

NWU boasts two of *Mail & Guardian's* most outstanding young South Africans

Issued by [North-West University \(NWU\)](#)

21 Sep 2020

An academic and an alumna of the North-West University (NWU) have been announced as two of the winners of the 2020 *Mail & Guardian* 200 Most Outstanding Young South Africans on 11 September 2020.

They are senior lecturer and researcher in physiology Dr Lebo Gafane-Matemane and alumna Advocate Thabang Pooe.

Each year, the *Mail & Guardian* canvasses the country and open up nominations to find the 200 most outstanding young South Africans. Once nominations close, potential candidates are shortlisted and finally winners are selected for each of the categories.

Dr Gafane-Matemane was announced as one of the winners in the Science and Technology category, and Advocate Pooe in the Justice and Law category.

An academic of note



Dr Lebo Gafane-Matemane

Dr Gafane-Matemane says this achievement is a moment of reflection and a great honour.

“This is an inspiration to continue to find innovative ways to collaborate with other researchers and stakeholders to alleviate the burden of hypertension we are currently facing in South Africa,” she adds.

Dr Gafane-Matemane is a member of the Hypertension in Africa Research Team (Hart), a research centre of excellence at the NWU.

Her research mainly focuses on hypertension, specifically, on the role of kidneys in the control of blood pressure and possible contribution to increased cardiovascular risk.

She is also collaborating with other researchers in creating awareness on cardiovascular health in communities.

Dr Gafane-Matemane is a member of various national and international bodies. These include the International Society of Hypertension, the South African Hypertension Society, Physiology Society of Southern Africa, the Society for Endocrinology, Metabolism and Diabetes of South Africa and the Organisation for Women in Science in the Developing World.

Alumna making her mark

After graduating from the NWU with an LLB degree, Thabang Pooe joined Section27, a public interest law centre in South Africa, as a fellow through a programme with Students for Law and Social Justice.

Determined to make her mark in public interest law, Pooe was appointed to serve as a law clerk for Justice Mbuyiseli, a judge of the Constitutional Court – an opportunity for which she remains grateful to this day.

Once she had completed her law clerking period, she returned to Section27 as a litigation fellow and completed an LLM degree at the University of California Los Angeles, specialising in public interest law and policy.

While studying, she also volunteered at the Los Angeles HIV Legal Programme, a centre dedicated to providing legal assistance to people living with HIV in Los Angeles County.

After completing her studies, she continued her work with public interest organisations, including Sonke Gender Justice, Equal Education and Section27.

Pooe is currently an advocate with the Johannesburg Society of Advocates practicing at Thulamela Chambers.

Source - [Mail & Guardian](#)



Advocate Thabang Pooe

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