



A LUMNI EMS

Reconnect **Revitalise** Reinvest **Rediscover**

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**From a barman to a
craftsman**

Sfisokuhle Hadebe, Class of '18



Starting from humble beginnings and blossoming like a butterfly is what best describes Sfisokuhle's entrepreneurial journey.

He worked as a barman in Mpumalanga province with an open mind to pair the humble work experience with his chemical engineering qualification. Investing four years in researching distillation and all the expertise that goes to distilling and bottling rum propelled him to realise his dream of becoming a craftsman. To make it in this very rare industry required Sfisokuhle to partner with those who have been in the industry and have mastered the craft of rum. Securing a partnership with Tapanga Rum, a well-known South African distiller, Sfisokuhle now produces the Tapanga Kopra rum which is delicately infused with Kopra, the sun-dried coconut kernel, and a hint of roasted almond and caramel.

Just like other prospective entrepreneurs, Sfisokuhle was told he needed capital of at least R190,000. Obviously, this was to be an obstacle in his entrepreneurship dreams. "I was on the verge of giving up when an opportunity to pitch a business idea presented itself. This was going to be a start of a long-time dream of becoming a craftsman," he said. Sfisokuhle is also employed full-time as a chemical operator at FFS Refineries and recently opened a shisanyama at his house as he wants to stay ahead despite South Africa's harsh economic conditions.



The young highflier

Dr Qinisani Qwabe, Class of '15



Kudos to Dr Qinisani Qwabe who recently graduated with a PhD in Sustainable Agriculture at a tender age of 27. When passion meets purpose, success is inevitable.

Dr Qwabe's passion for food security and indigenous farming shaped his very colourful career which is now paired with outstanding academic credentials.

He is currently a lecturer at the University of Free State and founder of Ubuntu AgriRenaissance an organisation that focuses on agriculture skills transfer, youth & community engagement, research, as well as the promotion, protection, and management of indigenous knowledge systems.

Congratulations on your well-deserved success. You are an inspiration to the entire MUT community!

Flying the flag high from Umlazi to the United States

Dr Sipho Ndlela, Class of '90

As a young boy, Dr Sipho Ndlela had ambitious dreams of living in Hollywood away from the pains of South Africa during the apartheid regime. Born and raised in Umlazi A-Section in a family of eight, he was raised up by parents who believed in their faith to protect them from the pain of poverty and life's struggles. Dr Sipho Ndlela worked hard to graduate with a Chemical Engineering diploma at MUT in 1990 and has furthered his studies to attain a PhD at the Iowa State University in the United States of America.



Dr Ndlela is a committed researcher and scholar in Biofuels and chemical engineering in general. He has settled in New York where he works as a Principal Systems Engineer at Obantarla Corporation in the US. He co-founded Alternative Energy for Afrika (AEFA Inc), an organisation that oversees strategic platforms on renewable energy projects including Solar and Wind for the African continent.



Interviewed on MUT Radio, Dr Ndelela expressed his ultimate desire to see MUT students and South African youth, in general, spreading their wings and grabbing opportunities around the world. As a global citizen himself, he mentors students in the US and at home in South Africa to give them support and direction to pursue bold dreams beyond their immediate surroundings. With an established career abroad, Dr Ndelela never forgets his roots and has reached out to the MUT Alumni Relations office to explore sustained contributions to the development of current MUT students and recent graduates. A very welcome gesture considering the challenges of WIL placement and employment for engineering students. MUT is honoured to be home to graduates that never forget their roots and look back on how they could support the vision of the institution.

Sanelisiwe Mnyandu vividly remembers mid-February 2004 walking in at MUT to look for a place to study. Sharing her experiences recently on MUT Radio, Sanelisiwe reminisced how it took her ten years of changing courses to finally graduate for a diploma and B. Tech Human Resources Management.

The extended stay at MUT helped her to do some self-evaluation and reflection which propelled her to a meaningful career. During her years as a student, Sanelisiwe excelled at student leadership establishing and serving in the Young Women's Network. She learned that prioritising extramural activities can hinder academic progress.

"It is important for students to find a balance between academic work and extramural activities. I advise you to fight for your qualification first by balancing the academics and student development activities because your qualification will give you the voice to pursue your passion," Sanelisiwe said. She takes pride that her *alma mater* has taken a decision to advocate for entrepreneurship with a vision to produce graduates that create work for themselves and their peers.

Sanelisiwe currently serves in the MUT Council as Convocation appointee and has been given the responsibility to chair the Student Affairs Committee of Council. She takes pride in the character MUT has birthed in her and is grateful for an opportunity to serve an institution that has built her character and given her an education that she uses in her business venture as a Human Resources Consultant and Image Consultant.

MUT graduate and Council member sends a strong message to students - "Rise above your failures"

