

Khathi Charcoal

KEEPS BUSINESS

FIRES BURNING

Ntuthuko Khathi is one young man whose fire and drive for success is unmatched. It is the same fire that drove him to start his charcoal business, Khathi Holdings, which manufactures and distributes charcoal and braai products. The company produces lumpwood charcoal using alien trees.

Amid depressing unemployment statistics in South Africa, Ntuthuko decided to put all the skills learned through his mechanical engineering diploma to innovate and create his own work. For him, entrepreneurship is a transformative option to unlock income generation and empower communities. He says hard



work is a vehicle for endless opportunities. “Telling the story of our Khathi Charcoal brand is an ongoing process. Each day our business grows, shifts and adds new chapters to the story. The most liberating and powerful realisation is that trying new things is never a losing solution; even if you fail at what you tried to accomplish, you still learn so much from the setbacks,” said Ntuthuko.

Ntuthuko attributes his success to MUT’s student entrepreneur programmes and the pre-graduation work readiness programme that he attended while studying at MUT. He is certain that these interventions steered his personal and business growth. Khathi Holdings supplies products to formal and informal business owners such as butcheries, shisanyamas and lodges around KwaZulu-Natal. Growing up in rural Jozini, Ntuthuko is fully aware of the many challenges faced by rural communities and has made it part of his business vision to empower local communities. All of his employees are recruited from within the community of Jozini where his business is located.

The business was started in 2017 and has withstood all the challenges brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic. It currently has fifteen permanent staff and three casual staff.