



## Women in NDT: A day of inspiration

On October 14 at the CSIR, the Southern African Institute of NDT (SAINT) organised a day of inspiration for women to both celebrate the success of women in the NDT industry and to encourage more women to take up careers in NDT.

“My history in NDT goes back to when I was three years old and went onsite with my dad with an ultrasonic set that was twice the size I was,” said MC for the event, Elaine McDonald from SANDE, while delivering the opening address. “I was born in NDT and, like Amanda, I am now an NDT granny who will retire having been in the profession for my whole career, McDonald said, adding, “and to all you young ladies who are starting your careers, we are proud of you. You are all wonderful women.”

SAINT president Keith Cain, while welcoming and thanking guests and sponsors, announced that SAIW has sponsored three bursaries for deserving women: one for ultrasonic testing (UT) Level 1 and Level 2 courses and exams; one for radiographic testing (RT) Level 1 and Level 2 courses and exams; and a third for the Level 1 and Level 2 Welding Inspector qualifications.

Presentations by the NDT Industry's women followed, starting with a keynote address by Emma Snyman from the Radiation Control unit of the Department of Health, who dealt

with RT and pregnancy.

Zanele Mgiba, who has a masters degree in welding and now works for Rotek, presented and inspiring talk about the importance of mentorship. She urged women not to use their gender or motherhood as excuses to avoid becoming a fully integrated NDT practitioner. “You are of capable, organised and strong. There are opportunities in NDT and the future of the next generation of women depends on you taking a stand,” she urged.

Sunithi Barends from Murray and Roberts talked about new generation woman; Kathryn Wooldridge of UCT tackled the way in which women in the NDT industry experience gender roles, attitudes and discrimination; and motivational talks by Suzaan Badenhorst of ANDTC, Rochelle Slaffa of Stanley Inspection, GE's Amanda van der Westhuizen and Thea Wagner of Gammatec followed.

“When I was pregnant I was basically kept inside a maze of red lines, because at Gammatec we have trucks of isotopes coming in all the time. But you don't have to stop working. In hospitals and dental surgeries, the dentists, nurses and radiographers often use lead aprons. And on the industrial side, UT and other techniques are perfectly safe for women, even while they are pregnant,” Wagner assured. ■



Sunithi Barends from M&R.



Rotek's Zanele Mgiba.



Thea Wagner from Gammatec.



Elain McDonald from SANDE.



GE's Amanda vd Westhuizen.



Emma Snyman from DOH.



A day of inspiration for women was held at the CSIR to celebrate the success of women in the NDT industry and to motivate more young women to take up careers in the industry.