

UKZN academics join *prestigious* academy



Caption from left: The four UKZN academics Thajasvarie Naicker, Kogieleum Naidoo, Deevia Bhana and Yin-Zhe Ma at the inauguration.

Five University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) academics are among 29 of South Africa's leading scholars and scientists inaugurated as members of the Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAf) while one young academic has been admitted into the South African Young Academy of Science (SAYAS). The new ASSAf members from UKZN are Professor Deevia Bhana - DSI/NRF South African Research Chair in Gender and Childhood Sexuality; Professor Rituparno Goswami - Academic Leader (Research) at the School of Mathematics, Statistics and Computer Science; Professor Yin-Zhe Ma - Academic at the Physics Cluster at UKZN and a core member of the Square Kilometer Array team; Professor Thajasvarie Naicker - Academic in the College of Health Sciences; and Professor Kogieleum Naidoo - Deputy Director: Centre for the AIDS Programme of Research in South Africa (CAPRISA) and Head: CAPRISA TB and HIV Treatment Research Programme and Honorary Associate Professor in the Department of Nursing and Public Health, UKZN. While the new SAYAS member is Professor Asanda Mditshwa - Associate professor of horticultural sciences at UKZN. Vice-Chancellor and Principal of UKZN, Professor Nana Poku congratulated the newly inaugurated members. "Membership in the Academy is reserved for the country's leading scholars and scientists. Their election as Members of ASSAf cements their stature as among the country's best scholars. The mere fact that they were

elected into the Membership by existing members of the Academy is proof that they also command the respect of their peers," said Poku.

New Members are elected each year by the full existing Membership. Membership of the Academy is a great honour and is in recognition of scholarly achievement. Members are the core asset of the Academy and give of their time and expertise voluntarily in the service of society. The 29 new ASSAf Members bring the total Membership of ASSAf to 659.

Mditshwa was one of ten South African Young Academy of Science (SAYAS) members inaugurated at the same time. SAYAS was launched in October 2011 as a means to enable South Africa's young scientists to fully participate in local and internationally relevant research and development agendas. It provides a national platform where leading young scientists from all disciplines in the country can interact, and also access international networking and career development opportunities.

SAYAS members are young scientists below the age of 40, have PhDs and are deemed excellent in their fields of expertise.

The scholars and scientists were inaugurated at the annual (ASSAf) Awards Ceremony held in Pretoria recently.