



The US Witsie



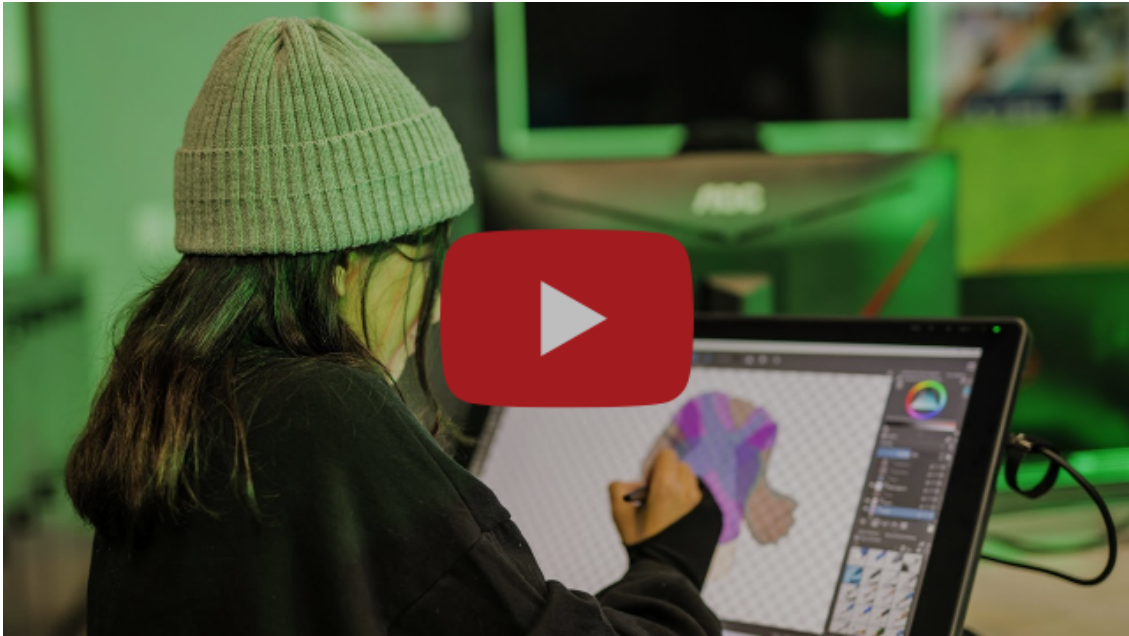
Wits Fund Newsletter April 2023

witsfund.org

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

Hi Witsies, howzit! It's always so wonderful to hear from so many of you, telling us how much you enjoy reading and receiving this monthly newsletter. We love putting it together, cause it reminds us of all the lovely things we should be grateful for - growing up in wonderful South Africa, graduating from a world-class university, and now being here in the US, taking on the world.

LAUNCH OF WITS INNOVATION CENTRE SIGNALS NEW ERA



The Wits Innovation Centre (WIC) lies at the heart of the University's innovation ecosystem that seeks to develop an 'innovation mindset' across all disciplines and boundaries.



At the launch of the WIC, Mr Letlotlo Phohole , WIC Senior Manager, Dr David Fine, and Dr Adam Pantanowitz, the inaugural Angela and David Fine Chair in Innovation and WIC Director.

The WIC will harness the creativity and ingenuity of the University's rich, diverse community of innovators to solve complex, real-world problems.

The new [Wits Innovation Centre \(WIC\)](#) was officially launched earlier this month, and is a dynamic multidisciplinary hub that enables a space to create, collaborate, and engage in impactful innovation, across disciplines and sectoral boundaries.

As a starting point, thanks to [a generous donation](#) from Wits alumnus and innovator, Dr David Fine, the new Angela and David Fine Chair in Innovation has also been established. The Chair in Innovation is being held by [Dr Adam Pantanowitz](#), iconic biomedical and electrical engineer at Wits. He is also the first Director of the WIC.

An artificial intelligence expert, technologist, and entrepreneur, Pantanowitz is well-known for initiating and leading the first group in the world to connect a human brain live and mobile to the internet in a project called the [Braininternet](#) – a term he coined.

“When we look around, we might see our world filled with challenges. We have, however, all of the tools available to us to find solutions. The WIC’s arrival ushers in a new impetus to do so, leveraging the great assets, minds, and tools at our University,” said Pantanowitz.

Read more [here](#).

US Ambassador to SA visits Wits Campus



U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of South Africa Reuben E. Brigety II paid a visit to Wits campus, and

tweeted pics above, saying:

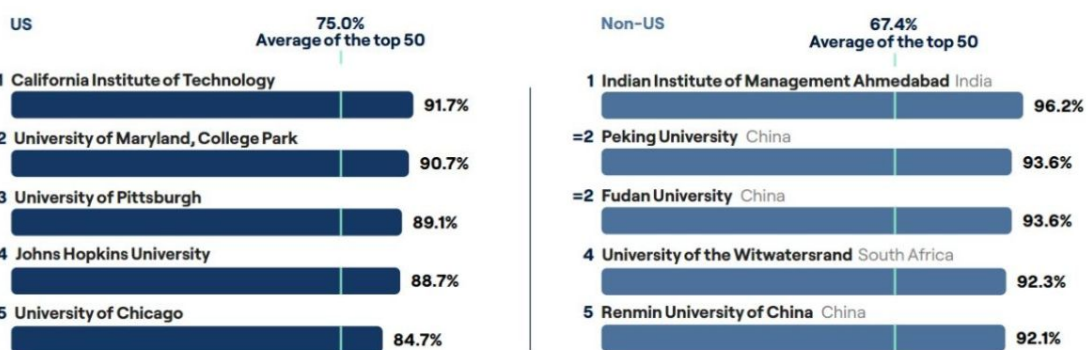
"Really enjoyed my time at [@WitsUniversity](#)– especially the discussion with students on [#democracy](#) [#climatechange](#) and the future of US-SA relations. Thank you Vice Chancellor, Prof Zeblon Vilakazi and team! Our partnership in [#health](#) and [#education](#) is as strong as ever."

Wits 4th in rankings for self-made millionaires

Totaling around 352,000 individuals, the ultra wealthy population is an exclusive segment of the wealthy class, accounting for just 1.2% of the world's millionaires (those with a fortune of \$1m or more). Which universities produce (or attract) such wealthy individuals? And how do such alumni differ across universities? See the full Altrata report, [University Alumni Rankings of the Wealthy and Influential 2022](#) here, but most interesting for us, the placement of Wits University in fourth place for self-made UHNW alumni, outside of the US.

Self-made UHNW universities

Universities ranked by proportion of self-made UHNW alumni



Note: The top five were selected out of the top 50 UHNW universities in the US and rest of the world respectively.
Source: Wealth-X, an Altrata company 2022

Fine advice on failing, luck & limiting expertise



Wits University awarded Dr David Fine an honorary degree at the Faculty of Science graduation ceremony on 17 April 2023.

What do the Lockerbie bombing, landmines and pulmonary hypertension have in common?

Apart from being either deadly or potentially lethal, all three were a focus for innovation by the entrepreneurial chemist, Dr David Fine, who delivered the keynote address at the Faculty of Science graduation ceremony.

“The last time I was in this Hall was 59 years ago, when I received my BSc Honours degree, second-class, in chemistry. That was before all you graduates were born. It was before even most of your parents were born, so I feel it’s appropriate for me to mention some of the lessons learnt that I wish I’d known very much earlier,” said Fine, after congratulating all graduands and especially “those who are first in their family to receive a university degree”.

“Wits is a world-class university, and you graduate today with a world-class degree and with the skills and knowledge not only to change South Africa but the world. This is especially true if you have graduated today with advanced degrees. You are the future. You are the chosen. And you’re going to have so much fun as a world-class scientist.”

Read more [here](#).

IN MEMORIAM: Dr Louis Berman
(Wits MBBCh 1957)



Dr Margaret Spitz (Wits MBBCh 1966) recently shared with us the sad news of the passing of her beloved husband, Dr Louis Berman. We extend to her and to his family and friends, our deepest condolences.

An extract taken from the [official obituary](#):

"Louis Berman was born on February 27, 1934 in Johannesburg, South Africa to Isaac and Dora Berman. His first language was Yiddish. He learned English when he started elementary school. Despite this inauspicious start, he excelled as a student including winning first prize in Latin and Hebrew across the country. He was the first in his family to attend University and graduated as a physician in 1957. Louis trained in Rheumatology in Chicago and London, was the first certified rheumatologist in South Africa, and trained a generation of medical students; one of whom, Margaret Spitz, later became his wife. They were married for 55 years.

In 1978, they emigrated to Houston to provide their children with greater opportunities and freedom. He built a thriving rheumatology practice and was much beloved by his patients and staff. Louis was a superb physician and an astute diagnostician. Well before other men in his generation, he was remarkably supportive and proud of his wife's academic successes."

[The University of the Witwatersrand Fund, Inc.](#) is a corporation under the Internal Revenue Code, section 501 (c) (3). Donations are tax deductible to the extent provided by law. The Wits Fund IRS EIN number is: **13-3902012**.

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.

Donate Today

Wits Review

The magazine for ALUMNI and friends of the University of the Witwatersrand

April 2023, Vol 49

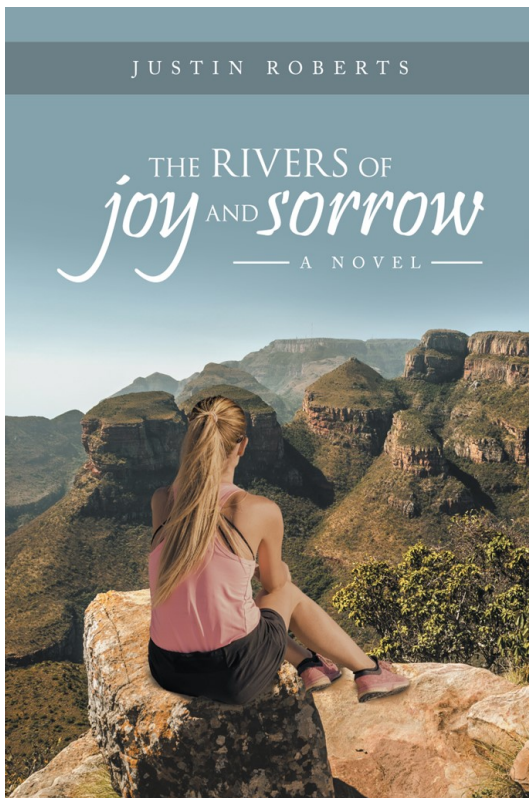


The cover of the Wits Review magazine features a vibrant illustration of a woman in traditional Zulu attire, including a beaded headband and a long, patterned skirt. She is holding a long, thin object, possibly a staff or a piece of fabric. The background is a warm, orange-brown color. The magazine's title 'Wits Review' is prominently displayed in white text on the right side of the cover. Below the title, smaller text reads: 'The magazine for ALUMNI and friends of the University of the Witwatersrand' and 'April edition 2023, Volume 49'.

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Loyal Loyalties

The Wits Fund has received a very generous offer from Prof John Rogan (Wits BSc 1965), who has published a novel entitled “The Rivers of Joy and Sorrow”.

In this poignant story, students who decide to oppose apartheid are propelled on a journey entailing love, abandonment, yearning, betrayal, and redemption.

John has very generously donated a 100% of the royalties of the sale of the book to Wits alumni and other readers of this newsletter.

In order to ensure that royalties accrue to the Wits Fund, please follow the steps below:

1. Go to Archway Publishing, <https://bit.ly/3CBPQxZ>
2. Order whichever version of the book you choose. (The paper version will accrue more royalties.)
3. Send the following information [via email to Nooshin.Erfani-Ghadimi@wits.ac.za]:

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