

THE DCF

NEWS FOR ALUMNI & FRIENDS OF WITS



R150 MILLION GIFT FROM THE KIRSH FOUNDATION

Nathan Kirsh (BCom 1953) launched the University's Centenary Campaign with a R150 million endowment from the Kirsh Foundation to provide student scholarships. "Wits played an integral role in transforming my life. I am giving back with the hope that Wits can have the same impact in transforming the lives of young people for generations to come," he said. [Read more here.](#)

New 5G lab unveiled



Huawei, data-only network operator Rain and Wits partnered to launch South Africa's first 5G lab at the **Wits Tshimologong Digital Innovation Precinct**.

Defend universities



Dr Conrad Hughes (PhD 2008) **writes** that we must protect universities at all costs through personal investment, state subsidies and private sponsorship.

FOR MORE WITS NEWS CLICK [HERE](#)

RESEARCH NEWS

Breakthrough HIV injection

Researchers at HIV Prevention Trials Network announced that an experimental injection worked better than daily pills to help protect women from HIV infection. [Read more here.](#)



WITSIES WITH EDGE



Professor Baveesh Kana (BSc 1997, BSc Hons 1998, PhD 2002) has led a team of researchers at the Centre for Biomedical Tuberculosis Research to develop a unique "control standard" to improve the accuracy of **COVID-19 testing**. The team says it uses homology to engineer a control organism that mimics the genetic material of the virus when used in test kits. This control is safe, non-pathogenic (non-disease causing) and stable.



Dr Stavros Nicolaou (BPharm 1986, DSc Med honoris causa 2019) Aspen Pharmacare Group's Senior Executive for Strategic Trade was instrumental in pioneering the manufacture of the first generic anti-retroviral treatment, which became the backbone of the South African public-ARV programme. Now the company has agreed to manufacture Johnson & Johnson's COVID-19 vaccine. Watch his recent interview with **CHS:Africa** [here](#). **Dr Nicolaou** was also appointed to the board of Cricket South Africa, which is chaired by Justice Zak Yacoob (LLD honoris causa 2019).



In case you missed **Professor Stephen Clingman** (BA 1977, BA Hons 1978) deliver the Bram Fischer Memorial Lecture titled "Bram Fischer of Our Times", it can be accessed [here](#). **Professor Clingman** is Distinguished Professor of English and former Director of the Interdisciplinary Studies Institute at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. He is also Bram Fischer's (LLD honoris causa 2015) award-winning biographer.



Professor Suresh Parbhoo Kana (MCom 1986), who chaired the World Food Programme's audit committee for years, was instrumental in it receiving the 2020 Nobel Peace Prize. [Read more.](#)



Dr Riaan Ritkin (BA Hons 2005, MA 2009, PhD 2012) is Research Fellow at the Centre for Microbial Ecology and Genomics at the University of Pretoria. He was profiled in *National Geographic* as an innovator for his research into **RNA of prehistoric diseases**.



The *Mail & Guardian's* annual 200 Young South Africans included many alumni under the age of 35. In its 15th year, the supplement showcases individuals making contributions in their respective fields. This year also featured a COVID-19 heroes category. See full list of Witsies [here](#).

We celebrate the following high-profile appointment:

Magi Motswane (BSc Eng 2001, MSc Eng 2007) was appointed as President and CEO of ArcelorMittal Canada. He has worked in the mining industry for more than 20 years. Prior to joining ArcelorMittal, he was CEO of Anglo American's Sishen mine. He began his career in 1998 with Exaro Resources and from 2010 to 2017 he was General Manager of Operations at Glencore's Xstrata's Goedevonden Complex.



SEE MORE WITSIE APPOINTMENTS AND ACHIEVERS [HERE](#)

BOOKS



- Hilary Kraut** (BDS 1970) is a retired dentist who has for 44 years been drilling, filling, extracting and implanting teeth. What significantly eased the stress was the joy of writing an e-book "You're Biting My Fingers" under the pseudonym YRU Laffing. It is a humorous, and at times engaging account of stories accumulated over the years in his private practice. [Read more here.](#)
- Rehana Rossouw** (BA Hons 2008, MA 2012) launched the story of eco-tourism businessman Fred Daniel in *Predator Politics: Mabuza, Fred Daniel and the Great Land Scam* (Jacana Media, 2020). She chats about it [here](#) to Newsroom Afrika.
- Dr Karl Mittermaier** (1938-2016) was a member of the Economics Department at Wits for over 30 years between 1967 and 2001. *The Hand Behind the Invisible Hand: Dogmatic and Pragmatic Views on Free Markets and the State of Economic Theory* (Bristol University Press, 2020) has been published posthumously. [Read more here.](#)
- Professor Anton Harber** (BA 1979) Adjunct Professor in the Journalism and Media Studies Department at Wits, launched his new book *So for the Record: Behind the Headlines in an Era of State Capture* (Jonathan Ball, 2020). [Watch](#) his conversation with investigative journalist Jacques Pauw.
- Pavlo Phitidis** (MBA 2001) is a renowned business turnaround specialist who recently launched his second book *Reset, Rebuild, Reinvent: Build Your Business to Thrive in a Crisis* (Plan MacMillan, 2020). In it he shares insights, tools and actions that he has used to turn crises into opportunities. During the COVID-19 shutdown Phitidis ran a series of Corona Business Battle Plan webinars to help SMEs face and manage challenges. See more [here](#).
- Founder of independent publishing house Modjaji Books, **Colleen Higgs** (BA 1985) released *my mother, my madness* (Deep South, 2020). It is an intimate collection of journal entries around caring for an ageing parent. Find out more for [international copies](#), or an [interview](#) on SABC.

SOCIALS/EVENTS



Respected public intellectual **Ann Bernstein** (BA 1976, BA Hons 1977) gave alumni a sobering view of the state of South Africa's economy. [Read more.](#)



The Faculty of Health Sciences held a virtual Alumni Reunion this year. It started with the AJ Orenstein Lecture delivered by **Professor Lynn Morris** (BSc 1981, BSc Hons 1983) titled "How HIV research is helping us tackle SARS-COV-2". This was followed by the Biennial Research Day and Postgraduate Expo, the Alumni Symposium and culminated in a virtual [Gala Dinner](#).



UPCOMING EVENT - 30 NOVEMBER 2020
We invite you to attend a global webinar with guest speaker **Dixit Joshi** (BSc 1992) who is Group Treasurer of Deutsche Bank AG. Topic: The Future of the Global Financial Industry. Register [here](#).

WITSIE4LIFE

We reflect on the distinguished career of alumna **Professor Rosemary Crouch** (BSc OT 1971, MSc OT 1984) who has been an exemplary role model and mentor for many occupational therapists. "If I was given the chance, I would study occupational therapy again. It's a fabulous and very flexible career," she says after almost 50 years in the profession. [Read more.](#)



WITSIE4GOOD



Featured as MultiChoice's "most-loved storyteller" **Lebohago Masango** (BA 2015, BA Hons 2016, MA 2019) has also collaborated with Professor Claudine Storbeck, Director at the Centre for Deaf Studies at Wits, on a new children's book *Mpumi and Jabu's Magical Day*. It's a story about friendship and highlights the needs of deaf children. [Read more here.](#)



CAREER JOURNEYS



Dr Peter Brews (BCom 1978, LLB 1982, HDipCoLaw 1985, PhD 1990) is dean of the University of South Carolina's Darla Moore School of Business. He shares [his journey](#) at a time when US MBA programmes are experiencing a decline in applications.



Professor Barry Dvoolatzky (BSc 1975) Professor Emeritus at the Joburg Centre for Software Engineering, launched a content hub called *The Grand Geeks*. The hub curates content and conversations with prominent guests in the digital sector.



Vice Chancellor Professor Adam Habib was profiled in *702's Upside of Failure* [series](#), discussing how he used an experience of failure to start again.



Self-confessed social media addict and budding entrepreneur **Thashen Naidoo** (BSc 2019, BSc Hons 2020) is a young geophysicist courageously sharing his experiences as a young professional. [Read more](#)



PLACES TO VISIT
The Adler Museum: Past, Present & Future

We invite Wits alumni to participate in the latest [University Professionals Survey 2021](#). Help us understand your expectations and employer interests better.

[Giving to Wits](#)

[Wits Annual Fund](#)

www.wits.ac.za/alumni/

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Issued by the Office of Alumni Relations, Alumni House, Wits Club Complex, Alumni Lane, West Campus



THE WITS CLUB & CONFERENCE VENUE

Surrounded by old oak trees, The Wits Club has an old-world charm suitable for any event.

The complex houses an upmarket restaurant offering a trendy and sophisticated menu.

OLIVES & PLATES OPERATING TIMES
Open from 08h00 to 16h00
Wednesday to Sunday, Call
(011) 717-9265, or email
info@olivesandplates.co.za
to make a reservation. Booking is essential.

Read the latest review in the Daily Maverick's TGIFood column [here](#)