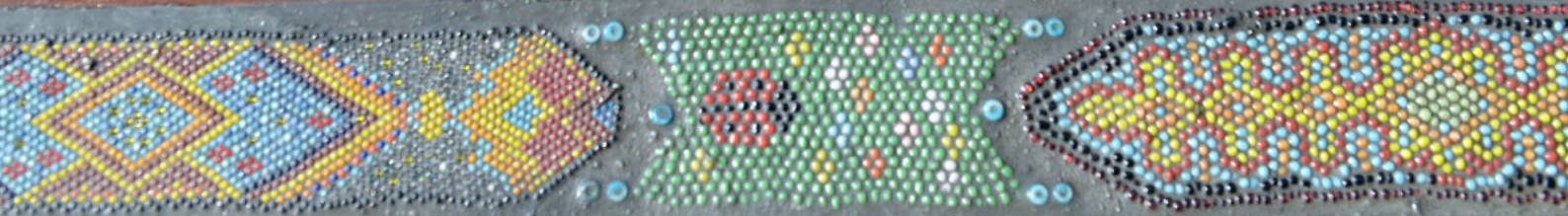
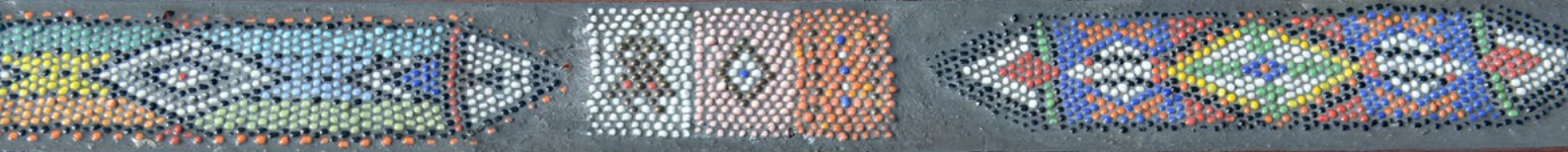


NELSON MANDELA
UNIVERSITY



Naming and Renaming Programme Launch

Introducing the new residence names

Vision

To be a dynamic African university, recognised for its leadership in generating cutting-edge knowledge for a sustainable future

Mission

To offer a diverse range of life-changing education experiences for a better world

Values



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What's in a name?

An excerpt from President Cyril Ramaphosa's speech at the naming ceremony of Nelson Mandela University in July 2017:

In all the cultures of this land, names are imbued with great meaning.

The decision to become Nelson Mandela University is not simply an exercise in corporate re-branding.

It is a statement of intent. It is a statement of values.

It is a validation of the struggles of our people against colonial occupation and apartheid oppression.

It is an affirmation of their history and identity, of their dignity and rights.

The act by the colonial authorities of naming this locality Port Elizabeth was an act of dispossession.

The act by the democratic government of renaming it was an act of reclamation.

So too with the renaming of the university.

It makes a statement about justice, rehabilitation and reconciliation.

It starts to reshape our South African identity.

It helps us to move forward, together, as a people.

That is because Nelson Mandela embodied the best in us.

He represented the values which we South Africans, black and white, united in our diversity, cherish and uphold ...

In naming this university after Nelson Mandela, you are shouldering a great responsibility – to encourage, educate and nurture the new generation about which Madiba wrote.

You are shouldering the responsibility of giving life to Madiba's dream of social equality.

That means that this university must be at the forefront of efforts to make higher education accessible to the poor and marginalised.

This university must be at the forefront of efforts to ensure that higher education is an instrument for the achievement of social equality – that it does not simply perpetuate privilege.

While we have made huge strides in making higher education accessible, many capable and deserving young people are still not able to enter universities.

Many of those who do gain enrolment struggle to succeed. Many study in substandard living conditions.

The support they receive is not sufficient. Too many drop out.

These are the challenges that a university named after Nelson Mandela will have to confront.

It will also have to confront the challenge of harnessing, as Madiba put it, the collective wisdom of humankind. This means looking at what we teach and how we teach it. We must decolonise our higher education system ...

A university that associates itself with Nelson Mandela must necessarily review its curriculum and examine the subtle layers of colonial and neo-colonial norms that underlie its thought systems. It will have to liberate the minds of the oppressed and awaken them to the potential of African scholarship. It will have to remove the cloak of institutionalised racism and sexism.

It will have to promote an African renaissance and contribute, through teaching and research, to the making of the African Century.

It must remain rooted in answering the challenges that confront our society in a global economy.

This must be an African university that serves the continent and her people.

By naming this institution after Nelson Mandela, you are making the commitment that out of your teaching will emerge African scholars and academics that can bring a diversity of thought to traditional knowledge systems. You are recognising that you are situated in a society and on a continent that is ravaged by poverty, inequality and unemployment.

It means your curriculum will, in content and character, seek to answer the social and economic challenges that confront our country and continent.

A university named after Nelson Mandela will have to be an example for other African universities. It will have to build partnerships for African scholarship through knowledge sharing.

It will have to be deeply rooted in its African identity.

When students walk onto the grounds of this university they should feel the humanism of Nelson Mandela. They should feel part of a people-centred university – where all are recognised and valued for their individuality.

This should be a place where diversity is a strength.

This should be a place where differences of opinion, ideology, culture and interest are able to thrive and contest. This should be a place where there is respect for the cultural, linguistic, and ethnic diversity that characterises the beauty of our people.

... a decolonised university ought to be: dynamic, humane, inclusive and futuristic.

By recognising the legacy of Madiba, by studying what he stood for and what he means to our people, you will fully realise the transformative value of higher education.

From now on, the many thousands of students passing through these gates will have the name 'Nelson Mandela' in their résumés.

Will they too go on to become unifiers, innovators, internationalists?

Will they too dream of a new society founded on equality and the pursuit of human happiness?

And will they have the skills, the knowledge, the consciousness to strive together to build such a society?

[This university] is challenged to build relationships of cooperation and understanding. It is challenged to redefine higher education in our country. It is challenged to school successive generations in the values of honour, selflessness, justice and the building of a humane society.

Nelson Mandela University is born today.

It is an institution with a worthy academic heritage, an exciting future and an awesome responsibility.

I have no doubt that you will eagerly shoulder this responsibility and prove yourselves worthy of your new name.

NELSON MANDELA UNIVERSITY



Why the New Names?

Our institution officially became Nelson Mandela University on 20 July 2017 – the only university in the world to be given this honour.

This name brings with it many opportunities, but it also brings particular responsibilities and transformational obligations.

Or to quote President Cyril Ramaphosa, “You are shouldering the responsibility of giving life to Madiba’s dream of social equality. This means that this university must be at the forefront of efforts to make higher education accessible to the poor and marginalised.”

It also means looking at what we teach and how we teach it, removing the cloak of institutionalised racism and sexism, promoting an African renaissance and living up to our vision of being a dynamic African university that serves the continent and all its people.

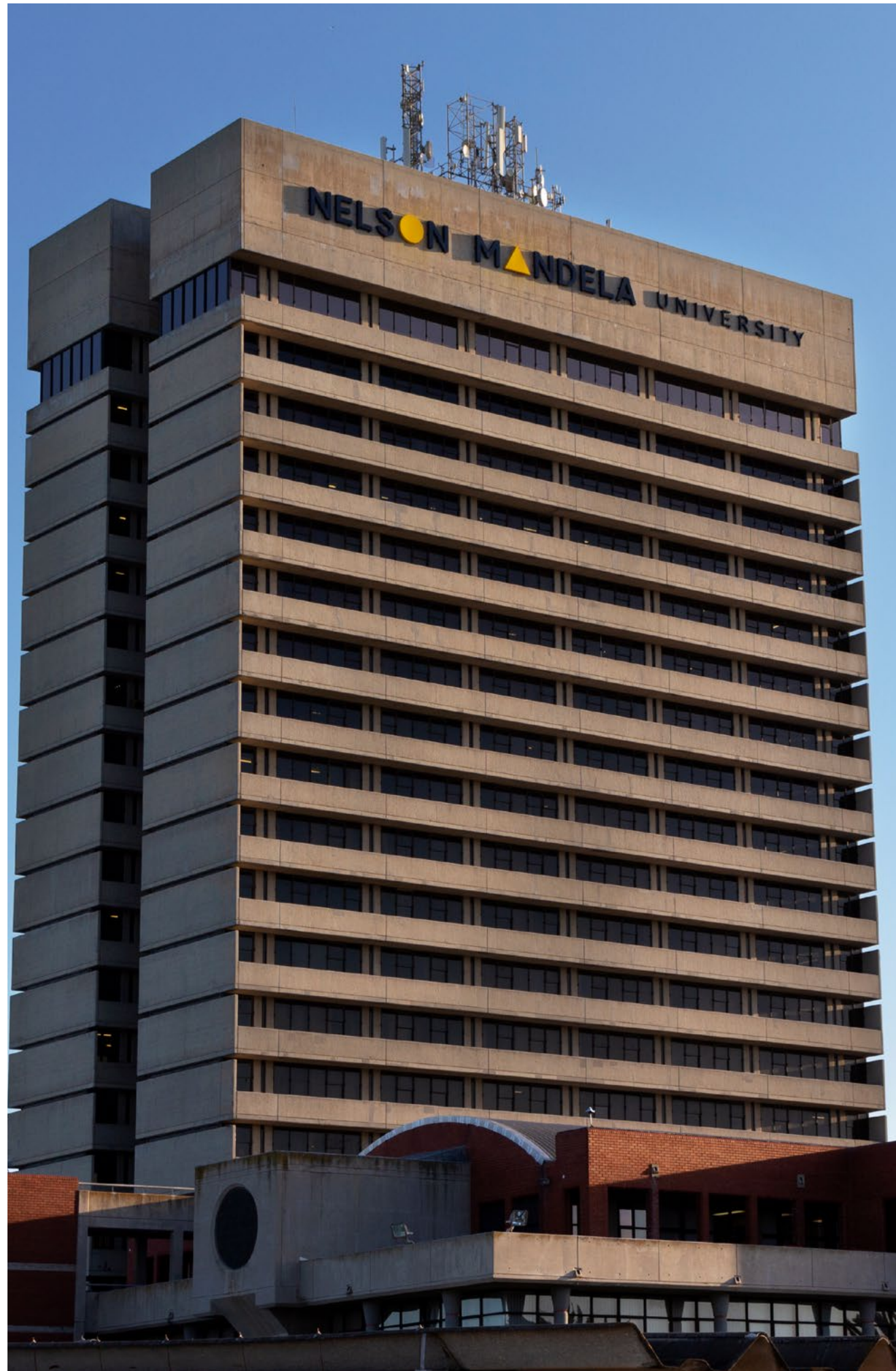
In short, the university must endeavour to live up to the values and ethos inherent in the Mandela name.

Mandela name

Extensive consultations were held early in 2017 to discover what this iconic name means to Mandela University staff and students, and more significantly how we, as a community, can “walk the talk” and live the legacy of our namesake in impactful and sustainable ways.

Transformation and the need for building social cohesion in addressing social justice and equality was highlighted time and again in these interactions, along with a collective call to experience the iconic statesman’s presence visually, through our actions and our artworks.

A Naming and Renaming programme symbolically signals the university’s commitment to transformation in naming places, spaces and buildings that enhance the Mandela name and entrench our growing intellectual identity.



... given the sensitivities associated with naming and renaming, the process will by its very nature remain fluid.

Roll-out of the Programme

The Naming and Renaming programme is anticipated to take at least 18 to 24 months for completion given the magnitude and complexity of the process.

The rationale, the supporting documentation and processes have already been communicated through various platforms, including internal memos via email, newsletters, articles in publications and a dedicated Naming and Renaming website. The Department of Student Governance liaised with students, who kick-started the process in 2017; line managers have engaged with their teams, and alumni have been made aware of the opportunities afforded by this exciting programme.

Covering seven campuses and dozens of spaces and places, the university has opted to take a phased, precinct-based approach.

The first phase is focused on the following:

- Port Elizabeth student residences
- New unnamed buildings and those with "number" names
- Individual spaces and places
- George Campus

However, given the sensitivities associated with naming and renaming, the process will by its very nature remain fluid. It is a process that is expected to gain traction and momentum as more

and more staff and students choose to make their voices heard about places and spaces that are important to them.

Sub-committees and champions

Various sub-committees have been, or will be, established to guide the process. They will draw key stakeholders together to begin discussions around the places and spaces that are in need of naming in line with the new Naming Policy.

Likewise, anyone who wishes to initiate engagement in their building, can do so by calling together relevant groups or individuals to brainstorm choices.

Governance processes

Regardless of the starting point, all proposed choices must go through an institutional approval process, starting with the Arts, Culture and Heritage Committee and its Naming and Renaming subcommittee, right through to the university's highest governing body, the Council.

Family or Trust Approval

While the correct governance approvals are being followed, permission from the family or trust after whom a building is to be named will be sought in a parallel process. This was the case with eight student residences (see page 11).

A Transformed Identity for Nelson Mandela University

The value of the Naming and Renaming process was recognised by Professor Sibongile Muthwa in a “think piece” dating back to December 2017, shortly before she was installed as Vice-Chancellor. These are excerpts from that article.

The University has reflected on the moral and social responsibility associated with embracing this name (Nelson Mandela), its implications for our identity and strategic choices, as well as transformations we need to make in order to align ourselves more appropriately to the name.

We realise that this is an intellectual and philosophical project of some significance, which the university has to undertake in communion and in consultation with all its stakeholders. It is in the co-creation of the desired identity of the institution that all its publics will feel they are an integral part.

This identity creation project will therefore need to challenge and transcend the widely accepted notions of tolerance and co-existence and ensure that all stakeholders truly feel they belong.

In doing so, we must reflect on:

The **essence of Mandela**, particularly as this relates to his leadership, his notion of social justice and the value of education in changing the trajectory of the marginalised and the vulnerable in society.

The **foundational scholarly mission** of the university – teaching and learning, research, as well as engagement – all being aligned to the distinct iconic brand of Madiba, and more broadly, the vision and values of a free, equal and democratic world that he stood and fought for, and

The **institutional culture, practices and the symbols** that will define our institution and help to break with the negative legacy of the past.

Finally, and in keeping with the mandate of our Council, we place a spotlight on the **governance ethos** of our Council.

The following excerpts focus on the essence of Mandela and our institutional culture.

1. The True ‘Essence’ of Mandela

“The truth is that we are not yet free; we have merely achieved the freedom to be free, the right not to be oppressed. We have not taken the final step of our journey, but the first step on a longer and even more difficult road. For to be free is not merely to cast off one’s chains, but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others. The true test of our devotion to freedom is just beginning.” Nelson Mandela *The Long Walk to Freedom*.

In his address at the launch of the new name, South Africa’s (then)

Deputy President, Cyril Ramaphosa, dedicated most of his speech to addressing the new consciousness that we have to inculcate to demonstrate that we are truly deserving of our name.

He challenged us to rethink the content and approach of our teaching and learning, our research agenda, to re-examine our attitude to Africa, and to pay attention to the lasting impression and resultant attributes of the students that have come through our University.

In particular, he challenged Nelson Mandela University to position its identity in line with Mandela’s ethos of love for humanity and his lifelong commitment to social justice.

2. On institutional culture and the symbols

Achille Mbembe posits that in order to move forward towards the positive side of history, we need to “demythologise and de-commission” the symbols of history that hold us back.

The time is now ripe to confront the political and class origins of the institutions that merged to make up our university, which have not been sufficiently debated. This negative legacy from the past, manifests in our public spaces, buildings, names, symbols, rituals and continues to influence our institutional culture.

A new generation of rising young academics at Nelson Mandela University has pointed this out in different ways and drawn attention to the need to confront our history honestly and openly if we are to truly break with the past and move forward on the developmental trajectory we are charting.

At our university this will have a lot to do with how we choose to leverage public spaces in a manner that communicates our vision of inclusion and commitment to humanity. The existing policy on naming is being revised to develop a progressive guide for both revisiting existing names and naming of future buildings and roads more in keeping with the vision of the university. (This was completed in 2018).

The project of naming and renaming of buildings and other public spaces provides us with a significant opportunity. The centenary celebrations of Nelson Mandela’s birth in 2018 provides the university with a unique opportunity and inspiring springboard on which to launch this work. The concept document being developed by management in consultation with students seeks to locate the naming and renaming project within a set of fundamental principles and criteria, which will help build social cohesion and not sow further division as well as reflect our new identity. This is going to require a new round of courageous conversations.

Transforming together – the Naming and Renaming Programme

The Naming and Renaming Project is driven by the university’s need to proactively transform to build a better future for all people.

Since our campuses are where teaching, learning and research take place and where our institutional culture gets its legitimacy, Nelson Mandela University has begun to review the names of places and spaces, especially those associated with the country’s discriminatory past.

The consultative manner in which this exercise is unfolding serves as a powerful signal of our collective commitment to building a university that is keenly aware of its past, and poised to engage with itself to work out, for itself, a new decolonial identity.

This exercise will frame the university’s character in line with our foundational values of humanity and social justice.

For us, the naming of buildings is more than a symbolic change. Rather, it is about opening up spaces for much deeper self-reflection and contemplation, to drive the change we want to see at our university. It is at the centre of our intentions to foster a culture of social inclusion.

Naming policy

A naming policy that considers the university’s vision, mission and values, and is compatible with the Constitution of South Africa and the ethos of our namesake, is in place to support this process. The policy was completed and approved after wide-ranging consultations in 2017. It provides firm foundations and guidelines for this exciting process, which is already under way in various stages across the university’s seven campuses.

Name change criteria

- The names should redress the imbalances of the past and seek to honour local people and the history of the area
- The names chosen should be of those who have contributed significantly to advance the cause of all South Africa’s peoples
- Names selected may represent places of significance and meaning; significant moments or events in our history; geographical features; indigenous flora or fauna in line with the university’s strategic priorities and our vision, mission and values
- Names should serve to build social cohesion and inspire present and future generations
- The primary users of the building or space should be given the opportunity to provide input on its name



Presently, colloquially known as the “new, new” Engineering building on North Campus, this iconic building will soon receive a name deserving of its significance to those who work and study here.

Everyone has a voice

In the spirit of inclusivity, transparency and engagement, everyone has a voice in the naming process.

The Naming and Renaming Project website is the go-to destination for all matters relating to this mammoth project.

The site includes:

- Background on the project
- Supporting documentation, such as the Naming and Renaming Policy, and the relevant naming criteria guidelines and principles

- The student residences project
- Future projects
- The roll-out schedule
- All internal Naming and Renaming email memos and associated updates
- Contact details

Have your say

The new site also offers everyone the opportunity to have their say.

Go to: naming.mandela.ac.za



Faculties will engage on a process of naming a key building of significance to them, such as the new Science Faculty building on South Campus.

These names must align with the university's new name in globally positioning us, especially academically.

Student residences

The university's Student Representative Council (SRC), as the independent voice of students at Nelson Mandela University, spearheaded the name change process for student residences, starting in Port Elizabeth.

A series of consultative meetings among students, starting in April 2018??, was held across student residences on the Port Elizabeth campuses to discuss, debate and decide on names that will take our dynamic African university forward. Names that will build our institutional culture, resonate with our Mandela ethos and inspire future generations were all proposed.

Their link with the Eastern Cape – the birthplace of Nelson Mandela and our university – and importance of education were also considered in the selection process.

Students commented: "Property should not carry empty names like 'Building 123' or Xanadu which is not significant in the context of Nelson Mandela or general climate of higher education in South Africa.

"Names should emphasise our African identity and reflect on our location in the Eastern Cape, including the use of names from local and indigenous languages. And those selected should have an unshaken record and reputation with regard to social justice."

Finally, the students agreed through the consultation and much debate, that those selected should resonate with human rights, engagement, decoloniality and cultural upliftment.

These names must align with the university's new name in globally positioning us, especially academically.

Each of the families or trusts whose names were selected were approached for permission and the necessary approvals. Each request was met positively, and plans are in place for the families and/or trust representatives to visit the residence after whom their loved one has been named, and to interact with the students living there.



“It is not about destroying the past, but about building a better future,”

– Michael Barry, head of the university's Arts, Culture and Heritage division



NEW RESIDENCE NAMES

For a better understanding of the significance of these names, see the following biographical sketches on each remarkable individual.

- **Claude Qavane Residence** (formerly Xanadu)
- **Sarah Baartman Residence** (Melodi)
- **Solomon Mahlangu Residence** (Unitas)
- **Lillian Ngoyi Residence** (Veritas)
- **Hector Pieterse Residence** (Letaba)
- **Charlotte Maxeke Residence** (Lebombo)
- **Sol Plaatje Residence** (Protea)
- **Yolanda Guma Residence** (Oceana)

Almost all residences on the university's Port Elizabeth campuses have been renamed including these on South and Second Avenue campuses.



Claude Qavane Residence (Xanadu)

A Young Leader par Excellence

1970–2002
Anti-apartheid activist, politician, intellectual
Birthplace: Port Elizabeth, Eastern Cape

“Qavane was deeply respected by liberation movements and political organisations of the day”



An “organic intellectual” dedicated to inclusive, non-racial and quality education, Claude Qavane achieved staggering political success before his untimely death in 2002.

Born to a working class family in Kwazakhele, he thrived academically and, fiercely determined to study further, became a petrol attendant to help fund his tertiary education.

A committed student activist and member of the South African Students Congress (SASCO), he was expelled from the then Port Elizabeth Technikon (now part of Nelson Mandela University) for his campaigns against financial exclusions and other discriminatory practices in higher learning institutions.

Undeterred, he enrolled at Vista University (now part of Nelson Mandela University) to read for an LLB degree.

Agent for change

While studying law, Qavane realised that mobilising young people in education had a direct impact on the type of society they would later create.

With this in mind, he joined the ANC Youth League and was part of its collective leadership in Port Elizabeth.

Qavane also played a major role in shaping Vista University’s educational system following his election as co-leader of the South African Student Congress local branch.

His firm grasp of the challenges facing education led to his joining the ANC’s education desk, where he participated in debates that led to the formulation of the Higher Education Act of 1997.

A love for learning

Qavane was deeply respected by liberation movements and political organisations of the day.

In 1999, owing to his wealth of knowledge – and ability to articulate the pressing political and educational issues of the day – he was invited to join the ANC Political Education and Training Unit, a position he held until his death.

Between 1999 and 2002, Qavane served on the South African Students Congress National Executive Committee and was elected president.

It was during this period that he helped shape the mergers, transformation and rationalisation of institutions within the Higher Education sector.

Sadly, ill-health plagued him, and Qavane died aged just 32.

Leaving a legacy

In Port Elizabeth, ten years after his death, Qavane was described at a memorial lecture in his honour as a Nelson Mandela-like intellectual with a “zest for education”.

ANC regional executive committee member Mabhuti Dano, who had worked with Qavane, told the audience that his colleague refused to be drawn into controversies and was “theoretically grounded politically”.

In this way, he said, Qavane was similar to both Mandela and former ANC Deputy President Walter Sisulu.

All three men understood that the ANC was founded on unity and so, for Qavane, unity was “sacrosanct”. His approach was always discursive, rather than aggressive.

Xanadu students firmly resolved to have their residence named for this young student icon – one who fought against oppression and tirelessly challenged the wrongdoings of society.

Sarah Baartman Residence (Melodi)

Daughter of our Soil

1789-1816
Khoisan heroine, South African symbol of colonial oppression
Birthplace: Eastern Cape

This distinguished heritage would later be the cause of her misfortune.



Born in the fertile Gamtoos River valley in the Eastern Cape, Sarah Baartman is one of our most significant forebears – a symbol of the resilience of women and the tragic consequences of colonialism.

With a Khoi father and San mother, she inherited the ancestral mantle of the first peoples of South Africa.

This distinguished heritage would later be the cause of her misfortune.

Early life

Baartman belonged to the Gonaqua subgroup of Khoikhoi who herded cattle in the Eastern Cape.

Raised on a colonial farm, at two years old she lost her mother, and in adolescence her father. At 16, Baartman was forced into slavery following the murder of her fiancé by the Dutch.

Taken to Cape Town as a domestic servant, she was renamed ‘Saartjie’ by her Dutch masters.

‘Hottentot Venus’

In 1810, an employment ‘contract’ was signed between Baartman, British ship surgeon William Dunlop and his partner Hendrik Cezar, brother of the slaver who had bought her.

Under the terms of this ‘contract’, Baartman would become a domestic servant in England and Ireland – and would be exhibited to the public.

She would receive money for these exhibitions and could return home after five years.

Historians doubt the authenticity of this document, given that Baartman’s culture did not keep written records or abide by Western laws, and the most obvious – she was illiterate.

Dark times

In England, curious audiences paid money to see Baartman stripped half-naked, and marvelled at her large buttocks and skin colouring.

Caged in a building in Piccadilly, famed for its display of strange and unusual specimens and objects, Baartman became a popular attraction among not only British, but European tourists.

There were, however, strong objections to her inhumane treatment. With anti-slavery sentiment gaining traction in Great Britain, Dunlop and Cezar faced trial for their deeds, but were not punished.

Baartman also gave testimony that she was not being mistreated, although her amended ‘contract’ reflected better working conditions, a larger share of profits and warm clothing.

A life cut short

The young woman would never return to South Africa alive.

In 1814, Baartman was sent to France, where she was exhibited, virtually naked, alongside a baby rhinoceros, and encouraged to perform circus-type tricks. It was here that she earned the abhorrent nickname, ‘Hottentot Venus’.

Baartman’s final humiliation was undergoing examination by naturalist George Cuvier, who concluded that she was a link between man and animal.

Following her death in 1816, aged 26, she was dissected and then forgotten for years.

Baartman was finally brought home and buried at Hankey in 2002.

We will remember

Melodi students felt that Baartman’s life was a resounding example of resilience and the historical oppression of women – a story that should never be forgotten.

Solomon Mahlangu Residence (Unitas)

Hero of the Revolution

1956–1979
Freedom fighter, revolutionary
Birthplace: Gauteng (then Transvaal)



Mahlangu's death intensified international anger against the apartheid government in South Africa.

Dedicated to the emancipation of his people, Solomon Mahlangu died a martyr to the cause of freedom.

As a young man, he watched, with growing concern, student protests against the introduction of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction in African schools.

He was just 20 years old when hundreds of pupils were killed and more than a thousand others wounded as security police pushed back against the activists.

The fight begins

This passionate revolutionary joined the ANC in 1976 – the year of the Soweto student protests - and left South Africa to be trained by the ANC's military wing, uMkhonto we Sizwe, at camps in Angola and Mozambique.

A year later, he returned as a fully-fledged cadre and skilled, armed soldier, prepared to assist with the protests.

In June 1977, Mahlangu, Mondy Motloutng and George "Lucky" Mahlangu were intercepted in Goch Street, Johannesburg.

During the ensuing shoot-out (although it was argued that Mahlangu had not fired a shot), two civilians were killed and two wounded. Mahlangu and Motloutng were arrested.

Standing trial

Mahlangu was charged under the Terrorism Act and with two further counts of murder. He pleaded not guilty.

Evidence was led showing that Mahlangu had entered the country together with 10 companions, bringing with them ANC pamphlets, arms, explosives and ammunition.

His fellow suspect, Motloutng, was declared unfit to stand trial, owing to severe assault during his arrest.

Mahlangu, however, was unable to escape his fate. Found guilty of murder and under the Terrorism Act, he was sentenced to death by hanging on 2 March, 1978.

Despite intervention from governments and organisations across the world – including the United Nations – Mahlangu was denied leave to appeal and was executed on 6 April, 1979.

Reportedly, his last words were: "My blood will nourish the tree that will bear the fruits of freedom. Tell my people that I love them. They must continue the fight."

Global outrage

Mahlangu's death intensified international anger against the apartheid government in South Africa.

At home, his execution triggered a groundswell of fresh support from anti-apartheid movements, activists and the general public.

Concerns about violence at Mahlangu's funeral forced the police to have him buried in Atteridgeville. Nearly two decades later, in 1993, his remains were reinterred at Mamelodi Cemetery.

Fitting tributes

In the same year, the Solomon Mahlangu Square in Mamelodi was named in his honour.

In 2005, Mahlangu was posthumously awarded the gold Order of Mendi for Bravery as national acknowledgement of his willingness to sacrifice his life for South Africa.

Unitas students asked that Mahlangu be honoured in their residence for his revolutionary courage.

His name would remind them of the importance of fighting against injustices faced by young South Africans today.

Lillian Ngoyi Residence (Veritas)

Politics with a Purpose

1911–1980
Politician, visionary, women's rights champion
Birthplace: Pretoria



The ANC recognised her talent for uniting people in a common cause.

On 9 August, 1956, a bold and determined politician marched 20 000 women to the Union Buildings in Pretoria.

The 45-year-old Lillian Ngoyi, gifted public speaker and rising star in the ANC and resistance circles, was protesting against the apartheid government law requiring women to carry pass books.

It was one of the largest demonstrations in the country's history. Witnesses spoke of Ngoyi's courage as she knocked on the Prime Minister's door to hand over thousands of petitions.

Months later, owing to her growing success as an anti-apartheid activist, Ngoyi was among 156 well-known figures arrested for high treason – and one of the accused to stand trial during the infamous, four-year-long Treason Trial.

Born to lead

One of six children, Ngoyi enrolled for a nurses' training course after school, but later worked as a clothing factory machinist for 11 years.

There, her taste for emancipation, human rights and politics was nurtured – she joined the Garment Workers' Union (GWU) and became a leading figure in the organisation.

A naturally strong, vivacious woman, Ngoyi was attracted to the ethos and spirit of the ANC, joining the organisation during the 1950 Defiance Campaign, and was among those arrested for using facilities reserved for white people.

The ANC recognised her talent for uniting people in a common cause. A year later, she was elected ANC Women's League president and became president of the Federation of South African Women (FEDSAW) in 1956.

Ngoyi was also the first woman to be elected to the ANC National Executive Committee.

International influence

Ngoyi's recognition extended beyond South Africa, with mounting global interest in her work.

A year before the anti-pass march, she attended the Women's International Democratic Federation conference and was invited to tour eastern bloc countries – including Russia and China – with a group of socialist delegates.

Her determination to create awareness of apartheid further influenced her meteoric rise to international recognition.

Ngoyi addressed protest gatherings in several countries, including England, where she spoke to a packed Trafalgar Square in London. Ever the rebel, she, together with colleague Dora Tamana, was once arrested while trying to reach Switzerland without a passport.

Hard times

The outspoken politician endured severe hardship as a result of her activities, spending much time in solitary confinement while imprisoned under the 1960 state of emergency.

Issued with banning orders 24 months later, she was forbidden for several years to attend gatherings, spent weeks in solitary confinement while jailed under the Detention Act and battled to earn an income.

The students of Veritas chose to honour Ngoyi for her unquenchable sense of justice, and as an enduring symbol of emancipation and the upliftment of women.

A transnational figure and tireless champion of political freedom and human rights, she died in 1980, aged 69.

Hector Pieterse Residence (Letaba)

A Symbol of Sacrifice

1963–1976
Young activist, anti-apartheid icon
Birthplace: Soweto

By 1976, students had had enough.



Few images capture as powerfully the courage of student anti-apartheid activism as the grainy, black-and-white photograph of dying Soweto schoolboy Hector Pieterse.

Taken by news photographer Sam Nzima during the Soweto Uprising on 16 June, 1976, it has become a global symbol of resistance – and a sobering reminder of the sacrifice and bravery of thousands of schoolchildren and students dedicated to upholding their basic rights to freedom and education.

13-year-old Pieterse was one of the first casualties of the uprising against the enforced use of Afrikaans in African schools. Later, investigations revealed that, despite claims to the contrary, Pieterse was killed by a police bullet aimed straight at him.

Tragically, Pieterse was one of the youngest protestors involved in the uprising – an explosive mass action movement driven by the youth and brutally resisted by security forces.

Agents for change

The Bantu education system, enacted in 1953, was branded by many as ‘gutter education’ and labelled as a direct attempt to create subservient Africans in an apartheid South Africa.

The decision to introduce Afrikaans – perceived as the ‘language of the oppressor’ – as a medium of instruction at African schools, triggered resistance among the youth, many of whom were inspired by anti-apartheid activist Steve Biko and the Black Consciousness Movement.

By 1976, students had had enough.

However, what started as a peaceful protest, observers said, soon snowballed into violence.

Records show that around 566 schoolchildren died during the

protests, with another young boy, Hastings Ndlovu, reportedly the first child to be shot.

Fateful day

June 16 is now observed as ‘Youth Day’ – a public holiday in South Africa – in honour of the children and teenagers who rose up against their government.

In the 1990s, a memorial to Hector Pieterse was erected in Orlando, Soweto – just two blocks from the place where he was shot.

Several years later, the Hector Pieterse Museum was opened behind the site and houses Sam Nzima’s photograph.

For those who were there, the heartbreak of witnessing Pieterse’s martyrdom is a bitter memory.

“I saw a child fall down. Under a shower of bullets, I rushed forward and went for the picture,” Nzima was quoted as saying.

“It had been a peaceful march, the children were told to disperse, they started singing [Nkosi sikilel’ iAfrika]. The police were ordered to shoot.”

Nzima’s photograph told a thousand stories – not least of the bravery of 18-year-old high school pupil Mbuyisa Makhubu, who picked up the dying Pieterse and rushed him to safety, Pieterse’s devastated sister Antoinette Sithole at his side.

Always in our hearts

The students of Letaba Residence unanimously chose Hector Pieterse’s name during the naming and renaming process.

His strength of character, sense of responsibility, unswerving commitment to change and unflinching resistance to oppression made him a natural choice, they said.

Charlotte Maxeke Residence (Lebombo)

A Woman Before her Time

1874–1939
Activist, pioneering black woman academic, visionary
Birthplace: Limpopo Province

“Maxeke fought on two fronts – politics and education”

“I’ve never regarded women as, in any way, less competent than men,” wrote Nelson Mandela, in a letter to Advocate Felicity Kentridge, from his prison cell in Robben Island.

Charlotte Maxeke – already a towering political figure in the year of Mandela’s birth – may certainly have been among the fine female figures who influenced his equitable attitude towards women.

A principled, fearless leader, Maxeke was a talented academic and one of South Africa’s first black women graduates.

From humble early education at a missionary school in the Eastern Cape, she went on to complete her schooling in Kimberley before qualifying as a teacher.

Breaking new ground

Maxeke’s musical talent led her to the United States as part of a church choir – and it was here that she enrolled for a Bachelor of Science degree at Wilberforce University, which cites her as the first black South African woman to obtain a degree.

After meeting her future husband Marshall Maxeke in the US, Maxeke returned to South Africa, where she started teaching – and nurtured a role in political activism.

A member of the African National Congress (ANC), Maxeke co-founded the Bantu Women’s League, which later became the ANC Women’s League.

“Maxeke was an early opponent of passes for black women,” writes Shamiya Densmore of Maxeke’s alma mater, Wilberforce University.

“In June, 1913, she led the first anti-pass campaign against the [then] union government ... she and 700 women ... burned their passes.

“She [also] wrote in Xhosa on social and political situations [affecting]



women. In 1918, Maxeke founded the Bantu Women’s League of SANNC (South African Native National Congress).”

Maxeke’s dedication to both civil and women’s rights blossomed during the 1900s, when she was involved in multiracial movements, supported women’s voting rights, protested against low wages and founded an African employment agency in Johannesburg.

Knowledge is power

Maxeke fought on two fronts – politics and education.

Solidly religious and backed by her beloved African Methodist Episcopal Church, she was committed to providing South African children with quality schooling.

Maxeke and her husband founded the Wilberforce Institute in Evaton, south of Johannesburg, which continues to thrive today.

In addition to teaching, politics and missionary work, Maxeke was instrumental in arranging study opportunities for African students at Wilberforce University.

Leading light

Maxeke wore many hats, and tired of none of them.

Her string of achievements included membership of the Joint Council of Europeans and Bantus, presidency of the Women’s Missionary Society, organiser of the Women’s Mite Missionary Society in Johannesburg, the first black woman probation officer for juvenile delinquents, and proprietor of the first employment agency in Johannesburg to be owned by an African.

Hospitals, schools, streets, and even a submarine, are named for this remarkable woman.

History celebrates Charlotte Maxeke as a phenomenal political force, aptly honoured as “Mother of Black Freedom in South Africa”.

Sol Plaatje Residence (SSV Protea)

The Wisdom of Words

1876–1932
Intellectual, journalist, politician
Birthplace: Orange Free State



Like most intellectuals, Plaatje was keenly aware of the plight of his countrymen under colonial rule.

Revolutions are fought not only with weapons, but with words.

For famed South African linguist, translator and author Sol Plaatje, the pen proved mightier than the sword in his struggle for the country's liberation from colonialism.

Co-founder and first Secretary General of the South African Native National Congress (SANNC) – later the African National Congress (ANC) – Plaatje was born with few advantages and received very little formal education.

Despite this, he thrived academically, studying under missionaries, taking civil service examinations and becoming fluent in at least eight languages, including German and Dutch, by his early twenties.

Boer war years

Such was his proficiency that Plaatje was sent to Mafeking as an interpreter on the eve of the Boer War.

There, he acted as court interpreter and clerk to the Mafeking administrator of Native Affairs during the Siege of Mafeking (1899-1900).

The field of journalism had always appealed, and in 1901 he established *Koranta ea Beoana* (Newspaper of the Tswana) – South Africa's first Setswana-English weekly.

More editorships and newspaper contributions followed, and Plaatje became respected in both media and political circles.

Political pressure

Like most intellectuals, Plaatje was keenly aware of the plight of his countrymen under colonial rule.

As SANNC secretary general, he appealed against the Land Act of 1913, which strangled African land ownership and occupation.

Following a failed SANNC meeting with the British government in 1914, Plaatje remained in London for several years, producing several books, working as a language assistant at London University and lecturing.

His iconic book, *Native Life in South Africa, Before and Since the European War and the Boer Rebellion* (P.S. King, 1916), was a highlight of his literary career.

Plaatje was determined to recruit, "through writing and lecturing, the liberal and humanitarian establishment to his side," writes Professor of History at the University of Botswana, Neil Parsons, in his foreword to the fourth edition of *Native Life* (1998).

Fruitful travels

Plaatje was an astute political observer, willing participant in reform movements and an enthusiastic traveller.

During his visits overseas, Plaatje met British Prime Minister, Lloyd George, spoke widely about his political concerns and travelled to Canada and the United States to meet the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP).

Homecoming

In 1923, Plaatje settled back home and divided his time between literary pursuits and covering parliamentary sessions in Cape Town, where he represented the ANC and African interests.

Plaatje was also a member of the African People's Organisation and joined ANC representatives in presenting African complaints against the pass laws.

As Protea is a senior residence, students wished to name it after a stalwart and intellectual giant who not only played a significant political role, but left an indelible literary legacy.

Yolanda Guma Residence (Oceana)

A Leading Light

1986–2015
Youth leader, academic, student activist
Birthplace: Kwazulu-Natal



She made a difference in the lives of ordinary South Africans.

Yolanda Guma was destined to lead an extraordinary life.

Her commitment to uplifting fellow students, powerful management skills and determination to succeed underpin her hero status among those who knew and admired her.

One of four children, Guma was born in Empangeni and emerged as a natural all-rounder at Pietermaritzburg Girls' High School, where she was chosen as a prefect, excelled on the sports field and matriculated with exemption.

Her resolve to use education as a tool for both personal and community upliftment bore fruit in 2005, when she enrolled for a Bachelor of Administration degree at the then Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU).

Student in action

Guma joined the South African Students Congress (SASCO) during her first year, and quickly rose through the ranks, becoming branch deputy secretary and then regional treasurer.

Her interest in student activism expanded to membership of the ANC Youth League, Black Management Forum and the South African Public Management Student Association.

Unsurprisingly, Guma was elected to serve on the Student Representative Council (SRC), in consecutive years, as treasurer general, deputy secretary general and secretary general, and later as treasurer general of the South African Union of Students and the National Executive Committee of SASCO.

Those who worked with her – both staff and students – described Guma as a true leader of her generation, playing an important role in shaping policies at Mandela University.

A beacon of hope for students during her term as SRC secretary general, she drove the engine room of the organisation, ensuring that it produced strategic ideas to disrupt and improve the status quo.

Rising star

After graduating, Guma continued to thrive at her alma mater.

She accepted a position as Community Based Training Planner at the university's Raymond Mhlaba Institute and gained valuable experience there for her next career move – personal assistant to the provincial secretary of the South African Democratic Teachers' Union (SADTU) in Kwazulu-Natal.

But the Eastern Cape was calling her home. Headhunted by the ANC Eastern Cape provincial office, Guma became personal assistant to the ANC provincial secretary; and, despite this demanding role, was drawn back to her student activism days and commitment to further education.

She enrolled at NMMU for an Honours degree in Public Administration and Management in 2014, committing her life – and career – to serving others in the public sphere.

While studying, she remained in her personal assistant post and was due to graduate in May, 2015.

However, in January of that year, Guma died unexpectedly.

Living legacy

Oceana Residence students unequivocally chose to rename their residence in honour of Guma, who lived there for the duration of her undergraduate degree.

The building will bear the name of one of its most beloved daughters – a fitting memorial to a young life well-lived.



‘Language, culture and religion are important indicators of identity’

– Nelson Mandela

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