



**news** Kings Beach parking lot flooded with sewage again **P4**



**news** 'Truck off!' Steps taken to protect Smartie Bridge from heavy vehicles **P5**



**sport** Awesome foursome end SA medal drought **Back page**



# The Herald

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## Port poised for boost from auto giants

REPORT INSIDE



### role playing



At the rehearsal of 'Giants in the Sky' at the Isithatha Theatre in Walmer were, from left, Jayme Ross, 13, Carlh Labuschagne, 13, and Rachel Meyer, 13. See report on Page 3 Picture: WERNER HILLS



The Herald Citizens of the Year Award winners from left to right are: Tracy Watson and Sarah Smuts of Love Story (Community); Berenice Jacobs (Gender-based-violence); Rose Cowpar (Arts and Culture); Ariana Bailey of Toynbee Ballet Academy (Standard Bank Youth – Make your Mark); Matshego Brenda Moduka of Atlega for Women Project Enterprise (Business); Garth Wright and Gary Stephenson of Ironman4thekidz (Sport); Zama Zulu of Masinyusane Development Organization (Education) and Albie Basson of Maranatha Streetworkers Trust (Civil society). Photo: Leon Hugo.

## Honouring our unsung heroes

The Sun Boardwalk Convention Centre sparkled on Friday night as Nelson Mandela Bay's finest gathered for The Herald Citizens of the Year Awards 2025, supported by Nelson Mandela University.

Hosted by the elegant and incredibly charismatic former Miss SA Jo-Ann Strauss, the evening was a celebration of eight special local heroes whose tireless work has transformed lives across the metro. Soulful singer Zolani Mahola entertained the audience with beautiful renditions of her well-loved music, as well as a preview of her upcoming single, Step Up.

Now in its 34th year, the awards have become a cornerstone of the city's calendar, shining a spotlight on people and organisations whose efforts often go unnoticed, yet leave an indelible mark on their communities. In her welcoming speech, Nelson Mandela University acting director: engagement office, Oyama Soga, highlighted the important roles that the winners hold in their communities and the differences they make. "Tonight, above all, belongs to our winners. Your tireless efforts are a beacon of hope in the Eastern Cape and beyond. You embody the values that inspire Nelson Mandela University which are resilience, humanity and deep commitment towards building

a just and sustainable society. "We salute you this evening and we thank you for reminding us what is possible when we live, not for ourselves, but in service of others," she said.

This year's winners come from all walks of life, but they share one quality: an unwavering commitment to service.

In the education category, Zama Zulu, director of Masinyusane Development Organisation, was recognised for his mission to boost literacy in impoverished communities while tackling youth unemployment. The innovative programmes train young people as teaching assistants, equipping them to help thousands of children learn to read with confidence.

The Civil Society Award went to Albie Basson of Maranatha Youth Centre, whose projects care for homeless adults, vulnerable children, and rural families in need. His vision has built spaces of dignity and opportunity where society's most marginalised can rebuild their lives.

Championing the fight against gender-based violence, Berenice Jacobs of the Rape Crisis Centre in Gqeberha was honoured for more than three decades of tireless advocacy, ensuring survivors receive compassionate care and access to justice.

In arts and culture, Rose Cowpar and her dedicated team at Impact Community Theatre Company were celebrated for opening doors to theatre, dance, and creativity for performers of all ages and abilities, including children and adults alike.

The business award went to Matshego Brenda Moduka, whose Atlega for Women Project is empowering unemployed youth through practical training in business and entrepreneurship, helping them grow their skills into sustainable livelihoods.

From humble beginnings handing out sandwiches, Sarah Smuts and Tracy Watson from Love Story were honoured in the community category for distributing more than 4.7-million meals to those in need, and for supporting early learning centres across the Bay.

In sport, Gary Stephenson and Garth Wright of Ironman4thekidz celebrated the initiative's 20th year by raising millions to support children's organisations — a true testament to the power of sport for good.

The recipient of the Standard Bank Make your Mark youth category was dance teacher Ariana Bailey of the Toynbee Ballet Academy, who was recognised for nurturing young dancers, instilling discipline, confidence, and artistic expression in the next generation. She walked away with prize money worth R20,000, compliments of Standard Bank.

The Herald editor Rochelle de Kock said small actions by many people could lead to impactful and lasting change. Addressing the audience, she said: "We are here to celebrate and say thank you to those who started off with small actions, in their little corners, because they felt moved to do it. We see you." De Kock also paid tribute to previous award winner Pamela Mabini, the founder of the Maro Foundation, who was murdered in March. "She, like many of you here this evening, was so passionate about touching lives and making a difference. "How wonderful it is to know that there are many who will continue to carry the torch of those good deeds."

This year's awards would not have been possible without the generous support of its sponsors, namely Nelson Mandela University, Standard Bank, SPAR, Continental Tyre SA, Vodacom, Capsicum Culinary Studio, Three Peaks Wine, JTC Events, Sun Boardwalk and Leon Hugo.




CONGRATULATIONS FROM PROUD PARTNERS



NELSON MANDELA UNIVERSITY IS THRILLED TO CONTINUE ITS PARTNERSHIP WITH THE HERALD CITIZEN OF THE YEAR AWARDS – AN INSPIRING CELEBRATION OF EVERYDAY PERSONS MAKING A REAL DIFFERENCE IN OUR COMMUNITIES. FOR OVER 30 YEARS, THIS INITIATIVE HAS SPOTLIGHTED PEOPLE WHOSE HARD WORK, KINDNESS, COURAGE, AND COMMITMENT REFLECT THE VALUES WE PURSUE AS AN ENGAGED UNIVERSITY IN SERVICE OF SOCIETY. THEIR STORIES REMIND US THAT WE ALL HAVE A ROLE TO PLAY IN BUILDING BETTER COMMUNITIES AND A BETTER WORLD. TO ALL THE FINALISTS – CONGRATULATIONS! YOUR WORK INSPIRES US AND ENCOURAGES US TO DO MORE, TOGETHER.

Prof André Keet, Deputy Vice-Chancellor Engagement and Transformation and Chair, Critical Studies in Higher Education Transformation.



**NELSON MANDELA**  
UNIVERSITY

THE HERALD PROUDLY EXTENDS A HEARTFELT CONGRATULATIONS TO THIS YEAR'S EXCEPTIONAL INDIVIDUALS AND NGOS RECOGNISED AS THE HERALD NELSON MANDELA UNIVERSITY CITIZENS OF THE YEAR. AS WE MARK 180 YEARS OF THE HERALD – NEARLY TWO CENTURIES OF SHARED STORIES, COMMUNITY UPLIFTMENT, AND POSITIVE CHANGE – THERE IS NO GREATER WAY TO CELEBRATE THIS MILESTONE THAN BY HONOURING THOSE WHO CONTINUE TO SHAPE AND STRENGTHEN OUR REGION. YOUR COMPASSION AND TIRELESS SERVICE TO THE PEOPLE OF NELSON MANDELA BAY REFLECT THE VERY BEST OF WHO WE ARE AS A COMMUNITY. THANK YOU FOR BEING THE TRUE CHAMPIONS OF OUR COMMUNITY. IT IS OUR PRIVILEGE TO CELEBRATE AND STAND ALONGSIDE YOU.

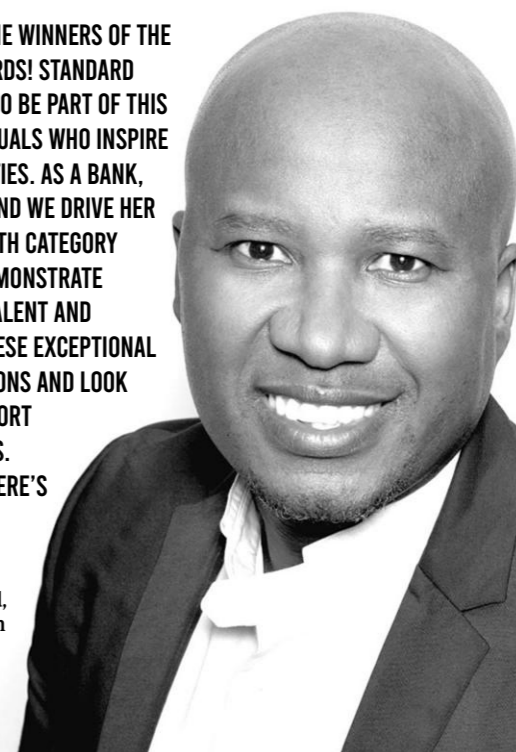
Berna Ulay-Walters, Marketing Manager, The Herald.



**The Herald**

HEARTFELT CONGRATULATIONS TO THE WINNERS OF THE HERALD CITIZENS OF THE YEAR AWARDS! STANDARD BANK EASTERN CAPE IS HONOURED TO BE PART OF THIS CELEBRATION, RECOGNISING INDIVIDUALS WHO INSPIRE POSITIVE CHANGE IN OUR COMMUNITIES. AS A BANK, WE BELIEVE "AFRICA IS OUR HOME AND WE DRIVE HER GROWTH." BY SPONSORING THE YOUTH CATEGORY THROUGH MAKE YOUR MARK, WE DEMONSTRATE OUR COMMITMENT TO NURTURING TALENT AND DRIVING GROWTH. WE COMMEND THESE EXCEPTIONAL INDIVIDUALS FOR THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS AND LOOK FORWARD TO CONTINUING OUR SUPPORT FOR COMMUNITY-DRIVEN INITIATIVES. WELL DONE TO ALL WINNERS, AND HERE'S TO MANY MORE YEARS OF INSPIRING POSITIVE CHANGE!

Unathi Magalekane, Provincial Head, Personal and Private Banking Eastern Cape.



**Standard Bank**



**ENTREPRENEURSHIP:** Mandela University Deputy Vice-Chancellor: People and Operations Luthando Jack, left, Minister of Small Business Development, Stella Tembisa Ndabeni and Centre Director Dr Thobekani Lose, at the launch of the Centre for Entrepreneurship Rapid Incubator on North Campus.

## New incubator helps to create jobs for young entrepreneurs

A new entrepreneurship incubator at Nelson Mandela University is tackling youth unemployment, having already supported 42 small businesses and created 85 jobs in its first year of operation. The Centre for Entrepreneurship Rapid Incubator, officially launched by Small Business Development Minister Stella Tembisa Ndabeni earlier this year, has disbursed over R5 million through its enterprise development fund to support student and community business ventures. Funded in partnership with the Small Enterprise Development and Finance Agency, the centre offers comprehensive 18- to 36-month incubation programmes targeting students, graduates, unemployed youth and township entrepreneurs across the University's Gqeberha and George campuses.

Centre Director Dr Thobekani Lose, highlighted the diverse range

of student-run businesses now operating on campus, including tutoring services, media companies, website development, food vendors, clothing stores and even a driving school. These ventures not only generate income for their founders but also create employment opportunities for other students. The Centre provides a full ecosystem of support services, including business bootcamps, training workshops, career counselling, funding access and shared office infrastructure. Its collaborative approach allows young entrepreneurs to benefit from hot-desking facilities and sharing space with established business support organisations.

Nelson Mandela University Deputy Vice-Chancellor for People and Operations, Luthando Jack said the University was

committed to entrepreneurship as a cornerstone of economic development. The centre was therefore aligned with national priorities to foster innovation, stimulate inclusive economic growth and address South Africa's youth unemployment crisis. He said at the launch, "Nothing is more powerful than an idea whose time has come. Entrepreneurship is a necessity, and it must be a centrepiece of our national psychology. We aim to uplift the communities within which the university is located – and we are open for business!"

The initiative represents Nelson Mandela University's broader mission to serve society by preparing students for entrepreneurial success, while uplifting surrounding communities through job creation and economic empowerment.

## Mandela University brings science to the people

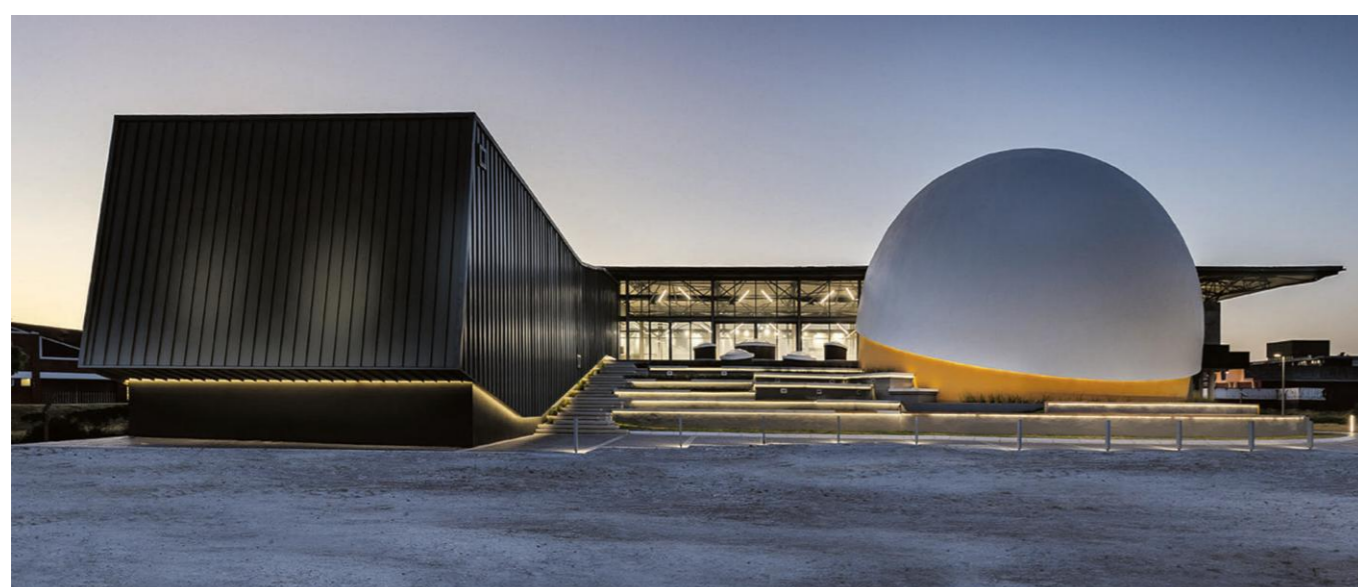
Nelson Mandela University is taking science beyond the laboratory and into society – with schools and communities all part of the journey. The opening of the R54-million Science Centre on the Ocean Sciences Campus in 2024, was a major boost to this drive. Funded by the Department of Higher Education and Training, the Centre is designed to open up science to the public, with interactive exhibitions, teaching labs, a 137-seater dome and digital classrooms. It is a space for learners, educators, researchers and the wider community. Guest lectures, workshops and professional development in Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics education have already been part of its busy programme in 2025.

Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Engagement and Transformation Professor Andre Keet calls the Centre "a dynamic promise between the University, the broader community, and society; where knowledge meets curiosity, and innovation inspires transformation".

That promise is also shaping the University curriculum. A new course, Social Consciousness and Sustainable Futures, is being piloted this year in selected faculties and will eventually be rolled out to all seven faculties. One of its themes, Science for Society, looks at the history and social context of science in Africa and how science can support sustainable choices.

The Faculty of Science also regards maths and science outreach as part of its mandate. Staff and students regularly run workshops, expos and exhibitions across the Eastern Cape and nationally, encouraging young people to see science as part of daily life. Parents are urged to play their part too, by supporting their children's interest in maths and science.

By connecting schools, students and society, Mandela University aims to grow a more scientifically literate community – and a more engaged one.



**CONNECTING SCHOOLS, STUDENTS AND SOCIETY:** Science Centre on the Ocean Sciences Campus

## Empowering teachers for the digital age

South Africa's learners are stepping into the digital age as Coding and Robotics officially enters the school curriculum from 2026 and a Gqeberha-based movement is playing an important role in empowering teachers for this.

The Department of Basic Education (DBE) has gazetted a Coding and Robotics curriculum for Grade R to 9, with Foundation Phase compulsory from 2026. This aims to equip learners with problem-solving and critical thinking skills for a technology-driven future. The Foundation Phase curriculum is "unplugged", meaning schools do not need computer labs – or even electricity – to get started.

Tangible Africa, an engagement project of Nelson Mandela University's Computing Sciences Department and the Leva Foundation, has been central to the roll-out.

Its coding games and training are used across Africa and beyond. Working with the DBE and teacher unions, Tangible Africa was part of a three-year Teacher Union Collaboration (TUC) project that upskilled thousands of teachers ahead of next year's Curriculum Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS) implementation. Tangible Africa founder and Nelson Mandela University Associate Professor Jean Greyling said: "The partnership with unions as part of the TUC project has been a watershed experience for Tangible Africa. We got to be involved in the training of more than 40 000 teachers, showing how relevant and valuable unplugged and tangible coding is for South Africa. I believe this has had a huge impact in preparing teachers for the new Coding and Robotics curricula."

Teachers who completed the training say it has already changed their classrooms. Emfundweni Primary School teacher Lwando Tshiseka, from Zwide, said: "It helps our learners to be exposed to digital skills and prepare them for a technology-driven future. I appreciate what you [Tangible Africa] have done for us." To support teachers further, Tangible Africa has launched a WhatsApp ChatBot, distributing free weekly lessons for Grades R to 7. These lessons, developed by a team of experienced teachers, are CAPS-aligned. Consequently, Foundation Phase teachers who implement them throughout 2026, will cover the full curriculum. Feedback from teachers who have used them this year, confirm that they are easy to follow and implement.

## InnoVenton marks 20 years of science for society

This year, Nelson Mandela University's InnoVenton celebrates 20 years of translating science into technology solutions for real world challenges. The University's Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Research, Innovation and Internationalisation, Prof Azwinnidini Muronga, said the scientific work it conducts is geared in service of society. "The end goal is to make a tangible socioeconomic impact that supports local, regional and national priorities."

InnoVenton, Downstream Chemical Technology Station, offers services, such as feasibility studies, testing, product prototyping and technology demonstration, to empower and support industry clients, small and medium enterprises, students and student entrepreneurs.

It works in the areas of chemical process safety and cosmetic formulation and developing technologies to address societal challenges. Ensuring a skilled workforce through formal training, short courses and providing opportunities for entrepreneurship with workshops for women from rural communities, form the foundation of its engagement interactions. In 2025, there has been a new slate of innovations and, with support from the national Technology Innovation Agency (TIA), InnoVenton is bringing these one step closer to commercialisation.

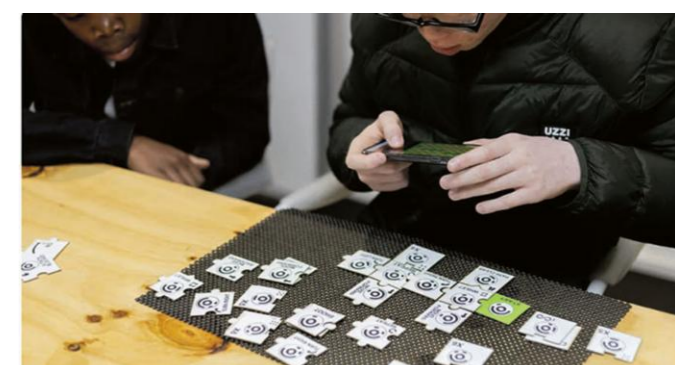
Some initiatives under way include:

- Cosmetic formulation development and improvement: clients are assisted with developing and improving formulations for various personal care products;
- Plans for a pilot scale prototype manufacturing facility for cosmetic products, to bridge the gap between at-home and larger contract manufacturing;
- Green synthesis of agrichemicals for sustainability; and
- Supporting fluorochemical, hemp and cannabis and chemical manufacturing revitalisation initiatives across the Eastern Cape.

TIA Technology Stations Programme Head Vusi Skosana said the Technology Stations Programme was established to enable universities to provide technology development services to small and medium enterprises. "InnoVenton is one of our oldest partners in this programme and we celebrate this 20-year milestone with pride as we have seen the impact of this partnership," Skosana said.



**INNOVENTON:** From left, InnoVenton Acting Director Louise Hamilton, InnoVenton Laboratory Manager Dr Melissa Gouws, Technology Innovation Agency Technology Stations Programme Head Vusi Skosana and InnoVenton Deputy Director Dr Gary Dugmore at the 20th anniversary celebrations.



**CODING AND ROBOTICS:** Tangible Africa founder and Nelson Mandela University Associate Professor Jean Greyling engaging with a learner on their Coding and Robotics project.

According to Prof Greyling, "the fact that it can be presented unplugged makes it accessible to all the schools in South Africa. Furthermore, there is a strong emphasis on 21st century skills such as computational thinking, while the type of activities underlying the curriculum strongly supports group work and communication." With Coding and Robotics now in the CAPS curriculum, and a network of trained teachers in place, Tangible Africa and Nelson Mandela University are helping to reshape education – and prepare the next generation for the jobs of the future.

The annual tournament culminates in a virtual Coding World Cup on 5 December, which is the anniversary of Mandela's passing.

# Breaking taboos

Nelson Mandela University Medical School students are taking health education directly to school learners, tackling sensitive topics, that young people may struggle to discuss openly.

Third-year students Mia Janse van Rensburg and Tyne Rouquette partnered with their lecturer at the time, Dr Ntokozo Mzimela, to deliver a comprehensive sexual health education session at Ndzondelelo High School in Zwide. "It's important to talk openly about health, especially sensitive topics such as HPV (Human Papillomavirus) and sexual health," said Janse van Rensburg and Rouquette of the outreach.

What began as an HPV awareness initiative, however, expanded into broader sexual health education at the school's request, covering sexually transmitted infections, prevention strategies and treatment options. The Medical School team addressed common misconceptions, including the myth that HPV only affects women, while emphasising that the virus can cause various cancers, including cervical cancer – the second most common cancer among South African women. The session proved particularly valuable, given South Africa's high burden of HPV-

related diseases, yet societal taboos often prevent young people from finding accurate information. Dr Mzimela enhanced accessibility by translating complex medical concepts into isiXhosa, ensuring cultural relevance for the diverse student body.

It was also a chance for the students to integrate their professional training, at the Medical School with real-world impact. Initially, they found, Grade 12 students were reserved while Grade 10 learners showed some discomfort, but the interactive approach eventually created space for meaningful dialogue. "It wasn't always easy, but creating a safe space led to real conversations and powerful connections, highlighting the vital role of community health education," said Rouquette.

The team stressed prevention through vaccination, safe practices and regular screening, while providing practical guidance on accessing testing and treatment services. "Our core aim was to empower youngsters with knowledge, enabling them to make informed decisions about their wellbeing and to chip away at the stigma often associated with sensitive topics," said Janse van Rensburg. The experience underscored the significance of community engagement in effective health promotion.



MEDICAL SCHOOL: Ndzondelelo High School learners with Medical School students, Tyne Rouquette and Mia Janse van Rensburg and their former lecturer Dr Ntokozo Mzimela

# Celebrating 50 years of nursing education

Nelson Mandela University's Department of Nursing Science is celebrating 50 years of producing compassionate, skilled healthcare professionals serving communities. It was established in 1975, under the leadership of the late Professor (Sister) Mary Mellish, who became the first nurse in South Africa to obtain a Doctor Curatoris in 1976. "Our golden anniversary offers the opportunity to reflect on the past five decades and the numerous students, staff, leaders, mentors and graduates who have made our department what it is today," said Department Head Dr Nolundi Radana.

It is the oldest department in the Faculty of Health Sciences at Nelson Mandela University. She said, "the department has not only survived varying transitions but has continued to grow and expand and its legacy has been shaped by visionary professors, dedicated staff and generations of students who have left their mark on the profession throughout. "We pay homage to all the leaders, staff members and students – past and present – who have contributed diligently to shaping and transforming the department to what it is today. Here's to 50 years of excellence in Nursing Scholarship. May the next five decades continue to inform, innovate, and inspire!" The Department marked the event with a Nursing Science hybrid symposium: Celebrating Five Decades of Nursing Education: Inform, Innovate and Inspire, held at North Campus in September. This was followed by a networking breakfast at the Boardwalk Hotel Convention Centre in Summerstrand.

Dr Radana said the 50th anniversary was more than a celebration, it also was a reminder of the impact that dedicated educators and passionate students could make. "This significant milestone reminds us that we strive for excellence in education, theory, research and clinical practice. We are excited about what the future of the field of nursing holds, not only in South Africa, but also beyond our borders."

As the Department of Nursing Science looks ahead to the next five decades and beyond, its legacy of excellence, innovation and care remains firmly in place.



GOLDEN CELEBRATION: Students from Nelson Mandela University's Department of Nursing Science joined in, celebrating 50 years of nursing scholarship.



STEAM WORKSHOPS: Nelson Mandela University's Govan Mbeki Mathematics Development Centre hosts regular Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, Mathematics (STEAM) workshops at schools as part of its ongoing Mathematics intervention programmes. Paterson High School learners are shown working on one activity, "Milk for Money", which focuses on the notion of reduce, reuse, recycle and environmental stewardship. Centre Director Dr Carine Steyn said the interactive, fun and educational workshops were geared towards motivating learners in STEAM subjects.



MUSIC: Dr Rudi Bower at work with young singers

# Building communities through music

Nelson Mandela University is opening doors for young musicians from under-resourced schools with a new training programme. Launched at the start of 2025, the Department of Music and Performing Arts initiative, in the Faculty of Humanities, gives learners and community members access to formal music training and theory – essential skills for those who dream of studying music at university. "There are so many learners in our schools who have the talent but no formal training, which they need to access university," said Department Head, Dr Rudi Bower. "We are determined to make this happen for them."

The first pre-tertiary groups were drawn from Paterson High School – which has no music teacher – in Schauderville and from the Roselane Conservatoire of Music in Kariega, which trains musicians from under-resourced communities. The project at the University's Bird Street Campus in Central has already had a ripple effect. Sibusiso Ngowebo, who runs the Gqeberha Music Academy in Joe Slovo Township near Despatch, contacted Dr Bower after seeing the news article about the training programme earlier this year. Now 30 of his young singers, aged 10 to 17, are part of the weekly classes, with 15 attending one week, and the other 15 the next. "Many of these learners want to study music one day. This programme gives them the foundation they need to reach that dream," Ngowebo said.

He founded Gqeberha Music Academy, formerly named Cecil Music and Arts Academy after his late father Cecil Ngowebo who was a gospel singer, in 2025. "It is really working well, so we are looking at hosting concerts, and building on the relationship and

the ties between us," said Dr Bower of the new sign-ups.

Using music as a bridge for inclusion, the University project is empowering under-resourced schools and learners through arts-based engagement. "We mainly selected Grade 8, 9 and 10 learners, but a nine-year-old trombonist has also been admitted," Dr Bower said. "We are also open to young people who have already completed school."

The programme builds on the University's long-running one-one pre-tertiary training, offered at reduced rates, and the plan is to expand it into a Youth Music Hub. Classes take place in the University's historic Bird Street music building, which has a concert hall, offices, practice rooms and a library. Initially, learners study music theory and voice, before progressing to instruments with support from senior students.

While the enthusiasm is high, resources remain a challenge, particularly for scholar transport. The University is covering costs for 2025, and Dr Bower is in talks with the Eastern Cape Department of Education to secure sustainable funding. "With support, we could expand the Youth Music Hub to reach many more schools, and many more learners. The response from the Department has been very positive, and we are hopeful for the future."

For now, the sound of new voices and instruments rising from the Bird Street campus is a sign of opportunity – and of communities being built through music.



ACCESS FOR ALL: Dr Nosiphiwo Delubom

# (Dis)ability: Access for all

Nelson Mandela University has a strong drive towards enabling inclusive access and success, as well as respect for diversity, social justice and equality. This means strongly promoting disability inclusion and advocacy within South Africa's higher education landscape. Under the leadership of Dr Nosiphiwo Delubom, Chairperson of the Higher Education Disability Services Association (HEDSA), the University is setting benchmarks for universal accessibility.

HEDSA, recognised by the Department of Higher Education and endorsed by Universities South Africa (USA), aims to facilitate critical dialogue and share best practices among institutions. Dr Delubom was elected in 2023 and will be chairperson until 2027. Within Nelson Mandela University, Dr Delubom heads the Universal Accessibility and Disability Services (UADS), which is committed to ensuring equal opportunities for all students with disabilities. One of her key initiatives has been to enhance

access for deaf students by advocating for professional Sign Language interpreters in academic settings. Notably, when the University welcomed its first deaf student in 2025, it provided a dedicated Sign Language interpreter to support the educational journey.

Reflecting this commitment to inclusivity, Nelson Mandela University this year received two accolades at the Eastern Cape Regional Disability Collaboration awards. The UADS was honoured with the Promoting Best Practices Award, while Dr Delubom received an honorary award for her tireless advocacy work. These awards spotlight the ongoing efforts to create an inclusive learning environment, where every student can thrive. Dr Delubom stressed that these initiatives do not grant unfair advantages but rather level the playing field for all students, ensuring that those with disabilities receive the necessary support to succeed.

The commitment to accessibility is also seen in changes to campus infrastructure across the institution's seven campuses, making student housing and facilities more accommodating for individuals with mobility challenges.

Boitumelo Wesi, a wheelchair-user, shared her transformative experience, highlighting how staff went above and beyond to ensure her comfort and support. "Thanks to their efforts, I was relocated to a residence that is much more accommodating for my disability."

Dr Delubom's passion for disability advocacy began in 1996 when she witnessed children with disabilities being deprived of education. Her experiences fuelled her drive to fight social injustice and promote equity. "Other institutions must take the initiative to make necessary changes," she urged, demonstrating that creating an inclusive environment is not only possible but essential.

# Students step up for campus staff

In a caring "job swap", students at Nelson Mandela University's George Campus recently spent the day working in the roles of the University's support staff.

Students from Kindness@Mandela, Dialogue@Mandela and the Green Campus Initiative collaborated to give support staff a break ahead of Workers' Day on 1 May. The goal was simple: to show appreciation and raise student awareness about the hard work that keeps the campus running. They rolled up their sleeves and got stuck in, to experience the often-overlooked contributions of cleaning, horticulture, security, shuttle services and kitchen staff.

Project leader Vuyani Ngobese, a third-year forestry student, founded Dialogue@Mandela in his first year in 2023, and Kindness@Mandela this year. "We intended to do something nice for the support services staff because we feel they are often overlooked, yet their work is so profound and important for the well-being of everyone on campus. The impact was enormous for both the students and staff. The staff felt really appreciated, you could feel a palpable sense of gratitude because they say, honestly, no one ever thinks of them," he said.

Volunteers who scrubbed toilets and tidied spaces said they gained a new understanding of the effort involved. "Those who participated realised how much effort it takes for these men and women to keep our spaces clean and safe." Dialogue@Mandela deputy chairperson Naledi Mokgopo said she hoped the May Day project would evolve into a regular part of University culture, reflecting the Mandela values of ubuntu, social justice and respect for diversity. "There was an increased awareness about the mess they (students) make within the residences. They were more conscious even about just simply greeting the staff members," said the second-year Accounting student.



JOB SWAP: Vuyani Ngobese rolled up his sleeves along with others

To end the day, students shared refreshments with the staff and discussed the purpose behind the celebration. Kindness@Mandela members are also collecting sanitary towels for students in need in the "Dignify Her Up" project. The goal is to restore dignity, boost confidence and support academic success.

A further initiative in July saw members build on an ongoing Food Bank Project. They joined a Rise Against Hunger Africa, meal-packing initiative at Garden Route Mall, helping volunteers to pack 30 000 meals for the broader Garden Route District. Their contribution of time and energy led to a heartwarming outcome: Kindness@Mandela was given approximately 360 meal packs for the campus food bank. Student empathy and service leadership reinforce the "Mandela Graduate" attributes of social consciousness and human-centred development.

# GIVING TO MANDELA UNIVERSITY

No academically deserving student should be denied the opportunity to learn and succeed simply because they cannot afford education. Yet many struggle with financial hardship, hunger, and the burden of historical debt. Support our bursary and nutrition programmes and help students graduate, and thrive — building a brighter, more just, and equitable South Africa for all.

Help Change the World: Give to Mandela University here:

<https://www.mandela.ac.za/Giving>

Join us in giving to change a life.

Pledge your support and help our students to reach higher than hope.



# SPAR EC gives hope through CSI projects

SPAR Eastern Cape has touched the lives of thousands across the province through various corporate social investment initiatives this year. From coming to the rescue of an ailing soup kitchen to tackling the scourge of period poverty, the family retailer has left no stone unturned in its quest to make an impact in the communities it serves.

The recent SPAR Charity Golf Day, held at the Port Elizabeth Golf Club in Gqeberha, is a fine example of how the Group benefits organisations that assist those most in need. This year's beneficiaries were the Bet Sheekom House of Restoration, the Smile Foundation and Autism EC. Smile Foundation regional coordinator Tanya Jackson said SPAR had supported the organisation, which helps children requiring plastic and reconstructive surgery, for many years.

SPAR also teamed up with the Association for Persons with Disabilities (APD) for the 14th Wheelchair Wednesday campaign. Up to 20 corporate teams participate in each of the four activation days by purchasing a wheelchair for R5 000, which are then donated to the mobility-impaired.

The 2025 campaign got underway at SUPERSPAR Newton Park in late August, with one corporate donating seven wheelchairs. APD Nelson Mandela Bay executive director Cecilia Fourie said one of the campaign's most important outcomes was to recommend ways of making the premises of the hosting stores more wheelchair-friendly.

In July, SPAR EC partnered with Unilever Foods through its Knorrox brand to upgrade the soup kitchen and food garden at the Good Samaritan Church in the Bay's Motherwell township. Warden Fezeka Tsotso said their call had been answered after

the church reached out to the corporate sector for assistance. "They have given hope and dignity to our community. We are so grateful; from the bottom of our hearts. It's touched my heart so deeply," she said. "People of this area are poor and sometimes they sleep with nothing in their stomachs."

According to SPAR EC advertising manager Roseann Shadrach the retailer has been fighting for learners in underprivileged communities' right to a proper education through its Petals #EndPeriodPoverty campaign. "Statistics show that just under a third miss up to five days of school every month due to their inability to purchase menstrual hygiene products." The countrywide initiative has seen 14 million packs donated since 2019, she added. "The products are purchased by shoppers and placed in an in-store trolley before being distributed to non-profits."

The ever-popular SPAR Women's Challenge, which takes place from Pollok Beach later this month, also contains a vital CSI component. This year's beneficiaries, Ubuntu Pathways and LifeLine South Africa, both align with SPAR's commitment to ending gender-based violence (GBV).

Besides nurturing children from cradle to career through its early childhood development and education programmes, Ubuntu works closely with other organisations to counsel women in distress and providing a safe space for survivors.

LifeLine SA, meanwhile, runs SPAR's End GBV helpline with the retailer pitching in by maintaining and improving call-centre infrastructure. It also ensures there are sufficient numbers of trained counsellors to manage the volume of calls from people seeking counselling and guidance.



**GOOD SAMARITANS SOUP KITCHEN:** Volunteer Nomanene Ntintili cooks a storm for guests in the container-kitchen donated by SPAR EC and Knorrox on Mandela Day. Photo: Leon Hugo



**WHEELCHAIR WEDNESDAY:** Crickley Dairy staffers Simon Adams and "pusher" André Cox take part in the first Wheelchair Wednesday activation of the 2025 campaign. Photo: Leon Hugo



**SPAR WOMEN'S CHALLENGE:** The school at Ubuntu Pathways, a beneficiary of this year's SPAR Women's Challenge, lays the perfect educational foundation for boys and girls passing through its cradle-to-career programme. Photo: Supplied

## Standard Bank Extends a Helping Hand to Flood Victims



Donated items being offloaded on site for much needed relief to the flood victims



Items being handed over to flood victims in the community together with officials and Red Cross representatives



Officials from KSD Municipality, Standard Bank Eastern Cape representatives and Members of the Red Cross were present at the handover

Standard Bank Eastern Cape recently provided crucial assistance to the King Sabata Dalindyebo Municipality in Mthatha, Eastern Cape, following devastating floods in the area. On July 16, the bank donated R2.5 million via the Red Cross to secure essential supplies for affected families. The donation enabled the procurement of mattresses, blankets, and food for up to 60 days, providing much-needed relief to those impacted.

The handover ceremony was attended by Executive Mayor of KSD Municipality, Councillor Nyaniso Nelani, and Standard Bank representatives. According to Unathi Maqalekane, Provincial Head of Personal and Private Banking in the Eastern Cape, Standard Bank prioritizes community matters and recognizes the importance of responding to tragedies such as these floods. By providing necessary assistance, the bank aims to support families affected by the disaster and help them recover from the devastating impact of the floods.

This donation is part of Standard Bank's broader efforts to contribute to disaster relief initiatives. The bank has consistently demonstrated its commitment to supporting communities in need, and this initiative is a testament to its dedication to corporate social responsibility. By partnering with organizations like the Red Cross, Standard Bank is able to make a meaningful difference in the lives of those affected by disasters.

The King Sabata Dalindyebo Municipality has faced significant

challenges in recent times, and the floods have further exacerbated the situation. The donation from Standard Bank will go a long way in providing relief to families who have lost their homes and livelihoods. The municipality has expressed its gratitude to Standard Bank for its generosity and commitment to supporting the community.

The impact of the floods on the community cannot be overstated. Many families have been left without access to basic necessities, and the donation from Standard Bank will provide much-needed support. The bank's efforts will help to alleviate some of the suffering and provide hope to those affected.

Standard Bank's donation is a shining example of corporate citizenship in action. The bank's commitment to supporting communities in need is evident in its actions, and this initiative is a testament to its dedication to making a positive impact. As a major financial institution, Standard Bank has a responsibility to give back to the communities it serves, and this donation is a significant step in that direction.

In conclusion, Standard Bank's donation of R2.5 million to the King Sabata Dalindyebo Municipality is a generous and timely response to the devastating floods in the area. The bank's commitment to supporting communities in need is evident in its actions, and this initiative will provide much-needed relief to families affected by the disaster.

