

Judge Lex Mpati

New Chancellor of Rhodes University, Judge Lex Mpati has deep roots in Grahamstown and the Eastern Cape Province, and still maintains a home in Grahamstown.

Despite a seriously disadvantaged background he completed BA and LLB degrees at Rhodes University, being only the second black student to graduate with an LLB from Rhodes.

He has often related that it was his experiences of injustice as a petrol attendant that motivated him to study law in an effort to make a difference in the divided society in which he grew up.

After graduating from Rhodes he worked first as an attorney and subsequently as an advocate, primarily for the Legal Resources Centre, where he was heavily involved in human rights work throughout the Eastern Cape Province.

His *curriculum vitae* speaks to his considerable work as a human rights lawyer and activist, and the numerous additional positions and responsibilities that he has held.

He was elevated to the Bench in 1997, has been a Judge of Appeal since 2000, and President of the Supreme Court of Appeal since 2008 (the first Rhodes Law alumnus to be so appointed).

As such he is probably the third most senior lawyer in South Africa (after the Chief Justice and Deputy Chief Justice of the Constitutional Court).

He has had honorary LLD degrees conferred upon him by Rhodes University (2004) and NMMU. He was a member of the Rhodes Council from 1996 to 2008.

He has been involved in legal education and training in various ways. He has acted as external examiner in the Rhodes Law Faculty, moderator of the National Bar Examination, he is a member of the Judicial Education Planning Committee, and is an Extraordinary Professor at UFS.

Despite his involvement with many other institutions, Judge Mpati has retained a close association with his *alma mater*. He is an inspirational figure for law students who he exhorts to use their knowledge and skills in the interests of promoting justice and human rights in whatever field they may work in.

Besides being President of the Supreme Court of Appeal, Judge Mpati is a humble man of wonderful integrity and extraordinary moral fibre. He embodies the values espoused in our Vision and Mission statement, and will be a superb role model for Rhodes students. For all these reasons Rhodes University has invited Judge Mpati to be the new Chancellor of Rhodes University.

LEX MPATI

<u>Place and date of birth:</u>	Durban, 5 September 1949.
<u>Primary Education:</u>	St Joseph's Catholic School, Fort Beaufort.
<u>High School:</u>	Mary Waters High School, Grahamstown. Matriculated 1967.
<u>Post High School</u>	1968 to 1980 (inclusive) worked as petrol attendant, works clerk, furniture salesman and Barman.
<u>Tertiary Education:</u>	BA, 1982 and LLB (Rhodes); 1984.
<u>Professional Career:</u>	Attorney in Grahamstown from February 1985-February 1989. Secretary of the Grahamstown Side-Bar Association 1985-1987. Advocate and member of the Eastern Cape Society of Advocates, July 1989-February 1997. In-house Counsel, Legal Resources Centre, 1993-1996. Extensively involved both as attorney and advocate in human rights matters throughout the Eastern Cape, 1986-1996. Member of the National Association of Democratic Lawyers, 1986-1997. Member of the panel of arbitrators of IMSSA (Independent Mediation Service of South Africa, 1990-1996. Member of the panel of mediators of IMSSA, 1990-1996. Member of the Board of Trustees of All Saints College, King Williamstown/Bisho, 1990-1994. Co-chairperson, Grahamstown Local Government Negotiating Forum, 1994. Member of the Electoral Tribunal, 1994.

Member of a task team sent by Minister of Justice, Mr Omar, to interview various interested parties and individuals on the Chilean Truth Commission (spent two weeks in Chile), October 1994.

Member of the Commission of Enquiry into the finalisation of the boundaries between KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape Province, 1995.

Appointed Senior Counsel, April 1996.

Acting Judge, Eastern Cape Division of the High Court, June 1996-January 1997.

Judge of the High Court, Eastern Cape Division, 1 February 1997-December 2000.

External Examiner, Rhodes University Law Faculty, Legal Theory I/Introduction to the Study of Law since 1995.

Moderator, National Bar Examination Board, 1997-.

Member of the Judicial Education Planning Committee, a sub-committee of the Judicial Service Commission, 1997-2004.

Trustee, Legal Resources Centre, 1998-.

Acting Judge of Appeal, June 1999-December 2000.

Judge of Appeal, December 2000-.

Deputy President, Supreme Court of Appeal, January 2003-.

Appointed Professor Extraordinary in the Department of Constitutional Law and Philosophy of Law, University of the Free State, from 1 January 2004-31 December 2006.

President : Supreme Court of Appeal, 15 August 2008 -.

Marital Status:

Married, with four children, two sons and two daughters.

Sporting Activities:

Played rugby for and captained Old Collegians Rugby Football Club, Grahamstown and represented South Eastern Districts Rugby Union at provincial level.

General Secretary (1980-1981) and then President of the South Eastern Districts Rugby Union 1984-1985.

Assistant Secretary, South African Rugby Union, 1986-1992.

Member of the National Executive Committee, South African Rugby Football Union, 1992-1994.

Chairman, National Judicial Committee of SARFU, 1994-1996 and member of National Judicial Committee 1996-.

Appointed by International Rugby Board as Judicial Officer for 2003 Rugby World Cup in Australia.

Member of SANZAR (South Africa/New Zealand/Australian Rugby), 2007 -.

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