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## **In memory of Gugulethu Siziba (1979-2017)**

It is with great sadness that the Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology announces the death of Dr Gugulethu Siziba, a former PhD student and postdoctoral fellow in the Department.

Gugulethu Siziba was born in Zimbabwe in 1979. He grew up in Bulawayo and completed his initial academic training at the University of Zimbabwe in Harare. Before arriving at Stellenbosch he worked as: a lecturer in the Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology at the University of Zimbabwe; a research fellow at the African Institute for Agrarian Studies (AIAS), in Zimbabwe; and a researcher at the African Centre for Migration and Society (ACMS) at the University of the Witwatersrand.

In late 2010 Gugulethu was awarded a Stellenbosch Graduate School bursary and in 2011 was registered as a PhD student in the Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology. In December 2011 he was awarded a Next Generation Social Sciences in Africa Fellowship by the Social Science Research Council, based in New York. At the 2013 annual congress of the South African Sociological Association he was awarded first prize in the annual SASA student essay competition, based on a paper that he presented at the 2012 congress. He graduated in December 2013, after defending a thesis titled “Language and the politics of identity in South Africa: The case of Zimbabwean Shona and Ndebele migrants in Johannesburg.” The PhD thesis took the form of a multi-sited ethnography and presented a detailed and nuanced analysis of the manner in which Shona and isiNdebele speakers use language to appropriate and craft spaces for themselves in Johannesburg.

From 2014 to 2016 he held postdoctoral fellowships at Stellenbosch. The first of these was a Stellenbosch Postdoctoral Fellowship, where he worked with Lloyd Hill and Simon Bekker on an NRF-funded project titled “Language and urban social space in South Africa”. In 2016 he received a Carnegie Funded American Council of Learned Societies (ACLS) Postdoctoral Fellowship, which allowed him to begin the process of converting his thesis into a book – working at Stellenbosch and at the University of

Ghana, in Accra. During this period he produced a number of journal articles, many of which were based on his PhD research.

Gugu (as he was known to friends and colleagues) was one of the top PhD graduates to emerge from our department and the Faculty's Graduate School, and was recognized as a rising star in southern African sociology. He was well-read and had a particular talent for integrating theoretical ideas into thick descriptions of the contexts that he studied. He made a noteworthy academic contribution through research that integrated the fields of sociolinguistics and migration studies.

As an alumnus of the Graduate School he was friends with fellow Graduate School colleagues and numerous other Stellenbosch staff members and students. His personal interests included football and creative writing – particularly satire. As a well-respected colleague and friend to many people in this Faculty, he will be sorely missed. We extend our condolences to his partner, Nyari Mubaiwa, and to his mother, Lister, and family in Bulawayo.

Simon Bekker and Lloyd Hill  
15 February 2017