



The US Witsie



Wits Fund Newsletter November 2022

witsfund.org

Wits turned 100 in 2022 Learn more [here](#).

'Tis the season to be Thankful! And we say, to each and everyone one of you: thank you for flying the Wits flag high, wherever you are in the country.

OTHER HUNDREDS

Wits University turned 100 in 2022, and so did two of its distinguished alumni: Sir Sydney Woolf Kentridge KC (BA 1942, LLD honoris causa 2000) and Prof Joshua Levy (BA 1942, MBBCh 1947).



LEGAL GIANT: Treason Trial and Biko inquest advocate, a hero - Sydney Kentridge turned 100

Inspiring profiles on one of Wits University's most outstanding graduates, Sir Sydney Kentridge "a South African legal centurion who never flinched from taking on the state at its venal worst", in [the Daily Maverick](#), and in the [latest issue of the Wits Review](#).

Retired radiologist Professor Joshua Levy (BA 1942, MBBCh 1947) celebrated his 100th birthday on 1 November 2022.

Dr Les Glassman (BSc 1979, BDS 1984), the University's representative in Israel, presented Professor Levy with centenary gifts on the special day.

Read more [here](#), and watch a video of the special presentation to Prof Levy [here](#).



KEEP GOING, *STRAIGHT-STRAIGHT*, UNTIL THE NEXT ROBOT: HOW AN AI OBSESSION TOOK ONE WITSIE FROM THE LIBRARY LAWNS TO THE IVY LEAGUE

Mr Stanley Bergman, Chair of Wits
Fund Board, invites you to join the

WITS FUND INDABA



Pic: Prof George Konidakis

Keep going, *straight-straight*, until the next robot: how an AI obsession took one Witsie from the Library Lawns to the Ivy League

December 6th, 8pm ET

[Prof George Konidakis is an Associate Professor of Computer Science at Brown University, where he directs the Intelligent Robot Lab.](#) He is also a co-founder and the Chief Robotist of Realtime Robotics, a startup based on hardware-accelerated motion planning technology he co-invented while he was a professor at Duke. Prof Konidakis is also a member of the Wits Fund board.

Prof Konidakis will explore the future of artificial intelligence (AI), robotics, and computer science – as well as share stories of growing up in Joburg in the 80s and 90s, finding his passion for AI at Wits, and his journey since then.

Prof Konidakis has a Ph.D. (University of Massachusetts Amherst), MSc (University of Edinburgh); BSc 2000 and BScHons 2001 (Wits). He also serves on the Advisory Board of the Deep Learning Indaba and is the recent recipient of an NSF CAREER award, young faculty awards from DARPA and the AFOSR, and the Richard B. Salomon Faculty Research Award and Karen T. Romer Award for undergraduate advising from Brown. Prior to joining Brown, he held a faculty position at Duke and was a postdoctoral researcher at MIT.

The Wits Fund Indaba will be a Zoom webinar and will be moderated by [Mr Indran Naick a senior technical leader at IBM](#) and a member of the Wits Fund board.

DATE: December 6th, 8pm ET

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WITS, THE FIRST SOUTH AFRICAN UNIVERSITY TO

Click on the above video link to learn more of the University's
firsts. [#DistinctlyWits](#) [#Wits100Firsts](#) [#Wits100](#)

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Vision

To ensure that Wits University remains one of Africa's – and the world's – pre-eminent research-intensive educational institutions, with top academic standards, committed faculty, and supportive alumni.

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First African Civil Engineer Inducted into Wits Wall of Fame



Dr Solomon Lefakane, the first African to obtain a Civil Engineering degree in 1961, is the first Wits alumnus to be inducted into the Engineering Wall of Fame.

The Faculty of Engineering and the Built Environment unveiled its honorary Wall of Fame as part of Wits University's Centenary celebration.

Dr Lefakane was the first African to receive an engineering degree in South Africa in 1961 after obtaining his Bachelor of Science degree in Civil Engineering. The momentous occasion was attended by various Heads of Schools, and former First Lady and Witsie, Mrs Zanele Mbeki.

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Research and Innovation, Professor Lynn

Morris, opened the ceremony and reflected on Wits' achievements over the last 100 years.

"It has really been a wonderful year for Wits. We've been celebrating excellence at all levels at this great university. We've reflected on our past achievements and reconnected with old friends and alumni all over the world," said Morris.

Read more [here](#).

Love the new look newsletter? Have some suggestions? Want to tell us your story of how you got here? Please write in and tell us: <https://witsfund.org/contact/>



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