

# Eastern Cape Bar

Contributed by Nathi Dwayi

## Bhisho Bar

### WELCOMING YET ANOTHER SILK ACQUISITION

by Bayethe Maswazi

The Bhisho Bar is pleased to announce that Mncedisi Simoyi was recently elevated to silk status. His is an inspiring story of humble beginnings in a world that was hostile to the progress of people of his colour.

Mr Simoyi was born and bred in Willowvale, a small rural town in the Eastern Cape to illiterate parents due to the challenging socio-economic conditions of the time, which he also inherited.

Mr Simoyi joined the Transkei Police which later became the South African Police Service (SAPS) in 1983 and served in various units and branches until he resigned in 2002.

With the advent of the constitutional dispensation, he joined the Police and Prisons Civil Rights Union (POPCRU) where he served as a shop steward as well as a paralegal (and simultaneously as a defence officer appointed in terms of the SAPS Disciplinary Regulations) representing employees in disciplinary hearings and arbitration proceedings of the Safety and Security Sectoral Bargaining Council until his resignation in 2002.

While serving in the SAPS he applied and was accepted in legal studies, obtaining a Bachelor of Law (*BLuris*) in 1997, and Bachelor of Laws (LLB) in 2000 from the University of South Africa (Unisa). He then obtained his Certificate in Practical Legal Training under the auspices of the Law Society of South Africa in 2000.

Straight from university studies, he did his pupillage in 2001 in Durban under



the auspices of the Society of Advocates of KwaZulu-Natal and was admitted as an advocate on 3 May 2001. Mr Simoyi has thus been in practice for 23 years.

Undeterred, he commenced his studies towards a Master of Laws Degree (LLM) with a specialisation in labour law whilst in the SAPS and was conferred with same in 2004 whilst already practising as an advocate.

He has practised as an advocate since 2002 to date as a member of the Bhisho Society of Advocates as well as the

Port Elizabeth Bar, under the auspices of the Eastern Cape Society of Advocates. He practises mainly in labour as well as administrative law.

In 2022, the judge president of the Labour and Labour Appeal Court appointed him in an acting capacity as a judge of the Labour Court.

His elevation to silk status is a personal milestone that attests to his hard work and persistent quest for knowledge.

On receiving the letters patent for Simoyi SC, the chair of the Bhisho Bar Council, Donovan Pitt, convened a ceremony attended by a sizeable number of the bar membership to mark this milestone in a journey so inspiring and filled with great achievements along the way.

Simoyi SC joins the galaxy of silks that have been elevated to that status recently being Mtshabe SC, Da Silva SC, Swartbooi SC, Kunju SC, Bodlani SC and the immediate past chair of our Bar, Mapoma SC.

## Makhanda Bar

by Julian Barker

### ACTING APPOINTMENTS

Nicola Molony, who was absent from the Bar for an extended period during which she successfully underwent cancer treatment, returned to full-time practice in 2024. She served as an acting judge during the third term this year (her seventh acting appointment) and is acting again in the fourth term. We are glad to have her back.

Kerryn Watt, who first acted as a judge in March 2024, acted in August and September (both times for a week).

Nicola and Kerryn's acting appointments were in Makhanda, where they hold chambers.

### DEPARTURES

While still a member of the Eastern Cape Society of Advocates (ECSA), Gavin Dugmore SC left Makhanda in May this year for Knysna and is on the glide path to retirement after approximately 37 years at the Bar. Gavin reports that he enjoys exploring the hinterland of his new town, and we await news on how his golf has improved.

Lubabalo Ntlokwana left the ECSA in August to join Legal Aid South Africa as a High Court Legal Practitioner at its Qonce (King William's Town) office, which serves Bhisho and East London. We wish him all the best in his new role. 