



The US Witsie

June 2022

The Vice-Chancellor visits the West Coast...

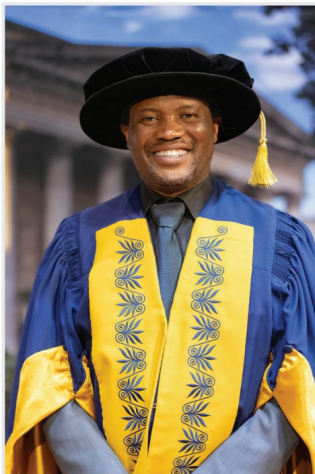


The Vice-Chancellor, Prof Zebulon Vilakazi, hosted alumni reunions in San Diego, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Vancouver from 8-15 May 2022 in celebration of the University's centenary.

[Click here to view photos](#)

...and was named a Fellow of the Royal Society...

This fellowship is like receiving the Lifetime achievement award at the Oscars. Prof Vilakazi joins the ranks of Isaac Newton, Charles Darwin, Albert Einstein, and Stephen Hawking.



On May 10 2022. Wits University Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Professor Zebulon Vilakazi, was welcomed as a Fellow of the prestigious Royal Society (UK), one of the world's most distinguished scientific academies.

"I am honored to be welcomed as a Fellow of the Royal Society," says Prof. Vilakazi, who is an internationally recognized nuclear physicist. "This is not just an honor for me, but also for Wits University, and all those who supported me. South Africa is home to a host of incredibly talented scientists, who punch above their weight in the global knowledge arena. Whilst this Fellowship acknowledges some of my achievements, more importantly, it recognizes the high calibre of science and scientists based in Africa."

DONATE NOW

Alumnus spotlight

Ian Harris: Having great chemistry has taken me [sometimes cycling] across the world



Mr Ian Harris (Wits, BSc Eng. 1974)

My grandparents fled Lithuania and my father grew up in Rustenburg, and my mother in Vryheid. After my father served in WWII, we lived in Sandringham in the veteran supported housing.

My late father, Max Harris was also a Wits graduate with a Bachelor of Science in Engineering (Mining), graduating in 1943. He was an entrepreneur and built the world's largest producer of electrolytic manganese and manganese dioxide and won the Export Award twice, presented by the J C Heunis, Minister of Economic Affairs.

I matriculated in 1969 from King Edward's School and studied Chemical Engineering at Wits and graduated cum laude. I then obtained a Master's in Chemical Engineering & Materials Science from the University of California, Berkeley. After working for 4 years for Rohm and Haas, a global specialty chemicals company in manufacturing, marketing and purchasing, I went back to university to obtain an MBA from the Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania.

I returned to Rohm and Haas post MBA and worked in in a senior marketing role, global business management and strategic planning. This included being assigned to London, UK to be business director of Europe, Russia, Middle East, and Africa. I am proud to have led the company's re-entry into SA post-Apartheid.

I retired in 2007 after 30 years with the company. Nowadays I serve on several boards, both for profit and non-profit, as well as managing a small venture capital fund in early-stage medical startups. The nonprofit where I spend most of my time is the National MS Society, both on the local and national boards and am very involved in overseeing translational research projects.

My current sports passion is cycling. I have participated in MS rides across the US and Canada. I as well as RAGBRAI, a 500-mile ride across Iowa, and visited Mallorca, Spain, several times to conquer the beautiful mountains and take in spectacular views. My cycling has led me to do many short sprint triathlons.

Caryn, my wife is also South African, another Wits graduate and we have been married for 46 years. We have 3 children and 2 grandsons and live in Philadelphia.

...and the Wits Fund held their annual board meeting at Lincoln Center in NY



The full board of the Wits Fund met on 16 May 2022, both in person and virtually. Along with the normal fiduciary business of the Wits Fund, the Board heard from the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Zebulon Vilakazi, and the Chair of Council (the highest governing body of the University), Mr Isaac Shongwe.

Welcoming the guests, Chair of the Board Mr Stanley Bergman, said that the work of the Wits Fund, in its support of Wits University, was now even more critical than before, as Wits is one of the most important institutions on the African continent



Join us for our next Wits Indaba - Dr David Fine



The successful Boston-based innovator and entrepreneur has made a generous donation of \$3,000,000 which will be used to establish the **Angela and David Fine Chair in Innovation** at Wits University

Join us online on July 28th at 8pm ET to hear details about his life and career
RSVP to nooshin.erfani-ghadimi@wits.ac.za