

Sinazo Raphahlela

“All the darkness in the world cannot extinguish the light of a single candle” (Saint Francis of Assisi). I love this famous quotation and try and live my life in a way that opposes darkness and brings light to others. Since my earliest memories, I have played a role in serving others. I made history when I was the first female to be elected as the President of the Student Representative Council (SRC) at University of the Western Cape (UWC). I again made history when I was the first woman to be elected as the President of the Convocation, the intellectual base of UWC. I grew up within a tradition of justice and peace **and** by applying my faith through action. I also served on the UWC Council as a student leader.

I chose to become a primary school teacher, in Langa one of the oldest African townships in Cape Town. My commitment is to serve the poor and to oppose corruption. I am dedicated to the struggle against Gender Based Violence and violence against children. I oppose violence against all of creation. We need to love the earth as our mother and remain steadfast in my servant leadership to the most vulnerable amongst us. In order to play a meaningful role in society, I completed a PGCE, graduated with two education degrees and I am busy with my Master's degree. I have also served in many leadership capacities within youth and student movements. I write on a regular basis and one of my stories will feature in a Community Chest book.

Academics have achieved remarkable success despite the stressful challenges they face within the university. Students have worked hard to get their degrees notwithstanding all the problems that they face. The workers at UWC are under tremendous pressure and many have resigned or were dismissed or forced out of the university. Two culture surveys: 2014 and 2018 show deep traumas and stresses amongst the academics and staff. My running partner, Khalid Khan and I completely commit ourselves to protect the rights of academics, the students as well as the workers at the university. **Once we are voted onto the Council we shall fearlessly protect the rights of UWC academics, students and workers who feel threatened or victimized.**

I believe that UWC is a great university but its recent history has created cause for concern. Three HIGH COURT cases: ruled the conduct of the powerful decision-makers of UWC, unlawful: **2014** Justice Schippers (Case No: 15526/2013); **2016** Justice Gamble (24537/2015) and now in August **2020**, Justice Kollapen (Case No: 23182/2017). I was the first applicant in that case before Justice Kollapen. I was not afraid to take the most powerful people at UWC to the High Court. I won that case on 26 August 2020. There is a Public Protector case against the UWC leadership (Reference No: 7/7/018160/16) that was incorrectly concluded. After a challenge, the case was re-opened on 10 September 2019. A criminal charge (1153/02/2019) of alleged perjury and crimen injuria as well as criminal defamation was lodged against the Rector. A fourth high court case, filed by human rights organization, Protect UWC against the UWC leadership is ongoing. We intend to help UWC comply with the rule of law.

My running partner, Khalid Khan has a youthful intellectualism and wisdom as well as quality life experience. He grew up on the Cape Flats and was part of the student movement that opposed apartheid during the 1980s. His life reflects a true liberation ethos. He is one of our liberation struggle heroes. It is an honour to have him as my Convocation partner. I will vote for him. I urge all those who intend to vote for me to vote for him as well. **Aluta Continua**