The 17th South African Psychology Congress was held at Emperors Palace, Johannesburg, from 13 to 16 September 2011, themed *Psychologist’s role in national issues and natural disasters*. As students attending such an esteemed event for the first time, we were both nervous and excited at the same time. We were excited about the opportunity to mingle with the “who’s who” in the psychology profession and to attend the thought provoking presentations and round table discussions. The day kicked off on a high note as all the attendees gathered in the foyer to register and socialise over a hot cup of tea and coffee. Once all the formalities had been completed, the conference was officially opened by Dr Emmanuel Tlou, the outgoing PsySSA President. One of the most important aspects in the opening ceremony was a memorandum of understanding signed between the Psychological Society of South Africa (PsySSA) and Psychological Association of Mozambique which was represented by Dr Boia Efraime Junior. The incoming president of PsySSA Professor Sphiwe Ngeobo made a remarkable statement at the opening ceremony, demanding that leaders do not be continually re-cycled and also to stop kicking the ladder away once they get to the top. This profound statement resonated with all the students, who are often confronted with struggles of selections as well as with struggles once in the workplace. This statement served as a starting point for networking.

After the opening ceremony and some socialising, we headed off to the first presentations with much anticipation and excitement. Poster presentations from various universities in South Africa, including two from Iran on reflections as well as work outputs throughout the year, were displayed in the foyer. The posters highlighted
many diverse topics such as resilience, violence, curricula, and personality, among others.

A book launch, titled “Response-ability in the era of AIDS. Building social capital in community care and support” was held on the second day of the conference, One of our MARC students was the lucky winner of this book.

Leigh-Gail Petersen and Wenche Dageid (author)

The congress programme covered a vast array of fields of interest with many interesting presentations taking place at the same time; it was very likely that we were a little spoilt for choice. A few of the interesting presentations included: *Hearing the silences through the ‘noise’: narratives of parenthood decision-making amongst ‘white’ Afrikaners* by T. Morison & C Macleod; *Harnessing the ‘subject effect’ in stereotyping experiments* by K. Durrheim; and *The social psychological predictors of racial segregation* by R. Wilkinson. It was very heartening to see presentations by students, of which two (Yaseen Alley and Lorato Palesa Modongo) were presentation winners at the South African Psychology Students Conference, held at the UNISA Sunnyside Campus on the 23rd and 24th of June 2011.
Critical to PsySSA are the various divisions that allow for members to discuss and reflect on where they are and where they are going regarding the relevant issues pertaining to their scope and practice. The Student Division is one such initiative that hopes to bring together students to discuss issues that are pertinent to them. Once such issue is the underrepresentation of students at conferences. We believe that universities should work closely with PsySSA to recruit and encourage students to attend such prestigious events and to attend presentations, ask questions, witness and participate academic debates and network with people who share the same interests as we do, thus reinvigorating our passion for psychology.

The International Congress of Psychology (ICP) will be held in Cape Town from 22 to 27 July 2012. For any person in the field of psychology, the prospect of attending ICP 2012 is a once in a lifetime opportunity. This will be the first time that the ICP will be hosted on African soil and we encourage all psychology students in Africa to attend this monumental event. This will offer an opportunity to network with international delegates and to broaden perspectives and knowledge with regards to psychology. PsySSA was certainly a platform that allowed networking and debate on the scope and field of psychology. We hope to meet many young budding psychologists at ICP 2012 and to continue these debates.
BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Leigh-Gail Petersen is currently in the process of completing her MA Psychology (Research Consultation) degree at Unisa. Her interests include monitoring and evaluation and researching social psychology with particular interest in social networking and communication patterns.

Steven Rebello is currently completing his MA Psychology (Research Consultation) degree at Unisa. His interests fall within the field of social psychology; more particularly, the process of socialisation and the internalisation of values.

Fathima Pochee is currently completing her Master’s degree in Psychology (Research Consultation) at Unisa. Her research interests include social psychology with a specific concern for community, cultural, educational and racial issues.