

IN MEMORIAM

A tribute to our dear colleague, the late

TSEPO MAJAKE

25 May 1970 – 20 June 2022

During the final stages of editing this edition of Quest, ASSAf lost one of its most beloved colleagues and one of the most ardent campfighters for Quest's mission to spread science to South Africa's youth. Here, we honour his love for, and contribution to the magazine – and the memories he leaves us with.

It was with shock and extreme sadness that we learned of the passing of Tsepo Majake, on the 20th of June 2022. How does one express the amazing essence and spirit of someone like Tsepo, the Education Liaison Officer at ASSAf from 1 March 2015 to 20 June 2022. His selfless generosity, integrity and uncompromising belief in all that is good, his unwavering commitment to science awareness amongst the youth of South Africa and the *Quest* magazine in particular, are unparalleled. Words cannot pay tribute or truly capture the sense of loss of such a genuinely warm, passionate, intellectual and wonderful individual.

The loss is there, tangible and real within everyone, but Tsepo exemplified life, love, laughter and an irrepressible belief and faith in seeing the best in everything.

We wish to honour him by expressing not only our sorrow for this profound loss, but also by remembering Tsepo as an amazing person who played a unique and special role in the lives of all he came into contact with. Our lives will be empty in the areas that he had brightened for us.

Soon after Tsepo joined ASSAf, his presence could be felt. His passion for science engagement and communication was tangible. He loved interacting with others and inspiring young people to choose science as a career. He was charismatic and friendly and he had the ability to engage with all he came into contact with. These exceptional and rare qualities were a great asset to the Scholarly Publishing team and *Quest's* outreach programme in particular. He was the support anchor for the *Quest* Science for South Africa team.

Tsepo will be remembered for all his National Science Week activities, more especially the highly successful Graaff-Reinet outreach in 2018 and for the pivotal role he played in the Khayelitsha Outreach funded by the Carnegie

Foundation in 2016. Tsepo was a man of stature, with a commanding yet warm voice, who spoke with knowledge, confidence and authority when he interacted with large groups of learners. During the COVID pandemic he arranged and facilitated many webinars on a vast variety of interesting topics. His ability to probe questions got the speakers talking. Tsepo was often included in interview panels at ASSAf as he had the gift of putting those being interviewed at ease and he was particularly good at gauging the employability of candidates and whether they would be a good "fit" for ASSAf.

Tsepo had a big heart and was a loyal colleague and a special friend to many at ASSAf and in the Scholarly Publishing Unit and to the *Quest* editorial board, in particular. We were privileged to have had an opportunity to share seven years of his journey at ASSAf. We celebrate his life. Here was a life that demanded notice ... a life that exemplified professionalism and passion for his work ... a life that inspired others ... a life that burned so that others' paths were lit.

He generously gave of his knowledge, his wisdom, his expertise and his skills. As such his intelligence, insightfulness, depth and understanding of people and the dynamics between people made him the ideal advisor and problem-solver in our organisation.

He was ever the gentleman and was known and commended for his dress sense when it came to the suits, ties and waistcoats he wore to formal meetings. He will be fondly remembered for his infectious laughter and warm smile, and more so for his delightful sense of humour. This following quote encapsulates Tsepo's life: "It is not the years in a life that count; it is the life in the years" (Abraham Lincoln, former American President).

Our hearts and prayers are with his family at this most difficult time.

A video tribute compiled by ASSAf in memory of Tsepo Majake can be viewed at: https://youtu.be/nR1Wmj_FHNY



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D. Quest: Science for South Africa

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