



INTERNET ARTICLE

DWS former Graduate Trainee chosen to fly the South African flag high at the Dutch Visitors Programme for 2019

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29-year-old former Graduate Trainee, Mbali Mahlayeye, has been nominated by the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) to fly the South African flag high at the Dutch Visitors Programme for 2019.

The 10-day programme is specially designed for talented people from emerging countries and aims to contribute to a better understanding of the Netherlands through the exchange of professional and personal experiences between participants and their Dutch colleagues.

Chosen to represent South Africa is self-proclaimed social activist and a Candidate Scientist within the DWS, who holds an MSc in Geoinformatics from the University of Pretoria.

Mahlayeye was born and raised in Ekurhuleni and is from a close-knit family of five. The soft spoken Mahlayeye maintains her upbringing by her “feisty mother” has always pushed her to always aim for greater heights and believe in herself.

“Growing up, my mother always encouraged all her children to speak their minds and reach for their dreams, no matter how far-fetched they seemed then,” said Mahlayeye.

She added that while in her final year of high school, she wanted to study Mining Engineering because of the perceived notion that the mining industry pays well.

“But that was not to be because my mom encouraged me to look into a career that will have a positive influence in the lives of those around me and the country as a whole,” she said.

“It was then that I decided to look into study fields that focus on addressing problems of geography, geosciences and related branches of science and engineering, and I haven’t looked back since,” said Mahlayeye.

With a beaming smile on her face, Mahlayeye said her nomination to partake in the Dutch Visitors Programme will not only broaden her thinking as a Candidate Scientist, but “ will also serve as a learning curve for me as I will engage other professionals on ways in which we can contribute to bring about change in our developing countries.”

The programme hosts about eight people from different countries. The high potentials are talented, entrepreneurial and internationally oriented individuals with a background in government, politics, business, media, education or science. They are aged between 27 and 35, preferably in possession of a Master’s degree, fluent in English and active in a field or discipline relevant to the Netherlands.

On advice she would give to youngsters who are looking into a career in the water, sanitation and engineering fields, Mahlayeye said: “First, you need to believe in yourself, be fearless and do your best. Doors will always open for you. If they don’t, knock on windows.”

Lebogang Maseko

