

FOURTEEN FABIANs CAPPED AT THE 2019 SPRING GRADUATION CEREMONY

The University of Pretoria conferred 14 postgraduate degrees – eight PhD degrees and six MSc degrees – to FABIANs during the Spring Graduation Ceremony on 5 September. Congratulations to these FABIANs on their remarkable achievements!



PhD

Dr Chrizelle Beukes

Thesis: Genomic diversity and phylogeography of South African rhizobia.

Supervisor: Prof. ET Steenkamp

Co-supervisors: Prof. SN Venter, Prof. TM Stepkowski (Warsaw University of Life Sciences),
Dr MM le Roux (South African National Biodiversity Institute)

Dr Arista Fourie

Thesis: A genomic approach towards understanding host specificity and pathogenicity in two *Ceratocystis* species.

Supervisor: Dr I Barnes

Co-supervisors: Prof. BD Wingfield, Prof. MJ Wingfield, Dr MA van der Nest

Dr Zander Human

Thesis: The microbial ecology of *Protea repens* (Proteaceae) infructescences and the surrounding environment.

Supervisor: Prof. ZW de Beer

Co-supervisors: Prof. SN Venter, Prof. MJ Wingfield

Dr Inosters Nzuki

Thesis: QTL mapping for pest and disease resistance in cassava varieties Kiroba and AR37-80 and coincidence of QTLs with introgression regions from *Manihot glaziovii*.

Supervisor: Prof. AA Myburg

Co-supervisors: Dr NA van der Merwe, Dr ME Ferguson (International Institute for Tropical Agriculture, Kenya)

Dr Caryn Oates

Thesis: *Eucalyptus* morphological and molecular responses to *Leptocybe invasa* oviposition.

Supervisor: Prof. S Naidoo

Co-supervisors: Prof. KJ Denby (University of Warwick, United Kingdom), Prof. AA Myburg, Prof. B Slippers

Dr Danielle Roodt

Thesis: The evolution of xylogenesis in vascular plants.

Supervisor: Prof. E Mizrachi

Co-supervisor: Prof. YEP van de Peer

Dr Quentin Santana

Thesis: Population and genomic analyses of the pitch canker pathogen *Fusarium circinatum* Nirenberg & O'Donnell.

Supervisor: Prof. MPA Coetzee

Co-Supervisors: Prof. ET Steenkamp, Prof. BD Wingfield, Prof. MJ Wingfield

Dr Erik Visser

Thesis: Transcriptomic model of resistance mechanisms in the *Pinus-Fusarium circinatum* interaction.

Supervisor: Prof. S Naidoo

Co-supervisors: Prof. AA Myburg, Prof. ET Steenkamp, Prof. JL Wegrzyn (University of Connecticut, USA)

MSc

Claudio de Nuzzo

Thesis: Endogenous peptide defence in maize against the fall armyworm *Spodoptera frugiperda* (J.E. Smith).

Supervisor: Prof. DK Berger

Co-supervisor: Prof. K Krüger

Lichelle Grobler

Dissertation: *Agrobacterium*-mediated CRISPR-Cas9 genome editing in *Nicotiana benthamiana*.

Supervisor: Dr BG Crampton

Co-supervisors: Dr MM O'Kennedy (Council for Scientific and Industrial Research), Dr P Pillay (Council for Scientific and Industrial Research).

Zanele Mahlangu (with distinction)

Dissertation: Seed quality of farm-saved dry bean produced by smallholder farmers in the uThukela district of Kwazulu-Natal, South Africa.

Supervisor: Prof. TAS Aveling

Co-supervisor: Dr Q Kritzinger

Dineo Mailula (with distinction)

Dissertation: Production of fusel alcohols in the species of the family Ceratocystidaceae.

Supervisor: Dr A Hammerbacher

Co-supervisors: Prof. BD Wingfield, Dr MA van der Nest

Zanelle Mufamadi

Dissertation: Identification of the causal agents and management of husk rot on macadamia in South Africa.

Supervisor: Prof. N van den Berg

Co-supervisor: Dr G Fourie

Pfano Mbedzi

Dissertation: Evaluation of simple sequence repeats (SSR) markers associated with resistance to *Sclerotinia sclerotiorum* (Lib.) de Barry in commercial South African soybean cultivars.

Supervisor: Prof. BJ Vorster

Co-supervisor: Prof. JE van der Waals