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UCT to honour class of graduates who will forever be an example of strength

INSPIRATIONAL STORIES: [Read remarkable stories of graduates who defied odds.](#)

SOUND BITE: [Listen to an audio version by UCT spokesperson, Elijah Moholola.](#)

The University of Cape Town will honour “students’ remarkable resilience” in the face of COVID-19 challenges as well as three distinguished individuals – Guy Harris, Dr Norbet Ndjeka and Dr Yogapragasen Pillay – next week.

This will be during the university’s virtual July graduation ceremonies to be held from 12 to 19 July. UCT Chancellor Dr Precious Moloi-Motsepe will officially confer degrees on all graduands, including one posthumous award.

Vice-Chancellor Professor Mamokgethi Phakeng said: “The university’s annual graduation is the highlight of our calendar. We celebrate and honour our students’ remarkable resilience and academic achievements. The past year leading up to the upcoming graduation has been full of unprecedented challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which is still very much with us.

“We are very proud of students who completed their study programmes in 2020 and are scheduled to graduate. While these graduation ceremonies will once again be held virtually, our enthusiasm for celebrating our students has never waned. We are inspired by this class of graduates who will forever be an example of strength within the UCT community.”

UCT will stage the ceremonies through online broadcast events, which will be available for viewing on the university’s social media platforms – [YouTube](#), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#) – as well as through the [UCT graduation web page](#) and on the [UCT News website](#).

The ceremonies will include the awarding of the Vice-Chancellor's medal as well as two honorary doctorates. The UCT book award, fellowship and distinguished teacher awardees will be announced at the ceremonies.

Harris, a UCT alumni and a qualified chartered accountant, will receive the Vice Chancellor's medal, which will be awarded at the Commerce ceremony. Harris is passionate about promoting and supporting entrepreneurship and tackling unemployment through entrepreneurship.

The first honorary doctorate will be conferred on Ndjeka at the Health Sciences ceremony and the other on Pillay at the Humanities ceremony.

Ndjeka has been the director of Drug-Resistant Tuberculosis (DR-TB), Tuberculosis (TB) and HIV at the National Department of Health (NDoH) since 2009. His primary accomplishments have been in the area of DR-TB. His exceptional achievements in the treatment of DR-TB have resulted from a unique blend of public service, activism and research.

Over the past 25 years at the NDoH, Pillay served under all five health ministers, moving through the ranks from director for systems development to deputy director-general, responsible for health programmes. He was an outspoken champion in the fight for health equity and improved health delivery for all South Africans.

The faculty ceremonies are as follows:

Date	Faculty	Time
12 July	Commerce	18:00
13 July	Engineering & the Built Environment	18:00
14 July	Health Sciences	18:00
15 July	Humanities	18:00
16 July	Law	18:00
19 July	Science	18:00

ENDS

Issued by: UCT Communication and Marketing Department

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