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INTERNET ARTICLE

DWS's Malepe on course to get young girls into the water sector

25 August 2020

The Gauteng Department of Water and Sanitation's Shoki Malepe is an inveterate optimist who believes in the power of women and their course to occupy the top of the food chain in the water sector.

The intellectually alert Malepe is a mover and shaker in her own right. She holds three degrees: Bsc in Water and Sanitation from the University of Limpopo, Bsc honours in Environmental Management from the University of South Africa (UNISA) and PRINCE 2 JIPSA- ASGISA offered in collaboration with the Netherlands.

Born in Phagameng and raised in Praktiseer in Tubatse, Limpopo, the Heidelberg resident is presently studying towards a BTech in Environmental Science with Tshwane University of Technology (TUT).

Her passion for education does not have an impacted on her alone but extends to the children she interacts with through the Departmental South African Youth Water Prize Competition.

Malepe is not only fired up by the conviction of her belief in the power of women. She is leading a charge in Gauteng through the South African Youth Water Prize Competition to get girls to further their education in the water sector.

Using the competition, Malepe immerses herself into the lives of learners across the Gauteng to practically give a leg up to young girls.

As the outbreak of the Coronavirus pandemic seemed to threaten this year's competition, her indomitable spirit spurred her on, for she knew the ultimate prize was to champion the hopes and aspirations of the young girls.

As the coordinator of the competition in Gauteng, she had to innovate and come up with a ground-breaking way to ensure covid-19 did not derail the future of young people, especially girls.

The result was to adapt the competition to the prevailing new normal, holding the competition online for the first time since its existence.

Malepe says she is inspired by and salute the many women in the country who continue to eke out a living by not being idle but engaging in gainfully efforts to make their families prosper. She adds that the stoical resilience displayed by these women will forever remain fresh in the recess of her mind.

A woman that does not flinch in the face of adversity, Malepe challenges patriarchy in her every step as she does her work in the male-dominated water sector. She says in all its



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existence; patriarchy has proved unsustainable as it distracts not only women but also men from making far more important contributions to improve life.

“We must step up our efforts to mould our young girls into a strong unit that must shake misconceptions that have continued to define them as being not important,” she said, adding that that women should not allow themselves to be manipulated into believing otherwise about their self-worth.

Hosia Sithole