



alumni news



September 2009

EDITORIAL

Welcome to the second edition of the CPUT alumni communiqué, *alumninews*. We wish to extend a warm welcome to the new cohort of alumni who graduated in September. A total of 711 diplomas and degrees, including 35 Masters and five Doctorates were awarded during the Spring graduation held on the Bellville Campus. In this edition we feature two young alumni who are making waves in the fields of sport and music. We also bring you an invitation to the launch of the Dream Lab, an incubator initiative aimed at supporting CPUT senior Business students and graduates who wish to start their own businesses. Alumni in business are urged to support this initiative. To read more about this and other stories in this edition go to www.cput.ac.za and click on Alumni.



CPUT songbird album set to rock

Caption: CPUT alumnus Raylene Samuels makes music that not only heals but inspires. www.raylenesongbird.com

It is not everyday that one meets a songbird, a multi-media specialist, a fashion designer and an actress all in one beautiful and spiritual human being. At age 26, Raylene Samuels is not just technologically savvy but has a message about life which she spreads through music. Her debut album *Let me breathe* speaks of finding one's true self, overcoming life's challenges and not forgetting to breathe. She describes the album as a journey from the young girl she was to a young woman she now is, strong and confident. But she has not always been this flourishing. "I used to be very shy and insecure. But I have overcome all that now," she says, adding that what many young people lack is belief in themselves which is central if one is to succeed in any profession. She says she found her element in writing and making music about her life experiences and hopes that spreading her music will have a positive effect on those who get to listen to it.

Raylene obtained her National Diploma in multi-media technology *cum laude* and currently works as a multi-media designer and developer at Gloo Design Agency in Cape Town. She is one of the first multi-media students to be admitted at CPUT. "It was tough those days; we did not have enough resources. I remember we used to have few computers to work on in a very crowded and hot lab," she says. But that did not prevent her from studying hard. "I understood early in my studies that my lecturers were not to spoon-feed but support me, so I worked hard," says Raylene. Although she had been singing from a young age, her professional debut came when a music video of her and band mates landed at JCQ Productions. She was introduced to Kani Naidoo of Honey Music and Media where she recorded the CD which was launched last December. Raylene describes her music as adult alternative acoustic rock, with a flavour for all tastes. Having had the opportunity to listen to the album myself, words like serene, inspirational and endearing come to mind. Asked what her next musical step is, Raylene responds that high on her agenda is to distribute her music as widely as possible via MP3 and get the message of breathing out there. "Ultimately, I want the world to hear and experience my music; it's my way of spreading goodness". Indeed with all the bad news in the world, some good tidings are more than welcome.



Academic athlete with a heart of gold

Caption: At any given moment CPUT post-graduate student Vincent Ntunja juggles at least four professional roles but he still dedicates time to his studies and coaches basketball to youngsters in his township.

He has recently been chosen brand ambassador for footwear brand, Bronx and he was named the May Cosmopolitan Sexiest Man, yet aware of all the hype around him Vincent Ntunja maintains a calm, down to earth attitude towards people and life. He makes no big deal of his achievements instead is appreciative for every one of them. "Somehow, I've always known I was destined for great things, but growing up I was not sure what those things might be," he says adding that "there is no doubt in my mind that even bigger things are still going to happen but I am grateful for what I am right now". His story unfolds like an interesting chapter in a good book. "I never plan far ahead, I choose to live for today and do my best in everything I am involved in," he says. A few years ago, Vincent's life was that of an ordinary young man growing up in Gugulethu outside Cape Town with limited resources. He was a keen student and enjoyed playing basketball and soccer but it was the former that has since become a significant part of his life.

Having played the sport for 11 years and forming part of the national junior and senior teams, he now presents a television slot on SABC 1 on basketball news. "Ever since I started thinking positively and embracing life, things began to change all around me. I could have easily dwelt on the

negative aspects but I choose to live a positive life everyday," he says. Above being a professional model, a TV presenter, a national basketball player, Vincent is a Sports Tourism Masters student. He studied Tourism management at National Diploma and B-Tech levels. He further plays for the CPUT Cats basketball team which holds the provincial champions. In 2006 a basketball court was developed in Gugulethu and named after him marking his devotion and contribution to the sport. It is at this court where, as part of his involvement with Hoops 4 Hope, an international non-profit organisation he conducts training sessions where he shares his knowledge of the sport and motivates the youth to adopt healthy and active lifestyles.

EVENTS



Business Dream Lab needs your support

CPUT Events Management students, under the leadership of lecturer Tania Petersen are hosting a cocktail function to launch a business incubator, known as the Dream Lab for CPUT business graduates seeking to start their own businesses. The function will be held on Thursday 22 October 2009 at the Granger Bay campus. The Dream Lab will provide the space for entrepreneurial aspiring students and graduates to realize their visions of owning their own

businesses, in a supportive and nurturing environment. Youth start-ups that secure space in the Dream Lab will have access to financial and business development support, mentoring and office resources where they can put their ideas into practice. The Dream Lab will be situated on the Cape Town Campus and will be implemented in 2010. At the launch function, guests can expect to get the vision and a full description of the initiative which will be implemented in three phases namely:

Phase one – Business plan competition

An extensive marketing campaign aimed at third years and B-tech students will take place by means of email, posters and flyers informing students of the competition. Following the campaign will be a business plan workshop which will take place before the competition due date to assist students who have never written a business plan before. The 10 best business plans will be selected by a panel consisting of the various stakeholders of the incubator. Depending on the interest and strength of the business plans, the number of entrepreneurs can increase.

Phase two - Incubation

Competition winners will occupy their space in the Dream Lab from 2010. Every entrepreneur will undergo a process of:

- Registration
- Patenting (where applicable)
- Branding
- Website development

A mentoring needs analysis will then be conducted in order to match the appropriate mentors to the trainee entrepreneurs. Each trainee entrepreneur will spend a month with an industry-specific mentor to learn more about the mechanics of the industry in which they will be operating.

Phase three - Operation

At this stage the trainee entrepreneur will start marketing and selling their products or services. The trainee entrepreneur will still receive counseling on issues relating to marketing, finance, and human resources. The length of the time that the entrepreneur will spend in the incubator is one year as the next group of entrepreneurs will take up the space in January the following year.

The Dream Lab initiative encourages innovation among CPUT business senior students and graduates while creating an opportunity for research and the development of collaborations with community, government and industry. The Dream Lab aims to create employers that will contribute to employment growth and economic competitiveness of South Africa.

Alumni in business are urged to take part in this initiative in a bid to contribute in addressing unemployment which is one of the global challenges facing the South African economy. Should you wish to make any financial or non-financial contributions to the Dream Lab initiative please contact: Project Coordinator Tania Petersen
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WEB PORTAL

We urge you to make use of the alumni portal on www.cput.ac.za click on Alumni. This portal affords CPUT alumni an opportunity to update contact details online as well as gain access to latest stories about other alumni and CPUT institutional developments.

Disclaimer: This newsletter is produced by the CPUT Advancement Department. For queries regarding any item on this newsletter and the web portal or to share an alumni story please e-mail alumninews@cput.ac.za or call Noloyiso Mchunu on +27 21 460 3514.