

Tribute to Professor Willemien du Plessis: A Legacy of Excellence and Compassion

E van der Schyff*

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Author

Elmarie van der Schyff

Affiliation

Judge of the High Court, Gauteng
Division

Email

elmarie2.evds@gmail.com

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Prof C Rautenbach
Prof JM Pienaar

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Prof C Rautenbach

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In this special edition of the journal, we pay tribute to a luminary in the world of academia, Professor Willemien du Plessis. As we gather to celebrate her illustrious career, we are reminded of the profound impact she has had on the fields of law, education, and human compassion.

Professor du Plessis is a true *mater familias*, a guiding figure who has nurtured and inspired countless individuals throughout her journey. Her contributions to the realm of knowledge are as diverse as they are influential, with a common thread of seeking practical and logical solutions to the myriad challenges that our world presents.

In the pages of this special edition, we delve into the remarkable academic journey of Professor du Plessis, exploring her diverse research interests and the lasting impact of her scholarly work. From her groundbreaking contributions to legal theory to her passionate advocacy for social justice, her body of work stands as a testament to her unwavering commitment to the pursuit of truth and justice.

But Professor du Plessis's legacy goes beyond her academic achievements. Her work ethic is an inspiration to us all, serving as a reminder of the importance of dedication and diligence in our own pursuits. She has been a mentor and a friend to many, tirelessly guiding and supporting emerging scholars as they navigate the often complex terrain of academia.

For me personally, Professor du Plessis has been a beacon of wisdom and kindness. I consider myself privileged to not only have worked alongside her but also to regard her as a friend. Her mentorship has been a guiding light in my academic journey, and her friendship has enriched my life in countless ways. Her warmth and boundless wisdom have left an indelible mark on my heart, and for that, I am eternally grateful.

Beyond academia, Professor du Plessis's compassion knows no bounds. Her generosity has touched the lives of numerous students and their families, as she has frequently used her

own research and personal resources to provide financial assistance to those in need. Her commitment to making education accessible to all is a testament to her belief in the transformative power of knowledge.

As we honour Professor du Plessis's contributions to the field of law, we also acknowledge her broader impact on the legal community. Her wisdom, guidance, and unwavering support have enriched the lives of countless individuals, leaving an indelible mark on the legal profession.

As Professor du Plessis embarks on this new chapter of her life in retirement, I extend my heartfelt best wishes to her and her family. May this be a time of well-deserved relaxation, new adventures, and the joy that comes from a life well-lived. While we will miss her presence in our daily lives, her legacy will continue to inspire us all, reminding us of the profound impact that one dedicated individual can have on the world.

In closing, we express our profound gratitude to Professor Willemien du Plessis for her unwavering commitment to knowledge, justice, and humanity. Her contributions have enriched our lives, and her legacy will continue to shine brightly, illuminating the path for future generations of scholars and advocates.

Elmarie van der Schyff

* Elmarie van der Schyff. BA (Law) LLB LLM LLD (NWU). Judge of the High Court of South Africa, Gauteng Division and Extraordinary Professor at the Faculty of Law, North-West University, South Africa. Email: elmarie2.evds@gmail.com. ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3017-5277>.