

Remembering Richardt Kok: A treasured leader in EDHE



Dear Members of the EDHE Community

In the workplace, one might take different approaches to relationships with colleagues. Generally, we try to keep things professional and collegial, but occasionally one encounters a colleague who is just so relatable and amiable that it becomes difficult to think of her/him as merely a colleague and not a much-loved friend. At EDHE, Richardt was that person.

We were devastated when we learnt of the news of Richardt's passing on 25 March. Losing our national Stakeholder Manager and friend has left a deep void in our hearts and our office. This comes at a time when we are positioning for the institutionalisation, scaling and sustainability of the EDHE work, with the solid foundations of entrepreneurship development at universities having been laid with the help of Richardt.

His contributions were instrumental in the establishment of the first EDHE stakeholder unit, and he played a pivotal role in the pioneering Economic Activation Offices initiative at universities. His impact on formalising and advancing the five national EDHE communities of practice was tremendous.

Richardt was a true EDHE brand champion. He was a caring mentor and supportive colleague to all. Amongst a bouquet of intriguing characteristics, we will remember Richardt for his infectious enthusiasm, sense of humour and passion for life.

His legacy in the Higher Education sector will live on through the many lives he touched and the initiatives he helped to establish. Richardt's contributions to growing and connecting the national community of changemakers and champions for entrepreneurship development at South African universities will not be forgotten.

Recently, when we doubted ourselves and our contribution through EDHE, Richardt sent us a late-night text message, being the sensitive thinker and motivator that he was. He wrote:

EDHE shines.

The team does amazing work. Claim it.

I, for one, believe in EDHE.

If it were easy to do, we would not have been needed.

*EDHE will remain a conduit, a support structure,
a collective voice to fight the battle to be
changemakers.*

The community has been built. Let it be known.

Why are we here? Purpose. Klaar.

We will miss Richardt deeply, but we are resolute to continue to honour his memory by upholding the values that he stood for and by carrying on this work with the same dedication and passion. We believe that you are doing the same.

Sincerely, and on behalf of the EDHE team,

Norah Clarke

Director: Entrepreneurship

28 March 2023