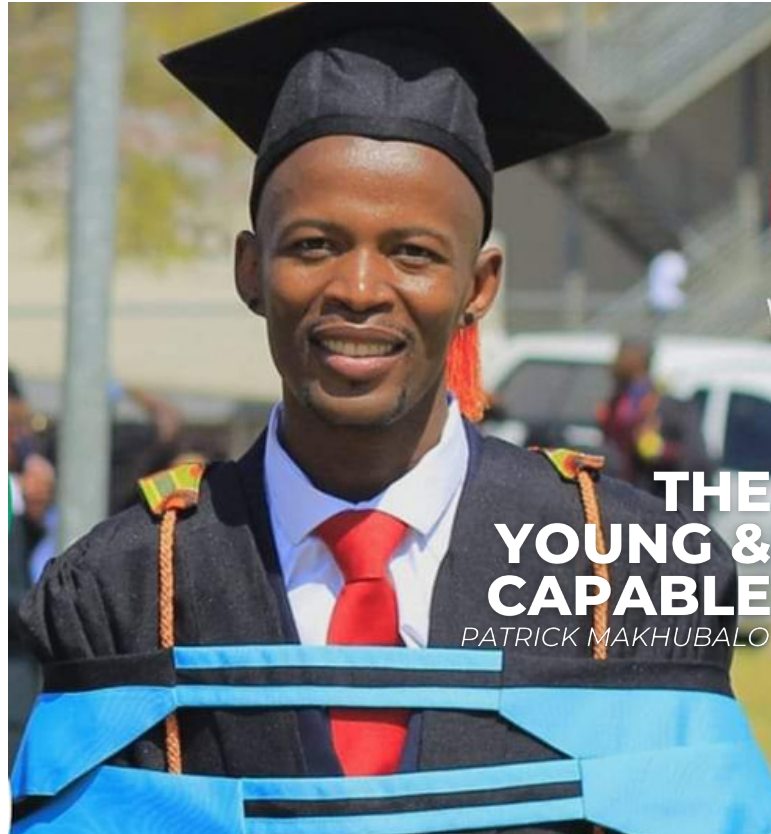


UNLEASH YOUR MIND WITH PATRICK: IGNITING ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE!

by Luyanda Mbalana



Patrick Thabo Makhubalo is a 29-year-old man with a remarkable intellectual ability. He was born and raised in Benoni, and is one of three siblings who were raised by a single mother. His brother, Tannkiso Makhubalo is a qualified engineer and works at Modderbee Correctional Services and his sister, Noma Makhubalo is working towards finishing her qualification at Boston College.

He started his elementary studies at St Rose Primary School. Later he went to Wattville Education Centre in Benoni and there he matriculated in 2014 with three distinctions: Business Studies, Southern Sotho and Travelling and Tourism. In 2016, he enrolled at the University of Johannesburg where he was studying for a Bachelor of Education, Senior and FET Phases, majoring in Accounting and School ICT Support and obtained this degree in 2019. In 2020, he was able to further his studies at the university of Johannesburg and obtained his Honour's Degree in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) with Distinction. In the previous year 2022, Mr Makhubalo obtained his master's degree in-

-Information and Communication Technology (ICT) at the same institution where his research-focused on Robotics and Coding in the STEM Education Curriculum. At present he is busy with his PhD from the University of Johannesburg. Moreover, he is working at the University of Johannesburg as UJ Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) Ambassador and also a Junior Lecturer in the Faculty of Education in the Department of Science and Technology.

He has had to find himself as one with solidarity because he has held certain beliefs pertaining to religion and culture that other people tended to undermine and disregard despite him feeling strongly about them.

"EDUCATION IS THE BEACON THAT LIGHTS THE PATH TO A BRIGHTER FUTURE. IT IS THE KEY THAT UNLOCKS DOORS OF OPPORTUNITY AND EMPOWERS INDIVIDUALS TO SHAPE THEIR DESTINIES. IN A WORLD DRIVEN BY KNOWLEDGE AND INNOVATION, THE IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATION CANNOT BE OVERSTATED"

Notwithstanding the mountain hills he had to climb, Mr Makhubalo has several other qualifications to his name;

- an Honour`s degree (NQF Level 8-with distinction),
- a Bachelor's degree in Senior and FET Phase (NQF Level 7),
- an Honour`s in ICT Innovation 2020 Top Achiever Award,
- a Master`s degree,
- UJ Fourth Industrial Revolution(4IR) Ambassador Certificate,
- Tutoring certificate (Best tutor in the Faculty of Education based on student's evaluations for two consecutive years),
- an Artificial Intelligence Certificate (Cum Laude),
- a Computer Skills Certificate (Cum Laude),
- an Introduction to Sustainable Development Certificate,
- a Financial Literacy Certificate,
- an African Insights Certificate,
- an Honours National Research Foundation (NRF) Scholarship and
- a Master`s UJ Global Excellence and Stature (GES) Scholarship.

His teaching philosophy relies on utilizing ICT tools that create a 21st-century classroom so that students will live and prosper in today's economy as well as acquire and sustain the relevant knowledge about the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR). His teaching philosophy is further fulfilled with the skills and patience of working in a challenging environment as this will enable him to be able to apply his critical thinking skills in finding solutions to the problem at hand. His vision foresees a digital classroom through the integration of technological tools during pedagogy instruction. His goal is to be the kind of educator who is part of a cohort that grows 21st-century skills and competencies necessary in a working environment.

Through 21st-century teaching skills, he aims to develop high-order thinking skills amongst students, effective communication skills, collaboration skills, and other skills that students may need to acquire in this current era.

His teaching skills met with the integration of technological tools will develop new teaching strategies that are radically different as they will enable I-traction of students with technological tools. As a teacher, his commitment is to become a proactive team player who is willing to share knowledge and information with others.

His burning desire to see himself as one of the young leaders who can transform others and take this country to a better level is the driving force behind his hard work. He loves the fact that his career exposes him to more of the Fourth Industrial Revolution Research, and Artificial Intelligence in teaching and learning as he just cannot get enough of these.

Looking back, Mr Makhubalo comes to the realization that people could not bring themselves to approach him and he wishes he could change that and maybe become a social butterfly, whose social interactions are more inspiring and building than anything, *"People found it difficult to approach me, I want to engage with many people especially youth, share ideas together and uplift each other, particularly on skills developments," he stated.*

Mr Makhubalo dedicates his leisure time to reading academic articles and published books for further insight, ensuring the insulation of life-long learning in students and academia's I interact and learning more about contemporary educational learning-

"TAKE HEART AND KEEP SEARCHING FOR OPPORTUNITIES THAT WILL GIVE YOU A PLATFORM TO FULFIL YOUR PURPOSE. YOU WERE MEANT TO BE GREAT, AND REJECTION IS JUST A PATHWAY WHICH LEADS TO YOUR GREATNESS. DO NOT UNDERMINE YOUR INTELLIGENCE. BE CAPABLE AND MAKE SURE THAT YOU LOVE WHAT YOU ARE DOING"

-theories to advance his teaching skills. He proudly attributes his success to his aforementioned mother and siblings.

Patrick's favourite place is in the majestic United States of America.

He wishes to end the year holding the title of a Specialist and a full-fledged Academia Scholar in ICT.

He believes his younger self is worthy of knowing that education is undoubtedly the key to success, to know also that hard work pays off and to never undermine his intelligence and potential. To know that he can be who he wants to be despite people making fun of him, and laughing at him during his struggle.

His words of wisdom to people who would like to follow in his footsteps are that they should remember to never stop learning and working hard so that they achieve their desired goal, to take heed of the fact that all of us were born to make a difference and our purpose will always align with the difference we were meant to make in this world.

You are Young and Capable

