But with his strong personality he rises above those conditions by improvising during his lessons. He is able to address learners with learning barriers and make use of extra classes to produce quality results. Mr Gumbi, is a determined teacher who chose teaching because he likes working with children. He believes that developing learners to think critically and become independent is the key. His love for teaching developed during his secondary schooling where he used to assist his classmates with extra classes.

“I enjoy teaching them, unpacking new concepts to them and seeing them doing well in my subjects.”

Mr Gumbi says one of the challenges in his school is the lack of resources and facilities.

He put emphasis on succeeding against all odds because as a teacher designated in the deep rural school, he has been able to produce quality results for the Grade 12 and achieved a 100% pass rate in Accounting for six consecutive years. During the year 2018 he was recognised as the best accounting teacher in KwaZulu-Natal province for achieving an average of 75% results for three consecutive years.

Being an NTA national participant will always be very close to his heart and this is like history to him. “It means a lot and I will never be the same teacher again. My plan is to go back and share my experience with my fellow teachers to develop them.”

Leo Jonathan Raynor
Collegiate Girls High School
Eastern Cape

Leo Jonathan Raynor was impressed by the excellent teachers he had when growing up and decided to follow their example. His goal was to mould the minds of the youth, and let them realise that they were important and that they could make a difference. He added that their voices need to be heard and not squashed. Being a teacher allows him to encourage learners to have the confidence to use their voice in a productive and constructive way.

Ms Mpapane, a grade twelve teacher, truly believes that teaching is her calling because she is determined to inspire the next generation. She has a real passion for accounting, the desire to pass this on to others and to help young learners as this will open up her doors to explore the world. She enjoys nurturing and encouraging learners to appreciate and develop their natural abilities and special interest.

Ms Mpapane continues to shine despite all the challenges that she faces which includes performance pressure, too much paperwork and balancing diverse learning needs. As a result she came up with strategies which are compatible to all types of learners without limitations.

As a way of supporting her learners she shows them love, care and try to communicate and involve their parents by seeking their intervention as a way of overcoming all their challenges. Hardwork, dedication, good relationship between all the stakeholders involved and commitment helps her to continue shining.

She is an excellent teacher as she is accessible, enthusiastic, loving and caring. Availability to her learners, colleagues and teachers even after working hours made her to be a strong candidate.

Participating in the national NTA made her feel honoured and special and going forward she plans to continue inspiring other people and to motivate: “As a result of partaking in the NTA I plan to inspire and motivate other teachers to participate in the awards in order to share their good practices to the world and be recognised.” Again, she plans to furthering her studies in order to become more developed, better and an outstanding teacher. Her participation in the awards means that she has earned respect and admiration by serving as a role model to her learners, colleagues and community.

Gcinangaye Portia Mpapane
Sikhawhlanie Secondary School
Mpumalanga

Luke Le Roux
Emil Weder Senior Secondary
Western Cape

He decided from an early age to excel academically to escape the trappings of an underprivileged background and Ian Luke Le Roux chose teaching as a career to assist those who came from similar circumstances. Mr Le Roux from Emil Weder Senior Secondary, Western Cape says he chose teaching to inspire, motivate and to create critical thinkers who, despite their circumstances or geographical location, believe in their abilities and strive to learn. For him there is nothing more rewarding than seeing previously struggling learners prosper.

The area he comes from is faced with various socio-economic issues such as substance abuse, high rate of teenage pregnancy, insufficient nutrition, learners who suffer from a poor self-esteem that result in poor results. These societal challenges have a ripple effect on the learners’ academic achievements as well as their personal development.

To mitigate these challenges, Mr Le Roux approaches the learners in a holistic manner by first trying to break down the barriers creating the low self-esteem, and then gradually exposing them to short term success. He sees a better South Africa through the perseverance and small role he is playing.

Through the values that were instilled by his parents and his optimistic outlook on life, he has managed to set high standards expects the same from the learners.
Like sport, physical fitness training and guiding them to be pro-moderling opportunities for them to practice in social situations. To Mr Ramathe, participation in the NTA is an honour and privilege. His plans include sharing his experiences more with his learners and believes in parental involvement in behavioural change. His passion includes turning around the behaviour of learners and believes in parental involvement in behavioural change. Mr Ramathe, participation in the NTA is an honour and privilege. His plans include sharing his experiences more with his learners and believes in parental involvement in behavioural change.

The main challenges that confront her include balancing diverse learning needs, learner social problems, and overcrowding. She addresses by giving guidance, providing and modelling opportunities for them to practice in social situations like sport, physical fitness training and guiding them to be pro-moderling opportunities for them to practice in social situations.

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Zacharia Thulani Nkosi
Mlondzo Primary
Mpusulanga

Thulani Nkosi is more than just a teacher—he is a social activist who tries to use his position to change the lives of his learners and community. He grew up very poor and had to move around selling tomatoes to make ends meet. “The pain of being destitute is unbearable so I knew that one day I want to be a teacher to bring change and make a difference to destitute children’s lives.” He enjoys giving to those who need assistance and reaching out to destitute families where his learners come from. Sharing his expertise with his staff is also one of his priorities. He is a perfectionist, so this encourages him to manage his school excellently.

Like other communities in South Africa, he faces challenges which include a huge number of learners living in poverty because this contributes negatively to children with learning difficulties. In trying to combat poverty he is in and out of businesses in a bid to get sponsors to assist his learners as well as their families. Where some of the teachers are underqualified he encourages and motivates them to enrol and further their studies. “I am an effective manager leading as an effective example in the school.” He became a provincial winner because of his teaching.

He believes that his strength as a teacher depends on building relationships amongst educators through professionalism. He finds his joy from empowering and supporting fellow educators with new information and keeping good human relationships. He acts instantly to address any impediment observed.

To Mr. Mayekiso, reaching the final stages of the NTA is an honour. He plans to influence his fellow colleagues and teachers to enter the NTA, and he will mentor them. He believes that his strength as a teacher depends on building emotional space for learners, patience, total commitment, passion and excellence in what he does. He also plans to serve as a mentor to other teachers and get wings to spread further his teaching.

Mr. Noël Venter from Andalusia Primary School in the Northern Cape chose teaching as a career to help learners who are subjected to social issues such as drug abuse, alcoholism and violence at home. He wanted to create a safe haven for them at school and during his 31 years of teaching has assisted many learners to overcome their challenges.

He enjoys the time he spends in class teaching and the interaction with them during coaching sessions. He is also passionate about staff development. His school, which is in a rural town, is challenged by poverty, crime, drug and alcohol abuse and severe sexual behaviour. He has managed to get the community and other stakeholders involved.

Mr. Venter’s vast experience has led him to represent the district and province in several forums and has presented papers at provincial and international conferences. His plans for the future entail developing his school as a centre of excellence.

Thabile Thelma Chabela from Nelson Mandela Primary School in the Free State tells us that during her time, teaching was the best profession so she chose the best. As a teacher, she enjoys giving learners the skill towards sharpening their wisdom and knowledge.

Ms. Chabela claims that crime and burglary at the school are the major challenges. She has managed to enlist the support of the QUJC members that include all school neighbours. She also gets a lot of support from the teachers and the SGB who have replaced the stolen items.

Ms. Chabela’s passion for teaching enabled her to win the provincial leg of the NTA. She plans to enter and win in global competitions.

Ntokozo Sishimbuze Mthimkhulu
Gomukuhle Primary School
KwaZulu Natal

Even though he never anticipated that the role of leadership will come so early in his life, Mr. Mthimkhulu chose teaching because he enjoys making a difference in the learners’ lives through empowering them with positive information and also exposing them to opportunities of success. He strongly believes that through education all things can be changed.

He finds his joy from empowering and supporting fellow educators with new information and keeping good human relationships amongst educators through professionalism.

“As part of dealing with learner discipline, I rely mostly on policies of the department that is, learners’ code of conduct”. He has also taken a duty to go an extra mile and ensure that he treats his colleagues with humanity and respect as a way of living as an example. He managed to restore cooperation of teachers who in return do the same to him and their fellow colleagues.

Mr. Mthimkhulu is so thankful about participating in the NTA and he believes that it was through respect that he got the opportunity to share his best practices provincially and nationally.

“I also felt that as one of the educators in deep rural areas, it is time that we showcase our hard work in educating the nation through participating in the NTA’s”. According to Mr. Mthimkhulu, it is an indication that dedication and hard work result in success. “It doesn’t matter where you come from or where you are; so long as you are trustworthy to your profession, it matters the most.”

His future plans include becoming part of the NTA’s ambassadors.

“I also feel that more educators should participate so that they could see the joy of teaching beyond the classroom.”
Noni Julia Hlahle
Mariting primary School
Gauteng

Julia Hlahle found her calling as a teacher from an early age because she took leadership roles during her Sunday school days. She also formed a Youth Club, an initiative that prompted her to believe that she had qualities of being a teacher and a leader. “I started seeing myself as a teacher from a young age and since then the love of teaching developed in me.” From there she just wanted to see herself being a qualified teacher. Her passion and love for teaching and interacting with learners, teachers and community members contributed in making her a provincial winner.

She will always pride herself for participating in the national level and this means that she is making a difference as an educator, leader and follower of the South African schooling system. “I have actualised my dream and become the best, excellent leader in primary school.” Her main challenge is facing learners with learning disabilities, parents who do not get involved in the children’s education, inadequate infrastructure, lack of libraries, not fully equipped computer laboratories, lack of sports-fields and under-resourced school halls.

Despite the existence of all the challenges, she is prepared to confront those challenges by assisting learners with disabilities and by also creating good relationships with the parents. She also provides extra classes for those learners and ensures that School Based Support Team (SBST), gives all the support needed to both the educators and the learners.

She also confronts those challenges by inviting parents to the school. She gives them schedules of meetings where on dire circumstances she visits the learner’s families with the assistance of the School Governing Body (SGB).

In addressing the computer laboratory she has partnered with the community, ill-disciplined children, and the myriad of paperwork and administration. Notwithstanding the above-mentioned challenges, she has, together with teachers, SGB and community - developed a curriculum of lessons and capturing their attention is a good tool for teaching she influences the future and teaches learners to be responsible global citizens that can right some of the wrongs that have occurred in the past.

She has expanded her interest to mentoring of young teachers to be excellent, to make a difference through what and how they teach and engage with the school community.

Presently, she faces a myriad of challenges, such as negative and apathetic teachers, the social ills that enter the school through the community, ill-disciplined children, and the myriad of paperwork and administration. Notwithstanding the above-mentioned challenges, she has, together with teachers, SGB and community - developed a school of excellence that talks to the needs of the National Development Plan, the needs as identified by the World Economic Forum for the Fourth Industrial Revolution and the DBE’s Math and Science Strategy.

As a manager she encourages the teachers to innovate, take the learners beyond the school walls by taking part in Olympiads, various competitions and workshops. SKYPE with classrooms across the globe, collaborate across classrooms in our district and across continents. Ms Horn has achieved the number one position in the Secondary School Leadership in the national NTA because of her determination and perseverance.

Some of her future plans include working closely with the universities around the school with their student teachers to ensure that there are highly qualified educators that they can hand the baton over to and also contribute and share her skills and knowledge to a broader education sphere in the future.

Wendy Horn
Protea Heights Academy
Western Cape

A product of the Funza Lushaka bursary scheme of the Department of Basic Education - Ms Horn’s passion is in the awakening of learners’ minds to think critically, to solve problems and to see the wonder of the world around them through the disciplines of Maths and Science. She believes that through teaching she influences the future and teaches learners to be responsible global citizens that can right some of the wrongs that have occurred in the past.

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Livhalani Bridget Sinyosi works in a school with learners who come from child headed families and appreciates working in an environment where she can bring hope and meet their needs.

The Dzata Secondary School teacher in Limpopo was inspired by her mother, who taught her in primary school to take up the profession. She approaches those challenges with hands on approach by not being afraid to find solutions to individual problems. “My faith in the Almighty and support from colleagues, family, parents and the wider community allows me to continue to shine in spite of these challenges.”

Ms Sinyosi has taken a lead to alleviate the challenges of these learners. Ms Sinyosi is highly involved in professional associations such as Nahelele East Circuit, EMASA, and is a former Branch Education Convener in one of the Unions, mentor in different schools, and presents an educational programme at Nzhelele FM every-Wednesday.

Ms Mahomed says participating in this category has been a “difference, I derive great pleasure from changing an ordinary school into extraordinary ones.”

Ms Mahomed strives to keep the learners motivated in realizing the importance of education despite the social ills that they face. She approaches those challenges with hands on approach by not being afraid to find solutions to individual problems. “My faith in the Almighty and support from colleagues, family, parents and the wider community allows me to continue to shine in spite of these challenges.”

She says that her leadership skills both inside and outside the classroom, her determination and commitment to give off her best at all times has contributed positively in enabling her to become a provincial winner. Ms Mahomed says participating in this category has been a life changing experience and she has also become a proud finalist.

Ms Mahomed was the only career she thought about when she was growing up. Ms Mei gets fulfillment from working with children in and outside the classroom to assist them reach their potential.

She is also inspired by working with a team of teaching and non-teaching staff who care about the welfare of learners at school.

The school is dominated by learners who come from child-headed house-holds and there is also inadequate learner furniture. The school manages to secure funding from the local mines.

Ms Mei states that she brought transformation to the school which is now fully functional; parents are playing their role at home and presents an educational programme at Nzhelele FM every-Wednesday.

Despite his strong attachment to all the learners, he does not underestimate the parents’ positive co-operation on their children’s education. “I continue to shine because I keep on engaging with them slowly but making sure that they understand what is being imparted to their children.”

Mr Mathenjwa stood out as a provincial winner because he was able to portray his commitment to his leadership works. As part of his strength he excels with working as a team with his colleagues and also living an exemplary life. He has the capability to put more effort to his work and beyond the call of duty. Participating in the national level is an honour to him even though he has also realised that there is still a lot to be done in the school, community and nationally. It is a positive challenge, which is also motivating him and an encouragement to do more.

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Lebogang Beatrice Mei

Lebogang Beatrice Mei from Maedi Secondary School in the Northern Cape chose the teaching career because teaching was the only career she thought about when she was growing up.

Ms Mei gets fulfillment from working with children in and outside the classroom to assist them reach their potential.

She is also inspired by working with a team of teaching and non-teaching staff who care about the welfare of learners at school.

The school is dominated by learners who come from child-headed house-holds and there is also inadequate learner furniture. The school manages to secure funding from the local mines.

Ms Mei states that she brought transformation to the school which is now fully functional; parents are playing their role at school because of her contribution to bringing change to the community.

She plans to continue using her skills and experience to empower learners, colleagues and other stakeholders.

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Mr Qamata chose teaching because it is a heavenly mandate and a noble profession. To him, education is the only tool that can take people out of poverty. This understanding, coupled with his involvement in the struggle for liberation as an activist, guided him to choose the teaching profession. He enjoys imparting subject knowledge to learners, providing leadership and inspiration to teachers, non-teaching staff, learners and the entire school population. He adds that what drives him is turning around an ordinary rural school into a centre of excellence and also creating a safe and conducive environment that enables learners to unleash their best potential. Furthermore, he gives guidance, mentoring and coaching to leaders of surrounding schools in the district and beyond. He works with various stakeholders including business people, former students and parents in improving the school infrastructure. This he does by rallying around all stakeholders around the school vision and thereby building a lasting legacy for the institution.

The general decrease in the culture of learning is the biggest challenge confronting all schools, including Qamata’s school. The only solution is continuously providing motivation and support to learners using various educational programmes such as career guidance sessions, motivational talks etc. The second challenge is a de-motivated workforce that requires a leader who continues to rally staff and the surrounding community, around the school vision. Thirdly, is the limited parental involvement in the education of their children. The other burning issue is the inadequate financial resources and to address this he galvanises financial support beyond departmental allocations.

Mr Qamata’s strength lies in his networking skills which is reflected by the private sector support the institution enjoys and improvement of results for a successive three year period with an increase of 14% in 2016, an increase of 4% in 2017 and an increase of 7.8% in 2018. Participating in the NTA has been a learning curve that provided him with an opportunity to reflect. It has also served as an inspiration to teachers, learners and the community. Going forward, he intends to extend his role and impact on education to benefit a bigger number of learners.

Mr Kaneli proclaims that teaching gives him an opportunity to be a critical and creative thinker. He adds that technology in teaching gives him an opportunity to explore new exciting ways to communicate, to be innovative and collaborate with other stakeholders. Teaching also assists him to design differentiated lessons for diverse students, create meaningful assessments and inclusive learning opportunities for all learners. It also gives him an opportunity to be a lifelong learner and to adjust to the constant changes in technology and culture. He believes that he meets learners at a critical point in their lives and that gives him a prospect to build their lives and future. One of the challenges he confronts in his work is having more children needing support with fewer resources; especially learners with specific educational needs who are integrated in with other learners in classrooms. He also reports that some teachers find the transition to the 21st century learning skills a challenge, as some teachers are not computer literate.

Mr Kaneli, a principal at Bainsvlei combined school, with 987 learners the majority of them coming from challenging socio-economic conditions, has managed to make a success of the school. Going forward, he plans to play an active role in education to ensure that South Africa becomes a winning and leading nation in education.

Louise Fullard always had an inner desire and calling to be a teacher. Since she started her teaching career 25 years ago, she had been driven to think out of the box. She is determined to draw her mark, to make an impact and to leave a good legacy.

“I am a futurist and a visionary. I have confidence in my ability when I approach a challenge, to see the resolution, identify the steps to address it and anticipate the successful outcome and result”. She says the current challenges faced in education, is that many people do not fully comprehend the impact and effect that Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) has on our society, education and future. “Everything is changing and we are not going back. Therefore we need to adopt technology in teaching to prepare our learners for life.” The main complaints in her quest facing this challenge, is the availability/knowledge of hardware, software and data. She utilises technology herself and knows where she is going. She has the gift to positively change the perceptions of others and when she hits a stumbling block and finds a way around by partnering stakeholders.

During the NTA coaching session, the district director described her as a national agent of change, an inspiration to teachers, non-teaching staff, learners and the community. Going forward, he intends to extend his role and impact on education to benefit a bigger number of learners.

As a national winner of this category, I am definitely encouraged to pursue my (4IR) dream for education in our country. I will use this platform to reach out to more schools in my district, to assist and equip them in areas of technological need.”
Mr. Molepo’s plan is to help learners and teachers to use technology effectively.

**Finalist**

Pearl Nonhlanhla Langa
Dalpark Secondary School
Gauteng.

Pearl Nonhlanhla Langa’s English lessons are integrated with digital content, videos, music, online quizzes, which help her learners to keep abreast with real-life scenarios. Since her formative years, Ms. Langa always had a passion to impart knowledge to young minds. Dealing with the adolescent learners who also come from communities that lack support and adult mentorship makes her enjoy being a teacher. She enjoys sharing knowledge with them and seeing them succeed academically regardless of their socio-economic status.

As an English teacher, she enjoys literature, especially poetry, plays and novels.

She admits that in her school there is high substance abuse related issues. Learners adopt certain cultures and practices in their communities and bring these to the school community.

The school has set specific measures to curb the use of drugs within the school premises.

While teaching, she always ensures that learners participate in classroom activities and further encourage them to participate in the extra-curricular activities at school.

Having high confidence levels and visible passion enabled her to become the provincial winner. As a way of confronting the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR), Ms. Langa ensures that all the learners attain the necessary skills.

She believes that teaching does not end in the classroom and that there are endless possibilities within the educational sector nationally and internationally. Having taught abroad, she confirms that learners are the same, teachers just have to prepare and acquaint themselves with what goes on in the world. She indicated that there are things that teachers can do in order to remain prepared, that will include taking a short course about classroom management, partaking in community service, reading books, watching the news, entering into competitions and teaching workers after normal school hours.

After participating in the NTA, she has a view that the process is developmental and enables the teachers to change the perception about the standard of Basic Education. “I would like to close the gap in our existing digital divide and help learners to actively become part of the 4IR. "I would encourage teachers to acquaint themselves with our fast changing times and to gradually enhance their teaching using technologies.”

Ms Pretorius’ desire to make a difference in the lives of learners, made her realise that teaching is not only a profession but also a mission. She believes that children are like a clay which is moulded and shaped by the hands of teachers. "Through teaching I would be able to fulfil my soul’s craving to contribute in shaping the world of tomorrow”. She quoted the words of Vicky Davis: “When we connect our learners with the world, we are building bridges today that tomorrow we will walk across.” According to her being with children is like being endowed with perpetual youth. The love, laughter, mischief, creativity and imagination of children are like an eternal fountain of joy and vitality.

She believes that the large amount of assessments, analysis and emphasis on data collection is a burden to teachers which could lead to less time of teaching.

She has developed Visual Basic for Applications (VBA) program that runs on Excel to help teachers.

She passes her knowledge to her fellow educators to ease their workload and that keeps her going despite all the challenges. With her classroom not equipped with white boards, she decided to buy her own projector and laptop to bring the classroom to life.

Ms Pretorius developed an assessment task program for the learners to complete in class. “Technology enables my learners to engage with the content and make the assessment task interesting and assessment easier.” With her fearless attitude of learning new teaching strategies and incorporating new technologies into her lessons and the willingness to share with colleagues made her a worthy Provincial winner.

“I believe that everyone has the potential to change the world. Participating in the NTA does not only recognise my work but also the learners of my school.” Children have the potential to change the world. For the future she would work towards developing ICT infrastructure in her school since that’s where her passion lies.

Ndlovu became a teacher because he had a passion for helping others to explore and reach their academic potential both in knowledge and skills that will enable them to survive in the ever-changing environment. He coupled the passion with the sharing of the skills to enable self-discovery and problem solving in the learners’ day to day lives. He also had zeal to give back to the community through knowledge empowerment.

Ndlovu enjoys seeing learners come up with their own solutions in problems, owning the learning material and getting the most out of it. He encourages learners to give feedback at any given time not only in the classroom but as and when they interact with the curriculum material. He gets excited when he sees them using or applying given knowledge in dealing with other situations. He believes that the use of ICT devices, 21st century skills in line with the devices that they are currently using in their day to day interactions will enable learners to work in new jobs that have never been known before.

The major challenges he is confronted with are the dangers of social engineering and all the associated online platforms challenges. He believes in inculcating social responsibility on all actions on the online platform or normal platform. To him, ethos and accountability are always an ongoing process in every lesson. He believes that what makes him stand out is his style of teaching where he teaches with learners in mind.

He also brings technology into the learners’ space and keeping a positive, open yet progressive learning environment. Above all willingness to learn, re-moulding, engaging and learning from past mistakes helps her teaching and learning environment to be enticing to the learners.

His goal is to demonstrate ICT integration to less privileged and challenged areas for better utilisation of the available technology in schools. This will help produce other role models and rounded learners who understand the e-world around.
Ms Mthombeni’s has always wanted to make a difference in her community by encouraging the children to prioritise studying as a way of combating poverty. It is her main aim to eradicate the belief that first Place Winner

Riefqah Sasman
Heideveld Secondary School
Western Cape

Riefqah Sasman’s passion for integrating technology in her teaching and learning has enabled her to reach out also to fellow teachers she has trained to do the same and have changed their practice as a result. The Heideveld Secondary School, Western Cape teacher chose teaching to make a difference in children’s lives and change negative culture from the inside. The school faces socio-economic circumstances of learners and large classes. She has managed to use her values and technology to create an inclusive learning environment. Ms Sasman is motivated by the academic, social, physical or emotional progress she sees happening in learners knowing that she was part of that paradigm shift.

Her philosophy has always been hard work does not go unnoticed and that perseverance is the key to success and not just a cliche. Her future plans include studying Computer Integrated Education (CIE) as her future depends on her mastery of CIE integration in teaching and learning.

Ms Mazibuko could not have chosen any career except teaching which she strongly believes that to her it’s a calling to lead, motivate, mould and to love all the learners without prejudices. “I am dedicated to my profession in a way that I even dedicate more time to the learners searching for their unique talent and practicing with them”. She regards ICT as a tool that connects with the rest of the world. She finds joy in preparing for the learners work, marking their assignments and discussing with them. She regards ICT as a tool that helps her communicate with other teachers as well as the rest of the world.

There are times where she senses negativity from the learners and this affects her progress as a teacher. Another challenge she uses her values and technology to create an inclusive learning environment. Ms Sasman is motivated by the academic, social, physical or emotional progress she sees happening in learners knowing that she was part of that paradigm shift.

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Second Place Winner

Shadrack Nkosana Kheswa
The Sentinel Primary School
Free State

Shadrack Nkosana Kheswa from the Sentinel Primary School in Free State chose teaching because the profession is a beacon of hope and enables him to bring about positive changes in the lives of learners. He adds that teaching is a tool that enables him to touch and inspire young people to better themselves and to upgrade the country. He also chose teaching because he intends to shape the destination, talents and mould prosperity in learners.

He enjoys performing scientific research and experimenting with learners; working with learners with different personalities, talents and helping them to unleash their potential within and outside the classrooms. This is coupled with motivating learners about life, academics, sport and other areas that make learners life worthwhile.

The scarcity of scientific apparatus is the major challenge. This is coupled with lack of parental involvement as partners in their children’s education; and overcrowded classrooms.

Mr Kheswa has represented the Free State province in an International Science Fair as a judge. He produces excellent Natural Sciences results and equips the learners with scientific research skills. He is presently studying towards a master’s degree specializing in Natural sciences curriculum at the University of Free State (UFS).

He plans to be a Natural Sciences subject specialist and help South Africa to solve the problem of scarcity of scientists, doctors and other important science skills that are needed in order to grow the economy and country. He also plans to dedicate his life to scientific research to help close the skills and knowledge gap in the country.

Third Place Winner

Ms Ismail, a natural science teacher uses technology and interactive education to stimulate learners as part of enhancing her lessons. The service of education, the enhancement of the mind of a child, the fulfillment of her parents’ dream was a call that she answered.

After completing a Degree in Information Science, she was left with a void and a yearning for a purpose where after doing her post-graduate in education, and becoming a teacher fulfilled her. That was also influenced by the camaraderie of her fellow educators and the achievements of her learners.

She makes a difference by showing compassion, understanding, and treating her class not only as a collective but by valuing each individual. “Every child is unique and I acknowledge them according to what they are and not where they come from.”

“I embrace change. I am not a procrastinator but an educator with true core values of imparting knowledge”.

The NTA program is a means of motivating and appreciating all educators for their hard work. She plans to utilise the lessons learnt in the program in her professional development and will mentor other educators. As her next step, she will focus on furthering her career. As a natural science educator she would like to embed the foundation of science and everything that work into the lives of learners so that they may be of service to our country. “Education is the key in overcoming challenges and obstacles.”

Participating in the national NTA is a means of motivation for all educators, that the hard work we put in for the benefit of the future of this country is appreciated. It is the next step in my professional development.”

Finalist

Lufhereng Secondary School
Moreki Ancell Mosuane

Moreki Ancell Mosuane, a Natural Science teacher did not intend to become a teacher but had a change of heart in 2011 when he received funding from the department of basic education. “It was during my first year of training when I discovered that I had a hidden passion for teaching.” That took him back to the days where he used to take a role of a teacher when the educator was not in class.

He enjoys teaching the subject because it sparks curiosity and the content always changes due to new discoveries and inventions. “I cannot wait to see some of the learners graduating and pursuing their careers even as Natural Science specialists.”

Being in a rural area and working in an extremely poor community where the majority of learners are faced with harsh socio-economic circumstances is one of the barriers at its own. Therefore as a teacher he plays multiple roles while teaching in class. “I am not only a teacher but a part time counsellor, guardian and a parent.” With the high number of learners at his school, he is always prepared to adapt and treat all the learners according to their needs.

“It is therefore important to be an empathetic listener so that learners can communicate freely and it makes them to learn with ease.”

He believes that all teachers are sufficiently trained and are experts in their respective subjects. However teachers are subjected and assigned from the different working conditions and circumstances.

“I had problems and challenges but with the suitable strategies and solutions to solve them and create a positive, conducive learning and teaching environment.”

Complementing his participation in the NTAs, Mr Mosuane believes that it is always good to see your hard work being recognised and acknowledged. This will encourage him to work even harder and inspire others to join the teaching sector. He plans to be an ambassador of the NTA and encourage other teachers to participate in the program. “I have seen the impact it does on teachers’ ethics and the standards of our profession.”
Ms van Eck wants to continue to provide quality education in science and give back as much to the surrounding communities as possible in the sciences. She is looking to partner more actively with one or two schools to create an environment where learners across schools can share ideas and participate in competitions.
First place winner

Jacobus Johannes Du Plessis van Rensburg
Ligbron Academy of Technology
Mpumalanga

He initially thought of becoming a preacher or an attorney. But, inspired by his high school headmaster who had a career in education, he became a career in education. For Mr Jacobus Johannes Du Plessis van Rensburg, teaching became a career choice for him. He has been blessed with excellent people, skills and a love for teaching. He is grateful and he enjoys interacting with the students.

Foundation that assists individuals on educational matters locally and internationally.

Also presents papers in education conferences locally, nationally and internationally.

Study Club which assists teachers to draw benefits.

He plans to continue working with NGO’s in the education sector. He also intends to establish or participate in an Education Foundation that assists individuals on educational matters such as career choice, bursaries etc.

Second Place Winner

Melesi Johannes Monnaphiri
Naivalsig High School
Free State

Melesi Johannes Monnaphiri from Naivalsig High School in the Free State believes that his background gave him few career choices and teaching was an obvious choice. Through teaching, he could rise above his circumstances, be a respected member of the community, but also be impactful in the lives of the children and youth around him.

Mr Monnaphiri enjoys being a team-player in an environment with different people who are passionately committed to bettering the lives of children. As team members, their understanding is that children are a message they send into the future, into a time where they may not even exist. But how they represent themselves will also be representing symbols; dedication and sacrifices, and how they impacted their lives.

Cites family backgrounds and diverse personalities of staff members, learners and their parents often pose as challenges. In addition, learners come from either child-headed families, single parent homes or homes in which they are left in the care of elderly relatives. Drug, alcohol and social media influences also affect the learning environment negatively. He has confronted and addressed these challenges by involving all stakeholders in an effort to help each other.

Mr Monnaphiri believes that he has reached the level of professionalism because of a combination of the past and how he envisages the future. He plans to continue to impart my knowledge and expertise while continuing to impact lives as he has been doing for many decades.

Third Place Winner

Stephen Sebopetsa
Rathaga Primary School
Limpopo

Dr NS Sebopetsa from Rathaga Primary School in Limpopo was inspired by his father who was a teacher. He was always inspired by him to ask him to read or write letters for them. He enjoys being in front of learners every day teaching and having a positive influence in their lives. He always reminds himself that what he teaches will contribute significantly to improving the lives of learners to become better and contribute to make them responsible citizens who are patriotic and proud of their country. He equally enjoys leading and managing the learners.

Dr Sebopetsa’s major challenge was to provide a learning environment that is conducive and safe.

He plans to continue doing more for the benefit of the disadvantaged, being an author and lead the M and D (Masters and Doctor’s degree) Study Club which assists teachers to draw proposals and/or dissertations which is a prerequisite requirement for Masters and Doctor’s degree at universities. He also presents papers in education conferences locally, nationally and internationally.

He also intends to establish or participate in an Education Foundation that assists individuals on educational matters such as career choice, bursaries etc.

Lifetime Achievement Award

Kesval Govender
Woolhope Secondary School
Eastern Cape

Kesval Govender from Woolhope Secondary School in the Eastern Cape was forced to be a teacher by the financial difficulties that his parents experienced. He has grown to love teaching and as a people’s person, he loves working with and encouraging the development of young people’s potential in academics, arts and culture, sport etc. He derives pleasure when he receives past learners who return to school to share their successes past school life.

The major challenge is the popularity of the school that usually results in overcrowding. To solve this challenge he uses special rooms and has asked the local education district office to supply the school with prefabricated classrooms to place these learners.

He feels that his commitment to transformation has contributed to his success as a principal. During his tenure as principal, he put in place programs, measures and policies that have transformed Woolhope Secondary School, from a former Indian only school to a truly South African school that embraces diversity in all aspects.

He regards his participation in the NTA as a highlight of his career. It is an affirmation of his contributions to education in the Nelson Mandela District and Eastern Cape at large. He plans to continue working with NGOs in the education sector.
Lorna Sanders remembers that all she ever wanted to be was a Mathematics teacher and she thought that was her ultimate goal. She was inspired by one of her Mathematics educators as he gave her the opportunity to assist her fellow students when he was busy with administration work. Working with staff members and getting them to be excited about their teaching and their own learning is a great challenge for her. However, she is able to get the staff to be a professional body. She encourages her staff to get involved in up-skilling themselves using the latest trends in technology and in education. She takes up challenges to try new methods in the classroom, attend conferences and networks. In the same time she receives a lot of support from a very good team of staff who allow her to introduce new ideas.

She also ensures that her learners are involved in many activities and she will always go out of her way to ensure that the learners receive the recognition that they deserve. She also works closely with members of the community. School Governing Bodies (SGB) and the Education Department.

She believes that no one will ever take away the empowerment that she has acquired by participating in the NTA from the district level to the national level. She will continue to continue the work that she is doing as it is a passion. Ms Sanders wants everyone to be curious about the world and be excited about learning one small thing each day. She would like to spend time up-skilling fellow educators in the use of technology in their classrooms as she is passionate about the way technology can assist educators without replacing educators.

She is determined to make learners aware of their surroundings and to become valuable members of society. ‘I want the country to benefit from the learners that I am able to assist.’

It was not a coincidence to meet her first teacher who also predicted that she is destined to be a teacher. Ms Collins, her first teacher showed her love, care and support. The image of being a teacher became clearer as she was getting older and her passion increased more when she realised that the needs of learners with disabilities were neglected.

She gets fulfillment in teaching because learners with special needs make teachers to feel rewarded by acquiring new knowledge, skills, becoming independent and behavioural change. ‘I enjoy networking with other Special schools and other departments as it assists her with simplifying her work of identifying a variety of impairments and barriers to learning’. Teaching does not go without the challenges; for Ms Nene the shortage of school infrastructure and human resource seems to be a big challenge in her school. She is working in a boarding school where the dining hall serves work as multipurpose because it becomes a hall and dining hall alternatively. Again there are no state paid hostel staff and the school is assisted by volunteers from the community. There are no specialists in the school, that is, social workers, nurses, speech therapists and physiotherapists. They are only assisted by local sister departments to render those services at least once a month.

Besides all those challenges severely intellectually disabled learners are also equipped with gardening skills, self-care and socialisation. Others also receive Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) skills which includes bricklaying, garment making and catering.

Ms Nene’s working experience has influenced her to be chosen as the provincial winner and she believes that she can influence students to become teachers, principals and monitors in future. She will always cherish participating in the national NTAs and this always be a motivation for her. Going forward she will organise capacity building activities for parents, teachers, learners and community. She would also like to publish a book about her experience in working with learners with disabilities since her focus is not necessarily in disability but rather to expose and nurture hidden talent.

Edna Loxton, from Hillcrest Secondary School, Western Cape, joined the teaching profession because she wanted to rise above the rural circumstances she grew up in and show the community that one can live one’s dream. She also wanted to invest in the learners’ lives. Ms Loxton enjoys working with teachers, learners and the rest of the school community. She takes pride in seeing learners and teachers grow as a result of her leadership.

The school is regarded as a Quintile 4 although it is in an economically-depressed area which is characterised by low parent involvement, poor financial contributions by parents, learning barriers and the long distances that learners have to travel to school.

Ms Loxton, who is a role-model in her community, has managed to overcome the above-mentioned challenges by ensuring that School Governing Bodies were trained to assist the schools and engaging in professional development of teachers. Her personality traits which are value-driven, ambitious, great leadership and communication skills have also assisted her in the work she does.

Mrs Annemarie Wilson of Laerskool Andalusia School in the Northern Cape chose the teaching career because teaching is her passion. She enjoys seeing the learners faces light up when they understand the work. She wants to make a difference because she believes the greatest gifts you can give someone are time, love and attention.

To her, the major challenges are all the administration work and all the marking, especially if you have four classes for EFAL. She confronts these challenges by taking it day by day and working long hours after school, at home and over weekends. She always stays positive and does her best. She tries to be a role model for other teachers by setting a good example.

Ms Wilson maintains a high level of performance in the classroom, on the sport field and in the community. Participation in the NTA is a recognition that she has given all to the teaching profession.
FEBRUARY 2020

Finalist
Geoffrey Masiamienang Sebe
Gataote Primary School
North West

Geoffrey Sebe has the chalk dust on the sleeve of his soul. He has been a mathematics teacher since 1981. He served for the better part of his teaching career in a deep rural area, where strategic planning was in dire need.

He has taught at the worst of schools, where learners failed 100% the previous year but yet changed the learner attainment to beyond 90%. The villages at which he taught were severely disadvantaged. There were no school buildings, with learners accommodated in church buildings.

A modernised community is now in place through his efforts. He has also touched the lives of the top ranking Alumnae in North West and Northern Cape Provinces, including the former general secretary of COSATU, Mr Zwelinzima Yavi. “Team work spirit prevails in my school amongst all stake holders.”

Mr Sebe has been a principal for 34 years. He is a Methodist accredited local preacher, a political figure and a happily married husband for the past 35 years.

He is computer literate. He leads his learners to fit into industry, business, sport and moralities of South Africa.

He expands the horizon of his charges, instils ownership of the school by the community, and promotes partnership of the school and the business industry. He is a founder member of SADTU in Pampierstad branch alongside heavyweights like Dr S. Mvula who is a deputy director in North West Education Department.

Bench marking on previous NTA winners helped him to attain the provincial title for 2019. Participating in the national NATAs has been a good privilege for him where he also enjoyed the support, coaching and mentoring offered by the North West team. He envisages becoming an author of books, emerging commercial farmer and established motivational speaker shortly.

First Place Winner
Ian William Galbraith
Lilyfontein School
Eastern Province

Dr Ian William Galbraith, a retired teacher of Lilyfontein School in the Eastern Province went into teaching hoping to make learning a valued experience for youngsters.

He loves seeing or hearing people grow and develop intellectually, physically, in relationships, emotionally towards becoming self-fulfilled people. He is inspired by creative people with initiative and enjoys providing discussion sessions with learners or teachers.

To Dr Galbraith, handling people is always a challenge but transforming thinking is a fascinating task that is strongly related to his passion: brain-based learning and Neuroscience.

Being the winner of the Kader Asmal award means recognition for having walked the talk in overcoming many constraints, from financial to social to give learners the opportunity to have enjoyed schooling and achieved at the same time. Funded by a Norwegian company, he, presently, develops a group of retired educators, principals, circuit managers, university lecturers into a service support group for schools. He also provides mentoring support in School Leadership and Management, English FAL, Maths, science and the Foundation phase.

Winning an award like this will serve to increase his credibility in the project schools and endorse programmes as they look for funding into the future.

Second Place Winner
Phuti Ragophala
Pula-Madibogo Primary School
Limpopo

Nursing’s loss was a massive gain for scores of learners who went through Ms Ragophala’s hands through the years. She wanted to be a nurse but waited four years for a nursing call to come. During the time of waiting, she started teaching at a private school and found that she enjoyed teaching.

She eventually trained as a teacher and never became a nurse as she had originally intended. She later became a school principal, retired and continues teaching through online and social media platforms.

Teaching is to MS Ragophala a medium she uses to change the lives of learners, for example, orphans who have become leading community members through her teaching.

She cites lack of physical and human resources and shortage of land and space as some of the challenges she dealt with whilst she was a principal. To counteract these challenges, Ms Ragophala formed partnership with University of Limpopo which provided both physical and human resources to solve these challenges that limit learners chances to learn.

Ms Ragophala’s participation in the Kader Asmal Award is a culmination of a long journey which was characterised by selfless leadership, integrating Batho Principles, UN SDGs, 21st century skills and TPCK in her teaching and leadership, being a global citizen and a teacher without borders.

“However, I believe that the legacy I leave for the future outweighs any challenge in the present.”

Through her efforts many changes have been witnessed in the lives of thousands of children in Rustenburg, not only through building of a high school but in the consistent delivery of quality education.

“She has left a legacy in terms of her strategic vision and financial management but more importantly she has been a prominent role player in nation building and promoting transformation in the province. Mrs Holding works hard, have a positive attitude, excellent work ethic, embraces life-long learning and shares her experience with others.

Participating and becoming a third place winner is a privilege as a Kader Asmal Ambassador. Her participation is also aimed at motivating others to pursue their dreams of achieving this prestigious award and continue Professor Asmal’s legacy. “I envisage myself mentoring other candidates and using my success as a springboard to show my entire school community what can be achieved with vision and hard work”. She proudly believes that her achievement will inspire the new generation to reimagine their own ideas of what success looks like.

Third Place Winner
Arlene Holding
Fields College
North West

Remaining relevant and keeping abreast of technology development has been one of the strengths of Mrs Arlene Holding. “I believed, and still do, that I could make a profound change in the lives of the children entrusted to my care.” Mrs Holding acknowledges the fact that it is no accident that she dedicated her life to education as it has brought her joy and responsibility in equal measure.

No day is ever the same and each moment in her life is full of human interaction and connection. She loves working with children. As a teacher she has attended weddings, funerals and cherish the connections she made with generations of families. “I deliver education but I build relationships”.

Dealing with the breakdowns of families and how it impacts on children and their ability to learn to their full potential has been a challenge.
The passion for imparting her knowledge on learners has remained with Mrs van Heerden ever since she started teaching at Sunlands Primary School in 1976 and was responsible for the Physical Education from Grade 4 – 7 and in her own class. From the onset, she derived great fulfillment from the teaching and learning experience.

As the leader of professional communities of school leaders (SAPA and ICP), it has been the wealth of the interaction with other school leaders, sharing of best practices and the personal, professional growth that occurs in these communities that have been highlights for her.

Mrs van Heerden states that it has been a great honour and privilege to be recognised, especially because of what the award represents and because it is part of Prof Kader Asmal’s legacy and is humbled by association with his legacy.

She adds that the award is a tribute to and recognition not only for her, but also the school community and her professional communities.

Next year, the International Confederation of Principals (ICP) will celebrate its 30th Anniversary and a great programme of professional learning will take shape, including an International Aspiring School Leaders Convention in Cape Town. A layman’s international comparative study on equity will also be done via members of the ICP and under her leadership ICP will continue to advocate for the position of the principal, principalship to teachers, learners and members of the school community.

To me, participating in the national NTA is a confirmation of recognition and an excellent legacy in education.

Mrs van Heerden states that it has been a great honour and an excellent legacy in education.

She says by participating in the national NTAs will give her a platform to able to assist other districts and it will also build recognition and an excellent legacy in education.
Mr Khomo decided to become a teacher because he grew up in the deep rural Sipofu area where he walked 12 km every day to reach school. This created the necessary resilience to withstand and persevere the harsh realities of attending school and looking after cattle. After matric, he only had one wish which was to be a teacher and go back to the rural environment and help children break the entrapment that he experienced as a young boy. He maintains that after 29 years of being a teacher and 15 years as a school principal, nothing satisfies him more than continuously setting up and implementing strategies of turning a rural school into an academic giant.

“When our school started performing at 90% we believed that academic excellence knows no geographical limitations.” For eight consecutive years, they have maintained 90% of quality results despite the very large number of learners in the school. “It is heartwarming when some of the learners achieve eight distinctions, especially in the sciences stream.” This exposure moved to greater heights in 2019 as two of their learners received full scholarships from the New York University in the US.

“Being in a rural school, the major challenge is that we are slowly becoming the victims of our own successes as the school is no longer able to cope with the public demand for space.” When he started as principal the school had 600 learners and that number has grown to 1800.

He addresses these challenges through continuous engagement with all the educators. It is his task to continuously remind and package the stakeholders’ addresses with the strategic vision of the school. This has created an environment wherein every staff member puts a shoulder behind the wheel of excellence. It is this positive vibe and mutual partnership among stakeholders that has ensured the continued performance at 90% of quality passes for 8 years.

“I will always esteem participating in the NTAs and all the support I received from all stakeholders. This is an affirmation that leadership and academic excellence in a school is a matter of vision than resources.”

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**Excellence in Teaching Mathematics (GET)**

**Finalist**

Sibusiso Samuel Khomo
Sibusisiwe Comprehensive Technical High School
KwaZulu-Natal

**First Place Winner**

Constance Kgamosa Pilane
Mafenyana Primary School
North West

Being with children is like being endowed with perpetual youth, the love, laughter, mischief, creativity and imagination of children, are like eternal fountain of joy and vitality. She discovered the love of children and love of learning draws her to teaching. She chose this profession because of the passion that in it lies her special destiny. Ms Pilane has served this noble profession for 24 years. She is a dedicated, resourceful and goal driven professional educator with a solid commitment to the social and academic growth and development of every child. She instils knowledge, skills and values to her learners by using different learning and teaching styles, like games, creative thinking, group work, problem solving, manipulatives, critical thinking, conceptual understanding, strategic competency, reasoning and technology.

She enjoys making a difference in the lives of as many learners as she can, by shaping the destiny of a nation in her classroom and building personality of her learners in order to equip them to face challenges of a competitive world in throes of transition and change.

“My major challenge in my school is balancing the different learning needs of learners, behaviour problems and disenaged parents. Knowing my learners, unlocks a number of benefits including the ability to create an environment which is conducive to learning.

She promotes the culture of teaching and learning amongst both learners and educators by involving them in co - ordination of Mathematics activities. “My vision is to see excellence in Mathematics and for the South African children to pursue a career in Mathematics.”

Winning the national NTA is an honour to me. “I am a candle that consumes itself to light a way to learners, teachers and the community.”

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**Second Place Winner**

Nombuso Precious Thabela
Likhewa Primary School
Mpumalanga

Ms Thabela’s unconditional love for Mathematics was inspired by the way her Grade 12 teacher taught her Mathematics, and this made impact in her life. “Her passion for Maths and seeing me succeeding in life inspired me a lot. She planted a seed of Mathematics in me that is why I specialised with Mathematics in my future plans. As a life-long learner that is involved in various learning professional communities and networks she always looks for interesting teaching strategies and approach that will help her learners to understand in the 4th grade level.

Her teaching strategies include the use of ICT to enhance learning of mathematics. Her dedication has impacted in improving the teaching profession in the entire country as she contributes by assisting educators not only in her province but in different provinces.

“Winning at national level for me is a cherry on top, not that I don’t believe in myself, but NTA is a journey for development.”

Her future plans are to make more impact to the learners and ensuring that learners do Mathematics and take Maths career path through integrating ICT in his teaching as the country is to do lessons compatible to the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR).

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**Third Place Winner**

Gertrude Joalane Phirimana
Zamukuhlea Junior Secondary School
Eastern Cape

Ms Phirimana has always loved being a teacher to an extent that she used to imitate her teachers by sharing good learning experiences with other learners in the playgrounds. She enjoys seeing learners display independent thinking skills especially when they think out of the box when investigating mathematical rules and formulae through her guidance.

Her major challenge has been overcrowded classes and this makes it difficult to give all the learners individual attention. She tries to keep all learners engaged at all times by giving them different tasks and problems to solve as individuals and as groups. She also does extra classes to add more teaching time for Mathematics.

Ms Ndlovu is a results-driven individual in everything she does. She strives for best learner performance and uses all available resources for networking provincially, nationally and internationally with other Maths teachers through available programmes. She intends to further her studies for the betterment and widening of her Maths knowledge.
Faldilla Gassiep, from Fairview Primary School, Western Cape chose teaching as her career of choice because she is a people’s person and loves being of service to family and friends. She loves study groups and enjoys working with children. She was also inspired by her mother who was a teacher and that made her to choose teaching as a career of choice.

What makes her feel her work is worthwhile is when learners understand and are able to communicate their understanding. She also enjoys building meaningful relationships with learners, colleagues, parents and the community.

The major challenge that confronts her is the amount of administration teachers have to do and having to meet the deadlines despite needing to have valuable teaching moments. This has not dampened her enthusiasm and she has managed to ensure that the deadlines are met.

She attributes her success to her dedication and commitment to education, learners, the school and the community.

Her participation in the NTA is a culmination of all she has done ever since she decided to be a teacher. It illustrates that her choice is worthwhile in that it has made a difference in the lives of people and she intends to continue to excel, especially in teaching Mathematics.

Gomolemo Beauty Setae from Mamoratwa Middle School in the Northern Cape likes to share knowledge and skills with learners and making change in peoples’ lives through teaching and equipping them with necessary skills and techniques to solve problems.

Ms Setae enjoys being in front of learners, sharing ideas, showing them different approaches and methods of solving mathematical problems. In the process, she ensures that the content knowledge is learnt well through the use of available different learning and teaching media. This makes her very proud to see learners doing well in what she has taught them because it shows her strengths and potential.

Lack of resources (network, ICT teaching aids) and overcrowded classrooms are the major challenges that face her but she has learnt to improvise and network with other.

Ms Setae is involved in educational programmes organised by the district, province as well as national to learn new skills and approaches of teaching mathematics. She plans to open a Maths centre in the township to assist learners with Mathematics.

Rachel Dhlomo, says that there is a demand for great teachers in this country and believes that teachers are nation builders and going forward she will continue building the nation and inspiring a lot of people including her fellow colleagues, learners and the community.

She enjoys interacting with students at all stages of development and from all walks of life. Helping learners along this path and playing a part in shaping them is her passion. She prefers helping learners who are struggling with low self-esteem, poverty and the encourage them to realise their full potential.

As a way of assisting learners who struggle with mathematics, she organises extra classes mostly after school and start with the basics until they understand.

“I do more than teaching, and my impact extends far beyond the classroom.” In 2018 she applied for a scholarship for one of her learners to Oprah Winfrey School for girls. That learner became the top learner in Grade 8 mathematics.

Ms Dlomo is fulfilled by the fact that she has participated in the national NTAs and will also afford her the platform to contribute more to the education system and to change the way learners perceive mathematics. She will use the NTA to motivate more teachers to excel in their line of expertise. “I plan to study and ensure that I become a member of the DBE team.”
Finalist

Sithembile Nhlapo
DNC Combined Primary
KwaZulu-Natal.

She discovered that she has to take a path in education while she was still young and she enjoys nourishing, grooming and uplifting young minds. She strongly believe that teaching is love and selflessness because educators have to give their all to see those lives grow up and become what they intend to be. Teachers awakens the learners’ unique intellectual curiosity.

“Teaching is rewriting what families and the society have written off. She also chose teaching because she wanted to work collaboratively with learners, parents, communities and the whole country to bring up a child into becoming world citizens.

I enjoy putting a smile in my learners face and see them happy and feeling appreciated.” She also gives them a wholesome of mental food and endeavour to cultivate their taste. “Participating in the national NTA has proven that I am a national asset and I will strive to become an international asset by winning the Global Teacher Prize award.”

First Place Winner

Catarina Engelbrecht
Plat Rand Special School
Mpunwala

Ms Catarina Engelbrecht believes she was born to be a teacher. “My dolls and teddy bears were my first learners.” After matric she was confused as to what career to pursue because she had many choices and interests. With her family relocating to another country, she ended being a teacher late in her life. This also came after being a casual teacher in activities such as ballet, piano and art lessons. “To me teaching is a passion and I love every minute of it.”

Working at a special school, is the most enjoyable and rewarding aspect because learners who were labelled as un-able to learn or labelled with learning disabilities, comes into her class and after that they become more confident and be able to demonstrate knowledge. She is able to do this because she believes that each learner is special and has a talent that needs to be developed. One of the challenges that she faces is lack of resources. In response she involves the community and request them to donate items. She has initiated a recycling project at school and she collaborates with companies to assist in various ways. Another challenge is the curriculum which has to be compatible to the learners with special needs.

“Therefore, I differentiate the curriculum to suit individual needs and I adapt my lessons plans, methodology and assessments so that each learner has equal opportunity to success.”

She became a provincial winner because of her extensive knowledge of her subjects, extensive knowledge of learning barriers and creative ways of dealing with them. She also has the ability to get along with her learners and colleagues, and firmly believes in fairness and equality. “Winning this category at national level will give me a voice and a platform to drive my ideas to improve and adapt the curriculum.”

She believes that it will also give her the opportunity to develop and publish her teaching guide for special needs teachers. Winning will probably push her to become even more of an all-rounder and she hopes to grow more confidence and apply for higher posts. Participating in the national NTA category has proven that I am a national asset and I will strive to become an international asset by winning the Global Teacher Prize award.”

Second Place Winner

Khomotso Athalia Madike
Tlamelang Special School
North West

Ms Madike put her dream of becoming an Information Technology Business Analyst (ITBA) Specialist on hold when her daughter failed créche due learning disabilities. She wanted to learn different teaching methods as a way of helping her daughter and other learners with disabilities. “All parents expect their children to do better than them.” In that same year she registered for Masters in Computer Science but she was affected and devastated by her daughter’s performance and could not complete. She enjoys seeing parents/guardians of learners with disabilities being emotionally healed and start giving their children maximum support which leads to learners gaining more confidence and produce better results because inclusive education starts at home.

“The school admits learners whose primary disability is physical and we are offering mainstream curriculum. If a learner has multiple disabilities including cognitive impairment but the primary disability is physical then the learner is admitted to our school; such learners struggle with the commercial stream. We have applied for curriculum extension but it is not yet approved.”

“I creatively engage learners with the curriculum to enhance their learning experience by addressing their diverse needs.”

She became a provincial winner of this category due to her love for children and desire to use different teaching methods which makes her go an extra mile by accommodating learners with different learning barriers. “I belong to the dedicated, smart-working and winning team of Educators.”

Therefore, I differentiate the curriculum to suit individual needs and I adapt my lessons plans, methodology and assessments so that each learner has equal opportunity to success.”

She became a provincial winner because of her extensive knowledge of her subjects, extensive knowledge of learning barriers and creative ways of dealing with them. She also has the ability to get along with her learners and colleagues, and firmly believes in fairness and equality. “Winning this category at national level will give me a voice and a platform to drive my ideas to improve and adapt the curriculum.”

She believes that it will also give her the opportunity to develop and publish her teaching guide for special needs teachers. Winning will probably push her to become even more of an all-rounder and she hopes to grow more confidence and apply for higher posts. Participating in the national NTA category has proven that I am a national asset and I will strive to become an international asset by winning the Global Teacher Prize award.”

“My plan is to do research in Inclusive Education, obtain Masters and PhD in Education and serve children with disabilities in a better way. I intend to run a campaign about emotional healing of parents of children with disabilities.”

Third Place Winner

Parveen Manjoo
Inkanyiso Special School
KwaZulu-Natal

Ms Manjoo’s interest and passion have always lied in Psychology. Having a BA degree in Psychology and Sociology as her majors, she decided to make it work for her and pursued a Post Graduate Certificate in Education.

“I believe teaching chose me.” Her dreams were realised when she obtained a post at Inkanyiso Special Needs School, thus enabling her studies to efficiently serve her passions and interests.

Practical engagement of learners with combined and diverse disabilities allows for intervention and continued support with available resources. Experiencing appreciation from her learners is most rewarding benefits.

Having been appointed as the new Departmental Head of the Foundation Phase, has been a little overwhelming. However persevering and seeking support from the relevant people and the professional bodies has been very informative and my experience is growing significantly.

“I am also eager to attend workshops, read and research to enhance my knowledge for effective delivery to any barriers that may arise.”

Ms Manjoo put emphasis on the fact that her passion on special needs learners brings out a deeper level of care and concern in her and that has worked as a best strategy for her excellence. The need to assist the learners to be independent and learn is even greater. Being an artistic individual who loves art and has creative skills, she uses learning through playing, integrated with academics to develop learners holistically. Sharing her knowledge with fellow schools in the form of-hosting Outreach Programmes and being a District Facilitator for curriculum workshops has enabled her to both become the provincial winner.

Participating in the national NTA category is a confirmation that hard work pays off and if one believes in herself and step out of her comfort zone. Her plans for the future is to continue to strive and try for new dreams, now goals and expand her knowledge in the field of education. “My love for the sky further verifies–Ann high and reach for the stars”.

Excellence in Special Needs Teaching
Hazel Human, from Olympia School of Skills, Western Cape, was inspired by her Grade 4 teacher who did not only teach academics but also showed empathy and taught them values. She is motivated by seeing struggling learners mastering a particular skill and she cries and laughs with learners and that makes her human.

Most of the learners in her class come from poverty-stricken backgrounds. She consciously adopts her teaching methods to accommodate learners living in poverty. She also models a positive attitude and is always optimistic. Ms Human said her dedication to learners with special needs makes her stand out. This makes her work twice as hard to better their lives at school. She intends to open a non-governmental organisation (NGO) to equip learners with special needs with life skills.

Hester W.C. Scholtz from Elizabeth Conradie School in the Northern Cape followed on the footsteps of her mother who was passionate about teaching. Her passion rubbed onto her and that makes her to openly face any barrier or disability that comes her way.

To Ms Scholtz, participation in the NTA “is a tremendous honour, recognition of all the hard work, commitment and the passion I have for teaching.” She plans to make a bigger difference, to break the stigma regarding LSEN schools and their learners, register for a Master’s degree in Education, focusing on classroom management in LSEN schools.

To Ms Nthebe, participation in the NTA is an exposure and affirmation of the respect, work, time and dedication that she has devoted to her work. In future, she promises to continue her meaningful contribution to her community.

Ms Human said her dedication to learners with special needs makes her stand out. This makes her work twice as hard to better their lives at school. She intends to open a non-governmental organisation (NGO) to equip learners with special needs with life skills.

Ms Edwards stood out and became a provincial winner as a way of being creative in her teaching, she comes up with new ideas to inspire the learners, her colleagues and mentors.

To Ms Human, participation in the NTA “is a tremendous honour, recognition of all the hard work, commitment and the passion I have for teaching.” She plans to make a bigger difference, to break the stigma regarding LSEN schools and their learners, register for a Master’s degree in Education, focusing on classroom management in LSEN schools.

Ms Nthebe is a passionate, creative and dedicated teacher who likes to collaborate with other institutions that are already accredited with the SETA such as Theta so that the learners can receive the accredited certificate that will enable them to find a job or open their own businesses.

Ms Nthebe grew up in a family of teachers, often in such cases their children become teachers and sometimes regret their choices. “Not me”, she indicated. Especially when it comes to Special Needs teaching which has taught her to be able to celebrate the little things in life and the smallest progress is huge in these children’s lives.

Ms Edwards grew up in a family of teachers, often in such cases their children become teachers and sometimes regret their choices. “Not me”, she indicated. Especially when it comes to Special Needs teaching which has taught her to be able to celebrate the little things in life and the smallest progress is huge in these children’s lives.

As a way of being creative in her teaching, she comes up with new ideas to inspire the learners, her colleagues and mentors.

Hester Scholtz from Elizabeth Conradie School in the Northern Cape followed on the footsteps of her mother who was passionate about teaching. Her passion rubbed onto her and that makes her to openly face any barrier or disability that comes her way.

Participating in the national NTAs has been an amazing journey and she has grown a lot. “It was a time for reflecting on my 12 year career as an educator.” She would love to encourage and mentor new teachers in the future and has recently become a birthing doula which she will practice in her spare time.
Teacher Development

The Teacher Development Branch has the mandate for capacity building of teachers from pre-grade R to the FET levels. This includes district and head office staff linked to curriculum delivery. It also oversees implementation of the Sci-Bono Discovery Centre.

ICT IN EDUCATION

This area aims to capacitate the training of teachers to integrate technology in the classroom by delivering their lessons with available ICTs to enhance their teaching.

We have an online Professional Development programme aimed at advancing teacher capacity in integrating these modern technologies into teaching and learning.

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

This five day training programme supports inclusion specialists in different identified areas of inclusive education. We conduct orientation workshops for teachers in Special Schools on the implementation of the Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support.

PSYCHOSOCIAL TRAINING AND SUPPORT

MGSLG has adopted a three-tier model to support schools in psychosocial issues which includes: A System of Prevention A System of Early Detection and A System of Care.

SECONDARY SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME (SSIP)

The Secondary School Improvement Programme (SSIP) for educators is intended to equip educators in Gauteng Schools who obtained less than 80% pass rate in the identified twelve gateway subjects in the National Senior Certificate (NSC) results.

EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT (ECD)

MGSLG offers ECD training programmes at different levels for laying the foundation required to ensure that children are well prepared for formal schooling. The ECD programmes ensures that children have skills and knowledge they need to cope with Grade 1 learning and the rest of their schooling demands. Practitioners participating in the capacity building programmes receive an award upon successful completion.

CIPTEL AND CISETL PROGRAMME

This programme focuses on teaching methods for English language teachers. As a national programme MGSLG has the responsibility to train primary and secondary school teachers over five days of intensive, practice-based learning. Language teaching remains one of the critical yet weakest areas in the system of education since English is used as medium of instruction by most schools.

ACCREDITED PROGRAMMES FOR TEACHERS

To ensure that teachers improve their skills and knowledge MGSLG offers accredited programmes in partnership with several Higher Education Institutions such as University of Johannesburg, University of Pretoria, UNISA and Wits University. Such programmes are offered at different levels for teachers in subjects such as Geography, Economic and Management Sciences (EMS), Music, Life Skills and Engineering and Graphic Design (EGD). All these programmes lead towards accreditation from NQF Levels 5 – 7.

ASSESSMENT

This programme was rolled out to capacitate district officials responsible for assessment in the province. Assessment remains one of the biggest challenges for teachers based on the Diagnostic Reports where school based assessments in some schools were disqualified by Umalusi thus disadvantaging Grade 12 learners in some subjects.

Therefore while a stand-alone subject-based programme was designed for all phases, assessment continues to be incorporated across all teacher development programmes as an essential skill to be learned by teachers and officials.

Tel: 011 830 2200/1
www.mgslg.co.za
Twitter @mgslg1
Facebook: Matthew Goniwe School of Leadership and Governance
We are a leader in teacher development and school leadership programmes, says Matthew Goniwe CEO

MGS LG chief executive Advocate Thulani Makhubela spoke to Inside Education Senior Writer Charles Molele about the importance of maths and science, teacher development and ICT in education.

Matthew Goniwe had a passion for Maths and Science and many students who passed through his hands went on to make it in life. What can the current crop of teachers and learners learn from Matthew Goniwe’s legacy as it relates to maths and science education, and the positive values of quality education to build a skilled workforce?

With the advent of the 4IR, Maths and Science are more critical today than they were in the times of Matthew. Our country is short of skilled people that can contribute positively to our economy. The passion that Matthew is said to have had for maths and science is more needed now in both educators and learners.

Matthew Goniwe was an African who stood for what was right and taught the Apartheid regime a lesson that mathematics and science were gateway subjects that can be taught and learned by anyone. As we celebrate his life and legacy, how can we best remember the great icon and what he stood for?

I think, he understood the value of humanity, dignity and respect. He advocated education for economic and social opportunities for the community. He was described by many as a “born teacher” and a person who loved people and ideas. He instilled discipline into the schools, gaining respect of the children, parents and teachers.

The MGSLG is at the centre of preserving Goniwe’s legacy and heritage for all South Africans. What are some of the key projects that you are currently working on at the School of Governance to celebrate his life, politics, passion for education, positive values and ethical leadership?

We are celebrating his life and legacy through constant innovation and drive to being a leader in teacher development and school leadership programmes. Some of the key programs that we are world renowned for are in ICT in education where we skill teachers on how not just to use ICT gadgets but to integrate ICT into all learning programmes.

We have taken a lead in driving Early Childhood Development programmes and to professionalise the practitioners in this field. These are done through Higher Education Institution partnerships and driving the creation of early childhood teacher curriculum. Education is also community driven and we are pioneers in many School Governing Body Training and capacity development of School leadership.

The education system in South Africa is experiencing a number of challenges at the moment, including – to name just a few, curriculum issues, violence and drugs at schools, racism, infrastructure backlogs, quality of our teachers, etc.

What needs to be done to ensure we realise some of his core ideals?

The MEC (Panyaza Lesufi) always emphasises the issue of Social Cohesion and Schools safety programmes. Together with the Gauteng Department of Education we are giving priority and prominence to Psychosocial programmes. Our programmes focus on HIV/AIDS, Mental Health, Teenage Pregnancy and Substance abuse issue. We are currently conducting a pilot project at 12 schools wherein we have placed Child and Youth care workers who provide support in these issues.

Can you reflect on the difficult road he travelled as a teacher, community and political leader, responding to, among others, the current political climate, violence against women and children and, lastly, youth development?

It is common knowledge that Matthew was harassed, detained and often transferred away from his home, family and community in an effort to destabilize the work of his movement and the strength of the community. He was fired from his teaching job for refusing a transfer. He was labelled a troublemaker and agitator that needed to be closely monitored and controlled.

He mobilised the Community of Cradock and the surrounding areas on a scale never seen before, making him dangerous and a threat to the then government. He was a disciplinarian and instilled it to the youth of his community. It was reported that he once took matters in his hands by stopping a group of youths from staring a police patrol car. Matthew was a visionary leader as seen from his handwritten notes.

MGS LG chief executive Advocate Thulani Makhubela
South Africa has made remarkable progress in the transition from apartheid to democracy; however, there is a need to accelerate progress in this regard. In nearly every facet of life, advancements are being made in building an inclusive society, rolling back the shadow of history and broadening opportunities for all.

We envisage a South Africa where everyone embraces their full potential; a country where opportunity is not by birth but by ability, education and hard work. Realising such a society will require transformation of the economy and focussed efforts to build the country’s capabilities in particular the institutions at education and innovation.

The young people in particular, deserve better educational and economic opportunities wherein the utilisation of the Information Communication Technology (ICT) as a catalyst, is envisaged to improve learning and teaching, enhancing classroom effectiveness, stimulating communication and learner engagement in order to set them on a pathway of achievement and excellence in every aspect of their lives.

Over the coming years, we are going to start seeing drastic changes in the way education reacts to the changes in technology that we see ourselves using on a daily basis. Technology that has the potential to redefine the way we do things, how we do things and why we do things.

In a world that is constantly evolving with new technology, systems, processes and tools, Education has remained reasonably stagnant. While I disagree with the views about robots taking over our classes in the coming years, I do agree that there will be significant changes.

When it comes to technology and education, there is a seismic shift taking place on both ends. The needs and expectations of today’s learner have changed dramatically—they need personalization and the skills to thrive in the workforce of the future. At the same time, the cost of education is getting higher, but learners are learning through new models that are increasingly more accessible. These changes demand the right tools and technology to ensure success for learners in their academic journey as well as for educators and principals. We see major shifts happening in the changing landscape of education.

A World Economic Forum report suggests that 65% of people entering university this year will ultimately be working in jobs that don’t currently exist. It’s hard to imagine what tomorrow’s jobs will need, but what we do know is that different skills, ways of thinking and analysing will be required.

We need to rethink how we are preparing the future workforce. Thinking of youth as lifelong learners, not just test-takers, and equipping them with future work skills. The future employee will need to be well rounded with not only trade or degree-relevant skills, but with both hard and soft skills that will allow them to shift careers as they keep up with the evolving economy.

Teaching learners how to learn, relate and unlearn will set them up with the skills to thrive in the workforce of the future. In addition to the much-quoted 21st century skills list of collaboration, critical thinking, communication and creativity, lies a platform of further skills development for teachers that we have yet to uncover. More importantly, teachers must be developed with the values Matthew Goniwe lived and died by, in the service of his people. Like Matthew Goniwe, teachers, above all else, must want and love to teach, and also share his dedication that went far beyond the classroom—anything that concerned his pupils was also his concern. He also introduced discipline into the schools; gaining the respect of the children, parents and teachers alike; at a time when education disruptions were rife.

The basic education sector in South Africa has indicated its education disruptions were rife. And teachers alike, at a time when the respect of the children, parents and selflessness.

Matthew Goniwe worked tirelessly throughout his life so that we can enjoy the non-racial, prosperous and democratic South Africa.

Embracing Goniwe’s values for a better future

Teachers will need to understand the ethics of using technology and how to balance the use of technology with humanity.

They will need to be able to establish where the line is regarding facilitating and controlling technology, may begin to blur that line and so teachers will need proper equipping in technology to handle that.

From Matthew Goniwe’s quality of depth and his dedication to the liberation struggle together with his deeply embedded humanism enabled him to mobilise our people against the apartheid regime.

The life, character and contributions of Matthew Goniwe to our struggle will remain relevant to future generations because the values he personified are universal values that underlie all great struggles for freedom.

From his life, I learnt some important traits I believe teachers would need to continue to espouse and flourish in the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

Embed change with positivity – as technology evolves and enters the education arena, educators must be positive, willing to learn and adapt, and be willing to share your successes and failures.

• Collaborate with others - As we get more connected the willingness to collaborate and learn with and from others is a critical skill in today’s world and in the future.

Be Creative and take risks – We need to model creativity and think the way creativity can be integrated into your daily routine and take risks in doing so.

• Develop children holistically – Get to know your students, their families and how they learn! With the rise in teaching and learning styles it is more important than ever to teach the whole child, taking into account the variances that exist.

Let the life of Matthew Goniwe motivate teachers and all of use the spirit with which we can tackle poverty, unemployment and inequality.

The life and legacy of Matthew Goniwe should empower us to position ourselves to serve our people with loyalty, discipline and selflessness. Matthew Goniwe worked tirelessly throughout his life so that we can enjoy the non-racial, prosperous and democratic South Africa.

• Lesufi is Gauteng Education MEC

PANYAZA LESUFI

20 Years Of Teaching Excellence
National Teaching Awards top provincial finalists

These are the pictures of all Gauteng top finalists who obtained Position 1s in the ten NTA categories, as well as the Kader Asmal Excellence Award.

1. Category: Excellence in Primary School Teaching
   Names of Provincial Finalist: Charmain Kruger
   Name of District: Tshwane North
   Cluster: 4
   School Name: Laerskool Magalieskruin

2. Category: Excellence in Secondary School Teaching
   Names of Provincial Finalist: Salome Kelly Mofokeng
   Name of District: Sedibeng West
   Cluster: 6
   School Name: Lebohang Secondary

3. Category: Excellence in Primary School Leadership
   Names of Provincial Finalist: Noni Julia Hlahle
   Name of District: Ekurhuleni North
   Cluster: 7
   School Name: Moriting Primary

   Names of Provincial Finalist: Rahemeen Mohamed
   Name of District: Ekurhuleni North
   Cluster: 7
   School Name: Willowmoore High

5. Category: Excellence in Grade R Teaching
   Names of Provincial Finalist: Khanyisa Faku
   Name of District: Ekurhuleni South
   Cluster: 7
   School Name: Rondesvelt Primary

6. Category: Excellence in Special Needs Teaching
   Names of Provincial Finalist: Toinette Edwards
   Name of District: Johannesburg West
   Cluster: 3
   School Name: The Gateway School

7. Category: Excellence in Teaching Mathematics Teaching (GET)
   Names of Provincial Finalist: Rachel Dlomo
   Name of District: Tshwane South
   Cluster: 1
   School Name: Nellmapius Primary

8. Category: Excellence in Teaching Natural Sciences (GET)
   Names of Provincial Finalist: Moreki Ancell Mosuane
   Name of District: Johannesburg West
   Cluster: 2
   School Name: Lufhereng Secondary

   Names of Provincial Finalist: Pearl Nonhlanhla Langa
   Name of District: Gauteng East
   Cluster: 7
   School Name: Dalpark Secondary

10. Category: Kader Asmal Excellence Award
    Names of Provincial Finalist: Hilda Emily Kekana
    Name of District: Tshwane South
    Institution: Gauteng Department of Education

Category: Lifetime Achievement Award
Names of Provincial Finalist: Lorna Sanders
Name of District: Ekurhuleni North
Cluster: 7
School Name: Willowmoore High
Congratulations to all the 2019 National Teachers Awards winners