**EASA President Report**

CHAIRPERSON’S REPORT - 2016

Presented by Meahabo Dinah Magano

The year 2016 has been a dynamic year characterized by a number of events in the country which challenged the usual way of doing business. The educational landscape was challenged from lower levels to tertiary institutions, culminating with unrests in Limpopo where Vuwani schools were gutted down and the #FeesmustFall in Higher Education. The events call for transformation in education which necessitates stakeholders to question their practices. Researchers as stakeholders are also challenged on whether their research is relevant and predictive of the possible challenges facing the educational landscape in the country.

EASA 2017 conference theme is an attempt to interrogate our role as academics in an educational landscape. The theme “Inspired by the Dome: Optimising the impact of our research, teaching and community engagement to facilitate change towards a functional and harmonious, diverse South African educational landscape” is indeed an appropriate and well thought theme for times such as these. This theme which emanates from the geographical narrative of the meteorite that hit the Vaal area near Parys and subsequently affected the landscape causing the grassland to coexist with the bushveld is indeed a metaphor for the state of education in South Africa. The #Feesmustfall wave which hit the country will result in a unique situation where higher education is accessed by all regardless of their socio economic background. In the wake of this newly defined paradigm EASA members must be determined to make a meaningful contribution towards the advancement of policy and advancement of practice in education.

The keynote addresses for the conference were carefully selected so that conference delegates can have critical and fruitful engagements during presentations. All key note speakers are scholars of prolific standing in academia who are respected globally due to their scholarly contributions. Apart from presentations the executive committee has also resuscitated interest groups which will be an ongoing collaboration of academics for various disciplines throughout the year. The sessions at EASA conference will be the beginning of conversations which will be sustained throughout the year leading to the subsequent conference. The executive committee thought that this will create a platform for continuous discourse amongst EASA’s members. In addition panel discussions during the conference will enable active participation of scholars on the theme of the conference.

Following the EASA January 2017 conference, it is anticipated that EASA members will submit articles to our South African Journal of Education for publication. The journal is doing well with an impact factor of 0.560.

We also welcome new members of EASA and postgraduate students who attend our annual conference and present papers. Of importance is to indicate that all delegates who attend the conference remain to be members of EASA for the entire year.

Finally we congratulate the awards recipients nominated by EASA members for the medal of honour, emerging researcher and postgraduate medal!

Let me congratulate Dr Ruth Motlalepule Mampane who will be the chairperson of EASA for 2017, a word of appreciation is also extended to Dr Dipane Hlalele who was an outgoing chairperson for the current year. We welcome the incoming chairperson Prof Johnnie Hay.

Prof Meahabo Dinah Magano

EASA Chairperson 2016