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Over 250 staff celebrated at UCT Annual Awards

More than 250 University of Cape Town (UCT) staff members were recognised and celebrated for their contribution to the university's high standards of service, education and research at the UCT Annual Awards.

The university hosted the virtual UCT Annual Awards on Monday, 6 December 2021.

Vice-Chancellor Professor Mamokgethi Phakeng said: "The UCT Annual Awards event, now in its fourth year, is not only one of the most prestigious celebratory events on the university's calendar. It is also an opportunity for the UCT community to come together and celebrate the many achievements and milestones attained during the course of the year.

"It is thanks to staff that UCT is about to complete a second academic year under the many stresses COVID-19 has put on all of us; that students and staff members continue to receive the support they need; and that we remain Africa's top university on all five major rankings."

- [Watch the full awards ceremony.](#)
- [Read the full communication by the Vice-Chancellor.](#)

Phakeng reiterated that although the commitment, dedication and hard work by all staff is noticed, greatly appreciated and worthy of recognition, for this particular event staff members were honoured in the following categories: Ad Hom Promotions (106 recipients), Alan Pifer Award (two recipients), Distinguished Teacher Awards (two recipients), Long Service Awards (153 recipients) and Vice-Chancellor's Awards for Excellence in Transformation, Service Excellence and Global Citizenship (five recipients).

Vice-Chancellor's Excellence Awards

Nominations for these awards are made by staff in recognition of the excellence they see in colleagues' work.

"I was amazed this year by the high number of nominations we received. These nominations demonstrate two important facts about UCT colleagues. The first is how many have been performing at an exceptionally high standard during a year of extreme pressure. The second remarkable thing I have noted is how many have taken the time to acknowledge the hard

work of colleagues by drafting a nomination to honour them. This shows true collegiality and community spirit across the UCT workplace,” said Phakeng.

The **Global Citizenship Award** recognises individuals or teams who have demonstrated excellence in living out the UCT mission through areas of service, the pursuit of knowledge, the dignity of the human being and contributions to the common good. The recipients of the Global Citizenship Award are Liesl Hermanus for her service to the Hannover Park community, and Anne Isaac for her leadership in countering sexual and gender-based violence.

The **Service Excellence Award** celebrates exceptional or significantly improved services to UCT’s staff and students. This year there were also two recipients: the Health Sciences Research Office for enabling the Faculty of Health Sciences research enterprise; and UCT Libraries for providing virtual services in response to the COVID-19 emergency.

The **Transformation Award** honours a faculty or department that has taken remarkable steps to help drive institutional culture change. This year the award went to Lara Foot and the Baxter Theatre Centre for the Zabalaza Theatre Festival.

Ad Hominem

Following a vigorous process of assessing not only staff’s performance in teaching, supervision, research output, administration, and leadership, but also participation in socially responsive activities, 106 recipients received Ad Hominem promotions this year. These include scientific and technical officers, senior research officers, chief research officers, senior clinical educators, senior lecturers, associate professors, and professors.

Alan Pifer Award

Two outstanding academics were bestowed with the prestigious Alan Pifer Award: the Vice-Chancellor’s annual prize in recognition of outstanding socially responsive research that has demonstrated relevance to the advancement and welfare of South Africa’s disadvantaged people. The recipients are [Professor Catherine Ward](#), of the Department of Psychology, in recognition of her exceptional dedication to the prevention of violence, especially against children across the South African society; and [Professor Ambroise Wonkam](#), the director of Genetic Medicine of African Populations, in recognition of his work in describing novel variant genes relevant for congenital hearing impairment in populations of African ancestry.

Distinguished Teacher Award

Alongside socially responsive research, UCT is also committed to excellence in teaching and learning. The Distinguished Teacher Award is the highest accolade awarded to teaching staff at all levels within the university. This year two outstanding teachers, [Dr Bodhisattva Kar](#) and [Dr Marlon Swai](#), were honoured based on nominations by their students and colleagues.

Long Service Awards

It is rare to find an employer whose staff stay onboard for as long as 45 years. The awards honour staff for having been with UCT for 15 years (103 awardees), 25 years (42 awardees), 35 years (seven awardees), and 45 years (two awardees). Two staff members, Trevor Adams and Peter Jaftha (both from the Faculty of Health Sciences) were honoured for having served UCT for an amazing 45 years.

- Read more about the awards on the [UCT Annual Awards feature page](#).

ENDS

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