



## **USA ALUMNI NEWS**

March 2019

Dear Alumnus:

### **UKZN Foundation Executive Director Visits in May**

Prof Anesh Singh, Executive Director of the UKZN Foundation, will be visiting the US early in May. As he did last year, he will visit New York City and possibly Washington DC, contacting friends of the university and promoting its interests. While in New York, he will be hosting a reception on the 9<sup>th</sup> May for alumni at a venue to be announced soon. Your invitation to the event, which will feature South African wines and canapes, will be coming soon! If you know of any philanthropy/education donors that can accommodate a meeting with Anesh, please email Prof Singh with details [singham@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:singham@ukzn.ac.za) Click here to read about the [work of the Foundation](#).

### **New York City Social Mixer**

Party time! Alumni in the tri-state region are also invited to a cocktail-hour social mixer in Midtown Manhattan on Thursday, March 14. Registration for this event can be done at [this link](#) or you can be added to the guest by contacting UKZN USA Ambassador Mandy Dhillon via email: [mandy.dhillon@curriebrown.com](mailto:mandy.dhillon@curriebrown.com). The mixer will be held from 6 pm – 9 pm. This networking event is free.

### **South African Flea Market Returns!**

Alumni throughout the New York-New Jersey-Connecticut tri-state area are invited to participate in a South Africa flea market being held at 540 Lenox Avenue, Harlem, on Saturday, May 18. The USA UKZN Foundation Ambassadors will host a table where alumni can sell their goods and proceeds will go to the UKZN [Foundation](#). The popular annual event, held on a tree-lined street, always features a range of South African goodies for sale, including samosas, bunny chow, beadwork and original art. Anyone interested in providing articles or food for sale should contact Mandy asap. This fun and friendly fundraiser attracts South Africans from throughout the region and is a wonderful taste of home for people of all ages.

## **UKZN Religion Professor Tours USA Colleges**

Prof. Simangaliso Kumalo of the UKZN School of Religion, Philosophy and Classics (SRPC) recently did an academic lecture tour of Universities in the United States. At the Frederick Douglas Centre for African-American studies at the University of Rochester, New York, he delivered a lecture titled "Religion and Governance: A Necessity or Public Nuisance? An African Perspective." At the Department of Religion at Drake University, Des Moines, Iowa, where Prof. Kumalo had established a UKZN connection 10 years ago, he participated in their international partnership week and discussed further collaborations between UKZN and Drake.

While in the US, Prof. Kumalo was among 10,000 religion scholars and students from around the world attending the American Academy of Religion's annual conference in Denver, Colorado. He chaired a session titled "Ecology and Creation in Wesleyan and Methodist Perspective." It was an opportunity, Prof. Kumalo said, "to contribute to global scholarship and place UKZN on the map."

### **Connecting Across the US**

As the UKZN USA Ambassadors, our goal is to connect our fellow UKZN alumni across the United States to help keep each other informed about our community and collaborate on new positive ideas.

The UKZN alumni in the United States includes many extremely accomplished people working at the highest levels of academia, medicine, law, business, media and in charitable organizations. We have featured several of them in previous letters. In this issue we introduce you to Iresh Pillay, the financial expert whose expertise in both accounting and recruiting has benefited some of the largest companies in the United States. (See below).

If you know any UKZN alumni in the United States who are not yet connected to our UKZN community, please help us make contact. If you would like to hold a UKZN alumni gathering, we will help you get in touch with those living in your part of the United States.

Sincerely,

*Mandy Dhillon* (Howard College, 2008)

*Cheetah Haysom* (University of Pietermaritzburg, 1969)

**USA March Newsletter 2019**  
**Fabulous UKZN Alum: Iresh Pillay**



**IRESH PILLAY, CA (SA)**

Iresh Pillay, 38, is the innovative founding partner of a recruiting agency in New York City, that places accountants and financial professionals at industry-leading and large, reputable companies across the USA.

Iresh grew up in Queensburgh, outside Durban, and graduated at the Durban campus with an honors degree in accounting in 2002. He was a recipient of financial aid from UKZN as well as a bursary from the Will Howley Fund which made his tertiary education possible. “For that,” he says, “I will forever be indebted to the university.”

After completing his studies at UKZN, Iresh relocated to Johannesburg to start work at Grant Thornton, one of the largest accounting firms in the world, where he completed his articles and qualified as a CA (SA). He worked there until 2007 when he fulfilled his career ambition by moving to New York City, and getting a job with another top international accounting firm, BDO.

Over the next few years Iresh, as an accountant, gained exposure to the world of financial services including clients in hedge funds, private equity, asset managers, insurance, banking and others.

As much as he enjoyed his time in the industry, Iresh’s outgoing personality, coupled with his love for working with people, made recruiting a better fit for his talents. He then started at Nevis Recruiting in December

2012, excelling in the profession – he made partner after his 3rd year of service. During his time at the firm, Irish placed candidates at levels from associate up to CFO in a range of industries.

After five successful years at Nevis, Irish decided to start his own recruitment firm, adopting a more innovative, creative approach to talent acquisition in the world of accounting and finance. He founded Eclipse Recruiting Solutions- inspired by the concept of the perfect alignment of the sun, moon and earth, “just as we envisage to perfectly align the candidate with the right job at the right client”.

Besides recruiting, Irish stays abreast in the field by writing articles on various topics ranging from being a CA in the USA to the use of blockchain technology in the accounting industry (these can be found on his LinkedIn page).

Irish is the only member of his family in the USA, and his connection with South Africa remains strong. He’s one of the co-founders of the Wanderer’s Cricket Club, based in Manhattan, in which he plays the role of general secretary off the field and wicket-keeper/batsman on the field. Also, on the fourth Friday of every month, at the O’Brien’s Irish Pub in the heart of Times Square, New York, Irish Pillay organizes a “Springbok Club” jol for South Africans throughout the Tri-State region – a good opportunity to meet this Fabulous Alumnus!