

Mathonsi wants to remove the notion that students who graduate from universities of technology (UoTs) are less valuable than those from traditional universities. One of the bigger plans he has for opening an accounting firm is to be able to employ mostly students from UoTs, particularly MUT graduates.

Mathonsi has been an unrecognised tutor for MUT students for the past nine years in Financial Accounting, Taxation and Cost and Management Accounting. Seeing students who used to get 30 to 40% in their tests and exams getting 70 to 90% after attending his tutorial classes is extremely satisfying for him.

In 2018, he launched an accounting competition known as Power of Accountancy, sponsored by the profession's second largest accounting association, the South African Institute of Professional Accountants (SAIPA).

Even the COVID-19 pandemic couldn't stop Mathonsi's passion for helping students. He opened a WhatsApp group where accounting students ask difficult questions and he lets other students exercise their understanding first, then gives them the correct answer. He believes this way he is able to let them evaluate their own understanding of the principles of the subject.

Mathonsi values mentorship which has assisted him in every phase of building his trade. He has mentored many students and will continue to contribute to knowledge generation through his ventures. He believes in the saying that "it takes a village to raise a child" because he was once that child.

Electrical engineering graduate to help manage Pietermaritzburg's Msunduzi municipality

He was only 19 years old and had no registration cash when he enrolled at MUT for a National Diploma in Electrical Engineering. But with Grade 12 distinctions in Maths and Physical Sciences and a passion for learning, Cyncol Akani Sibiya succeeded in acquiring financial help from the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) and focused on building a brighter future for himself. Less than four years since he graduated, Sibiya will be starting his new job in Pietermaritzburg as a manager for metering and tariffs at the Msunduzi municipality. This is the result of Sibiya's outstanding dedication towards his work.



Akani Sibiya

He is also about to finish his Master's degree in Electrical Engineering at the Central University of Technology. He is being supervised by MUT's Dr Papy Numbi who, upon receiving news of Sibiya's appointment as manager, said, "You have made MUT proud; only four years from your graduation, you are now a manager in a municipality...WOOW!"

Sibiya's very senior appointment comes amid a very gloomy atmosphere in which people are losing jobs as a result of COVID-19. Dr Numbi believes his success

can be used to motivate other students. "Akani can also help as a point of contact who can assist for student placement for the in-service training of our students," said Dr Numbi.

Much has been said about the character of an individual and the people he or she associates with. Sibiya says that he considers himself lucky to have got close to people who have influenced his life. Some of these are MUT academics. "I got very close to people like Dr Numbi, Dr Owolawi, Dr Mulangu, Prof Kusakana, Mr Magenuka and my uncle Jerry Nwamba, a TUT lecturer, to name a few. They all said they saw a lot of potential in me, being a hard worker and a good student. They always believed in me and made it clear that I can get to their level and beyond," said Sibiya, who would like to pursue his studies up to PhD level.

Born in Johannesburg, 27-year-old Sibiya went to Mawila Primary School in Meadowlands, Soweto. After passing Grade 3 he went to Giyani, Limpopo, and continued at Samson Shiviti Primary School. He did his high school education at Mavalani High School. His brother told him about MUT, and the rest, as they say, is history.