

is already on her way to shaking up the world. She makes it clear that women are now ready to take up their rightful place in sectors previously dominated by men. "I chose Building because now there are a lot of women-empowering initiatives in this sector. There is change in the balance of job opportunities," she said. As a student, Samukelisiwe resolved to do the best she could, not just be one of the numbers. "I felt I had to do well. I felt no one would do it for me," she said. She felt that her good performance would push the door open so that other women coming after her would find it easy to break into the 'men's world'. "I studied with my friend, Ayanda Mkhize, who also did very well in her exams," she added.

Key to Samukelisiwe's success is her drive. "You have to have self-discipline. I had to put a lot of effort into my studies. I was inspired by the fact that women had been looked down upon. I wanted to show everyone that there is no difference between men and women. There are no limitations imposed by gender."

Samukelisiwe is pursuing her dream to be a businesswoman in the construction industry. She already has a company that she owns with Cebile,



One of the building projects Samukelisiwe is involved in

her 20-year-old sister, called S&C Developers. "We do delivery for suppliers. At the moment there are just the two of us. We are also both interested in livestock farming, and farming in general. We want to do animal farming, particularly pig farming. And goat farming. We will use our father's land," she said. Samukelisiwe's chances of succeeding in this area are big; her mother is also a farmer.

Samukelisiwe is also employed by Figgup General Trading, a company where she did her work-integrated learning (WIL), which does water pipelines and earthworks. On top of that, she does paperwork for her father's company, Sinethando Construction.

## Management Sciences awardee attributes success to family

Slungile Mkhize has received the Vice-Chancellor's Award for the top student in the Faculty of Management Sciences.

"My family inspired me to excel. I come from a very strict family. By strict I mean 'old school' as they still believe that when a girl goes to university, she will eventually meet friends who will mislead her and she may even end up falling pregnant. So I had to invest hours and spend sleepless nights in order to prove to them that I honestly went to university to be a better person tomorrow, not only for me but for them too," said Slungile, who graduated with a Diploma in Human Resources Management.

The secret to her success is simple: time management. She learnt early on that if she was to succeed, she would have to manage the amount of time she spent with her friends, or at least surround herself with good friends.

"I had to surround myself with the right people – not only my friends, but also being able to socialise with



Slungile Mkhize

other classmates and form group discussions with them," said Slungile.

Her path to MUT was not a straight line. Unlike her peers, she joined MUT after two gap-years. "It was not easy at first to get my mind used to the idea of 'learning' again," she admitted. "It was not easy to share a class with students who had recently matriculated, students who studied from privileged schools, and multiracial schools."

Besides having to re-orientate herself to being back in the classroom with fellow students, Slungile also had to contend with financial difficulties and the temptations that come with being a student. "I had to remind myself of who I was, where I came from and what my values were. Of course, that came with surrounding myself with people who challenged how I thought, and those are the people that contributed significantly towards my academic excellence," she said.