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NEWS LETTER
Q3 EDITION
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Welcome to Our Q3 Newsletter

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At Cornerstone, we believe that progress is built one step at a time, through the effort of our students, our staff, and our institution as a whole. This quarter carried that spirit in many ways. We built on the momentum of the year so far, celebrated the people who make our community what it is, and kept moving towards the goals we share. Along the way, we shared moments of achievement, connection, and learning that remind us why this work matters.

As you read through this edition, we hope you see a reflection of who we are: a community shaped by learning, collaboration, and a shared sense of purpose.

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FROM THE EXECUTIVE DEAN

A message from the Executive Dean reflecting on the quarter, key developments, and the road ahead.

Acting Executive Dean
Geraldine Franciscus

Dear Gentle Readers (– just kidding!)
Dear Cornerstonians/Cornerstoners

We have come through both an exciting and challenging period of transition since the start of 2026, beginning with our move to a new learning management system, followed by our move to a brand-new campus in Salt River in April 2026, and, for me personally, stepping into the Acting Executive Dean role at the beginning of March 2026.

With all these changes came exciting opportunities, including increased space in our new building for more engaging and new student spaces, as well as onboarding all staff onto Moodle, also fondly referred to as "Noodle". Moodle came with all the teething problems and more, and we had to work very hard across all departments to give both students and lecturers a good experience. At times we succeeded, and at other times we had to seriously go back to the drawing board and Namaste many times in between. One thing is for sure: the different Cornerstone departments and teams worked tirelessly to resolve the issues and concerns, working many long hours and banding together to do what needed to be done. A big thank you is really needed to all the staff who truly went the extra mile during this transition period.

As a private higher education institution, we are not without the challenges that Artificial Intelligence (AI) brings. We have been developing plans and strategising ways to address these challenges in ways that both enhance the proper use of AI and help us maintain academic standards that support students' learning and growth.

We had a Faculty Day on 22 April 2026, with the topic being "Empowering in Higher Education: AI for Teaching and Self-Care for Thriving", recognising that a period of great transition requires substantial resources, both human and otherwise, to bring these changes into effect. We need to focus on ways our staff can thrive amid the changes and acknowledge the impact on them and their well-being. At the 16 September Senate, we had Prof Aslam Fataar address us on AI policy and procedures, sharing his research findings and practical tips.

The need to hear the voices of staff and to provide capacity building in this new chapter led to the Capacity Building Workshops and training, recognising the need for us to grow together and have the space for more honest conversations with each other as we move forward on our journey to build a great institution. This has been both a lovely and challenging space for working across departments and getting to know each other, our workflows, and our responsibilities better. Understanding each person's role in the bigger picture has been very enlightening. Many areas for growth, some frustrations, and areas for further development have been identified. Stakeholders have played a huge part in this, which is really appreciated and not taken for granted. Thanks to everyone who has actively helped build Cornerstone Institute. We cannot do it alone; we need each other.

Faculty meetings, including HoDs/Programme Coordinators meetings, and strategic planning across departments have been undertaken. On 17 August 2026, we held the Strategic Planning Day with all the HoDs/Programme Coordinators to further enhance Cornerstone Institute's growth and vision. Topics included **Leadership and Institutional Alignment, Academic Excellence** and **Innovation, Programme Strategy and Growth, and Sustainability.** Discussions included enhancing student experiences, developing new programmes, improving current programmes, staff growth, AI use, and assessments.

We have officially signed an MOU with Chancen South Africa to help finance many more students; our partnerships are growing!

We have also seen the successes of staff who have received PhDs and published. We are also in a very exciting time as we look forward to welcoming more permanent faculty in 2027.

Another exciting thing to look forward to is the return of more contact programmes in 2027, as we continue to grow our online offerings and actively work towards the accreditation of additional programmes. Our new Quality Assurance Unit has been established to enable us to do this even more effectively under the leadership of Reitumetse Mofane and her team.
I move forward excited about the future of Cornerstone Institute and the impact we will have on future generations.

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Celebrating Excellence: Registrar Department Recognises Student Success Coaches



On 31 July 2026, the Registrar Department hosted a special Awards Ceremony at the Cornerstone Institute campus to celebrate and recognise the exceptional achievements of our Student Success Coaches who reached and exceeded their Semester 1 intake targets.

The event, themed as a royal high tea, provided a fitting setting to honour the commitment, dedication, and impact of the team members who played a significant role in supporting student recruitment and enrolment success.
The top performers for Semester 1 were:



Thean



Carmelita



Nasiphi

In addition, special recognition was given to Stephnie Jordan, Zena Julies, and Roxane Jannecke, who also successfully achieved their intake targets, demonstrating remarkable commitment to student success and institutional growth.



Roxane



Zena



Stephnie

The celebration was attended by senior leadership, including CEO Abdul Basier Dramat, Director of Student Services Beverley Dankers-Kotze, and Finance Manager Paul Africa, who joined colleagues in acknowledging the outstanding efforts of the award recipients.

Addressing attendees, leadership commended the Student Success Coaches for their perseverance, professionalism, and dedication to guiding prospective students through their educational journey. Their contributions have not only helped achieve enrolment goals but have also strengthened Cornerstone Institute's mission of transforming lives through education.

The Awards Ceremony served as a reminder that behind every successful enrolment is a team committed to helping students realise their aspirations. The achievements of Thean, Carmelita, Nasiphi, Zena, and Roxane exemplify the excellence, service, and student-centred values that define Cornerstone Institute.

Congratulations to all the award recipients on this well-deserved recognition, and thank you to all the student success coaches for their commitment. We look forward to celebrating many more successes in the semesters ahead.

Nariman Laattoe
Deputy Registrar


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NEWS LETTER

Finance Education. Know Your Options



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CAPITEC | Education Finance

CHANCEN International FAIR FINANCE FOR EQUAL ACCESS

FUNDICONNECT

A guide to the financial support and payment options available to students.

Understanding the funding options available to students helps us provide better guidance when financial concerns arise. Cornerstone offers a range of funding and payment solutions, each designed to support students in different circumstances.

Chancen International South Africa
Chancen offers an Income Share Agreement (ISA), in which repayments are linked to a student's future income rather than to a traditional upfront loan. Students repay once they are earning, with repayments capped for protection.

Cornerstone Extender
The Cornerstone Extender provides an additional pathway for qualifying students who need more time to complete their studies. It offers a structured way to extend their academic journey while maintaining access to Cornerstone's academic and student support.

FundiConnect
FundiConnect provides tuition funding through an online application process, with flexible repayment options. Once approved, funding is paid directly to Cornerstone.

Capitec Education Finance
Capitec offers education loans of up to R500,000, with a discounted fixed interest rate and repayment terms of up to 84 months. Students can also obtain an estimate before applying.

Mobicred
Mobicred is a revolving digital credit facility that can be used to manage study-related payments. It offers an online application process and flexible repayment options.

Cornerstone Financial Aid
Financial aid is available to eligible students experiencing financial need. Applications are assessed according to Cornerstone's requirements, available funding, and the applicable Financial Aid Policy.

Knowing the available funding options enables us to better support students when financial concerns arise and to direct them to the appropriate resources.

NEWS LETTER

Growing Through Partnership: Cornerstone × Chancen South Africa



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CHANCEN International
FAIR FINANCE FOR EQUAL ACCESS

Growing Through Partnership:
Cornerstone × Chancen South Africa

Cornerstone Institute has partnered with Chancen South Africa to expand access to higher education by providing eligible students with an alternative pathway to funding their studies through an Income Share Agreement (ISA).

The partnership supports students across selected programmes, including the Postgraduate Certificate in Education (FP/IP/SP), Bachelor of Commerce (second year), Higher Certificate in Business Studies, and Higher Certificate in Community Development.

Unlike a conventional student loan, the ISA does not charge interest or require fixed repayments regardless of a student's employment status.
Repayments begin only once a graduate is employed and earns above a set minimum income threshold, with repayment caps and a defined repayment period in place.

The partnership reflects Cornerstone Institute's ongoing commitment to widening access to higher education through flexible study options, funding opportunities, and student support. For students, the Chancen ISA provides another route towards obtaining a qualification and building towards their future.

The signing marks an important step in our shared commitment to creating greater opportunities for students and strengthening pathways into higher education and employment.

Growing Through Partnership:
Cornerstone × Chancen South Africa





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NEWS LETTER

Meet Our Newest Team Members

A spotlight on new staff members joining the Cornerstone community. Get to know them through three questions about their roles, interests, and experiences

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Meet Our Newest Team Members



Lindokuhle Mnqayi - Marketing
Junior Content Coordinator

What's your role and what does it involve?

I'm a Content Coordinator, responsible for planning and creating content for our digital platforms. I work on social media, campaigns, and creative projects, while coordinating with different teams to bring content ideas to life. I also make sure our content is engaging, relevant, and consistent with the brand.

What attracted you to this position/organisation?

I was attracted to this position because it combines my passion for content, creativity, and digital media with an organisation that is focused on making a meaningful impact. I also saw it as an opportunity to grow my skills, contribute fresh creative ideas, and gain valuable experience while being part of a purpose-driven team.

One interesting fact about me?
I was once featured on PhotoVogue Italia as a model (2023).

Nombulelo Kasana
Faculty Librarian



What's your role and what does it involve?

I work in the library, where my core role involves supporting students and staff with access to information and library resources. I assist with the organisation and management of library collections, help users find the information they need, and contribute to creating a welcoming and useful library environment. I also have an interest in improving and developing library collections so that they continue to meet the changing needs of the institution

What attracted you to this position/organisation?

What attracted me to this position was the opportunity to work in an environment where I can contribute to supporting s tudents and staff. I also liked the opportunity to grow professionally, learn new things, and be part of an organisation that values education and development. I saw the position as a chance to use my existing library experience while also developing new skills.

One interesting fact about me?

I laugh very loudly. You'll probably know I'm around before you actually see me!

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NEWS LETTER

GB 100 Boot Camp: Setting Our Students Up for Success



GIVE BACK 100

As part of our ongoing commitment to the Give Back 100 campaign, which opens doors to higher education for talented students who have the drive to build a career in business but haven't yet had the opportunity to study at a tertiary level, our Business Studies department hosted a Boot Camp for our GB 100 students this quarter.

The day combined practical business skills with genuine care for our students' success. Lecturers Sharon Brand and Solomon Ola led a hands-on Business Analytics exercise on how to use customer data to shape a new product concept. Geoff Schreiner, Head of Department, led a Marketing session that unpacked the growth strategy behind South African fintech PayNow.

The programme wrapped up with essential guidance on assessment dates, exam timetables, and upcoming Masterclasses, ensuring students left equipped for the semester ahead.

It's this kind of investment, in time, mentorship, and skills, that brings the Give Back 100 vision to life. It's about expanding access to business education and helping students build the foundation they need to thrive.





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Cornerstone at Open Book Festival



Cornerstone Institute partnered with the Open Book Festival 2026 as part of our Critical Dialogues programme, extending our commitment to creating spaces for meaningful public conversation and engagement.

The festival took place from 4–6 September at the Homecoming Centre, bringing together writers, readers, and creatives for conversations exploring literature, identity, history, and contemporary issues.

Through the partnership, Cornerstone supported the Critical Dialogue: Trusted Sources, a conversation on truth and misinformation featuring Dan Corder, Caryn Dolley, and Tara Roos, facilitated by Karabo Rajuili.


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OPEN BOOK FESTIVAL
4 - 6 SEPTEMBER 2026
HOMECOMING CENTRE DISTRICT 6

CORNERSTONE CRITICAL DIALOGUE
TRUSTED SOURCES

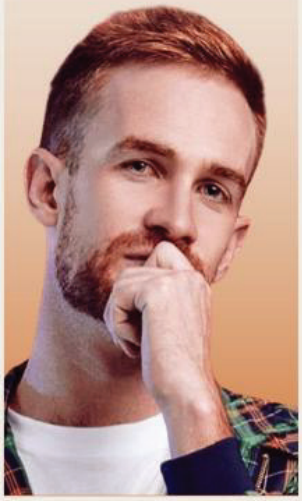
Saturday 5th
18:00 - 19:00

Star Theatre

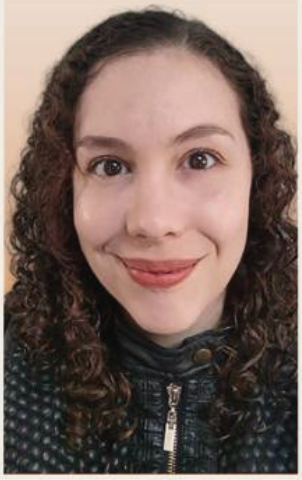
Dan Corder, Caryn Dolley and Tara Roos speak to Karabo Rajuili about truth in an age of misinformation.

Book via WebTickets.co.za

Cornerstone institute



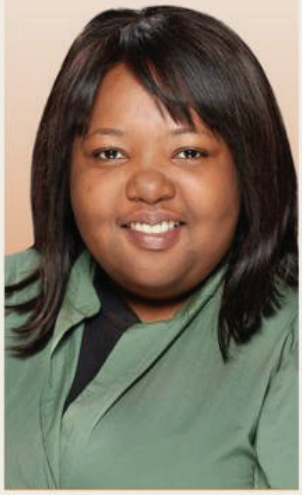
Dan Corder



Caryn Dolley



Tara Roos



Karabo Rajuili

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