

CHANCELLOR'S MEDAL

LIDIA AURET, A PHD GRADUATE IN METALLURGICAL ENGINEERING, WAS AWARDED THE UNIVERSITY'S CHANCELLOR'S MEDAL DURING THE YEAR UNDER REVIEW. THE MEDAL IS AWARDED ANNUALLY TO A FINAL-YEAR OR POSTGRADUATE STUDENT FOR EXCELLENT ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT.



In 2007 Dr Auret became one of only a handful of students to have obtained their undergraduate qualification in Chemical Engineering *summa cum laude*. She passed three of her subjects, including Engineering Mathematics, with final marks of 100%. She excelled throughout her undergraduate studies, receiving for instance the Wilhelm Frank Bursary and, in 2008, not only the Rector's Award for Academic Excellence but also the Southern African Institute of Mining and Metallurgy award for the best final-year student.

Dr Auret registered for a master's degree in 2008, which was converted to a PhD in Metallurgical Engineering in 2009. She received her PhD in 2010 after obtaining an aggregate of 87.8%, despite studying part-time during her final year. She has been appointed a postdoctoral research fellow by the Claude Leon Foundation for 2011 and 2012.

Four peer-reviewed articles that arose from her thesis have already been published or accepted for publication in top international journals in process control and chemical engineering. Two further articles are being prepared for publication. In addition to three peer-evaluated papers in the published proceedings of international conferences, in 2010

she was contracted to write a book with her supervisor, Prof Chris Aldrich, as part of the Springer-Verlag series, *Advances in pattern recognition*, in which work from her doctoral dissertation will feature prominently.

Dr Auret not only excelled in the academic sphere. From her first year in 2004, she was involved in the non-governmental organisation, Habitat for Humanity, and for the next two years, led a group of students who built affordable houses for needy people in Masiphumelele and Wallacedene. As an active member of the Pedal Power Association, she completed competitions such as the Cape Argus and the *Medallion Tour de Stellenbosch*.

She is a member of the Golden Key Honours Society and, at the *Alliance Française* in Stellenbosch, obtained her first diploma in French with a final mark of 90%. During her final three years, she was also a member of the Stellenbosch University Wine Culture Society.

Dr Auret hopes to pursue additional postdoctoral studies once she concludes her present fellowship.