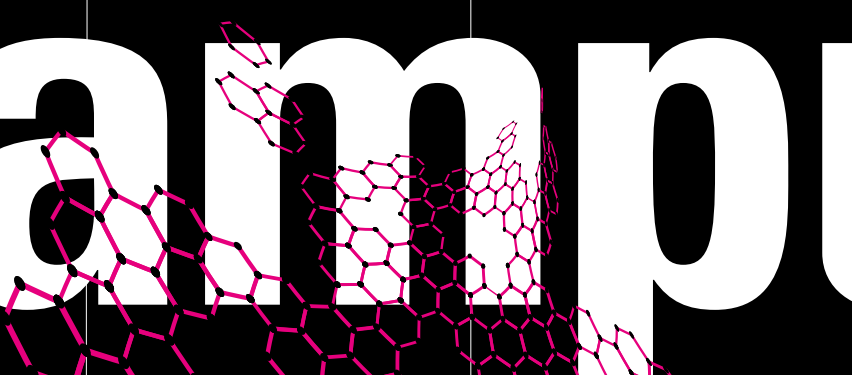


Campus



**'YOU CAN
MAKE A
DIFFERENCE
FOR A LOT OF
PEOPLE'**

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FROM ONE RECTOR TO ANOTHER

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'LET THE PEOPLE
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AT AFRISA
IT'S ALWAYS:
'THE MORE,
THE MERRIER'

COLOPHON

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FOREWORD



WE HONOUR AND CELEBRATE

My brother obtained his doctoral degree this fall. Not at the UT (that's unfortunate, of course) but at the University of Groningen. I had the honour of serving as his paranymp. The formal occasion initially meant to be a large-scale event, with a guest list of fifty people. It then became thirty, and we ended up with ten guests, including a 5 and 7-year-old.

All the same, my role as paranymp went brilliantly. Throw on your Sunday best, give the somewhat nervous candidate the occasional encouraging nod. C'est tout. Meanwhile, at the RUG Academy building, I reflected on the interview - on page four - with departing rector magnificus Thom Palstra and his successor Tom Veldkamp. Those holding the role of rector magnificus understand like no other how indispensable ceremonial ado is within the university. With a ceremony, we mark a significant event. We honour and we celebrate. These officials know the ropes. They're expected to make an appearance at the drop of a hat. Unless a miserable virus casts a spanner in the works.

Afterwards, we held a subdued reception. In a hotel, because you were still permitted to dine with a small group according to the moment's corona guidelines. 'It is what it is,' concluded the new doctor. He was right, of course. We raised our glasses and smiled - from behind our face masks - at the man of the hour.

Let us, above all, continue to raise our glasses. Whether it's to our university's 59th anniversary, to obtaining your degree, to a UT student (page 16) who collected 17,000 signatures in her fight against sexual harassment on the streets, to winning the Professor de Winter Prize (page 40), or to the ambitious alumnus who became director of an orchestra (page 30) or - perhaps most importantly - to being with loved ones during the holidays.


On behalf of the Campus editorial team, I wish you a joyful but, above all, healthy 2021.

Maaïke Platvoet
Editor-in-chief Campus magazine

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CHANGING OF THE GUARD

**'YOU CAN MAKE
A DIFFERENCE
FOR A LOT OF PEOPLE'**



FOR ONE, IT MIGHT BE THE BEST JOB IN THE WORLD. FOR THE OTHER, IT IS A NEW STEP THAT WILL ALLOW HIM TO MAKE A BIGGER CONTRIBUTION AND EXERT MORE INFLUENCE. BUT ONE THING IS INDISPUTABLY TRUE FOR BOTH DEPARTING RECTOR MAGNIFICUS THOM PALSTRA AND HIS SUCCESSOR TOM VELDKAMP: THE RECTORSHIP IS A WAY OF LIFE. ABOUT A SPECIAL OFFICE DURING A UNIQUE TIME.

It is awfully quiet in the UT's board wing. This is the first week when it is 'urgently advised' to wear a face mask in public areas. It goes without saying that Palstra and Veldkamp are both wearing theirs. Although working from home has become the new standard, they cannot avoid having to talk to each other face to face from time to time. There are important matters to discuss or, like today, joint interviews to conduct. We don't take off our masks until we are all seated at a safe distance of 1.5 metres from each other. Palstra opens the window of his office a bit further. A cold October wind blows into the room. 'This is the only way to air the room out,' the then-current rector says apologetically.

THIS MUST BE A STRANGE TIME IN WHICH TO SAY YOUR GOODBYES?

Palstra: 'It certainly is. A year ago, no one could have predicted the situation we now find ourselves in. The virus has had an enormous impact. I miss the physical interaction with others. I love nothing more than talking to people face to face as I walk around the campus. These days, the entire UT has been transformed. Realising that transformation in a correct and controlled manner was and continues to be a daunting task. You have to offer top-quality education, keep the labs open, maintain in- and external contacts, etcetera. Of course, we dedicated most of our attention to our education. Initially, that left little room for matters like research and internationalisation. The virus impacted everything.'

YOU MADE YOUR DECISION TO PASS THE TORCH PRIOR TO THE CRISIS. CAN YOU REMEMBER THAT MOMENT?

Palstra: 'I reached my decision during the Christmas holiday, last year. It was quite a process. I made my decision in peace, away from the daily hustle and bustle. After serving one term as rector, I decided to return to the world of science. I look back on these past four years with great fondness, but in the end I am still a man of substance. As rector, you do not always have the time to explore every issue as well as you would like. This was a constant struggle for me. Of course, I was supported by a team of highly skilled people, but I still felt the urge to take the time to truly dive into the issues at hand.'

PROFESSOR VELDAMP, WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS AS SUCCESSOR TO THE POSITION?

Veldkamp: 'It is different for me. To me, managing is about making decisions based on the information available at that time. That is how I did it when I was dean of the ITC faculty. Sometimes you have to stay your course; at other times, you have to make adjustment along the way. It is a continuous process.'

Palstra: 'It is also about charting a certain course and creating expectations. By plotting your course, you create expectations among twelve thousand students and three thousand employees. The current pandemic is a clear example. The forty percent

occupancy rate for the campus was the result of a careful and deliberate decision-making process. It was an educated guess: what can you still do while following the rules of social distancing? You know people have a strong urge to meet up with each other in person. With the figure of forty percent, we have defined a clear goal. It has created expectations that we do not want to retract.'

HOW IS THE ONBOARDING PROCESS GOING?

Veldkamp: 'We mostly talk to each other online to discuss ongoing matters. I knew about some of these issues, while I had not yet heard about some others. Of course, you look at these things differently from the perspective of the faculty than from that of the Executive Board. But that is no issue for me. My sabbatical in the spring literally and figuratively allowed me to walk away from my position as dean. It gave me a chance to really think things over.'

ARE THERE ANY LESSONS TO BE LEARNT FROM THE OFFICE THAT YOU ARE NOW PASSING ON?

Palstra: 'I have spent three quarters of my working life at a university. Being a rector in particular brought with it so many new aspects and insights that I did not know anything about beforehand. One of the things that characterises the job in my eyes is diversity: you have to know the university inside and out. Managing a university involves much more than education and research alone. For example, I was recently involved in the LGBTIQ+ day. That empathic aspect is one of the things I love most about this position. As rector, you truly have to get involved in every community at the university.'

Veldkamp: 'I believe that human side is very important. You have to incorporate it in different ways. It also ties in well with Shaping 2030. Our ambitions for the future will require a significant cultural shift. The current crisis has brought certain important aspects to light. Seeing how an entire community responds to something like that really helps you determine what is important. For example, working from home proves not to be an issue at all. All of a sudden, people are forced to make up their minds about it. I do not think the virus will go away. I believe corona will simply become a fact of life. Some students love studying from home. They relish their freedom and the opportunity to set their own schedules. That is a lesson in its own right: some things should not be managed.'

AS THE NEW RECTOR, WHAT DO YOU ADMIRE ABOUT YOUR PREDECESSOR?

Veldkamp: 'I respect the thoroughness with which Thom goes about things. I know I am not cut from the same cloth as a board member. I do not feel as strong a need to go through the entire process. Of course, you have to know what you are dealing with and understand the facts. You have to be aware of certain perspectives and arguments. You are not in it alone, either; you have people supporting you and a collegial board.'

WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE RECTORSHIP AS A WAY OF LIFE?

Palstra: 'I think it is. Aside from the impact of the coronavirus, it is a very demanding job. There are so many amazing initiatives here at the university; as rector, you do not want to get in their way. You have to talk to a ton of people, read a lot and spend much of your time on the road. For me, this job has absolutely been a way of life these past four years. Six months or so ago, I started taking Saturdays off and - because I work from home - I can eat lunch together with my wife. She is very happy about that. The position is also physically demanding. Last summer, I walked from Cologne to Metz towards Santiago de Compostella. The journey was not as easy as I had hoped it would be. Although I have given my heart and soul to the office, I have not really been taking good enough care of myself during that time.'

HOW WILL YOU TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF AS THE NEW RECTOR, PROFESSOR VELDKAMP?

Veldkamp: 'A lot of what Thom is saying rings true for me. Being a dean is not that different. I get my release through exercise; I go on ten-kilometre runs several times per week. Although the coronavirus has significantly reduced the amount of travelling we do, I know the work does not stop in the evenings or on weekends. Fortunately, I am good at structuring my time. Nevertheless, there will always be aspects of the job that give you energy and others that drain your energy. That is just part of it.'

LASTLY, WHAT ABOUT A RECTOR'S CEREMONIAL DUTIES? DO YOU ENJOY THAT PART OF THE JOB?

Veldkamp: 'I know it is part of the deal, but I do not enjoy being the centre of attention. It will not be my favourite part of the job, that much I know.'

Palstra: 'I know what you mean, but speaking at an LGBTQ+ gathering is quite an experience. It requires far less preparation than, say, giving a speech during the Dies Natalis. The latter also requires you to show your vision and offer substance. That makes it far more stressful. I look back fondly on certain student gatherings, like the one where Green Team Twente presented me with a glittery jacket. It feels great to demonstrate our gratitude to them as a university. That's what makes the job so gratifying; you can make a difference for a lot of people.'

Everyone puts their face mask back on. Time for a photo shoot. Since the drizzle outside won't let up, the photographer has decided to turn the hall of the administrative wing into a makeshift studio with professional lighting, white screens, umbrellas and all. The former and current rectors take their time; the office is not going anywhere. •



THOM PALSTRA

For the past four years, Thom Palstra served as rector of the University of Twente. During that time, he worked on policies for integrity, diversity, talent and the further development of the Twente educational model, among other things. Before coming to the UT, he worked at the University of Groningen as a professor and director of the Zernike Institute for Advanced Materials. Palstra studied at and obtained his doctoral degree from Leiden University. Palstra now works as professor of Solid State Chemistry at the UT Faculty of Science and Technology. •



TOM VELDKAMP

Tom Veldkamp served as dean of the ITC faculty for the past ten years. Under his guidance, the former International Educational Institute transformed into the UT faculty for geo-information science and earth observation. Veldkamp studied at and obtained his doctoral degree from Wageningen University & Research, where he was appointed as professor of Soil Inventory and Land Evaluation in 2002. On 27 November, he took over as the new rector of the University of Twente. •

DIVERSITY OF TWENTE



A few days before the international Coming Out Day, the large UT logo on campus temporarily changed into 'Diversity of Twente'. The colorful letters marked the signing of a declaration, in which the UT, Saxion and the ROC of Twente guarantee an inclusive and safe environment for the LGBTQ+ community. Eric Louis, UT associate professor and one of the initiators of 'Thlink with Pride' platform said: 'The UT supported the LGBTQ+ community prior to this official declaration. However, this is not always felt by everyone. The signing is therefore an important signal to the entire UT community. The joint declaration also shows to the rest of society: this is how we do it here at the UT, Saxion and the ROC.'

This year the UT also set up a central Diversity and Inclusion Office for both students and employees. As of September, Sterre Mkatini is leading the office with the goal of further improving the university's policy on diversity and inclusion. •



JULIANA MEDAL FOR TRUDIE HONDELINK

Trudie Hondelink has been awarded the Juliana Medal (Julianapenning) for her special service to the UT. The medal has existed since 2000 and is a tribute to people with exceptional merits within the University of Twente community. Hondelink worked on campus for many years and was in charge of the Boerderij Bosch.

'Trudie is invaluable to the UT Kring staff association and the entire UT. If someone stands for the sense of community and togetherness, within all sections of the university, then it is Trudie,' says UT Kring Chairman Dirk de Groot. •

CORONAMELDER APP

The UT has been actively involved in developing the CoronaMelder app, a coronavirus tracking and notification app. CoronaMelder uses Bluetooth to follow your movements, and whether you have come into contact with someone who is infected with coronavirus. Before the app was nationally launched in October, it was tested in the region of Twente. Lisette van Gemert-Pijnen, UT Professor of Persuasive Health Technology, was in charge of user tests, while UT professor Peter-Paul Verbeek supervised the ethical assessment of the app. Once the usability tests and the ethical test were completed and processed into the app's prototype, a field test was conducted in Twente with collaboration of local citizens. •

BRAIN-INSPIRED NETWORK TAKES LESSONS

The human brain is a great source of inspiration for developing future computer hardware. That is not strange, as our brain can perform highly complex tasks consuming a minimum of energy. Earlier this year, UT researchers already published a paper on 'brain inspired' network in Nature. This disordered network cannot be compared to 'conventional' electronics. Yet, it is capable of recognizing patterns like handwriting. But if you do not know beforehand what is happening inside the network if you enter some kind of signal, how can you make the network do what you're planning? This can be done step by step, in an evolutionary way, but this is quite slow. UT researchers came up with the idea of connecting it to a so-called deep-learning neural network. This is a type of artificial intelligence that is already in use in many applications. And indeed, this is capable of steering the brain-inspired network in the right direction, the researchers demonstrate in yet another Nature journal: Nature Nanotechnology. The work on new computer hardware is done within UT's Center for Brain-Inspired Nano Systems (BRAINS). •



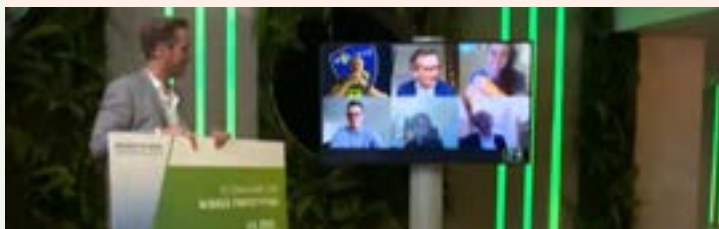
BUILDING BLOCKS FOR QUANTUM COMPUTERS

For decades, the quantum computer was the holy grail of computing: it seemed to be more of a theoretical concept than a working system. Recently, however, 'quantum supremacy' was demonstrated. Very complex problems that a conventional supercomputer can't deal with anymore, were solved by a quantum computer. One of the reasons for this is that a quantum computer solves all possible alternatives at the same time. It is now time for developing and improving the quantum building blocks, according to the new UT Centre for Quantum Nanotechnology Twente (QUANT). Its research can be about superconducting quantum bits, qubits, and new techniques for making them less vulnerable. It can also be about a totally different approach: a quantum computer based on light and photons. Thanks to the infrastructure of the MESA+ NanoLab, it is possible to evaluate and compare several types of technology. 'It clearly is more than only the quantum computer. There will be a whole range of applications we cannot imagine yet,' says Professor Pepijn Pinkse, director of QUANT. In Twente, a photonic quantum processor was developed, working with light and at room temperature. The new QuiX spinoff company will develop this concept further. •

UT CHALLENGE

As most large events this year, the fourth edition of the UT Challenge was also organized digitally. Its winners were announced during a livestream from the Bastille on the 20th of October, after months of hard work and online chats with coaches.

The project CenBot was the winner of the ideation category thanks to a solution that stabilizes blood plasma upon blood drawing. UT spin-off Plaex, a smart recycling bin which uses artificial intelligence (AI) to automatically sort waste, won the Prototyping category. The company Awaves, founded by UT students, became the winner of the startup category. Their solution is an artificial DJ that can mix music together using AI. Orbitrary and LogiXair were announced the 4TU Impact Challenge Wildcard winners. Orbitrary uses recycled plastic to make modular and temporary buildings, while LogiXair aims to achieve one-day delivery using drones. Orbitrary received yet another award: ASML makers award. Finally, the Audience prize was awarded to IP Pal, web-based tool providing tailored advice and coaching to scholars. •





MIRJAM BULT-SPIERING, VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE UT'S EXECUTIVE BOARD, IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE BUILDING PROJECTS ON CAMPUS. DURING THE CORONA CRISIS, RENOVATION AND CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES WERE CONTINUED AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE.

10

01

IF YOU HAVEN'T BEEN ON CAMPUS FOR MONTHS DURING THE PANDEMIC, WHAT CHANGES WILL CATCH YOUR EYE?

'The former conference hotel Drienerburght was renovated and painted and is being prepared for both teaching and housing of University College Twente. And we opened the HogeKamp Square. Maintenance work was done in advance, as much as possible. It may seem that a campus is 'finished' at a certain point, but it never is. Alumni who have not visited the grounds for years will be surprised when they see their 'alma mater'.'

02

THE HOGEKAMP SQUARE, WITH ITS LARGE BLUE STAIRS, WHAT IS ITS FUNCTION?

'It marks the beginning of the 'Boulevard'. At the same time, it is the end of the 'Oude Drienerloweg'. With the U Parkhotel, the Vrijhof and the High Tech Factory nearby, it is a connection point at Kennispark Twente. The square can be used for organizing large events once that is allowed. We created beautiful gardens around it. And we'll use it to showcase UT research, like a water treatment project.'

03

THE ITC FACULTY OF GEOINFORMATION SCIENCE AND EARTH OBSERVATION WILL MOVE TO THE CAMPUS. THIS IS, NO DOUBT, THE LARGEST PROJECT RIGHT NOW?

'Sure, it will be a new highlight after the TechMed Centre that was opened by the King last year. The design was approved in the past months, ITC will be in 'Langezijds', the former Chemical Engineering building. As an international and close community, ITC has been part of the UT for years now. I think moving to the campus is a good development, as we can learn a lot from each other and strengthen our community. I can't deny that ITC staff and students are very attached to their current building, because of the meeting places and great garden. These elements are included in the new design as well, with the restaurant as a 'social heart', with lots of daylight and green spaces. It is a very sustainable building too. I am happy that the verdict was unanimously positive. We expect the relocation in 2022.'

04

BEFORE EVERYBODY STARTED WORKING AT HOME, WE READ THAT THE UNIVERSITY OF TWENTE FACED A GROWING SHORTAGE OF WORK SPACES. IS THIS STILL THE CASE?

'Yes, it is. It may sound contradictory under the current circumstances, but several faculties will substantially grow thanks to the growing interest in engineering. We can't currently say when we will be able to work on campus again, but in the meantime we can't close our eyes to this issue. The need for lab spaces is urgent as well. We are working on flexible solutions that are circular and sustainable at the same time.'

05

THE BUILDING 'DE BOERDERIJ', WHICH USED TO SERVE AS A STUDENT RESTAURANT AND ALSO THE FACULTY CLUB, IS STILL EMPTY. WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO IT?

'It will be the 'Contact Centre', a meeting place and a central point for questions and support on anything that has to do with studying at the UT. Being an official monument, it represents the initial campus idea like no other building, and so a meeting point is a great new function for this building.'

SWISS CHEESE

He had to make 100% of the decisions with just 50% of the knowledge, our Prime Minister lamented during his historic press conference on 12 March. He claimed to base his decisions on the latest scientific insights, by which he probably meant knowledge acquired with scientific methods. As a press conference is hardly a philosophical lecture, we must forgive our Prime Minister this lack of nuance.

I am afraid that the quoted figure of 50% was a gross overestimation. The problem with knowledge is that there is no way to know what you don't know or how much you don't know. Scientific knowledge is an archipelago of painstakingly built and gradually expanding islands amidst a sea of ignorance. Although the islands have a solid foundation, their top soil is more akin to Swiss cheese. Some islands are connected to others via perilously unstable bridges.

What kind of knowledge would our nation's leaders need to guide us through this crisis? Those who expect science alone to hold the answer overestimate the field and do not do justice to human existence. You can incorporate every kind of science into our advisory bodies and constantly utilise the latest insights, but how do you brew a policy from that? It is true that scientists are creating better and better descriptions, establishing new connections and gradually shedding more light on the virus, its transmission, incubation, immunity, vaccination and protective equipment. However, there are some questions that science cannot answer. What kind of society do we want to be or should we be? What are people willing to (not) do, today and next year? What or whom are we willing to sacrifice? What fears and what suffering should weigh most heavily?



Scientists should resist the temptation of presenting politicians with a complete package of corona measures. They can update our politicians on the current state of affairs in their own field of expertise. Scientists familiar with multiple islands in the archipelago of knowledge can tell a more comprehensive story. While doing so, they should not stop explaining how science works and what people should and should not expect from it. Scientific knowledge comes with its own instructions. Afterwards, however, the scientists should leave the room and leave our public administrators to make their decisions and take responsibility for them. As part of that process, they should also explain how they weighed the knowledge that science could not provide. Their decisions are the result of a combination of scientific insight, social vision and emotions. Although our knowledge gradually transforms from Swiss cheese into a more solid substance, said social vision and emotions will remain as important as ever. •

Wiendelt Steenbergen

Professor of Biomedical Photonic Imaging

'LET THE PEOPLE AROUND YOU EXCEL'

UNTIL LAST YEAR, ERNA LEURINK (65) SERVED AS THE DIRECTOR OF BUSINESS OPERATIONS OF THE ITC FACULTY AND PLAYED AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN THE CONNECTION TO THE UT. AS A WORKAHOLIC, SHE RELISHED THE ENERGY THAT 'FUN WORK' GIVES HER. THAT IS, UNTIL SHE PUSHED HERSELF PAST HER OWN PHYSICAL LIMITS. NOW, SHE IS SEARCHING FOR A BETTER WAY TO STRUCTURE HER LIFE AND WORK.

1. DO THE JOB THAT YOU WOULD DO EVEN IF NO ONE PAID YOU FOR IT

'Money is important, but it is not the most important thing there is. One of my biggest goals in life is to do a job that I would still want to do even if I did not get paid for it. I often ask myself if that is still true. I have been fortunate enough to have always had jobs that I loved. I love a challenge, but that is not my main concern. A position like director of business operations is very abstract. You spend a lot of time in your head and talk to a ton of people. But what if our entire economic system that we have come to depend on were to collapse overnight - what would we have left? That thought is always in the back of my mind, so I have made sure to also develop some actual skills. Making clothes, training to become a welder

at the ROC. You are the director of your own life, after all.'

'I lost that control in March of 2019. I had been feeling listless and weak for a while and thought I had caught some kind of bug. At the same time, I was gaining a lot of weight. I went to my GP on a Monday and was told the next day to stop working. She told me it was a miracle that I was still walking around. My thyroid had shut down, which meant my vital organs were no longer functioning properly. The diagnosis was awful, but it would be possible to make a recovery if I dedicated myself entirely to it. I stopped working overnight and focused all my attention on my medication, diet and exercise.'



2. DO NOT FIGHT AGAINST YOUR MORTALITY; EMBRACE IT

'As a workaholic, I didn't think about getting older. Even today, I get up at five thirty in the morning. I love the feeling of getting started on my to-do list and having the whole day in front of me. That is why I ignored my disease and neglected the signals my body sent me. However, you cannot escape the fact that you're getting older. Your body tells you, but so do the people who offer you their seat on the bus. You start to realise that other people see you as one of the elderly.'

'I am still thinking about what I want to do with my life. I could never do nothing. That might be a genetic thing. My mother lived to the age of 93 and she made the most of every single day. When I first got ill, ITC dean Tom Veldkamp (the current rector, ed.) came to visit me. We had joined the ITC faculty together a decade ago and had always been close. He was about to finish his second term as dean and we had decided to give up our jobs at around the same time.'

'Tom visited me almost every week to talk about some things but mostly to ask me how I was doing. That was truly heart-warming. After that summer, I wanted to pick up my old life to some degree. Luckily, I was able to. Until the end of this year, I am involved in the ITC Hotel. I am also a member of the OPUT, a consultation of the trade unions with the Executive Board about the use and allocation of the decentralised employment conditions and the associated funds. That completes the circle, because one of my first jobs had me working for the labour union.'

3. BRING A LITTLE ZEN INTO YOUR LIFE

'I recently reread Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance. One fragment of that book - about how you have to start with the foundation if you want to build a house - has always stuck with me throughout my life. You have an end result in mind, but you can only achieve that goal one brick at a time. The journey towards the result has its own inherent value.'

'Working towards something takes time. We realised that too at the ITC faculty when we wanted to move to the campus. Looking back now, I realise we went too fast at times; as management, we wanted more than what the organisation itself was ready for. At other times, the Executive Board wanted to move faster than the faculty could. All in all, it was often a matter of timing and making sure everyone had the same goal in mind at the same time. I am glad and proud that the move to campus is still happening. I am especially glad that the time truly is right now.'

4. DO NOT BE AFRAID

'I never let a fear of failure get in my way. I always believe I can do whatever I set my mind to. That has not always been true, of course, but it never stopped me from seizing every opportunity that presented itself. As a result, my career has been anything but a straight path. The social academy, law school, training to become a tailor; there is no real coherence to be found. I have also done volunteer work all my life, from very practical things to administrative positions.'

'I am driven by a strong need for autonomy: I want to be able to take care of myself, enrich myself and not place all my eggs in one basket. Similarly, I do not want to be categorised or classified as a member of one specific group. An added benefit of my comprehensive background is the peace of mind it offers. I never have to be afraid of a supervisor or fear a loss of income if I do not like the work I'm doing. I know I will land on my feet. At least, that is what I've always told myself. This allows me to be myself and stay true to my beliefs in my work.'

5. THE TIME HAS COME FOR FEMALE LEADERSHIP

'One of my favourite authors is Hilary Mantel, who wrote several amazing historical novels centred around women. Reading her for the first time was a revelation. History is full of male role models, but you rarely hear anything about women. In her novels, Mantel breaks through that convention and shows us that women also played important roles in the past.'

'It is important to me to share my experiences of being a woman in a management position and I hope to inspire others with my story. We have been talking a lot about diversity and inclusion, but the academic world in particular still has a long way to go. We should adopt a more radical staff policy in order to level the playing field. Instead of 'in the event of equivalent suitability, we will choose a woman,' you can also choose to appoint a woman if she is suitable. That would make it far more straightforward and easier to recruit women for certain positions.'

6. IF YOU CANNOT CHANGE SOMETHING, DO NOT WORRY TOO MUCH ABOUT IT

'I come from a Catholic middle-class family, but my parents were not strict adherents of the doctrine. My main take-away from my religious upbringing is that you can always confess your sins and move past them. That is a liberating realisation. You are allowed to make mistakes and so are other people. At home, we adopted a fairly easy-going approach to life. My father was seriously ill for years. We always made the best of it and focused on the positives.'

'I had a great childhood. I was always part of a fun club in Hengelo, from cabaret to sports or the school paper. As with all good Catholic families, we had a priest in the family. He maintained churches and cathedrals in the French countryside. We received French lessons from the age of eight or so, so we could start helping out in the summer once we turned fourteen. There were these so-called Catholic construction crews from the Netherlands, students who helped maintain the churches. For us as teenagers, the lack of parental supervision was amazing. Of course, my uncle kept a close eye on us to make sure we didn't do anything improper. I look back fondly on that time. I do not go to the church much anymore, however. I stopped wanting to go as a teenager and my parents never forced me to.'

7. ALLOW PEOPLE TO EXCEL

'When Tom and I first joined ITC, we faced a crisis almost immediately. Millions had been diverted to South America. Tom and I did not know each other that well yet and the Executive Board did not know us or the ITC yet either. It was a difficult time, partly because we and our staff were heavily scrutinised. However, it also forged a strong bond between us. Throughout the ordeal, we remained a team and grew stronger together. We made it through that crisis by taking action and without trying to justify things.'

'As a leader, that is important. You have to believe and keep believing that everything will work out in the end. Above all, you have to believe in the people around you. If you lose that faith, you will become a bad leader. A leader's main job is to allow the people around them to excel at what they do, develop their talents and be seen. However, there comes a point at which you as a leader must hold up a mirror to someone if they are unhappy in their job and perform poorly. That is often difficult and confronting. Ultimately, I believe people can decide for themselves whether it is time for something new. They will often know on an instinctive level, without the need to actually say it.'

'I like the fact that the UT chose 'people first' as its slogan, because that is the way it should be: people should come first. It is great that this will be our motto for the next decade, but it also goes to show that the fact that we put people first - in our research and education and on the work floor - must apparently be made explicit. Let's focus on the positive, though: by putting people first, we can decide how to do so in the years to come and give everyone the opportunity to excel.' •



FIGHTING AGAINST INTIMIDATION ON THE STREET

'THE WORLD HAS NOT SEEN THE LAST OF ME YET'



NASTY REMARKS SHOUTED AT YOU EVERY DAY; SOMETIMES EVEN BEING CHASED AND BACKED INTO A CORNER. MYRTHE VAN DER HOUWEN, A STUDENT OF PSYCHOLOGY AT THE UT, WAS COMPLETELY FED UP WITH EVERYTHING WOMEN HAD TO DEAL WITH AT THE NOORDERHAGEN IN ENSCHEDE. IN EARLY JUNE, SHE LAUNCHED A PETITION AGAINST SEXUAL HARASSMENT ON THE STREET. SEVENTEEN THOUSAND SIGNATURES AND COUNTLESS MEDIA APPEARANCES LATER, SHE LOOKS BACK ON THE WHOLE ORDEAL.

‘I never would have expected my initiative to become as big as it has. I started the petition because I was fed up with women not being able to walk the streets in the centre of Enschede without being harassed in one way or another and I wanted to do something about it. The number of responses and the media attention were overwhelming. I remember fumbling calls from well-known news shows while trying to get some exercise. My father was completely shocked when he got an early call one morning from radio DJ Giel Beelen, asking for me. I am a student after all, so I was still asleep at that time and didn’t answer my own phone.’

VERY EXCITING

‘The TV show Op1 invited me to come talk about harassment on the streets together with VVD MP Dilan Yeşilgöz. That was very exciting. I remember sitting in the studio and thinking: ‘When this is all over and if I can tell my story as a nineteen-year-old student on national TV among such heavyweights as Yeşilgöz, I will never have to be nervous about anything ever again.’

THE BALL IN THE MUNICIPALITY’S COURT

‘Besides a ton of publicity, the petition also resulted in 17,000 signatures. I took a step back then. The publicity was quite overwhelming and I thought the ball was now in the court of the politicians. Luckily, the municipality of Enschede took the problem very seriously. I had some wonderful talks with PvdA alderman Yara Hummels in particular. The mayor was sympathetic as well, but as a woman, Yara has first-hand experience with catcalling. That made it easier to talk to her about it.’

POLITICAL GAME

‘The discussion threatened to derail when a Tubantia journalist asked me about the background of the men responsible. They looked to be of North-African descent, I replied honestly. Suddenly, Thierry Baudet and Geert Wilders also had a lot to say about my initiative. I refused to play that political game, however. Luckily, I was able to rectify the situation by saying that white men are also guilty of sexual harassment.’

GOOD RESULT

‘Following my petition, extra sweeps were conducted and BOAs and police issued fines. The most notorious group of men, which I’ve heard consisted of drug offenders from Rotterdam, has disappeared and the nuisance has decreased significantly. Women are now able to go to the supermarket without hearing any sexually suggestive remarks or being intimidated in other ways. Men also tell me they feel safer now. I am quite proud of that. All that effort led to some good results.’

BEING YOURSELF

‘All in all, it was a very special and exciting time that I would not have missed for anything. It was also quite intense. I got so much feedback online that I felt at times like everyone in Enschede knew who I was and was watching me. It’s quite strange when people you’ve never met have such strong opinions about you. Without a doubt, the weirdest of them all was a woman who claimed I wasn’t a real person and that Thierry Baudet had made me up. It was nice that I could simply be myself in front of my family and friends.’

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

‘The most important lesson I have learned from all this is that it is possible to bring about change by yourself. Don’t think that it doesn’t matter what you do, because it does; there are always people who are willing to listen to what you have to say and help out. Of course, this experience wasn’t all positive. Especially online, people can be incredibly negative and crude. At one point, I simply stopped reading the comments. Above all, though, I remember all the positive and supportive feedback I got from people who had my back.’

ROLLER COASTER

‘Would I do it all again, knowing what I know now? That’s a good question. After the roller coaster of the past few months, I am glad to just focus on my studies again. Still, I do believe I would take action if I encountered injustice again. I know from first-hand experience that one person can truly make a difference. So no, the world has not seen the last of me yet.’ •

THE PROMISING FUTURE OF CODESANDBOX

THE CODESANDBOX STORY READS LIKE AN ADVENTURE NOVEL: A MARVELLOUS IDEA BORN ON THE BEACH FORMS THE STARTING POINT OF A SUCCESSFUL JOURNEY FOR TWO UT STUDENTS. THEN THEY START WORKING ON IT IN THEIR STUDENT DORMS AND IT GROWS INTO A MULTIMILLION-EURO BUSINESS. BARELY FOUR YEARS LATER, APPROXIMATELY 2.5 MILLION PROGRAMMERS ARE USING THE PLATFORM, LAUNCHED BY 24-YEAR-OLD BAS BUURSMAN AND IVES VAN HOORNE, FOR WRITING AND SHARING NEW CODE.

Feeling almost nostalgic, the duo look back on their first tentative steps as entrepreneurs, back in 2016. During his holiday, Ives van Hoorne realised that it was almost impossible to work and help programmers with problems from an external location without a laptop. This experience resulted in the conception of CodeSandbox: an online platform where programmers can sit in their own 'Sandboxes' and develop, test and share programmes. The latter is the main idea behind their platform: making it easier to work together and share work.

However, the CodeSandbox of 2020 is not exactly the product Buursma and Van Hoorne had in mind in 2016: 'Our master plan was certainly not developed overnight,' explains Buursma. 'We began by creating a component editor. But when this editor turned out to be powerful enough to allow for files to be added, it developed into our first release.'

There turned out to be a lot of bumps in the road in their search for the right business model as they started envisioning the future of their idea. Buursma: 'We had to think long and hard about whether CodeSandbox could be a lucrative enterprise. At times we had our doubts of course, but the result was that we took a much-needed critical look at our plan, and we continue to do so. It became and still is very clear to us that our platform is a money maker. But the question is, how quickly can you show that?'

A CLOSE PAIR

While most start-ups result from the idea of one individual, Buursma and Van Hoorne have been inseparable since day one. Buursma: 'We work together extremely well, we know what the other person brings to the table but also what we should not expect from them. We have known each other since the first year of secondary school and have always done a lot of projects together, such as building apps and games, and we noticed that we were very good at working together.'

Van Hoorne: 'Bas is very good at staying organised, which is not exactly my strong suit. Thanks to Bas, everyone in our company knows exactly what he or she should be doing – he set up the entire system. I am a little messy and can be forgetful. When we were students he would always come over and wake me up with some coffee, to make sure I would be on time.'

Buursma laughs: 'Ives creates chaos, and I harness that chaos to keep us on the right track. But seriously, Ives is super creative, has exceptional programming skills and a vision for the development of our product.' There is one thing the two do have in common. 'We have a clear idea of where we want to be in five to ten years,' explains Ives. 'We totally agree on that.'



ON TO THE NEXT PHASE

The path to the future looks promising. A new phase is on the horizon for CodeSandbox. This autumn, the company managed to attract a new large investor in EQT. 'That means we have our work cut out for us: we need to hire lots of people, grow our business, come up with exciting plans and set ambitious goals,' says Van Hoorne, looking ahead. 'In a year's time we would like to achieve an annual recurring revenue of one million euros and we know we can do it.'

Buursma and Van Hoorne know that CodeSandbox could potentially tap into a huge market. But it is also a market with stiff competition that demands a unique and high-quality product. 'We are slowly seeing lots of competitors emerging,' says Buursma. 'Large companies such as Microsoft are also starting to take their first steps in this market. We are focusing on very specific cases in which our product functions optimally and that allows us to continue improving our product. We need that to stand out from the crowd.' Van Hoorne: 'Luckily the copycats are a little less creative so we always stay one step ahead of them.' •



STUDY AND WORK

Buursma obtained his Bachelor's degree in Industrial Design Engineering from the University of Twente earlier this year. 'When CodeSandbox got its first investment, I only needed to complete my final thesis project. I had to do it part-time and it took a little bit longer, but I am very proud that I managed to complete my degree programme.' Van Hoorne studied Technical Computer Science but did not complete the programme. 'Maybe for me, our start-up was a way out of studying. Although I enjoyed my time as a student, working life suits me much better.'

'COVID-19 SHOWED THAT OUR EDUCATION IS ADAPTABLE'

WHERE DOES THE PASSION FOR PASSING ON KNOWLEDGE COME FROM? IN THE SERIES 'MEET THE TEACHER' WE FOCUS ON PEOPLE WHO ARE TRULY DEDICATED TO EDUCATION. JUSTINE BLANFORD HAS 'EDUCATION' IN HER JOB DESCRIPTION MORE THAN OTHERS. SHE IS THE FIRST PROFESSOR WITH A FOCUS ON EDUCATION AT THE UT.

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HOW DID YOU GET INTO EDUCATION?

'There has always been a part of me that liked teaching. My mother has photos of me back when I was five or six, standing in front of blackboard and teaching. Professional teaching came naturally.'

DO YOU ALREADY KNOW WHICH TOPICS YOU WANT TO EXPLORE?

'I'm currently looking into the topic of resilient education – not just through a pandemic, but also in terms of changing student dynamics and demands. I don't think there will be a single clear model as the components will depend on the characteristics of the university, program and the student population. We will need to try different 'resilient' models and adjust them accordingly.'

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNT ABOUT EDUCATION THANKS TO THE PANDEMIC?

'The pandemic has revealed how adaptable and resilient education is thanks to technologies that are available today and the infrastructures in place at our university. Although the pandemic showed how adaptable students and staff are there is plenty still to be done. In July we ran a survey to better understand what worked well and what didn't so that we can think about what improvements are needed. One thing that really stood out was how motivated staff were to continue to provide quality learning environments for students. Everybody wanted to make it work and experimented

with different forms of communication and learning activities. So back to your question, what we did learn was that we can move many aspects of education to an online environment but that things like interactions were a little more difficult. Now is a good time to reassess our education.'

WHAT ARE MAIN CHALLENGES AND ADVANTAGES OF ONLINE EDUCATION?

'At first, I think people felt online education wasn't as good as face to face education. Now I think they see that it is as good. Of course you lose some pieces when you move things online, but we just need to find the right balance. Online education also has advantages. It has far greater reach. As long as people have internet, they can join from anywhere. You can reach areas that would otherwise be completely inaccessible.'

DO YOU THINK ONLINE EDUCATION IS THE FUTURE OF EDUCATION?

'I think online education will be a part of education, but how it is incorporated and how much will depend on the program and student population. There are clearly benefits to both: face to face and online. It depends on the age group. For undergraduates, who have just left home for the first time, fully online education may not be as suitable. They are not just learning about the topic, they are also learning about themselves. For older students and



professionals, online education can be a great solution. Especially if you are a working professional with a family and unable to move to the university, this gives you the opportunity to continue working on your development.'

HOW DO YOU KNOW THAT YOU ARE DOING A GOOD JOB AS A TEACHER?

'As a teacher, you never stop analyzing what you are doing right or wrong. But you also need to accept that not everyone will be passionate about the topic. You just need to make an impact on one person. That is already a great accomplishment. I just got an email from my former student saying that she got a new job and that she still uses everything I taught her. Things like that show you that you are making an impact.'

JUSTINE BLANFORD

The position of professor with a focus on education is intended for scientists with excellent performance in both research and education. Justine Blanford is the first to be appointed to this role at the UT. She is an expert on Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and spatial data. Before joining the department of Earth Observation Science at the ITC Faculty in April, she worked as an associate teaching professor at Penn State University in the USA.



HOGEKAMP SQUARE

The Hogekamp square has undergone a major transformation in the past years. With its small park and bright blue stairs, the space was officially opened during the (digital) Opening of the Academic Year 2020/21. The newly reconstructed square is intended for everyday relaxation, but also as a space for large events and get-togethers. And so – if the Covid-19 pandemic allows – we might see each other there for lunch on a sunny spring day or for a drink at the closing of this academic year. •





Photo from Open House
at the UT in 2018

CITIZEN SCIENCE

CITIZENS ARE BRIMMING WITH CURIOSITY

THE UT HAS OPTED FOR CITIZEN SCIENCE, AS EVIDENT FROM THE NEW SHAPING 2030 STRATEGY AND DESIGNLAB'S AMBITIONS. IS IT A 'BUZZWORD' OR CAN IT BRIDGE THE GAP BETWEEN SCIENCE AND SOCIETY? THREE UT EXPERTS PRESENT THEIR VIEWS ON THE CONCEPT OF 'CITIZEN SCIENCE.'

2020 was a year like no other. We all believed ourselves to be expert virologists. Everyone has joined the discussion. Do we wear a face mask? Yes, but it should be our choice. What about ventilation? Where possible, yes please. Who is getting sick? Generally the most vulnerable members of our society, but sometimes young people as well. Is the cure not worse than the disease itself? Hospitals are quickly running out of beds. Are we testing enough? No, we have to use rapid testing. Are those tests reliable? Not all of them. What do we test for? What do the figures of the RIVM tell us? Come to think of it, are the farmers still angry?

Scientists and citizens alike got more tangled up in this complex web of questions than ever before. In a time of crisis, our whole society joins the conversation. Although this leads to new insights, it also leads to polarisation. Scientists have to descend from their ivory tower. At least, that is what it looks like. The concept of Citizen Science has been a hot topic in the scientific community for a while now. In other words, it is high time for an in-depth exploration.

TOO BIG FOR THE SCIENTIFIC COMMUNITY ALONE

Citizen Science is hard to encapsulate with a single clearly delineated definition, says Sabine Wildevuur. She is the director of DesignLab, which is gradually becoming the epicentre of Citizen Science at the UT. 'I would rather not use any definition at all, relying instead on the ten principles of Citizen Science by the European Citizen Science Association. These allow you to hold research up to the 'yard stick' of Citizen Science.'

According to Wildevuur, one key principle is the active involvement of citizens in research. 'Citizen Science starts with the social challenges of our time. These are issues for which scientists need the help of society and citizens, and vice versa. Think of climate change or the corona crisis, for example. Generally, these problems come from bottom up, out of society. In this manner, Citizen Science bridges the gap between society and the academic world.'

The active involvement of citizens can take many forms, Wildevuur knows. 'From one extreme, where citizens take all the initiative for research, to the other, e.g. research for which citizens carry out a range of tasks like counting birds in the dunes or their gardens. This is all part of Citizen Science. The most important thing is that it concerns thorough scientific research.'

Gaston Remmers, director of the My Data Our Health foundation and an expert in the field of Citizen Science, is willing to go one step further in the search for a clear definition. 'To me, Citizen Science is a deeply humanising endeavour that unlocks the intrinsic research capabilities of citizens. The humanising aspect is particularly important to me. Above all, citizens want to be seen as human beings, not as lackeys of the scientific community. I believe this symmetrical relationship between citizens and scientists forms the bottom line of Citizen Science.'

Remmers, who also works at the UT as a guest researcher, still sees a certain degree of asymmetry in the relationship between

citizens and scientists. He believes the academic community and our society have largely been out of sync for decades. 'It makes perfect sense,' he says. 'Darwin was no scientist either. He was simply a man with excellent observational and analytical skills. He utilised inherently human characteristics: we build something from scratch, we discover, we observe and we test our findings. Those skills were only formalised and professionalised after Darwin. The term 'scientist' was only coined in the late nineteenth century. That extensive professionalisation has brought us a lot, but it has also created a monopoly on curiosity.'

DIVING MASKS AND NOISE POLLUTION

Nevertheless, Remmers is convinced that citizens are also brimming with curiosity. He believes an academic or healthcare institution is the perfect setting in which to tap into and capitalise on that curiosity. Citizen scientists are active in myriad fields, he knows. 'Amateur astronomers are discovering new planets, bird counting in backyards produces an invaluable treasure trove of data; lone scientists could never achieve anything on that scale. There are even gamers who are mapping out the structure of proteins when scientists' algorithms are unable to do so.'

Wildevuur also has an example from the current crisis. 'The Decathlon diving masks that were repurposed as respirators during the height of the first wave. The open creator community grew quickly. Our own TechMed Centre also used the masks as a starting point. That greatly expedited the application.'

Karin Pfeffer, professor of Urban Studies at the ITC faculty, utilises Citizen Science for her research into sound, among other things. 'It is a very important phenomenon in urban environments. During the corona crisis, you could already hear that our cities had become more quiet. Sound is certainly not necessarily a bad thing.'

*'Especially during a time of crisis,
you need every observation
and insight you can get'*

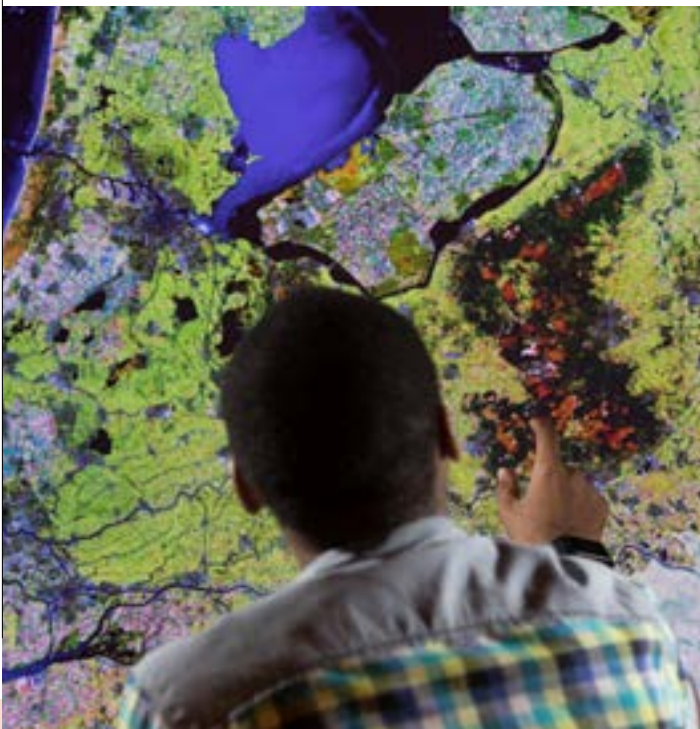
We try to map out sound with the help of citizens. Where do we enjoy it and where do we prefer peace and quiet? To what extent is people's perception a factor? Where should you intervene? It is a facilitated process that uses the help of citizens to bring in local knowledge.'

'As a scientist, you often do not really know what is happening,' Pfeffer admits. 'Citizens have a much better understanding of the local context. If you ignore that, you might design something that is ultimately useless. Spatial interventions and solutions have to tie into local issues. We want to generate knowledge that has a positive impact on spatial planning and policy. To do so, you have to generate knowledge that can actually be used to solve social issues.'

DIALOGUE

Involving citizens in science not only demands a lot from scientists, but also from the citizens themselves. Pfeffer experienced that herself within her field of geo-information and earth sciences, which often takes place in developing countries. 'There are vast unexplored areas to be found there - sometimes literally so. In those developing countries, the involvement of citizens is invaluable. However, researchers must realise that they are asking a lot from those citizens. Taking part in your research costs them valuable time that could otherwise be spent working and earning an income. This means citizens are more than suppliers of data. They should also receive the credit for their contribution.'

Citizen Science should therefore be a joint process, Pfeffer argues. 'Some groups are difficult to approach. Depending on what you want to study, it is sometimes better to involve those groups in Citizen Science projects. The question is how to do that. For starters, we must show citizens what is in it for them. It is about their intrinsic motivation. They must understand the relevance of the project for their own environment. Once citizens do get involved, I am often surprised by just how interested they are. We must make it a process of co-creation between citizens and scientists. That starts with something as simple as feedback. When citizens are asked to take part in a research project, they will - at the very least - want to know how it ends.'





According to Remmers, this dialogue between researchers and citizens is crucially important, especially during a time of crisis. He believes the relationship between scientists and citizens is akin to the one between doctors and their patients. 'There is formal expert knowledge and informal, often contextual, knowledge. Those two have to be brought together, both to develop the best treatment for a patient and to gain a better understanding of a situation in a more general sense.'

Remmers has seen a similar relationship emerge during the current corona crisis, albeit at the macro level. 'The RIVM and the OMT are the physicians of the Netherlands. However, that does not mean they have all the answers. Especially during a time of crisis, you need every observation and insight you can get. I know from experience (Remmers is a former cancer patient, ed.) that patients become exceptionally creative in critical situations. It sets something off in them. The same goes for the patient in this scenario; the Netherlands itself. We have all been affected and are looking for solutions. I believe in the adage that no one is dumb enough to be one hundred percent wrong. You should therefore not necessarily answer citizens' questions about the coronavirus; that is the old style of science communication. Instead, you should look for solutions and develop well-founded interpretations together.'

*'Citizen Science bridges
the gap between society and
the academic world'*

*'Amateur astronomers are
discovering new planets'*

This is the perfect time to get people involved in science, Remmers says. 'It is what sets us apart from totalitarian societies. We understand that everyone can make a valuable contribution in their own way. We seem to be losing sight of that a bit during the current age of corona. Of course, we have to manage different degrees of expertise, but quickly dismissing aberrant voices as conspiracy theorists is counter-productive and breeds populism. Both our society and the scientific community can benefit from the power of dialogue. Facilitating that dialogue is the essence of Citizen Science.'

Citizen Science is ultimately about scientists and citizens respecting and trusting each other, Wildevuur argues. 'For example, when a citizen suffers from an exceptionally rare medical condition, they often know more about it than their physician. It is about bringing everyone's knowledge together. Only then can we look at and tackle issues from a different angle.' •

AT AFRISA, IT'S ALWAYS: 'THE MORE, THE MERRIER'

THE UT IS HOME TO COUNTLESS CLUBS, SOCIETIES, AND ASSOCIATIONS. IN THIS SERIES, WE SHINE A SPOTLIGHT ON ALL OF THEM, WITH THIS ISSUE FOCUSING ON: AFRISA, THE AFRICAN INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ASSOCIATION.



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Since its inception in 2018, AFRISA has flourished, growing from a mere 20 members at first to 150 today. What is the key to success for this association? Akintunde Akinyoade, who sits on the board of AFRISA and studies Chemical Engineering at the UT, does not have to ponder the question for very long. 'We offer African culture. You won't find it anywhere else in the Enschede area. Our culture is vibrant and colourful. I also think that people from Africa connect with others very easily. That's what makes our association so unique.'

Akinyoade is responsible for AFRISA's activities. In a normal world, we would have paid a visit to AFRISA's home base or attended a representative activity, but the pandemic decided otherwise. What's more: AFRISA does not have a place to call its own yet. That being said, they are hard at work to secure an office in Bastille and have partnered up with other international associations at UT for a space in the student bunker. 'That would be great,' Akinyoade beams, 'as our members could simply drop by for a chat or some advice.'

The number of international associations at the UT is growing, with Indian, Pakistani, Romanian, Latin-American, and Surinamese students all having their own club within the university. In 2018, they

were joined by an African student association, but Akinyoade is quick to point out that they aren't just for students from Africa. 'Anyone can become a member, even non-students. The more, the merrier.'

BUILDING BRIDGES

According to this Chemical Engineering student, AFRISA seeks to build bridges between different countries and cultures. 'I've been fortunate enough to experience it myself. I suddenly found myself, a Nigerian man, speaking to someone from South Africa. I never did so before! Our association is about more than just contact between people from different African nations, though, as we also have members from the Netherlands and Germany. Anyone interested in African culture and the African vibe is welcome.'

This is reflected in the association's motto: Ubuntu. A rough translation would be 'I am because we are' and this collective spirit is central to the association. It's not me, but us. It's not them, but us. However, such a divide does still seem to exist between Dutch students and internationals. The groups live in two separate worlds. Akinyoade is familiar with the problem. 'I think language plays a big role. It's hard to understand each other if you don't speak the language. As an association, we try to make our own contribution.'



Some members of AFRISA speak Dutch, and they regularly organise language classes for others. This is just one example of how we try to bridge the gap.'

COVID-19

Fortunately, there is one language that transcends all borders: the language of food. 'Every year, we organise a food festival with traditional African dishes,' Akinyoade explains. 'We also organise frequent dancing workshops. At the start of the year, one of our workshops managed to draw in more than 50 participants - a resounding success. On top of that, we host drinks every month and organise trips to various cities in the area.'

'Because of the coronavirus, these trips and activities have had to be postponed for the time being, but the association has tried to organise as many of its activities online as possible. We also organise activities of a more serious bent, such as a recent debate on Chinese investment in Africa. China is investing extensively on the African continent, and we wanted to ask our members whether they believed that this was a good or a bad thing. Black Lives Matter is also an important theme, with several of our members attending anti-racism protest in Enschede in June.'

'SOFT SPOT'

This year, AFRISA missed out on the perfect moment to showcase its wide range of activities to prospective members, as the Kick-In opening market was cancelled due to the coronavirus. The physical version of the fair, that is. 'Despite the virus, we were still able to help out new members and share practical tips,' Akinyoade explains. 'We help them open a bank account and register with the municipal authorities, giving freshmen a soft landing in Twente, as it were.'

This soft landing was a key principle underlying the foundation of AFRISA. 'I like calling our association a soft spot for African students in Enschede. It can be difficult to find your way in Dutch society, so AFRISA is a place where you can come to relax and feel at home. Our association has grown so much that we are not only a soft spot for African students alone. By now, I think we have become a place that feels like home for all members, regardless of whether they come from Africa.' •



'BEING THE DIRECTOR OF SUCH A FANTASTIC ORCHESTRA IS QUITE AN HONOUR'

LAST YEAR, JACCO POST (53) EMBARKED ON HIS DREAM JOB AS DIRECTOR OF PHION, THE ORCHESTRA OF GELDERLAND AND OVERIJSEL PROVINCES. AT THE TIME, THE PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION ALUMNUS HAD NO IDEA WHAT WAS IN STORE FOR HIM. POST FACED THE DAUNTING TASK OF CARRYING THE NEWLY MERGED ORCHESTRA THROUGH A GLOBAL PANDEMIC. 'THIS HAS UNDOUBTEDLY BEEN THE TOUGHEST TIME OF MY ENTIRE CAREER.'

When Jacco Post straightens his webcam to start the interview, the Netherlands is not doing too well. Our country is on the verge of a second lockdown. Likewise, the director of Phion is preparing for yet another tense period. 'The crisis affects your right to exist as a symphony orchestra,' he sighs. 'We make live music in front of a live audience. During a lockdown, that is virtually impossible.' However, the UT alumnus is not one to give up when the going gets tough. Once the orchestra overcame the initial shock in mid-March, new initiatives were launched almost immediately. 'From performances in the gardens of care homes to concerts via live stream: we had a wealth of ideas - and we had hope. After the summer, we would be able to play in large concert halls again. True, there would be fewer musicians and smaller audiences, but at least we could get started again. That's what it felt like.'

or three more years. The question remains, however, how we will emerge on the other side? To minimise your losses, you can enter a sleep mode for a year or two, but how can you stay relevant as an orchestra during that time?'

Post also has to ask himself what he can do to make it through these unprecedented times. 'If your plane goes down, the safety instructions tell you to put your own oxygen mask on first. That might sound selfish, but I have to think about myself as well. Otherwise, who knows what'll happen. As director, I try to make room in my day for reflection, sports and practice. I also try to do things with the orchestra one or two days a week. That allows me to offset negative energy with positive energy.'

OXYGEN MASK

Nevertheless, this is a complex time for everyone, Post included. 'I can honestly say that this has been the toughest time of my entire career. The crisis puts everything I have learned over the course of my professional career to the test. My biggest concern is the continuity of the orchestra. All productions are losing money at the moment. Subsidies will keep our heads above the water for two

*'I have to choose my course
of action carefully'*

MERGER

Besides the coronavirus, there is something else that requires the UT alumnus' undivided attention: the merger. Phion, a combination of the Gelders Orkest and the Orkest van het Oosten, has only been around for a year. Post began his job as director on the first day of the new orchestra's existence. His task was by no means an easy one. How do you combine two orchestras that each have such strong ties to their respective home regions? According to Post, having a long-term vision is essential. 'I always look ten or fifteen years into the future. How can we sustain a top-level orchestra in the east? That is our ultimate goal. I believe a merger is the answer.'

'You could say: the two orchestras have to be fully integrated in four years' time,' Post continues. This is not the first time he has used that approach in his career. During his Public Administration studies at the UT, the alumnus learned how to develop a multi-year strategy in a plan-based manner. However, things are not that simple with Phion. 'I have to choose my course of action carefully. If the integration moves too quickly, a sponsor from Twente might begin to wonder why their money is being sent to Arnhem. That is not my intention. The same goes for sponsors from Gelderland, only the other way around.'

At times, Post says, it can feel like walking through a minefield. 'Even in a minefield, you ultimately have a destination. I just have to keep my perspective a bit vague. I want to bring the various parties closer together. That means listening to what everyone has to say and getting people involved in my analysis. At the same time, I have to make some complex decisions. Because of the coronavirus, we had to hire a chief conductor without the candidate ever actually standing in front of the orchestra. We did it, though. Otto Tausk is an amazing chief conductor.'

PUBLIC INTEREST

The word 'complex' is heard several times as Post tells his story. According to him, complex situations characterise the public sector. Nevertheless, it is where the UT alumnus feels most at home. 'I have been drawn to matters of public interest from an early age. Even when I was a boy of fourteen or fifteen, I would sit in the public stands to attend municipal council meetings in Havelte, where I lived. From time to time, a journalist from Dagblad van het Noorden would sit next to me, but I was usually the only one there. I was simply incredibly interested in politics and the public sector.'

'A dean at my high school told me: 'They have a great study programme for you in Twente, Jacco. It combines economics, law, sociology and political science. It's like a four-in-one package.' I decided to follow his advice and study Public Administration. I have never regretted my choice for a second. In Twente, I learned how to analyse complex issues and break them down into easy-to-understand components. It was truly an exceptional programme.'

He also loved life on campus. In the late 1980s, Post's life took place almost entirely in the area around Drienerlo. 'I exercised a lot, had relevant jobs, was an active member of the study association Sirius and met my future wife there. In the campus residence where I lived together with fourteen other UT students, my house mate Erik and I were the only Humanities students. If the phone rang, it was always for me or for Erik. The science students barely had any contact with the outside world. You don't ever forget things like that.'

ART

Although the public administrator in Post found everything he desired in Twente and in his first job at the Ministry of Finance in The Hague, there was still something missing: art. After all, that young teenager from Havelte did not spend all his time in the public stands of the municipal council chamber. On weekends, he would visit different museums all over the country. 'After I got a job, I decided to go to evening school and study Art History in Leiden. I wanted to bring art into my life again.'

It took some time for his love of art and public administration to come together. The first time this happened was in 2011, when Post became the new director of the Kaliber Kunstenschool in Enschede. Phion followed more than eight years later, in 2019. 'Being the director of such a fantastic orchestra is quite an honour. When I heard the news, I had my head in the clouds for an entire month.'

Funnily enough, Post hardly touched his own piano during his first year as orchestra director. 'I may have played it once or twice, but no more than that. It is an odd paradox, but I simply don't have the time. The coronavirus has only made matters worse. Of course, I do listen to music a lot. The musicians in our orchestra told me to never reveal my favourite piece. There is just too much to choose from! Recently, I have been listening a lot to Schumann's piano compositions. I especially love the rendition by Nino Gvetadze. In her music, she expresses the loneliness people feel during the lockdown. I found comfort in that.' •

*'They have a great
study programme for you
in Twente, Jacco.'*

FREEDOM REIGNS!

In the forests of Drienerlo the chains close late at night
Nobody is allowed to go out anymore, stay indoors and sit tight.

Those were some of the lyrics of the introduction song sung by first-year students in 1966. The Technical University of Applied Sciences Twente began its third year with a few hundred men and a handful of women. Here's a quote from a different verse: *Nobody dares to make love anymore, because the guards are coming.* According to the stories going around, the former THT - which has since become the UT - did everything it could to offer students a safe environment. At Drienerlo, there was plenty of time for study, contemplation and little else besides. Barriers that came down at night; a special student dean who issued warnings; a mandatory stay on campus for the first two years of your studies; being forced to purchase coupons to eat in the mensa; no girls allowed at night. It all sounds terribly restrictive. Did students really have their freedom taken away to such an extent? How did they actually feel about the rules?

Now, almost sixty years later: COVID-19 has led to severe restrictions on campus. We must maintain a safe distance of 1.5 metres from each other at all times. Online education. Empty drinking halls. Partying, making music and playing sports together are forbidden. Staff log in from home. Everyone has to wear a face mask and wash their hands religiously.

Back to the sixties. I asked five students and staff members with first-hand experience how restrictive the campus really was. Those barriers? They didn't exist. At the main entrance, there was a gate that never closed. Thin chains were hung across the other entrances at night, but you could easily get past those on your bike or on foot. The chains were there to keep out thieves in cars. Theft was a major problem back then. Students could come and go as they pleased at all hours of the day and night.

What about the student dean? For years, professor Jan Schuijjer played that role. He took a benevolent approach. His wife Elly and he lived on campus and their door was always open. In those early years, the university of applied sciences was one big community. Everyone - especially the students - took part in the exciting 'experiment in the woods'. Wim Hoogendoorn, a first-year student



in 1965, was a co-founder of the association for cultural activities, Studium Generale, the Student Council. Students would bring famous pianists like Cziffra or writers like Mulisch to Twente.

Was the campus a place where one would focus solely on one's studies? Certainly not. Rather, it was a place where one could become a well-rounded and knowledgeable individual, an expert organiser, an athlete, a performer or a pub crawler. What if you had a class early the next morning? Eduard van Emmerik, who enrolled in 1966: 'There was no mandatory attendance for the lectures. Furthermore, we could take as long as we wanted to complete our studies. I never experienced any social control. Freedom reigned.' Researcher Henny Kramers-Pals moved into a campus apartment in 1965. Before that time, she had lived on campuses in the United States, which were incredibly strict. She had also rented a small room from a landlady in Rotterdam, which was equally horrible. By comparison, the campus was a breath of fresh air.

What about the rule stating that no girls were allowed to spend the night? Well, there was no one there to check. Marijke, Wim's girlfriend, often slept over. His was not the only shared bed. Why, then, this persistent rumour of the campus being so restrictive in those years? Perhaps that is because the rules were written down, but rarely enforced. Isn't that the same problem we face today in corona times? •

Hiska Bakker

Historian, journalist and a presenter at Studium Generale

HEART TO HEART

FRANK HALFWERK, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF TECHNICAL MEDICINE, RUSHES TO MEET ME AT THE MAIN ENTRANCE OF THE MEDISCH SPECTRUM TWENTE (MST) IN ENSCHEDE. HE HAS TO. IT'S OCTOBER, THE SECOND CORONA WAVE IS HITTING HARD AND, AS OF TODAY, FACEMASKS ARE MANDATORY IN THE HOSPITAL – AND NOBODY CAN ENTER WITHOUT SHOWING A PROOF OF AN APPOINTMENT.

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Luckily, Halfwerk is used to scurrying around the building. He waves me through. Dressed in his white medical coat, it is clear that the researcher and technical physician belongs here and I can pass the 'checkpoint'. We run upstairs to the Thorax Centrum Twente, the department specializing in hearth and lungs treatment, where he works three days a week on 'everything that has to do with the heart'. He has an office here as well as at the UT, where he just finished his PhD research and started as Assistant Professor of Technical Medicine. But he doesn't seem to spend much time at his desk. He only sits down long enough to eat up his lunch in a few quick bites. 'We have to go up to the surgical ward to see a patient who needs a heart valve replacement,' he says.

Valve replacement is one of the topics covered in Halfwerk's PhD thesis focused on innovations in cardio-thoracic surgery. 'If you need your valve replaced, there are essentially two options. First, biological replacement – which is good but degrades really fast. Second, mechanical valve which can last a lifetime, but means you need blood thinning

medication. So there are basically two suboptimal options,' he explains. 'In my project, we made improvements to the materials for biological valves so that the immune system doesn't react so strongly to it and the valve lasts longer.'

The patient we are seeing is, in fact, getting a biological valve, but that is not why Halfwerk needed to visit him now. He wants to ask if the patient is willing to participate in a medical study that the researcher is leading. 'The procedure we are studying is so called Left atrial appendage (LAA) occlusion. It is a treatment strategy to reduce the risk of blood clots from entering the bloodstream and causing a stroke in patients. Essentially we place a small clip on the LAA, a part of the heart, during the surgery.'

The Assistant Professor calmly explains all this to the patient, who agrees to get the additional procedure. It is a randomized study, though. That means we don't know if the patient will be in the implementation group or the test group. Halfwerk draws a randomly selected envelope that contains





the information. The moment of truth. 'Oh good, he will actually get it,' reads out the scientist. 'Now I will call the surgeons and anesthesiologists to let them know.'

The phone calls are conducted in the staircase while hurrying back downstairs. More meetings are awaiting. The first one is related to another part of his doctoral research, a part that is already applied in the hospital. I can see its results on posters hanging in nearly every room.

'If you think of patients in hospital, you probably imagine them in bed – but lying in bed is not good for their recovery. It often leads to muscle loss, other issues and consequently the patients are more often readmitted to the hospital. The project therefore focused on trying to get them out of bed and motivate them to walk,' clarifies Halfwerk. 'We have used wearable sensors to measure what patients actually do, how much they move and to see how we could improve rehabilitation in

hospital. This project covered in my doctoral thesis was very successful and it's already being implemented here and in other hospitals in the Netherlands and Belgium. It is rather low tech: we use simple posters with descriptions of exercises and give patients information and realistic goals.' Next steps and possible improvements to this new method are discussed in the digital meeting with a nurse and physical therapist.

'Time's up, you guys,' exclaims the UT researcher as clock strikes 3 pm. 'I have to run.' He has a (confidential) meeting with a lead surgeon. 'At least I think so. It is very unpredictable in the hospital, you never know what will happen.' In a never-stopping fast tempo, Frank Halfwerk walks out into the corridor. 'Isn't this stressful?' I ask. 'Yes, it is. But so is doing a PhD. It is stressful, but I also get a lot of energy out of it.' •





A TABLE WITH SENSORS & LIGHTS

It attracts a ton of attention: the Sensory Interactive Table developed by UT researchers Juliet Haarman, Roelof de Vries (EEMCS-BSS) and former Interaction Technology student Emiel Harmsen. A round dining table packed with sensors and LED lights. 'In a way, our research is only now truly beginning.'

De Vries, who specialises in the interaction between man and machine, and Haarman are working with students and businesses to explore the possibilities of the table 'as a tool for interventions with regard to nutrition and behaviour.' De Vries: 'Virtually everything that currently exists with regard to food tracking and a responsible diet is designed for individuals. Think of dieticians and apps. However, eating also has a very strong social aspect. Especially in a social environment, it can be difficult to maintain desired behaviour.'

The various sensors and indicator lights in the table are designed to give users feedback on their behaviour. They can provide insight into e.g. how fast someone eats, how much they eat and what they eat. Haarman: 'We want to develop the table in a way that ensures the user's dining experience remains a positive one. The people sitting at the table, each with their own nutritional goals, must feel supported to actually achieve these goals.'

The Sensory table was developed as part of the UT's Personalized eHealth Technology programme and the 4TU Pride & Prejudice project. •

UT'ERS ON THE MOVE

2020

AART STUURMAN
EMSYS'20

Aart Stuurman started a position in September as an engineer with the Royal Netherlands Meteorological Institute (KNMI) shortly after completing his MSc graduation research at the Netherlands Forensic Institute (NFI) on the topic of computer assisted comparison of fingerprints. During his studies, he was also a member of Solar Team Twente which with their RED Shift car came 5th place in the 2017 World Challenge race between Darwin and Adelaide. •



2017

LORIN STAN
MST'17

Since September 2020 Lorin Stan is a Scientific Advisor at the German Bundestag where he drafts parliamentary initiatives and prepares briefings for his MP for the EU-Affairs Committee, Sub-Committee for European Law and the Franco-German parliamentary Assembly. While at the UT Stan interned at the German Embassy in Moldova, and following graduation also undertook internships in Sofia, Brussels and Berlin. •



2014

DANIËLLE KOOPMAN
TM'14 PHD'19

Daniëlle Koopman started working as a Clinical Research Specialist at Finapres Medical Systems (part of Demcon) in March 2020. She did her PhD research at the Isala Hospital (Zwolle) in the field of PET scanners and in November 2019 obtained her doctorate at the UT. •



2002

HENK-PETER DE BOCK
ME'02

Following 17 years at General Electric (GE) as Principal Engineer ThermoSciences, Henk-Peter de Bock recently became Program Director at ARPA-e, an agency of the US Department of Energy. His responsibilities include realizing breakthroughs in energy research and reducing emissions through disruptive new ideas. His key areas of focus are increasing efficiency of electronic systems, such as vehicle charging, telecom and data centers and developing pathways for green, low emissions, biofuel and hybrid powered aviation. •



1999

MARLEEN SANDERSE
PA'99

In September Marleen Sanderse became Mayor of Hattem. Following her UT studies she was a trainee at the Ministry of Economic Affairs, Agriculture and Innovation, and afterwards transitioned from adviser, to coordinator and to manager at the municipality of Almere. Since 2014 Sanderse served as an alderman first in Naarden and, after it was merged, in the municipality Gooise Lakes. She was also a reserve rower for the 2008 Beijing Paralympic Summer Games Netherlands team. •



1998

MIRIAM LUIZINK
APH'98

The Dutch Research Council (NWO) appointed Miriam Luizink as Director of NWO-I from 1 October 2020. She will be primarily focusing on the scientific positioning of NWO institutes. Luizink has held a range of senior positions at applied and engineering sciences organizations such as UT MESA+ Institute, NanoLabNL, and NWO institute SRON. She most recently was director of Roessingh Research and Development. •



1988

ED BRINKSMA
PHD'88

Ed Brinksma's term as President of the Erasmus University Rotterdam's Executive Board commenced on 1 September 2020. He is responsible for general governance issues, strategic policy and international affairs. Brinksma was President of Hamburg University of Technology from 2018 and before that Rector Magnificus (2009 and 2016) at the UT, where he remains Professor of Computer Science. •



1981

PETER HEIJ
PA'81

Peter Heij joined ABDTOPConsult at the Dutch Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations. This is an advisory group of top civil servants who can be quickly deployed by the national government on complex or urgent issues. The appointment took effect on September 1, 2020. Prior to this he was Director-General for Water and Soil at the Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management. •

CAREER CAFÉ BRINGS ALUMNI AND STUDENTS TOGETHER

NETWORKING IS A TRIED AND TRUSTED METHOD OF FINDING A JOB. HOW CAN YOU DO SO IN THE AGE OF SOCIAL DISTANCING? ALUMNI AND STUDENTS CAN STILL GET TOGETHER IN THE ONLINE CAREER CAFÉ. 'IT IS GREAT TO HEAR FROM SOMEONE WHO GRADUATED FROM THE SAME PROGRAMME ABOUT THE PATHS THAT ARE OPEN TO YOU.'

At times, it can get the better of Suraj Prakash Sonwalkar. The coronavirus has impeded his search for a job. 'As a result, everyone is staying put,' Suraj says. He graduated from the UT in the field of Construction Management and Engineering.

It has also made networking more difficult. During the online Career Café, he got in touch with alumna Annemarie Mulder, who had some useful tips for him. 'For example, she told me to broaden my perspective. She talked about her own development after her graduation. I hope to find a job that has something to do with 3D printing in the construction sector. While I wait for the right opportunity to come along, I can develop myself further and thereby improve my chances.'

The online Career Café is a joint project of Career Services and the Alumni Office. In June, twenty alumni shared their practical tips with 120 students. Annemarie Mulder, who studied Public Administration at the UT, was one of the alumni. She works as project leader at the architectural and engineering firm Inros Lackner SE in Hamburg, Germany. 'I would have loved to have had access to this well of experience when I was graduating. That is why I am happy to share my experiences today.'

One of Mulder's tips is to stop looking for a specific job, but to focus instead on what aspects of a job matter most to you; e.g. a horizontal organisational structure or flexible working hours. 'Who knows, you might find yourself in a completely different sector.' As a practical tip, she advised students to look for connections on LinkedIn who already work in your sector. 'Instead of trying to get your foot in the door via the HR manager, you are recommended by an employee. That is often far more effective.'

Like Mulder, Sonwalkar is willing to work in a different country. 'India is my home country, but the Netherlands is the market leader for this technology. In Dubai, they even have plans to construct a quarter of all new buildings with this method by 2030. Annemarie has shown me the importance of keeping my options open.' Backed up by the UT as an entrepreneurial university, Sonwalkar can also start his own business in India. 'I am now more confident than before that everything will work out fine in the end.' •

SAVE THE DATE UT ALUMNI DAY 5 JUNE 2021

Are you joining the celebration of University of Twente's 60th birthday during the UT Alumni Day on 5 June 2021? The Alumni Day will be your day! This time, you are in charge: what should definitely be part of the programme? A lecture of your favourite professor? A visit to that special place on campus during a campus tour? Being able to stay over in your old house with your former housemates? In short, what should be added to the programme? Let us know before 1 January 2021 via alumni@utwente.nl. Of all suggestions, ten will receive our colourful UT socks. •



MARINA VAN DAMME SCHOLARSHIP FOR PAVLINA NANOU

On 27 November, during the celebration to commemorate the UT's 59th birthday, Pavlina Nanou (CT'07/PhD'12), an alumna of the Chemical Engineering programme, received the Marina van Damme Scholarship for successful female alumni talent.

Nanou is COO of TORWASH BV, a spin-off of TNO's Energy Research Centre of the Netherlands (ECN) that was founded last January. TORWASH BV is based on the so-called TORWASH technology. This technology is a processing method designed to reduce the sludge content of sewage water by 85%.

As COO, Nanou's responsibilities include scaling up the technology and forming partnerships with organisations such as Eneco and various water authorities. She intends to use the €9,000 in scholarship money to fill the gaps in her knowledge of business economics and improve her management skills.

The winner worked at ECN as Research & Project Manager and - since 2018 - as Technical Lead 'Biomass Upgrading to Fuels.' This year marked the eighteenth time that the Marina van Damme Scholarship was given out by the Twente University Fund. It is made possible by a donation from Mrs M.A. Van Damme-Van Weele, PhD MSc. In 1965, she was the first PhD candidate of the former Twente Technical University of Applied Sciences. •



CLARA STEGEHUIS WINS THE PROFESSOR DE WINTER PRIZE

Clara Stegehuis (TW'14), assistant professor at the Electrical Engineering, Mathematics and Computer Science faculty, won the Professor De Winter Prize for international female scientific talent this year. She received the prize during the 59th Dies Natalis on 27 November.

The prize is an international publication prize for female top talent. Stegehuis was the principal author of the winning article 'Optimal subgraph structures in scale-free configuration models,' which was published in Annals of Applied Probability. The study is seen as a milestone in our understanding of complex networks. It offers new insights that can help identify e.g. fake news on the internet or, to go in an entirely different direction, detect genes with cancer mutations in genetic networks or provide insight into the spread of viruses. Stegehuis is also an excellent lecturer and one of the KNAW-elected 'Faces of Science'.

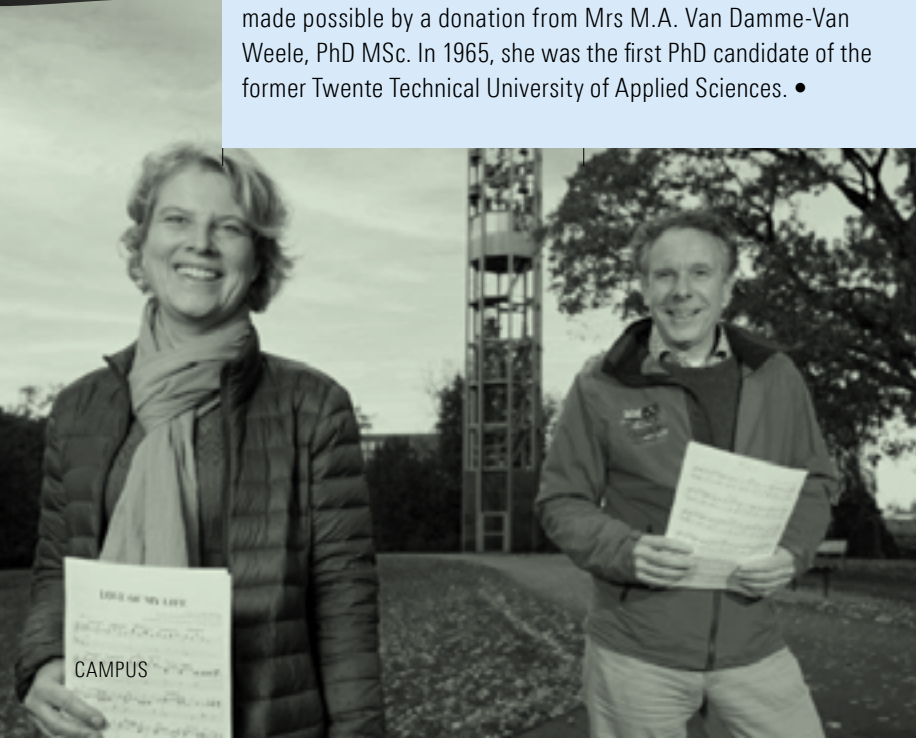
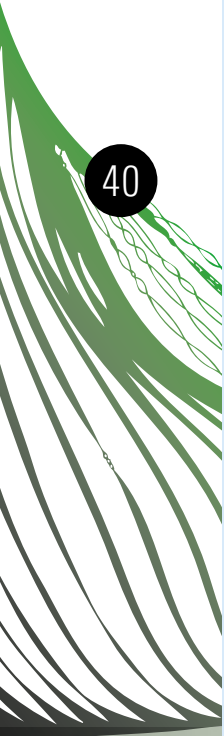
The Professor De Winter Prize recognizes excellent scientific research. This award is initiated by the Professor De Winter Fund, supported by the heirs of the late prof. and Mrs De Winter, UT alumnus Henk Hoving and his partner Thijs van Reijn of the Twente University Fund. This year marks the fourteenth time that the prize was given out. •

TEAM UP

ANNUAL CAMPAIGN 2021

The annual campaign 2021 has kicked off. Help researcher Chris de Korte achieve his goal of developing a quick and painless method to screen for breast cancer. Support our world champion Green Team Twente with its efforts to promote the use of hydrogen as a sustainable fuel for mobility. Donate to the Kipaji Scholarship Fund, which grants scholarships to talented young individuals in developing countries. Support our heritage and let our famous Campus Rietveld Carillon shine and sound like never before! •

www.steunutwente.nl





TEDXTWENTEU 2020

The fifth edition of TEDxTwenteU, held last February, was a major success. Just before the coronavirus hit, the large auditorium of Concordia on the Oude Markt was packed to the rafters. The wide diversity of speakers gave inspirational presentations about their innovative ideas. The motto was 'Winds of Change.' •



PASSION WEEK

In February, student associations VGST, NSE, C.S.V. Alpha and RSK organised the Passion Week. There were lectures, testimonials and live music centred around the theme of 'Brainstorm.' The goal was to get students thinking about such important questions as 'Why are we here?', 'Are we more than our brain?' and 'Is faith more than psychological?' •



STUKAFEST 2020

The thirteenth edition of Stukafest was held last February. Sixteen student homes were turned into unique, atmospheric venues where one could enjoy a wide range of performances. From music, dance and comedy to poetry, literature and theatre: there truly was something for everyone. After the StukaHap in SamSam on the Oude Markt, the visitors stopped by the various StukaHuizen. The music during the afterparty in Bar Update was provided by the student band Ciska de Rat. A DJ was there to close the evening in style. •

All these events were made possible with:
A contribution from the University Fund.



The Twente University Fund has officially been classified as a charity by the Tax Authority. The fund has been given the status of ANBI (Public Benefit Organisation, PBO). This means that donations to the fund are tax deductible under certain conditions. Visit our website at www.utwente.nl/ufonds for more information.

Contact:

Maurice Essers, director:
053 489 3993 or
m.l.g.essers@utwente.nl

FOR TALENT!

SUPPORT TO THE UNIVERSITY OF TWENTE

Even after you are gone, you can still have an impact on future generations of students at the University of Twente. With your donation to the UT, new generations of students can develop themselves and our research can make a meaningful contribution to society. Are you thinking about including the UT in your will? We would be happy to discuss the possibilities with you. •

For more information: www.utwente.nl/nalaten

TAX BENEFITS

Do you already donate to the campaign every year or are you thinking about doing so? You can easily enjoy a tax benefit by turning your donation into a periodical gift. Doing so will allow you to raise your contribution without spending any extra money. •

For more information: www.utwente.nl/doneren-met-voordeel

eSPORTS

WE BINGE-WATCH ONE NETFLIX SHOW AFTER ANOTHER, DEVOUR FILMS AND GAMES AND MIGHT ACTUALLY READ A BOOK FROM TIME TO TIME. IN MOST CASES, IT IS LITTLE MORE THAN BRAINLESS ENTERTAINMENT. AT OTHER TIMES, HOWEVER, POPULAR CULTURE INSPIRES REAL SCIENTIFIC QUESTIONS. THIS IS POP CULTURE AS SEEN THROUGH THE EYES OF A SCIENTIST.

The work of BMS researcher Guido Bruinsma focuses on eSports performance research, i.e. the science behind professional gaming. He shares his observations about the increasingly prominent role science plays in eSports.

‘The world of sports as we know it has clear dependent variables: the fastest sprinter wins the 100-metre race, the athlete who can throw their disc the farthest wins in their category of choice. Such feats of athleticism can be influenced to some extent. That explains why top athletes have a team of professionals at their side, ranging from nutrition and movement experts to psychologists. Suppose you change one small factor, such as placing a foot slightly more to the left or right, how will that affect your performance? In this regard, the world of eSports still has a long way to go. Although eSports performances are analysed, the systematic research that is conducted in the world of real-life sports is often missing.’

‘ESports as an area of research has great potential to unite different areas of research - from data, to psychology, to mobility sciences - in order to develop it into a top-class sport for the players, viewers and those involved. No top-level sport without top-level research.’

‘An added benefit of eSports is that they are played in a controlled environment. That means you do not have to worry about such practical concerns as sensors moving around, atmospheric influences or making the measurement technology you need mobile; most eSports athletes simply sit still.’

‘We conducted tests with professional eSports athletes in the eSports lab in DesignLab. We still have to gather a lot more data



before we can draw any clear conclusions, but one thing I did notice is that their performances are generally quite even. Many of their actions and thought patterns are based around routine. They know that if they lose the ball with their left-wing player, the area around their right back is wide open. Based on that knowledge, they know they have to interrupt their opponent's play quickly to prevent them from breaking through their defence. If they see that this is not an option, they will quickly move on to plan B. They are in a flow.’

‘You get into a flow when you face significant challenges that you consistently manage to overcome anyway. In eSports, as in real-life sports, the opposite is common as well. If the challenge is just a bit too much for the player, they may start to tilt; they begin to lose themselves in their frustration. The principle of flow can be traced back to an educational theory developed by the Russian psychologist Lev Vygotsky at the start of the previous century. The concept has become fully ingrained in the world of gaming. Most games are perfectly balanced; the constant challenges gamers face keep them playing. The game stays challenging and fun.’

‘People have a tendency to underestimate the appeal of eSports for spectators, which is unwarranted if you ask me. Seventy million people watched the livestream of the finale of the Dota 2 World Championship. Compare that to the average football match. Then there is the fact that a game of FIFA only lasts for twelve action-packed minutes, instead of stretching on for ninety occasionally dull minutes. During the crisis there was a neat development to be seen in cycling: a competition supported by hardware manufacturer Zwift. So you can take part in well-known competitions at home or have an eSports version of an event.’ •

TEAMS

They were logged in and arranged
it was all just about normal
yet the setting felt estranged
as if all was fake and formal.

Almost everyone was there
had told enough of cat and kid
'The meeting starts' then said the chair
sounding like he always did.

Ideas were smart, and outlooks tough
questions were asked, opinions shared
but if you listened close enough
you heard that no one really cared.

At once a flame of hope was lit
a great thought, one not to refute
too bad that no one heard of it
her microphone was still on mute.

No one kept track of tasks and votes
which everyone already guessed
because the guy who took such notes
was off for a corona test.

It all looked like a clumsy dance
but why, why did they do this then?
They all together took the chance
to just see their colleagues again.

Gone for too long, apart too much
you reach the end of your tether
still through the tech you feel the touch
because we belong together.

UNIVERSITY OF TWENTE.

Campus