



## SAICE AND PROFESSIONAL NEWS

# NSTF Awards' tenth birthday – and a present for SAICE



DURING AN ILLUSTRIOUS gala dinner, which marked the tenth birthday of the National Science and Technology Forum (NSTF) Awards, various individuals and groups were honoured for their outstanding contributions towards scientific, engineering and technological (SET) development during 2007. The Minister of Science and Technology, Mr Mosibudi Mangena, who is also the patron of the NSTF, presented the awards. Winners were selected from more than 70 nominations. The event is unique in that it affords an opportunity for recognition to all practising scientists, engineers and technologists across the spectrum of innovation, including, for example, teachers and students in mathematics, science and technology.



Denis Hunt, the chief adjudicator explained the theme, *Today's research – Tomorrow's innovation*, and emphasised the contribution that dedicated individuals, either working by themselves or as part of an organisation, can make towards improving the quality of life for current and future generations. It is clear that South African SET is on a par with global standards. It is also important to take note that great innovation is only really achievable through people. South Africa can be proud of the NSTF Awards winners and nominees.

### ALLYSON LAWLESS

It was with great joy that we witnessed SAICE's Allyson Lawless winning in the category for 'Activities other than

1 Minister of Science and Technology Mosibudi Mangena, Allyson Lawless, Lulu Khumalo (BHP Billiton)

2 Minister of Science and Technology Mosibudi Mangena, Prof Fred Hugo (University of Stellenbosch), Debbeey Cromhout (Executive Director TRAC), Ephraim Baloyi (Dept Trade and Industry)

research and its outputs over the last five years or less'.

During her year as the first lady president of SAICE in 2000, Allyson became acutely aware of the skills shortage in the civil engineering profession and undertook a project across the country, which covered interviews, questionnaires and

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workshops for and with students, graduates and other sources of input. This culminated in the publication of 'Numbers and Needs: Addressing Imbalances in the Civil Engineering Profession' and a second, similar analysis of the local government situation. These have changed perceptions regarding scarce skills in South Africa where for the first time the extent of the engineering skills shortage has been measured and published. The work is frequently quoted when the topic is addressed at the highest level. The interventions suggested in the books are being very successfully implemented, e.g. through the ENERGYS project for which purpose SAICE established a section 21 company. UNESCO has proposed that the work should serve as a model for studies in other African countries, as well as in certain first world countries.

**TRAC**

We were equally delighted when another civil engineering-connected winner was

announced, this time in the category for 'Innovation developed through an NGO/ Not-for-Profit Organisation (NPO) or Community Based Organisation (CBO)'. The award went to the Technology Research Activity Centre (TRAC) Programme of SET Education Support of the Department of Civil Engineering at the University of Stellenbosch.

TRAC South Africa is a national, non-profit programme, the objective of which is to support physical science, mathematics, and technology education in South African secondary schools. The TRAC Programme seeks to enable and encourage learners to enter into careers in science, engineering, and technology. TRAC is also involved in education intervention programmes, where the main aim is to uplift the standard of physical science education in South Africa. This is done with educator training programmes, vocational guidance assistance, as well as classroom intervention in schools where the resources are limited or lacking. The TRAC emblem has become a familiar hallmark in the endeavour to improve

*TRAC South Africa is a national, non-profit programme, the objective of which is to support physical science, mathematics, and technology education in South African secondary schools*

what is being done to enhance science and mathematics amongst school learners, especially in the rural areas. In 2006, in excess of 68 000 learners were exposed to the TRAC programme, while during 2007, 109 000 learners were exposed to the programme and 2 831 teachers were trained by TRAC.

Prof Fred Hugo, who served as SAICE president in 1993 and who is the 'father' of TRAC, received the award together with TRAC Executive Director, Debbeey Cromhout.

To Allyson and the TRAC team – please accept our heartiest congratulations! □

Ever had a **SMART** idea that could change our world for the better and wondered what to do with it? By thinking ahead you can use your innovative, **SMART** idea to resolve:

-  Traffic congestion
-  Water conservation
-  Recycling issues
-  Sustainable housing for healthy communities
-  South Africa's sanitation backlog
-  Ergonomic challenges for women in construction, e.g. lightweight tools OR
-  Have you designed a small **SMART** section of a workable project

Then you **MUST** enter the SAICE **SMART** Awards for 2008. Your **SMART** idea might be worth R20K.

All entries must comply with the **SMART** philosophy:

- |          |   |
|----------|---|
| <b>S</b> | - sustainable                           |
| <b>M</b> | - magnificent thinking/innovation       |
| <b>A</b> | - amazing solution                      |
| <b>R</b> | - right for the time and place          |
| <b>T</b> | - truly and proudly Civils South Africa |

For more information, contact Zina Girald on 27 (0) 11 805 5947 or [zgirald@saice.org.za](mailto:zgirald@saice.org.za). You can also download the entry form on-line: <http://www.civils.org.za/EventsAwards/Awards/SMART/tabid/117/Default.aspx>

Entries close on **10 September 2008**

Please note: The **SMART** Awards are awarded to individuals and not to projects.

**THINK SMART, THINK AHEAD**

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**SMART**  
**awards**  
**2008**

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**Last year's winner:**



**Kevin Legge: Reinforced barrier system**