



INTERNET ARTICLE

From George to Sweden, 16-year-old Unam Halam ready to fly the SA flag high

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16-year-old Unam Halam from George in the Western Cape is gearing up to represent South Africa at the Stockholm Junior Water Prize competition in Sweden, on 30 August 2022. This is after she and her close friend and classmate, 17-year-old Faith Classen won the Department of Water and Sanitation's science and technology based South African Youth Water Prize (SAYWP) competition in May this year.

The duo is currently in Grade 10 at the Heatherlands High School and aim to fly the South African flag high through their invention of the Drop Saver, which is aimed at curbing the spread of water leaks in their school and community.

"When my parents heard that we won the SAYWP competition, they were super proud of me and very emotional. Winning does not only symbolise jetting off to Sweden for the first time in my life but of importance to me, is that my future will be well taken care of," said Halam.

This is as she plans to pursue studies in Environmental Water Science through a comprehensive bursary which will be funded by the Department of Water and Sanitation. "I want to further my studies until PhD level in the Hydrology field," she said.

"The bursary will help me a lot as my dream of becoming an engineer is slowly coming true and knowing that my parents won't have to worry about tuition fees puts my heart at ease," Halam said.

When asked what kind of advice she would give to her younger self, Halam said: "I would tell younger Unam to never stop believing in herself and her dreams even when no one else believes in her. To take that leap of faith because you will never know what the future has in store for you."

Meanwhile, Classen, who always dreamed of becoming a medical doctor while growing up, will use the bursary to study towards a qualification in Microbiology after she completes her matric. Although she is unable to travel to Sweden with her mate to showcase their invention, Classen has wished Halam well.

"I really wish I can be there with Faith but due to personal reasons, I am unable to attend the competitions. It is for this reason that I wish her all the best for the trip. I know she will do her best to represent our school and the whole country," she said.

Muziwanele Halam's face beamed with pride while expressing the joy for the great milestone her daughter has reached at such a young age, committing to support her every step of the way in her career choices.

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