

FABIANS CELEBRATE ANOTHER YEAR OF RESEARCH EXCELLENCE AT THE 2017 YEAR-END GALA DINNER AND AWARDS CEREMONY

The 2017 FABI year-end gala dinner and awards ceremony marked 20 years since the founding of the Institute and an historic turning point in its future. FABI staff, students and invited guests swapped their lab coats for evening wear to celebrate another year of research excellence and accomplishments. The event was attended by Vice-Principal for Research and Postgraduate Education at the University of Pretoria, Professor Stephanie Burton; Dean in the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences, Prof Jean Lubuma; Director: Facilities Management at UP Prof Susan Adendorff as well as representatives from the forestry sector, other FABI stakeholders and members of the FABI team and their guests.



From left to right: Outgoing FABI Director Prof Mike Wingfield, guest speaker Prof Jonathan Jansen and Dean in the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences at the University of Pretoria, Prof Jean Lubuma.

Former Vice-Chancellor of the University of the Free State, who had previously served as the Dean of the Faculty of Education at UP, Prof Jonathan Jansen was guest speaker for the night. He spoke of the responsibility of universities in the current social and political climate, as generators of new knowledge and, importantly, as institutions where openness, freedom of expression and the unflinching search for the truth are encouraged and practised. He commended FABI for these characteristics, which in its history have set it apart as a centre of excellence in its field.

Prof Lubuma announced that Prof Bernard Slippers would assume leadership of FABI from 1 January as founder Director Prof Mike Wingfield will step down from this position after 20 years at the helm. FABIans recalled their fondest memories of Prof Wingfield in a video screened on the night. FABIans also bid farewell to Dr Bridget Crampton, who will leave FABI to join the UK Forestry Commission at the end of the year.

Dr Irene Barnes officiated the awards ceremony and announced awards to the following people for their contributions to FABI in these categories:



Andi Wilson accepts her FABIan of the Year award from Prof Mike Wingfield.

Best FABI MSc: Drew Behrens

Best student publication: Valentine Nakato

Best FABI Post-doc publication: Dr Alistair McTaggart

FABI award “Getting the message to the public”: Juanita Avontuur, Arista Fourie, Angel Maduke and Benedicta Swalarsk-Parry who make up the CTHB Outreach Team

FABI award for mentorship: Benedicta Swalarsk-Parry and Jonathan Botha

FABI award recognising contributions by a member of staff at the University of Pretoria: Prof Susan Adendorff

Best student website: Quentin Guignard

FABI award recognising contributions by a person external to FABI: Sally Upfold of the Institute for Commercial Forestry Research

FABI Photographic Awards:

FABlans at work: Prof Dave Berger

FABI research: Angelique du Preez

FABlan of the Year: Andi Wilson

Honours students with projects at FABI received their special 2017 Honours T-shirt.