



The US Witsie



Wits Fund Newsletter December 2023

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

December is already here, bringing to an end another year of successes and challenges for us all. As you take time to reflect on 2023 and prepare for the new year, we hope that you will have a comforting and joyful holiday season, as well as the chance to be of service to each other.

**African Rainbow Minerals Endows
R20 million For Research at Wits**



South Africa is facing three key challenges: energy shortages, water scarcity, and the lack of skills in digitalization. A new collaboration between [African Rainbow Minerals](#) (“ARM”) and the [Faculty of Engineering and the Built Environment](#) (“Faculty”) in the University of the Witwatersrand ([Wits University](#)) aims to develop the high-level skills required to address these issues.

[Dr Patrice Motsepe](#), (*pictured above, to the right*), founder and Executive Chairman of African Rainbow Minerals (ARM), a Wits University alumnus and recipient of an honorary doctorate degree, said: “ARM is proud to partner with Wits University which is a globally respected academic institution.”

The ARM Postgraduate Fellowship Program at Wits University aims to develop and sharpen a critical mass of skills in South Africa through supporting a new cohort of postdoctoral fellows who will specialize in Water Resource Management, Digitalization, and work towards a Just Energy Transition. ARM will sponsor a R20 million endowment, which will be invested into perpetuity. The investment return on the endowment will be used to support research in the [Faculty of Engineering and the Built Environment](#).

“We recognize the importance of digital transformation in the mining industry, and the necessity to develop the critical skills needed to advance our economy,” says [Prof. Ziblon Vilakazi \(FRS\)](#), Vice-Chancellor and Principal of Wits University (*pictured above, to the left*).

Read more [here](#).



As we feel gratitude for the blessings in our lives, one way to pay it forward is through making an impact in a person's life that will uplift them, and their family, for generations to come.

DONATE [HERE](#)

**GUARDIAN OF SOUTH AFRICAN JOURNALISM RETIRES
FROM WITS....BUT IS FAR FROM DONE.**



Irwin Manoim and Anton Harber in the early days of the Mail & Guardian.

If there was a personification of the combination of academic and professional knowledge in journalism, it would be Professor Anton Harber.

Anton Harber worked extensively in professional media before joining academia in 2001 to pioneer the establishment of the Wits Journalism Department, now the Wits Centre for Journalism (WCJ). He retires from Wits at the end of this year but plans to continue working in diverse media and freedom of expression projects.

After starting his journalism career as a reporter at the Springs Advertiser in Springs, east of Johannesburg, he worked at the Sunday Post, the Sowetan and Rand Daily Mail newspapers. He was a political reporter at the Rand Daily Mail and was retrenched when it was closed in 1985. This would launch him to greater heights in his media career. Together with Irwin Manoim, who was also retrenched by the Rand Daily Mail, they used their retrenchment payouts to start the Weekly Mail, later known as the Mail & Guardian. Here, he demonstrated his journalism activism against apartheid, pioneering alternative journalism along other publications such as the New Nation, Vrye Weekblad, The Indicator, South and Work in Progress, among others.

When the Weekly Mail was acquired by London-based Guardian Media Group, he went on to become chief executive officer of Kagiso Broadcasting and executive director of Kagiso Media. He later left to form internet company, BIG Media.



It was in 2001 when the then Wits University Vice-Chancellor, Professor Colin Bundy, reached out to Harber to discuss plans to introduce journalism teaching at Wits and asked him if he would like to apply for the position of head of the prospective journalism department.

“At first I was hesitant because I wasn’t thinking of an academic career,” said Harber. “But I do have a special affinity for Wits. I am a Wits graduate, and I think it’s a great place to [study]. So, after a while, I thought it might actually be a really nice thing to do. I also felt that Wits needed a journalism programme.”

Read more [here](#).

IN MEMORIAM: PROFESSOR HARRY SEFTEL



REMEMBERING PROFESSOR HARRY SEFTEL | 28 Dec 1928 - 3 Dec 2023

It is with sadness that Wits University announced the passing of Professor Harry Seftel, a distinguished member of its Faculty of Health Sciences, and a

revered figure in the field of medicine.

Throughout his more than 50-year career at Wits, Professor Seftel embodied the motto, 'Wits. For Good', not only within the halls of academia but also in his extensive work with the wider South African community. His ability to simplify complex medical issues made invaluable knowledge accessible to the public, exemplifying the highest ideals of our institution in bridging education and societal impact.

As a dedicated advocate for health promotion, Prof. Seftel's contributions went far beyond the classroom. He was instrumental in advancing initiatives aimed at the eradication of chronic lifestyle diseases, impacting countless lives across the nation. His role as a mentor and educator has left an indelible mark on generations of students and colleagues. The legacy he leaves behind is not just one of academic achievement, but of a deep, heartfelt commitment to making a positive difference in the world.

We extend our heartfelt condolences to Prof. Seftel's family, friends, and all those who were touched by his remarkable life and work. We are poorer for his loss, but so much richer for his immense contributions and the inspiring example he set for us all.

Please share your memories and tributes, which will be a testament to the extraordinary impact he had on our Faculty, University and beyond.

Please do this using the following link: <https://forms.office.com/r/7nypJF5vz5>



WATCH: WITS LATEST NEWS IN SIXTY SECONDS - In this episode, the Wits Law Clinic celebrates 50 years of excellence, Professor Jennifer Fitchett and Dr Isaac Nape win Royal Society medals, researchers pioneer a new way of searching for Dark Matter, the use of AI in investigative journalism is explored, and 48 Wits BA Fine Art students exhibit their work. Read the full stories [here](#).

[**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.

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REFLECTIONS FROM CAMPUS ON THE DAY OF SPRINGBOK VICTORY

After a visit back to Joburg, Wits Fund board member, [Mr Indran Naick](#), sent the note below to friends and family in Texas.

I just recently got to go back home and thought I'd share some of my observations from the Wits campus. I was lucky to visit SA on the weekend the country was celebrating the Rugby World Cup win. It was incredible, the celebratory spirit, the pride in an amazing team and just being South African.

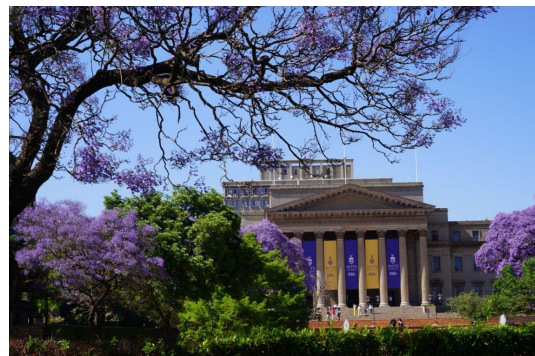
The Wits campus was as vibrant as ever, full of students that were caught up in their classes and carried that youthful optimistic energy. The

development was amazing, the new buildings are even more breathtaking in person and the starting of new projects filled me with pride. It was clear even from conversations with friends and family that Wits has great governance and is still as prestigious as always.

I had lunch with the Wits team at the Wits club restaurant, a first for me. The food at the restaurant at the lower end of West Campus was as gourmet as it was a piece of art! While there are a lot of great things going on the team also shared the challenges of a state-funded institution. As always, funding is going to be a growing challenge.

During this season of giving and as we get to the end of the tax year, please consider donating to the Wits fund where our contributions go a long way and its deductible. No amount is too small, everything collected will go towards funding a needy student or development programs. Use this link to donate: [Giving – The Wits Fund, Inc.](#)

Wishing you all Happy Holidays and to those traveling stay safe. I'm sharing some recent pictures below. Enjoy!



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