



The US Witsie



Wits Fund Newsletter August 2023

witsfund.org

Wits turned 100 in 2022. Learn more [here](#).

With the re-opening of Zola Clinic, we are celebrating a giant step forward for the provision of cutting-edge oral health care in Africa. The Wits Fund board was grateful to facilitate this project, made possible by a generous donation from the Stanley, Marion, Paul & Edward Bergman Family Foundation as part of Wits University's Centenary celebrations.

The Zola Clinic will impact under-served families for generations, as well as being a sustainable model for the future expansion of oral healthcare to similar community sites in South Africa and beyond.

**SOARING IN SOWETO - BERGMAN FAMILY GIFT
WILL IMPACT SOUTH AFRICANS FOR GENERATIONS**



Pictured above L-R: Prof Shabi Madhi, Dr Marion Bergman, Prof Judith Bruce, Prof Zebulon Vilakazi

The Zola Wits Dental Clinic is a refurbished and re-equipped 15-chair, state-of-the-art facility for community-based training and clinical services to the Zola and surrounding Soweto community in Gauteng Province, South Africa.



Construction was completed in January and the facility was officially opened to the public on 1 August 2023. The dental clinic is staffed by at least two dentists as well as oral hygienists, dental assistants, and specialist dentists on a rotational basis, supervising around 12 students per rotation.

The project was made possible by a generous donation from the Stanley, Marion, Paul and Edward [Bergman](#) Family Foundation to Wits University's [Centenary](#) campaign.

A delegation comprising donors, senior executives and academics from the University, Faculty and School of Oral Health Sciences, the Johannesburg Health District, and Zola Community Health Committee, visited the new building in January.

Speaking at the walk-through of the facility, donor [Dr Marion Bergman](#) said: "It's truly the realization of a dream to be here. The thought process that began this project started at least five years ago. I feel so much gratitude that this was able to happen and that we came to this moment. I'm totally confident that the community will use this clinic in the way it's supposed to be used and that it will be beneficial."

The multi-year, multi-million-rand gift to the University comes following in-depth consultations between the Bergman family and Wits University on how best to support the work of the [School of Oral Health Sciences](#), especially in expanding its footprint of service to high-density, low-service areas.

Wits Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Professor Zebon Vilakazi translated the words of community representative, Mr Themba Twala, who began with thanking Prof. Vilakazi and the Bergman family very much for their contribution to the clinic, and Wits for choosing Zola for their donation to such a clinic. He carried on to say:

"This clinic will not only serve this community, but will help train students who will serve the whole country. In our culture, when someone is given a piece of bread, they go down on their knees to show their deep appreciation [and that they are grateful] for the rest of their lifetime. In this case, the clinic will serve not only this [current] generation, but many more lifetimes and generations to come, and motivate students to join this [dental] profession, for which we are grateful."

Professor Joy Shackleton, Acting Head of the School of Health Sciences said the facility has been a long time in the making.

"I think we first visited in 2018, looking for space for dental students and this was a

nice big building, but it was in a sad state. I'm looking forward to using this space for healing, for teaching, and hopefully for some preventive dentistry, so that we're not needed as much as we are," she said.

The new clinic is a welcome reprieve for not only Zola residents but also for the School, which has been beset with challenges in recent years. Dr Takalani Mushungwa, a lecturer in the School and the "face of Zola Clinic" who led the walk-through said: "We have had tons and tons of problems at Wits Dental School. Now we have hope."



The Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences, Professor Shabir Madhi, said: "If there's one team of individuals in the faculty who I've got complete faith in after all they've been through over the past two years, it's Oral Health Sciences. The excitement that exists in the School because of this facility, it's really what's needed in terms of reviving its spirit."

Professor Vilakazi said: "Through our partnerships we are able to be part of rebuilding this country. It has been said that a dream deferred will not be a dream deterred. This clinic, when opened, will serve a massive area. It will serve people from all over Soweto. This will be a flagship of what dental services for the people ought to look like."



WATCH | New Wits dental clinic in Soweto ‘a long time in the making’

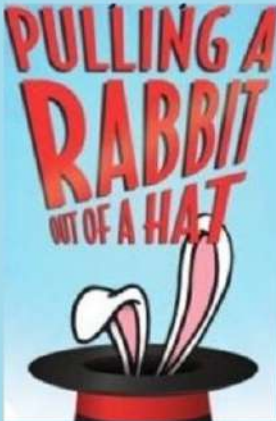
*Yoh, NEW YORK
Get Ready for a
lekker Jol*


A Fab Time, with SA foods and treats., and surprise entertainment

save the date

10
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23

**PULLING A
RABBIT
OUT OF A HAT**



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND FUND, INC. 

Killing Cancer With Cryoablation



When 75-year-old Kenneth ‘Kenny’ Siphayi went for a check-up after surgery to treat an enlarged prostate, he didn’t expect to have a renal cell carcinoma uncovered in his left kidney. Carcinoma is a cancer arising in the tissue of the skin or any of the internal organs.

Kenny’s urologist referred him to Dr Charles Sanyika, Head of Interventional Radiology at the [Wits Donald Gordon Medical Centre \(WDGMC\)](#). Interventional radiologists diagnose and treat a range of conditions by inserting instruments – catheters, wires, needles, probes – from outside the body using imaging technology such as X-rays, CT scans and ultrasounds.

Sanyika was preparing to pilot a pioneering technology called cryoablation – a first in southern Africa for the treatment of renal cell carcinoma.

“Cryoablation is a treatment that had not been available in the country previously for patients with early renal cell carcinoma, the most common type of kidney cancer,” explains Sanyika. “It’s a minimally invasive intervention where we insert a needle [probe] into the cancer mass and create very low temperatures, between minus 20 and minus 40 degrees Celsius, which result in cell death.”

Read more [here](#).



Wits in 60 Seconds / Curios.ty. Wits' research magazine. Issue 15: Everything [#ENERGY](#) Click [here](#) for more.

[The University of the Witwatersrand Fund, Inc.](#) is a corporation under the Internal Revenue Code, section 501 (c) (3). Donations are tax deductible to the extent provided by law. The Wits Fund IRS EIN number is: **13-3902012**.

Vision

To ensure that Wits University remains one of Africa's – and the world's – pre-eminent research-intensive educational institutions, with top academic standards, committed faculty, and supportive alumni.

[Donate Today](#)



Dear Witsies in Texas

We're arranging Wits alumni reunions in Texas from 6-12 September 2023 to celebrate the University's centenary and we'd love to see you there!

We are proud of your achievements so this would be a wonderful opportunity to acknowledge your success, reminisce, update you on Wits news, answer questions, and meet fellow Witsies.

The Vice-Chancellor, Professor Zebulon Vilakazi, and I look forward to seeing you!

Cocktails and refreshments will be served after the formal proceedings.

Dress code: Smart casual

[CLICK HERE TO RSVP FOR ANY OF THE REUNIONS](#)

Regards

Peter Maher

Director | Alumni Relations

peter.maher@wits.ac.za

	<h2>Dallas</h2> <p>Wednesday, 6 September 2023, 6pm</p> <p>Venue: Hotel Crescent Court, 400 Crescent Court, Dallas, Texas</p> <p>RSVP for Dallas</p>
<h2>Austin</h2> <p>Thursday, 7 September 2023, 6pm</p> <p>Venue: AT&T Hotel and Conference Center, 1900 University Avenue, Austin, Texas</p> <p>RSVP for Austin</p>	
	<h2>Houston</h2> <p>Sunday, 10 September 2023, 6pm</p> <p>Venue: The Post Oak Hotel, Uptown Houston, 1600 W Loop S, Houston, Texas</p> <p>RSVP for Houston</p>
<h2>San Antonio</h2> <p>Tuesday, 12 September 2023, 6pm</p> <p>Venue: San Antonio Marriott Rivercenter on the River Walk, 101 Bowie Street, San Antonio, Texas</p> <p>RSVP for San Antonio</p>	
<p>RSVP by Friday, 25 August 2023</p>	

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Missed one of the previous newsletters? Here they are, on one page: <https://witsfund.org/latest/>

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The University of the Witwatersrand Fund, Inc.
PO Box 7101, New York, NY 10150

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