

FAREWELL TO LYDIA TWALA

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Lydia Twala was born and brought up in QwaQwa but moved to Pretoria where her husband, Ismael, started a new job. When she joined FABI/TPCP in 2003, she was initially appointed as a receptionist, but very soon she became interested in the laboratory work. This has led to her becoming involved in the Fusarium screening program under the supervision of Prof Teresa Coutinho. She learned the basic laboratory skills and obtained her knowledge of microbial organisms, especially fungi. She then joined the culture collection (CMW) where more than 2500 cultures are deposited and withdrawn annually. Her major responsibility was to prepare freshly isolated fungal cultures for long-term preservation and to supply researchers and students with the cultures for their ongoing projects. She was always a very cheerful and passionate “teacher” of simple laboratory procedures as well as of “life’s complicated lessons” to both students and visitors. She was able to utilize these skills because she is a qualified teacher.



Farewell party in FABI courtyard



Mike giving good wishes for Lydia on behalf of FABI family



With the culture collection staff

We were very sad to say goodbye to Lydia as she had to leave FABI to follow her husband who was commissioned to serve at the South African Embassy in Tehran, Iran. She and her youngest daughter, Diana, who was in the 10th grade at school in Pretoria, have now relocated and found a home in Tehran where the family will live for the next two years. Lydia has two grown-up daughters who remained behind in Pretoria.

Our most recent news of Lydia, is that she was appointed as the vice-Secretary of the diplomatic ladies society in Iran, representing South Africa. It is not surprising to hear that she has been chosen to fulfil this role, as her ability to motivate people and her lively, optimistic and industrious personality are characteristics of Lydia that have been recognised. Her motto is: "we are not called to be thermometers but we are called to be thermostats in people's lives at the end of the day". We are missing Lydia, but we wish her and her family well in their new life in Iran.