

TEDxRhodesU - rediscovering South African belief

Steuart Pennington, CEO of SA - the Good News spent Sunday 12th August at TEDxRhodesU which renewed his hope for the future of South Africa.



www.TED.com, a US based website, is well known for providing "talks" on varied, intriguing, unusual topics. I was first introduced to TED by Chimamanda Adichie's "Danger of the Single Story" in which she talks of her experience as a middle class Nigerian student being exposed to American ignorance and the 4D* stereotype of Africa. (*Death, Disease, Disaster and Despair).

TEDx allows independent local productions, subject to strict criteria, to be organised in countries other than the United States of America. On Sunday August 12th, students from Rhodes University organised TEDxRhodesU under the curatorship of Tyron Louw and an energetic team of helpers. The theme was "African Inspired" and featuring a series of talks by inspirational speakers who shared their ideas on how we can construct a better South Africa.

Between 09h00 and 16h30 17 inspirational speakers, from a range of disciplines, gave seven to eighteen minute talks which, quite frankly, renewed my hope for the future of South Africa. We have serious talent here and really serious commitment to realising the dream of a united South Africa where everyone has access to hope and opportunity.

Prof. Justin Jonas spoke of how the SKA telescope will attract the world's finest scientists and scientific interest. Dr. Mark Horner spoke of how open source text books can be authored by volunteers and provide free access to good maths and science education for those who are keen to learn. Prof. Harry Dugmore spoke of how laughter is *the* most important tonic for good health and success. Dr. Rob Smorfitt spoke of the critical ingredients for successful innovation. Harry Owen spoke of the role that poetry can play in saving the Rhino. I spoke, Eusebius McKaiser, political analyst and 702 talk show host, spoke.....and 10 more speakers who kept the Grahamstown audience spellbound. It truly was 'cool'.

So, Sunday was a fascinating, inspirational day and above all gave me hope for our future, proving yet again that our mainstream media are in many respects doing us a disservice.

We will be featuring one talk a week on SA – the Good News starting today and they will all be available via TEDxRhodesU.com in the next few days.