

Mpumalanga Bar

Contributed by Gertruida Gomes De Jesus, Denise Greyling-Coetzer and Zodwa Gumede

GM GOMES: ENDURANCE, EXCELLENCE AND THE ULTIMATE HUMAN RACE

Gertruida Maria Gomes De Jesus, known professionally as GM Gomes, continues to distinguish herself not only in legal practice but also in elite long-distance running.

Based in Mpumalanga, Gomes is an advocate and competitive marathon runner representing Nedbank LVCC Mpumalanga. In November 2025, during her second year of practice, she delivered a standout performance at the Istanbul Marathon on 2 November 2025, one of the world's most iconic races and the only marathon to span two continents. The route begins on the Asian side of Istanbul, crosses the Bosphorus via the 15 Temmuz Şehitler Bridge, and finishes in Europe between the Blue Mosque (Sultanahmet Mosque) and Hagia Sophia.

The event hosted more than 41,000 athletes, and Gomes finished 17th woman overall, emerged as the fastest woman over the age of 40, and was the first South African finisher across both male and female categories. Running the 42,2 km course, she passed landmarks such as the Istanbul Naval Museum, Dolmabahçe Palace, Galata Bridge, Spice Bazaar, Topkapı Palace, Little Hagia Sophia Mosque and Gülhane Park. Each step was steeped in history and culture, making her achievement as much a journey through time as a test of endurance.

Earlier in 2025, Gomes recorded her personal best marathon time of 2:57 at the Elands Marathon. She had also aimed for a silver medal at the 2025 Comrades Marathon, but an injury shortly before the race prevented her participation. Undeterred, she returned to running with focus and determination, completing the Istanbul Marathon in 3:10:20, overtaking her nearest rival late in the race to secure



victory in her age category and top South African honours.

Her Comrades Marathon personal best is 8 hours 16 minutes, achieved in 2022 at the race widely regarded as The Ultimate Human Race. She now aspires to participate in the 100th Comrades Marathon and remains committed to returning to the iconic event.

Although she missed the opening of entries for the 2026 Comrades Marathon while travelling back from Turkey, another extraordinary opportunity soon followed. She was subsequently invited by the Abbott World Marathon Majors to compete in her age category at the World Championships, scheduled for 24 May 2026 at the Cape Town Marathon – an invitation she describes as “a once-in-a-lifetime honour”.

Her running journey has long been intertwined with her legal path. During her pupillage in 2023, while attending litigation and moot court exercises at Pumula Beach Hotel, Gomes planned an early-morning run with Francette Gouws, one of the trainers and helpers. Unexpectedly, Judge Trevor Richard Gorven, a judge of the Supreme Court of Appeal at the time, asked if he could join them.

“He told me, whatever you do, never compromise your running – it will always carry you forward,” she recalls. The encounter reinforced her belief that, regardless of title or position, runners inevitably find one another on the road, bound by shared discipline and perseverance.

For Gomes, running is more than competition. It is a discipline that mirrors the demands of advocacy: patience, endurance, humility and resolve. Whether in court or on the world stage, she continues to demonstrate that excellence is built one deliberate step at a time, all while experiencing the history, culture, and beauty of the world's great cities along the way.



Gertruida Gomes De Jesus and Robbie Gomes De Jesus



MPUMALANGA SOCIETY OF ADVOCATES CELEBRATES JUDGE DENISE GREYLING-COETZER'S APPOINTMENT

On 26 November 2025, the Mpumalanga Society of Advocates hosted a buffet lunch to celebrate Denise Greyling-Coetzer following her appointment as a judge in the Free State Division of the High Court.

Members of the Society came together at The Capital in Mbombela to celebrate her professional milestone and to wish her well as she embarked on her new judicial appointment. It was not a final farewell, but a proud moment to honour a valued colleague's success.

Judge Greyling-Coetzer has enjoyed a distinguished career at the Bar, which began in Bloemfontein with the Free State Society of Advocates as pupil member in

2010. In 2013 she joined the Johannesburg Society of Advocates, practising from the Island Group of Advocates in Sandton, and in 2018 she also joined the Mpumalanga Society of Advocates, running a dual practice until 2021 when she exclusively practised from her Mbombela chambers. Her appointment to the bench marks a meaningful return to Bloemfontein where her professional journey first began.

The event reflected the pride of the Mpumalanga Bar in one of its members reaching this significant milestone, recognising her contribution to the legal profession and the administration of justice in South Africa.



Front Micheal Speelman, S'busiso Mndawe, Dorcus Mathebula, Denise Greyling-Coetzer, Zodwa Gumede, Nozipho Mbuyane and Deon Dennis. **Back** Lindumusa Makamu, Sipho Mashela, Nosipho Shabangu, Tinyiko Mashabane, Ntiyiso Makamu and Gertruida Gomes De Jesus.



MPUMALANGA BAR CONGRATULATES THE CLASS OF 2025 AND BEST OVERALL PUPIL PERFORMANCE

The Mpumalanga Society of Advocates proudly congratulates all pupil advocates of the Class of 2025 who successfully passed the General Council of the Bar (GCB) Bar Examinations.

The Bar recognises the dedication, discipline, and resilience required to complete pupillage and meet the demanding standards of the profession. Each pupil who passed has achieved a significant milestone and is commended for their hard work and commitment.

The Mpumalanga Bar further extends special congratulations to Mbaleh Shabangu, who achieved the best overall performance in the GCB Bar Examinations, and also topped the Legal Practice Council (LPC) examinations. Although she is still awaiting her formal admission as an advocate, her exceptional results reflect excellence, consistency and outstanding promise for a future career at the Bar.

The Mpumalanga Bar celebrates this achievement and wishes Mbaleh, together with all successful pupils of the Class of 2025, every success as they take the next steps in their professional journey.

MPUMALANGA BAR CLOSES 2025 WITH YEAR-END BUFFET DINNER

The Mpumalanga Bar wrapped up 2025 in style with its year-end buffet dinner on Friday, 12 December 2025, at The Capital, Mbombela.

Members and their partners enjoyed a well-deserved evening to unwind, reconnect, and reflect on the highs (and occasional courtroom surprises) of the past year. The buffet was delicious, the conversation lively, and the music set

the perfect backdrop.

For one night only, the usual rules were relaxed: hearsay was fully admissible, and the only objections came in the form of “pass me another helping of dessert!” The informal setting allowed members to celebrate not just the successes of the Bar, but also the friendships, camaraderie and shared stories that make the profession so special.

A special note of celebration went to Nozipho Mbuyane, who was happily expecting at the time of the event – the Bar warmly congratulates her on the safe arrival of her baby girl, Amila Lisa Makamu.

The evening was a fitting close to 2025, reminding all that the strength of the Bar lies not only in skill and diligence but also in laughter, community and good company.



Zwelakhe Hadebe, Nozipho Mbuyane and Mfundo Makamu.



Mfundo Makamu, Sunday Lubisi and Nosipho Shabangu.



Nosipho Shabangu and Sipho Mashele.



Tinyiko Mashabane and Mfundo Makamu.



Sunday Lubisi, Mfundo Makamu, Sipho Mashele, Zwelakhe Hadebe and Robbie Gomes De Jesus.



Nozipho Mbuyane, Tinyiko Mashabane, Nosipho Shabangu and Gertruida Gomes De Jesus.



Tinyiko Mashabane and Zwelakhe Hadebe.



Mfundo Makamu, Nozipho Mbuyane, Gertruida Gomes De Jesus and Robbie Gomes De Jesus.

MPUMALANGA BAR WELCOMES SIX NEW PUPILS

The Mpumalanga Society of Advocates is pleased to welcome six pupil advocates who have commenced their pupillage for the year 2026.

This new intake reflects the continued growth of the Mpumalanga Bar and its commitment to developing competent, ethical and skilled advocates in service of the administration of justice.

The Pupils Programme is co-ordinated by Zodwa Gumede, who

plays a key role in supporting pupils through the structure and demands of pupillage, while ensuring that training and professional development remain aligned with the standards of the profession.

The Mpumalanga Bar warmly welcomes each of the pupils and wishes them a successful and rewarding year ahead. **A**



Front Itumeleng Malatjie and Nonsikelelo Dube.
Back Lindokuhle Lukhele, Sandile Masango, Godfrey Mnisi and Makhosini Khumalo.