**A Gold Medal for Prof. Naik**

28 March 2013

Wits University awarded a gold medal to Prof. Kantilal Naik for his contribution to the University, the School of Computational and Applied Mathematics, the country, and the community of Azaadville.

The medal was presented to him at the Faculty of Science's graduation ceremony on Wednesday, 27 March 2013.

**Citation:  Kantilal Naik**

Before joining the academic staff at the University of the Witwatersrand Prof. Kantilal Naik was first a senior Science teacher at Lenasia Indian High School (1964-1965) and Roodepoort Asiatic School (1966-1974). Prof. Naik then joined the Transvaal College of Education lecturing in Physical Science, Educational Technology, and Guidance and Counselling (1975-1980). Prof. Naik was promoted to the position of Senior Lecturer at the Transvaal College of Education in 1980.

He then left the Transvaal College of Education and was appointed as a Senior Tutor in the Department of Statistics at the University of the Witwatersrand from April 1981 till December 1985. In January 1986 Prof. Naik was transferred to the Department of Applied Mathematics and was promoted to the position of Senior Lecturer on 1 January 1991. He worked there until his retirement in December 2003. Prof. Naik has been appointed as an Honorary Adjunct Professor in the School of Computational and Applied Mathematics since 2010. Prof. Naik’s position as an Honorary Adjunct Professor has been renewed until the end of 2015.

He holds a BSc degree (1964) and a BEd degree (1974) from Wits. He also completed a MEd (with distinction) at UNISA in 1980, and a DEd (UNISA) in 1989. Prof. Naik has co-supervised two MSc students, published two textbooks and has written extensively on education. Prof. Arthur Bleksley wrote a foreword for Prof. Naik’s textbook on Physical Science entitled *Calculations in Physical Science.*

In 1971, Prof. Naik was arrested for associating with anti-apartheid activists and was detained at John Vorster Square. While in detention he was tortured by members of the security branch. His experiences while in detention are now part of a historic record maintained by the South African History Archive (SAHA) entitled *Between Life and Death on detention at John Vorster Square*.

In 1996 Prof. Naik gave testimony at the TRC hearings where he was given evidence of documents from the Department of Justice archives which showed that he was badly tortured at John Vorster Square. He is currently writing a book on his experiences in detention, focusing on the death in detention of Ahmed Timol. The book is based on his interactions with Ahmed Timol in the weeks leading up to Timol’s death. Prof. Naik spends a significant amount of time documenting the history of the Indian community in South Africa.

During his tenure as a staff member in the School, he served the School with distinction making a significant contribution its teaching activities. Although he has retired from the School, he continues to serve the University as a member of convocation. As part of Prof. Naik’s duties as an executive member of convocation, he serves on both Senate and Council. Furthermore, he serves the School and the Faculty on various promotions committees and continues to make a contribution to the School of Chemistry through his work showcasing chemistry and chemical reactions to the general public.

He has also made a significant contribution to the community of Azaadvaille. He has been involved with the School Governing Body of the Ahmed Timol Secondary School since 1996. He was instrumental in the name change of the school from the Azaadville Secondary School to the Ahmed Timol Secondary School. The renaming took place on the 29thApril 1998 when Nelson Mandela officially opened the new school.

Prof. Naik continues to work with the community of Azaadville and surrounding communities to improve education among the youth.

The University deems it fit to award Prof. Kantilal Naik with a gold medal for his significant contribution to the University, the School of Computational and Applied Mathematics, the country, and the community of Azaadville.

Source: <http://www.wits.ac.za/newsroom/newsitems/2012graduations/19526/news_item_19526.html>