

**Nelson Mandela University Alumni Association Annual Alumni Awards
Ceremony**

Congratulatory Message

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Virtual Event, 25 November 2021 [alternative broadcast 7 December 2021]

Good evening Ladies and Gentlemen. A warm Nelson Mandela University welcome to you all.

A special welcome to our 2021 Alumni Award recipients, their families and friends. We also acknowledge:

- all former Alumni award recipients
- Council Members
- Senior management
- the President and the Executive Committee of the Alumni Association; and
- Alumni, colleagues and friends who have all joined us online.

Celebratory events such as the Alumni Awards are very important to our University because they showcase our institutional values in action across the globe.

Nelson Mandela University aspires to be a leading African university, giving meaning to the ethos and values of our iconic namesake. We take pride in seeing our University and our alumni in the service of society, making a positive impact on the world.

My message this evening will be short and focused on the importance of celebrating achievements in challenging times. In so doing, I will also call on all of you to use your expertise, networks and resources to help us change the world.

These awards take place in the context of unprecedented health, environmental, social and economic challenges. The Covid-19 pandemic has been devastating on lives and livelihoods. All of us have been affected in one way or another. As we celebrate success and achievement tonight, we also remember our staff, students, alumni, family members and friends who passed on during this period.

The pandemic has deepened inequalities in society and entrenched social injustice. This should be a renewed rallying call to action. Over and above this, the recent UN Climate Change Conference (COP26) in Scotland has underscored the importance of united action to address existential environmental challenges so as to secure a future for our children and our children's children.

As we celebrate our collective achievements we must continue to work collaboratively towards creating a better, safer and fairer world for everyone.

In times such as these, we are all called upon to provide leadership. In March this year Mandela University adopted Vision 2030, a far-sighted institutional strategy designed to guide our work over the next decade. Alumni played an important part in its development. I would invite all alumni to play an active part in helping us attain Vision 2030's goals. The Mandela University alumni footprint and networks in our continent Africa and globally can assist us to create awareness of our University internationally and to promote financial sustainability.

Our 2021 Alumni Award recipients include leaders in the advertising, automotive, banking, higher education, human resource recruitment and public sectors. We have an Olympian, an international sportsman, as well as an octogenarian who continues to be an ambassador for his alma mater and discipline. Tonight's awards span a broad age spectrum, which reflects the power of the lifelong connection from which we draw experience and wisdom.

Each one of our award recipients, spread as they are across South Africa, the rest of Africa and other continents, makes us proud. Collectively, they represent the global reach of Mandela University as well as a cross-section of different disciplines, economic sectors and industries.

Our society needs positive role models and mentors and we rely on our alumni to help a new generation of students and young alumni on their journey, including support with internships and employment. Nelson Mandela University recently established a dedicated Madibaz Entrepreneurship Hub, and Student Entrepreneurial Service Desk to support young entrepreneurs, but we need seasoned entrepreneurs and activists as coaches and mentors. Please feel free to contact the Alumni Relations Office, if you would like to be involved.

One of the positive lessons from the pandemic has been how we can connect virtually with alumni across the globe. During 2021, the Alumni Relations Office set up Mandela Alumni Connect - an online alumni networking platform. More than one thousand alumni have already registered on the platform and the majority of our registered alumni indicated areas in which they are willing to support their alma mater. I invite all Mandela University alumni to register on Mandela Alumni Connect as further features of the platform will be rolled out in 2022.

Please visit our website and access *Theta*, our magazine for alumni and friends which highlights our alumni and institutional achievements. Our various social media platforms also constantly update our stakeholders.

The Alumni Association launched an online shop in September and we hope you will support the University Shop and your University by proudly displaying your institutional connection.

Congratulations to Award recipients

This brings me to the very pleasant duty I have for this online event - to officially announce the names of the 2021 Alumni Award recipients. I will be conferring the Alumni awards according to the various award categories. After this, the individual profiles, as well as the acceptance messages of the award recipients will be shared.

The first category is the

A. Rising Star Award, and the award recipients are:

1. Mr Thembinkosi Josopu
2. Ms Delaine Mentoer
3. Dr Mark Nasila
4. Mr Anrich Nortje

Congratulations to the Rising Star Award recipients.

B. The next category is the Alumni Special Award. The Alumni Special Award recipient for 2021 is Mr Ken Ramjee.

Congratulations Mr Ramjee - Mr Ramjee also celebrated his 80th birthday this year.

C. Our final category is the Alumni Achiever Award and the recipients are:

1. Mr Michael Mike Abel
2. Dr Michael Ferreira
3. Ms Hilda Kabushenga Kragha, and
4. Prof Vivienne Lawack.

Congratulations to our Alumni Achiever Award recipients.

Conclusion

As I conclude, I wish to again congratulate all our 2021 alumni award recipients. Please stay connected and continue to make Nelson Mandela University proud.

Enjoy the rest of the online awards ceremony.

Continue to Change the World!

Thank you. *Dankie. Enkosi. Maze nethole.*

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