



## INTERNET ARTICLE

### **DWS former Graduate Trainee pursues PhD studies in Geohydrology**

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Soft spoken and family oriented Palesa Mohajane from Sterkspruit in the Eastern Cape is living her dream life of pursuing PhD studies which will not only change her life, but those of the community she grew up in.

Mohajane presently holds an MSc in Geohydrology which she passed with distinction in 2018. A BSc Honours (2014) in Geohydrology and BSc Geology (2013) qualifications all obtained from the University of the Free State.

Narrating her academic career, Mohajane said the Department of Water and Sanitation's bursary programme assisted her to study further.

"During my third year in university, I managed to secure the Department's bursary which I used to further my studies until the completion at Honours level. I then joined the Department in 2015 as a graduate trainee under the Learning Academy and I was placed in Hartbeespoort to gain practical experience," she said.

She said her day-to-day work entails providing geohydrological support to Water Use Authorizations and environmental project management.

"I conduct groundwater resource monitoring and groundwater quality checks. I do field data collection, data management, groundwater resource assessment and management. I am also responsible for groundwater extension services," Mohajane said.

Mohajane said one of the challenges she has faced in the male dominated industry includes having to always prove her work ethic and to demystifying the preconceived stereotypical gender roles in the sector.

"It often gets tiring. As a woman, you are always underestimated. No one really expects you to know anything and you have to constantly prove yourself in order to be respected," she said.

Voicing her guidance to young and upcoming women who are planning to join the sector, Mohajane had an advice to give.

"There are no rehearsals to this life thing. You only get one chance at it. You must always make the most of every opportunity that comes your way, as I have done with opportunities presented to me by the Department," Mohajane said.

"Do not be afraid to take up space. Each and every one of us has the potential to be great," she added. "Just do your best."





## water & sanitation

Department:  
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Reflecting about her job as a Scientist, Mohajane said: “What fulfils me the most is that I can see the difference my job brings in communities, which then impacts positively in people’s lives.”

“Improving the quality of water provided to communities tops it for me. When I know that my job somehow contributes in providing this essential resource and also the fact that is it of good quality brings me joy,” she maintained.

With a chuckle in her voice, Mohajane said if she is not busy “being a scientist” she tries to spend as much time with her family as possible.

“Things get hectic at times you know, juggling work and studies isn’t always easy,” she concluded.

**Lebogang Maseko**

