



water & sanitation

Department:
Water and Sanitation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

INTERNET ARTICLE

School bell rings for student who bagged DWS's bursary to study BSc. Civil Engineering

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A 19-year old Free State student who was awarded a bursary by the Department of Water and Sanitation has a passion for the water sector that he aptly fits his description as the student of the first water.

Toka Monareng is one of twenty students who will be setting foot in an institution of higher learning for the first time this year to follow a lifelong dream in the water sector by studying a BSc Civil Engineering. For the next three years, the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits) will become a home away from home.

Hailing from the far-flung Lusaka Village, Monareng caught the wind of the water sector when he noticed that, although his fellow villagers were receiving clean water, they had a chronic challenge of water shortage. This sparked a desire in him to be part of the solution. He decided to pursue a career in the water sector that will place him in the right space to turn the situation around.

Monareng says there is no doubt in his mind that, barring any strange happening, he will work hard to become part of the solution that his country needs in dealing with water shortages, especially in rural areas.

He credits the Department of Water and Sanitation's Aqua Enduro programme for opening a window into the diversified world of water and sanitation sector.

At first, Monareng says, he wanted to study for a qualification in water care but then made a U-turn when he was part of a team of students from the Free State who travelled to Pretoria to take part in the Department of Water and Sanitation's Aqua Enduro programme.

He said: "The Aqua Enduro Programme gave me a totally different perspective to what was available in terms of careers in the water sector. I had gone there with my preconceived ideas but when I was there I got exposed to many aspects of the water sector that I did not know about before. This led to a change of heart as I now became interested in doing a Bsc. Civil Engineering."

This programme, which started in 2008, funds twenty (20) students every year, especially those from marginalised communities to pursue studies in the fields of science and engineering with a bias towards the water sector. It is an innovative that is aimed at addressing the shortage in the scientific and engineering disciplines within the water sector at grass roots level and forms part of the department's 2020 Vision for Water Education Programme (WPE). The overarching aim of this programme is to fund students to study a career of their choice in engineering or science in disciplines that contribute to the water sector.



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Rearing to start his studies, Monareng says his chosen career will assist him in the future as he is keen on doing hydraulics or water management, adding that his dream is to finally work for the department to apply his acquired skills.

“My ultimate goal is to work for the department so that I contribute to the finding lasting solutions to the problem of water shortage in the country. I also wish to play a key role in the building of dams as this is part of the solutions, coupled with campaigns aimed at urging the communities to conserve water,” concluded the optimistic Monareng.

Hosia Sithole