



INTERNET ARTICLE

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Young engineer aims for greater heights as Cuban mentorship bears fruit

A young professional scientist Asanda Dakuza who hails from Lusikisiki in rural Eastern Cape is living his dream of improving the quality of water provided to his community, a career which he says was influenced by his upbringing in the rocky village of Lusikisiki.

The 30-year-old BSc Hydrology and Geography University of Zululand graduate is presently pursuing his third qualification, BTech in Civil Engineering with the University of South Africa (UNISA). A decision which he said was influenced by his mentor Irene Jimenez Del Sol, a Cuban engineer who mentored him for a period of three years.

“I work as a specialist to support the Water Use Authorization unit within the Department of Water and Sanitation. My job also entails working very closely with various municipalities to ensure water service are provided efficiently and effectively,” said Dukuza.

He says some of the milestones he achieved by working with his mentor was to establish a monitoring water infrastructure network which ensures that people have good quality water from groundwater and that municipal infrastructure is maintained.

Dukuza further expressed his appreciation of the support he received from Del Sol, who he says, has vast knowledge of Geohydrological Surveying and Remote Sensing techniques.

“Being mentored by a Cuban specialist was serious boost for my career. I had the opportunity of learning various ways in which my international counterparts implement some the techniques and tools in the field of engineering as whole,” he said.

“I hope this partnership goes on and help other scientists and engineers in this country, the experience that they come with is very handy,” Dukuza maintained.

Dukuza said if he was not in the field of engineering, he would most probably be a Veterinary Doctor as he has a love and passion for animals.

The 30-year-old advised youngsters with an interest in the field.





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“If you want to become a scientist in this field you must be ready to work long hours. At times you won’t sleep at home for days or weeks on end. You must be willing to sacrifice your own comfort for the greater good”, he said.

He added that the best part of his job is being the only guy on his team. “This means all the special attention is directed to me,” he said with a chuckle in his voice.

“We need more black women in this field and it is encouraging to note that there is a lot more showing interest, which is a good thing. I love that as I can see that iiMbokodo are taking over,” he concluded.

Lebogang Maseko



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