

#tag

UNIZULU



UNIVERSITY OF
ZULULAND

#News4UsByUs

April - July 2015

GRAD 2015:
All the news and
pictures

GQONQA:
Meet the funniest
man on campus

INSPIRATIONAL:
Stories from
graduates who
beat all odds

**YETHU
SCHOLARS:**
Playing
big brother to
learners



#Editorial

The late American poet and civil rights activist Maya Angelou once said: *"You may encounter many defeats, but you must not be defeated. In fact, it may be necessary to encounter the defeats, so you can know who you are, what you can rise from, how you can still come out of it"*.

I was reminded of this quote when some of our graduates, who studied and excelled under trying circumstances, opened up to us about their experiences. Their stories show how they did not let adversity dictate their fate which is proof of how real determination will always triumph over adversity.

We realise there are many of our graduates out there with similar or even more inspiring stories of their personal journeys to success. But we could only profile just the few of these real life gladiators. We thank all the graduates and their families for having persevered whenever it seemed the mountain was insurmountable.

We wish them well as they venture into post university life. As the UNIZULU #Tag team we believe that these stories will serve as an inspiration to some who might be going through similar or even tougher challenges as you pursue your studies. Remember, it always seems impossible until it's done.

Also lookout for other stories on our sport teams and on students and organisations that continue to make us proud through hard work and service to others. We welcome the positive feedback and constructive criticism we received after our first issue was published in May and we have tried to improve on areas of concern.

One of the most common concerns raised about the first issue was that it was too thin. That has been addressed by adding four more pages to this issue. Helping us achieve this were two new contributors to the #Tag family: Kayakazi Gqabe and Anele Bhengu. We welcome them.

Many other students are set to join this team in the next few months as we strive to create a network of reporters on both of our campuses.

We hope that you will have fun reading this issue in the same way we had fun putting it together. And remember to send us your comments and suggestions to MbanjwaS@unizulu.ac.za

Editorial Team

**Normah Zondo (executive editor),
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Bheki Mbanjwa, Lydia Meyer, Mack Makhathini.**

Contributors

Kayakazi Gqabe and Anele Bhengu.



PAGE ONE
**"Our backgrounds
should not drag us
down"**



PAGE ONE
**Former high school
dropout aces degree
at 45**



PAGE TWO
**Security guard gets
capped, twice in one
week**



PAGE TWO
**From petrol
attendant to nurse**



PAGE THREE
**Yethu Scholars bridging
the gap between school
and university**



PAGE FOUR/FIVE
**Graduation 2015 in
Pictures**



PAGE SIX
**Enactus putting action
to words**



PAGE SEVEN
**Eager young Dj's who
are letting nothing stand
in the way of success**



PAGE EIGHT
**My journey to self-
discovery and
acceptance**



PAGE NINE
**Meet Gqonqa: the
funniest man on
campus**



PAGE NINE
**Boxers pack a serious
punch, scoop gold**



“Our backgrounds should not drag us down”

SPHAMANDLA GUMEDE

Being a mother of three and a young wife did not stop Nobuhle Maphumulo from pursuing her dream of getting a degree. In fact this made her work even harder at her studies.

Alongside 19 other top achievers, five selected from each of the four faculties, Maphumulo was honoured at the recent graduation ceremony in May. The 29-year-old BA Psychology and Philosophy graduate delivered a moving speech at the graduation ceremony in which she thanked her husband of seven years.

It was through the support of her husband Siboniso that she was able to come to the University of Zululand in 2012. While he was the one who paid for her first two years of study, Maphumulo is quick to point out that the support she got from her husband extended way beyond financial assistance. He ensured that their two children at the time were taken care of. “I thank my husband for all the support, in ensuring I achieved my objective...” The couple now has three children.

Growing up in a poor family, Maphumulo always knew that education would be her way out of poverty. It would also enable her to give back to her community of Bilanyoni in Dumebe.

Despite passing her matric with flying colours in 2003 she could not afford to go to University. However she always kept the dream alive and was encouraged to study by one of her former teachers Fikile Tshidzumba, who had taken her under her wing.

Coming from a needy family does not mean, you will be needy too, she said. “Our backgrounds cannot drag us down, but can make us stronger and be better prepared for our future”

During her final year in 2014 hardwork paid off as Maphumulo earned the Rector’s Fund. She is currently studying towards her honours degree in Psychology through a grant from the NRF.



Nobuhle Maphumulo

Former high school dropout aces degree at 45

#Tag REPORTER

Despite dropping out of school at the tender age of 16, only to go back and complete her matric when she was 35, Sandra Rohlandt did all she could to ensure that her dream to become a nurse was kept alive.

Finally at the age of 45 that dream is becoming a reality. In May she graduated with a Bachelor of Nursing Science Degree which she passed with distinction.



Sandra Rohlandt

After dropping out of school she worked at the post office for three years and after that for a doctor at Empangeni for five years. But all this time all she wanted to do was to be a nurse and she knew that she would need to go back to school for that to happen.

In 2005 she enrolled for matric part-time and to finance her studies she had to work as a care-worker in England for 3 months that year. “I came back and I wrote my matric in December that year. I passed and then I came to the University of Zululand to study Nursing. I had written my subjects in standard grade which made it hard for me to qualify but I was accepted on the basis of prior learning experience,” said Rohlandt who had done other short courses.

Life at the University was not easy for Rohlandt who was the oldest in class but she quickly adapted. “Another problem is that I was one of the few whites at the university so at first I thought I was going to be isolated. However I was accepted and I have since made many friends. The experience has really opened my eyes to different cultures”.

Another hurdle she had to overcome at University was her lack of finances. “I could only pay up to the first semester of my second year. I was ready to drop out but one professor who was impressed with my academic performance referred me to the NSFAS (National Student Financial Aid Scheme) office and they paid for my studies ever since,” explained Rohlandt.

In her first year she got two distinctions and “it just got better from there”.

Rohlandt now works at the labour ward at Greys Hospital in Pietermaritzburg as part of the obligatory one year community service. “I hope to get a permanent job after this. It does not matter if it is in the public or private sector as long as I do what I love which is nursing”.

The mother of three says her children are proud of her but they could not be part of her big day. “My two daughters (aged 20 and 18) are in New Zealand and the son (aged 11) is in Abu Dhabi. They were saying they wished they were here”

The full list of top achievers from each faculty:

Education	Arts
* Gertrude Mntungwa	* Nobuhle Maphumulo
* Nelisiwe Nzima	* Botho Mofokeng
* Thembisile Khoza	* Ncebakazi Jili
* Sibusiso Dlamini	* Alida-Michell Visagie
* Nkanyiso Sithole	* Sipiwe Mthembu
Science and Agriculture	Commerce, Administration & Law
* Sandile Zikhali	* Vumani Nhlapo
* Bhukumuntu Mbatha	* Sithandazile Gabellah
* Hlobisile Khanyi	* Nomfundo Khanyile
* Phelo Duma	* Lucy Ndlangamandla
* Sphamandla Magubane	* Gugulethu Maphisa

Security guard gets capped, twice in one week

BHEKI MBANJWA

When Ntombi Mathe was hired as a security guard at the University of Zululand in 2007 she wasted no time and registered for a degree the following year. Seven years later her hard work is paying off.

Not only did Mathe graduate at the last graduation ceremony but she did so twice, in different disciplines. On Monday, 11 May she received her Higher Diploma in Community Work and four days later she was back at the King Bhekuzulu Hall to receive her honours degree in Public Administration.

While she savoured the moment she believes there is still a long way to go having now enrolled for a Master's Degree in Community Work.

"My goal is to get a Doctoral degree. It is all about bettering my life and I would also like to work at the University of Zululand in another capacity, maybe in Human Resources because I have a passion for that field".

Studying while also working as a security guard has not been easy as it meant she had to study after her shifts. "Sometimes I would attend classes feeling tired after working the night shift. But because of the drive that I have I knew I had to do it".

She has also had to juggle her studies with her duties as a mother.

The mother of four thanked her family for being very supportive of her. "My mother and sisters always made sure that my children are taken care of".

Her dedication has inspired her oldest son who is also a student at UNIZULU. "He has a BSC degree from UNIZULU and has now enrolled for a degree in computer science. I think I have inspired my children. I know they are proud of me".

She also thanked fellow students. "Most of them are very supportive in that even when I cannot attend lectures due to work commitments they would take notes for me and bring me up to speed with the lectures".



Ntombi Mathe pictured with Professor J.D Thwala, the Acting Dean for the Faculty of Arts, as she received her higher diploma in community work



Registrar Dr Gift Vinger drapes the hood over Ntombi Mathe's shoulder as she received her Honours Degree in Public Administration

PICTURES BY: SPHAMANDLA GUMEDE

From petrol attendant to nurse

BHEKI MBANJWA

For three years Thulani Dlamini had to live on a staple diet of bread and polony just to save enough money to register at the University of Zululand.

That was between 2006 and 2009 when he worked as a petrol attendant in Ixopo.

But that is all in the past for Dlamini who graduated in May with a degree in Nursing Science.

After the graduation he recounted his journey to success saying he hoped it would inspire many others who are faced with trying circumstances.

After finishing matric in 1998, Dlamini was unemployed for eight years, only surviving on piece jobs in his hometown of Bulwer.

Although he had passed his matric with exemption his mother, who was a farmworker at that time, could not afford to send him to University.

It was only in 2006 that he found formal employment as a petrol attendant in Ixopo.

"I got the job through my brother who is a truck driver. I took the job and moved to Ixopo. In the beginning I was earning about R500 a fortnight. I had to pay rent, give some money to my mother and save some for university and this meant that even KFC was a luxury as I only survived on bread and polony".

Three years later in January 2010, when he was earning about R1300 a fortnight he resigned from his job feeling he had enough saved.

"I had saved R10 000 in those three years and I knew I wanted to come to the University to study. Being a petrol attendant was never going to be my destiny," Dlamini said.

In 2010 he enrolled for a BSC foundation course at the University of Zululand. "It was difficult because I had never even done physics before". Also making life more difficult for Dlamini was the financial pressure he was under.

"I could not find residence on campus and I had to rent a room off-campus". With the help of his pensioner mother he pulled through and the following year he registered for the four-year degree in Nursing Science which he completed last year.

He is now doing his community service at Estcourt Hospital. He hopes that his story would inspire other UNIZULU students especially those who do not come from well-off families.



Former Petrol attendant Thulani Dlamini now works at Estcourt Hospital

Yethu Scholars: Bridging the gap between school and university

SPHAMANDLA GUMEDE

When two University of Zululand students realised that many of the students coming to University were not equipped with the information to help them through the transition, they felt it was time to act.

That was in 2013 when Bongani Mchunu and Syanda Mnguni, who at the time were also first year students, decided to form a Non-Profit organisation known as Yethu Scholars.

The organisation's main task was to bridge the gap that exists between schools and Tertiary institutions by offering career guidance to schools around the University of Zululand.

Two years later Yethu Scholars has grown tremendously, with its members having forged partnerships with local councillors and education officials which in turn resulted in them sometimes being called in to offer training even to career guidance teachers.

"What we wanted to emphasize is that the journey to finding a job starts as early as Grade Nine because even your subject choices at that level will eventually determine the career path you take. We call it education before education, and because we are students we know exactly what is currently happening at the university and we can therefore keep it fresh" explained Mnguni.

Mnguni himself was a victim of a lack of proper career guidance which led to him enrolling for an electrical engineering course at an FET College after matric, something he clearly regrets now. He later

made the switch to UNIZULU where he is studying towards a degree in Environmental Planning and Development. He and other members of Yethu are determined to ensure the same fate does not befall other young people.

Despite resources being scarce, this has not stopped the determined organisation from carrying out its mandate. The NPO's 18 members sometimes have to club together their pocket monies so as to keep the fires burning.

Every month each member of Yethu has to contribute R10, this helps them to get around and to buy food during trips. However it is at the beginning of the year, during the registration period at UNIZULU that members of Yethu Scholars have to dig deep into their pockets. They have to sacrifice their pocket money so as to feed and even house some of the students who find themselves stranded due to having made the trek to the University not equipped with the necessary information.

One such student is Zukiswa Shibase who earlier this year travelled from uMzimkhulu in the lower south coast thinking that her conditional offer equalled a firm offer from the University. In her mind she was going to register and get accommodation on that day. When that did not happen she felt helpless. That is when Yethu stepped in and provided her and others with accommodation and also advised her on another career path. Now she is studying BA Correctional Studies.

Another UNIZULU student Nikita Chamane had applied



for a Nursing and Psychology courses. However to her disappointment she was never accepted for these.

But through the assistance of Yethu, she was advised on the change of mind process which she did. Now, a BA student, Chamane cannot think of life outside the creative arts. She now holds the position of Deputy Chairperson for Creative Arts.

The Yethu scholars' marketing director, Candith Mashego said as a first year student and a new member of the organisation she is learning a lot each day. "The idea is also that when we go back home during the holidays we adopt five or more pupils and that is how the message of

Yethu is spreading".

The Yethu founders, Mchunu (Chairperson) and Mnguni (Secretary General) said they would like to see their organisation spread to other areas.

Already Yethu is linking pupils with students at other tertiary institutions. While the organisation has only 18 members, Mchunu says one would be forgiven to believe that there were hundreds of members.

"We all have shared responsibilities in the organisation," he said adding that as founders they also lead by example which is motivation enough for other members to work hard.





Graduation 2015 in pictures



Enactus putting action to words

ANELE BHENGU

To members of the UNIZULU chapter of Enactus addressing skills shortages and creating employment is not just another slogan but a way of life.

A visit to some of their projects is testament enough of how members of this organisation are not afraid to roll up their sleeves for the benefit of others.

Enactus is the international student organisation, operating in universities in 36 countries around the world.

According to Kwanele Mkhwanazi, the Enactus UNIZULU team president the organisation brings together students, academics, business leaders and any other prominent people who have an interest in empowering communities through entrepreneurship

“We are living in difficult times and Enactus offers a platform for students who care about the society and environment to step in and lend a hand.”

Using community outreach projects, UNIZULU students, at both campuses, are taking action in addressing issues affecting many poor surrounding communities.

All their projects are aimed at changing people's lives by creating sustainable employment opportunities and in turn alleviating poverty.

For example through the Ikhwezi Initiative, Enactus UNIZULU has provided employment to eight people from eSikhawini.

The team assisted this group in starting up their business and has also helped them in getting the necessary equipment, skills and knowledge for running the business.

Mkhwanazi further explained that the team has adopted triple bottom line projects in response to the core objectives of Enactus: to improve the social, economic and environmental aspect of the communities.

“We have diverse participants. Our projects reach out to men and women, the young and the old,” he said.

One of the flagship projects of Enactus UNIZULU, Investing In Young Entrepreneurial Minds (IYEM) seeks to create young entrepreneurs as a means of also creating employment for young people.

Through this project 10 local schools have each been given a grant of R 1000 as start-up capital as part of a competition to identify profitable business ventures.

Through empowering others, the students who are part of Enactus UNIZULU are also reaping benefits as they gain various skills in the process.

“We have had students tell of how - before joining Enactus - they were not able to stand up and talk in front of a few people but can now chair meetings and even manage projects”.

Mkhwanazi continued: “We mentor students to become better individuals and

better citizens who can lead organisations and businesses”.

Mkhwanazi however stressed that members of Enactus expect nothing in return and do what they do because of the good feeling “that comes with helping people”

“We are motivated by empowered people”.

ENACTUS PROJECTS:

Ithubalethu – Works with people who farm vegetables and further process into secondary stage products, such as their most successful product – the vegetable atchar.

Investing in Young Entrepreneurial Minds – addresses the challenge of youth unemployment by transferring relevant entrepreneurial skills to the young people

Nyonikayiphumuli Agricultural Primary Co-operative Limited – seeks to create a rose geranium and rosemary enterprise that will supply the flavour and fragrance market with organically produced essential oils.

Artisans Upliftment Initiative - Assists handymen and artisans to start and operate their own small businesses which in turn generate employment. Currently focuses in the manufacturing of bricks and blocks.

Maritime Project - Focuses on farming indigenous and edible fish, respectively, in Matigulu and Port Dunford.

Ikhwezi Initiative – Has assisted in the establishing a bakery which has consequently alleviated poverty and provided employment

Umhlathuze Informal Traders Development Initiative – Empowers vendors in the uMhlathuze area through the use of technology helping them run their businesses efficiently.

The Road to Light Project – Aims to generate electricity through a compressible speed bump electricity generator using the movement of cars on the road.



DJs Native and Sneza spinning their way to success

KAYAKAZI GQABE

They are not only just DJs but they produce, work and study on top of everything else. They have toured the province of KwaZulu-Natal, shared the DJ booth with some of the most DJs in the country.

Malibongwe Khuzwayo aka Native and Sneza whose real name is Sinethemba Mkhwanazi are close friends but competitors in their career path. They are both doing their final year in BA Communication Science and Psychology.

Sneza is not only a DJ but is also an event organizer, jam sessions compiler and the founder of Soul Entertainment, a small business based in Nqutu.

Native on the other hand started DJ-ing professionally in 2012 doing events in different clubs across the province.

He later fell in love with production, producing Deep House tracks.

His best event by far was going to 'Polokwane' a welcoming community captivated by deep and soulful house alongside with the likes of Mobi Dixon, Black Coffee, Ezra and a couple of other artists.

With hard work and dedication Native plans to create his own band one day, and since he is a Communication Science student he also plans on establishing a diverse media company for artists such as musicians, actors and painters.

"I'm deeply in love with music and learning to mix tracks came easily to me because of the passion I have for not only music but for learning as well" said Sneza. Deep, Soulful, Dub step, Deep Tribal House genre is the kind of music he plays.

"All our sets are progressive; we start with the chilled Soulful tunes progress to deep house and all the way to deep tribal house music. It all depends on the response one gets from the crowd, as DJs we've learnt to feed off from the crowd."

Keeping the crowd happy at all times but still remaining original and true to our kind of music is very important to us" said the DJs. "We strongly believe that one has to enjoy the music they play so that the crowd feels the same through the music".

A Coca Cola event back in 2009 late September, was the first biggest event Sneza played at where he shared the DJ booth with top acts such as DJ Bongos and DJ Sox, "I'll never forget



DJ Native

how nervous I was when I was about to start my set said Sneza" laughing out loud.

"Here on campus we started an organization for the Deep House Lovers called UNIZULU Deep House Lovers we deal with events based strictly on deep house music, campus DJ's get to play and share experiences with other big names in Deep House and compile mix tapes for the fans to keep them up to date with latest music on social media".

Sneza continued saying "Last year we partnered with 60's Club to host students nights every Friday and we still wish to do it again this year hopefully get to



DJ Sneza

partner up with closer clubs but yeah we will let #Tag know of our future plans".

Sneza has ambitions of DJ-ing alongside international DJs.

The two DJs who are also close friends have learnt to manage their time well by giving undivided attention to their studies during the week, while they deal with bookings and events that come with being an artist.

Sneza and Native are very committed to their studies and are definitely looking forward to graduating next year.

Get in touch with Native and Sneza on:
Facebook: Malibongwe Native Khuzwayo
Instagram: Realnativelive
Facebook page: "Deejay Sneza"
Mixed tapes: podomatic @'DJSneza (SA)
Cell no: 076 073 4606
Email: veyanesneza@gmail.com

#OurReaders



My journey to self-discovery and acceptance

Discovering and accepting who you are is a step towards attaining wisdom, writes Kayakazi Gqabe.

Tall, fair complexion, and freckled, that was me. Since the early stages of grade six in primary school throughout mid high school I resented being tall and fair.

The slightest remark about my physique would quickly send me on a journey of self-doubt. However as years passed, the universe forced me to realise that my height, freckles, and complexion are what make me unique.



Kayakazi Gqabe.

The world opened up to me and I then realized that if as a person you base your self-worth on the comparisons and

social pressures, you'll never be capable of self-love.

Knowing that I had all these "imperfections" and there was nothing I could do about them led me into accepting that they were permanently there.

These imperfections are part of who I am.

When I made peace with my inner being about my "imperfections" and "flaws", I became content with everything. The outer world and the mirror accepted me because I had accepted myself. I allowed the Lord to grant me the confidence to walk in his original design for my life.

Modelling played a major role in boosting my confidence and self-esteem; it allowed me to embrace my height and freckles. It also allowed me to celebrate my womanhood and rejoice in the gift I am to the world. Embracing who you are is about living the core truth about your life.

With modelling what I thought were imperfections became a plus.

I still remember vividly what Sphiwo, who was my manager at a modelling agency once said to me.

"Miss Kay we going to have to change those heels, you are a ramp model so with you the taller the better or you won't be taken seriously with those type of stilettos (five inch)," he said.

With that he pushed me to wear nine inch heels but most importantly he taught me to be that tall unique girl, while feeling sexy and proud.

Having gone through this experience of self-doubt and later discovering myself I now appreciate that I am wonderfully made.

I am God's image; the person I am is a representation of Him within me. Wasting a second not loving myself and appreciating his creation which is me, is an insult to Him.

I was created not fit in or to bow down to the standards of this world but to be a valuable addition to mankind and a living expression and example of my Creator's heart.

***Kayakazi is a third year Communications Science student and part-time model. She is also a contributor to UNIZULU #Tag**

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Meet Gqonqa: the funniest man on campus

#tag REPORTER

“Everyone at home is crazy, I mean everyone including my mom and dad. We just laugh about any situation. We find something funny even in the most unfortunate of situations”. This is how Gqonqa, who is probably the funniest man on campus, retorts when asked where his passion for stand-up comedy comes from.

But comedy is no joke to the 24-year-old Durbanite whose real name is Sbongiseni Mpanza. “I recently got paid for a comedy gig. That meant I did not have to bother my parents for money as I could buy my own groceries and other stuff,” he says.

While he grew up in a family where humour was appreciated, it was not until he came to the University of Zululand that he started nurturing his talent as a stand-up comedian.

“When I was young I really was into writing poetry and then I

dabbled in rap. But when I came to the University I was introduced to comedy by Ndabe who also asked me to host sessions of Barethought, the poetry club at the University. I would listen to the poets and then poke fun at them and the experience was very good”

From then he never looked back. Besides hosting the poetry sessions on Thursdays, Gqonqa has performed to capacity crowds at the King Bhekuzulu Hall including the Freshers Ball and UNIZULU Got Talent events last year.

He has also achieved success outside the university having featured in shows alongside the likes of Msizi Shembe and Justice Kubheka.

This has gotten him so much recognition from fellow students so much so that he says that now he has to be an hour early when coming to campus as there are

always students along the way who will want to chit chat with him.

However it is only now that he is taking comedy seriously. But there is also a more serious side to Gqonqa and this can be heard every Saturday on Shine FM, the local community radio station, where he hosts a youth developmental show.

“I research topics for discussion and invite guests who can talk about those topics. These are topics that young people can relate to”.

He says doing this kind of show ties in with his studies because it is about “developing people socially as well”.

His good upbringing shows in his comedy as he prides himself of keeping it clean. “There is no vulgar involved. I always keep it clean,” he emphasizes. Most of his jokes are about himself he says. “I spend a lot of time with



Sbongiseni Mpanza

myself it makes me understand where I am in life I can prioritise and see what else there is to do,” he says.

His dream now is to grow as a comedian and also to host major comedy events. “I want to be recognised by the whole of South Africa,” he boldly proclaims.

Female Boxers pack a serious punch, scoop gold

SPHAMANDLA GUMEDE

Three female students from the University of Zululand (UNIZULU) have qualified for the national boxing championships to be held in Cape Town this month, after scooping gold at the KwaZulu-Natal Championships.

The three students, Welile Zondi (81+kg), Nomcebo Mpungose (60 kg) and Zamafuze Ngcobo (52kg) won the rights to represent KZN after winning gold in their respective divisions at the provincial tournament held on June 12.

Zondi, who won her fight with a knock out, was named the best newcomer of the tournament. Ngcobo, who won on points, was also crowned the best female boxer of the tournament.

UNIZULU had sent a total of five boxers to the provincial tournament. The team included the three female boxers and two male boxers. The two male boxers Lindani Buthelezi (69kg), Manqoba Ntshangase (56kg) got silver after losing on points in the finals.

All five boxers made it to the provincial championships after excelling at the uThungulu Elite Boxing Championship tournament held on May 30.

The boxers won gold at the tournament, held in Nkandla which was a qualifier for the KZN Boxing Championships.

At that tournament three other boxers from UNIZULU lost in the finals and got silver medals while three others got Bronze medals.

Star boxer, Sbonelo Ndzimandze could not compete in the tournament as he is a Swazi national.

Ndzimandze is one of the most accomplished boxers on campus boasting accolades which include winning the first

prize in the Swaziland national championships in 2013.

He has now qualified for the World Varsity games this year while he is also looking forward to representing his country in the All Africa Games and the 2016 Olympics in Rio de Janeiro.



Members of the UNIZULU Boxing team who participated in the provincial championships earlier this month are (from left to right) Nomcebo Mpungose, Manqoba Ntshangase, Welile Zondi, Lindani Buthelezi, Bheki Mngomezulu (coach) and Zamafuze Ngcobo



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