

VC's Preface – Report on 2008 research outputs

This report outlines the extent and quality of our research outputs for 2008. Rhodes possesses an admirable research milieu and culture that provides the space for intellectual development, debate, and the flourishing of ideas. As the smallest university in South Africa, we take special pride in Rhodes University having amongst the highest per capita research outputs. One of the core goals of a university is to produce knowledge, a public responsibility that Rhodes takes very seriously, and we continuously seek new opportunities to do so.

Many of Rhodes University's academics, departments, institutes, centres, and units are at the leading edge of research and are actively advancing knowledge in a range of disciplines and fields. During 2008, Rhodes launched three new centres. The DST/Mintek Nanotechnology Innovation Centre (Sensors) was founded under the directorship of Professor Tebello Nyokong; the Centre for Higher Education Research, Teaching & Learning, was formed out of a much expanded Academic Development Centre, under the leadership of the Dean of Teaching and Learning, Professor Chrissie Boughey; and the Centre for the Study of Democracy was launched under the leadership of Professor Stephen Friedman as a joint venture of Rhodes and the University of Johannesburg.

A second DST/NRF South African Research Chair was launched in the field of Marine Biology, with Professor Christopher McQuaid as its incumbent. Rhodes's first DST/NRF Chair, Professor Tebello Nyokong, in the area of Medicinal Chemistry and Nanotechnology, had an outstanding year, with accolades coming from a range of sources. She was officially recognized by the National Research Foundation as one of the most productive researchers in the country with 35 ISI indexed journal papers published during the year, an extraordinary achievement by anyone's standard, and with a large number of additional accredited outputs by her and her group during the year.

In the area of the creative arts, Mrs Janet Buckland of our Drama Department won special recognition as the recipient of the national Woman of the Year award promoted by Shopright-Checkers and SABC 2, in both the Arts and culture section and as the overall recipient. Professor Fackson Banda of our Journalism Department won the 2008 MISA (Media Institute of Southern Africa) Press Freedom Award. In the Geology Department, Professor Goonie Marsh was awarded the Geological Society of South Africa's highest scientific award, the Draper Memorial Medal, in recognition of his outstanding contribution to geological sciences in general, and particularly for his research work in the petrology of volcanic rocks and igneous provinces in South Africa.

The Vice-Chancellor's Distinguished Senior Research Award for 2008 went to Professor Peter Vale of the Department of Political and International Studies, for the national and international impact of his scholarly activities over a sustained period. The Vice-Chancellor's Book Award for 2008 went to Professor Dan Wylie of the Department of English, for *Myth of Iron - Shaka in History* (UKZN Press, 2008).

Rhodes postgraduates continue to excel in winning prestigious international and local scholarships, including the Rhodes (Oxford), Mandela Rhodes, Flanagan, Commonwealth, and Fulbright.

A major challenge facing South African Universities is the development of a new generation of teacher-scholars, one that Rhodes University has been engaging with for a number of years. We acknowledge the strong support of the Mellon Foundation, which has assisted us in creating a focused programme aimed at cultivating a new generation of black and women researchers, and in making a contribution towards transforming our academic body in the process. I am pleased to be able to announce that the Kresge Foundation has agreed to fund this initiative for a further four years.

I extend my congratulations and thanks to all of our researchers, collaborators, funders, donors, and partners who contributed to making 2008 a year in which research at Rhodes University flourished. Your expertise, dedication, rigour and generosity make Rhodes University the rich and distinctive intellectual space that it is.

Dr Saleem Badat
Vice-Chancellor