

MBAWC built environment bursary programme open for applications

The Master Builders' Association Western Cape (MBAWC) bursary programme is open for applications. The deadline for the receipt of applications is 31 January 2022. MBAWC has granted bursaries to over 150 built environment students to further their studies for more than 10 years.



Mishka van Schoor, MBAWC bursary recipient

Student, Mishka van Schoor, talks about her tertiary education journey and the many benefits of being accepted into the bursary programme.

Van Schoor discovered the MBAWC bursary programme through a family member whose company is registered with MBAWC. She has been studying through the bursary programme since her second year at Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT) where she plans to graduate from as a professional quantity surveyor (PQS).

The bursary covers tuition only and preference is given to family members or employees of MBAWC's member companies. In addition to undergraduate students, it is granted to first-year as well as postgraduate students. It's important to note that many students who studied through the bursary programme are now employed by MBAWC members and other companies in the built environment.

Van Schoor says, "I was delighted to be approved to receive the bursary. Tertiary education costs can have a substantial impact on a family's financial situation, and that's excluding extra costs, such as travel and supplies.

Motivation to do your best

"Although it can be a little stressful to know that your studies are being funded, this also serves as a strong motivation to do your best in your studies. It pushes you to work harder and achieve the best results possible," she says.

A bursary from MBAWC offers other benefits too. One of the most important tools in the construction industry is the ability to network; the MBAWC bursary programme gives students access to professionals in the field – this can be highly beneficial when it comes time to seek employment. Van Schoor also says that MBAWC assisted by putting her in touch with professionals who could offer advice and guidance on certain subjects in her course.

“Studying is not easy and can present many challenges,” Van Schoor says. “This year, I encountered several issues with my university and felt demotivated. However, I got the chance to speak to another student from a different university. I realised that he was facing many of the same problems and this made me understand that I was not alone in the situation. If students have any questions or concerns, they can easily connect with MBAWC for assistance.”



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Impact of Covid-19 on students

Covid-19 has had a significant impact on all students and has created many obstacles on campuses around the country. Van Schoor says she was able to address her concerns and struggles by seeking advice and motivation from MBAWC, particularly Letitia van Rensburg, training officer at MBAWC, who Van Schoor says was always ready to listen and offer advice.

“I have now completed my advanced diploma at CPUT and currently seeking employment,” she says. “My goal is to secure a position at a quantity surveying firm. This was a decision that took some time and thought to finalise. I had to decide between getting practical experience by applying for a position as a site quantity surveyor, or working at a quantity surveying firm, where I would not be as involved on site.”

As her long-term goal is to become a registered PQS, the best way to achieve her goal is to work for a quantity surveying firm that can prepare her for the obstacles she will face in completing her modules and required tasks.



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More than funding

Van Schoor says, “I would recommend this bursary, because unlike other bursary providers, the MBAWC offers more than funding. The organisation gives students an opportunity to grow their connections with professionals and other students. It

is an amazing opportunity and can be a great motivator for students to do well in their studies. The MBAWC has an interest in helping students achieve their goals, which is about more than just providing funding.”

Enquiries about the MBAWC bursary can be addressed to Letitia van Rensburg: letitia@mbawc.org.za. Successful candidates will be notified by 4 March 2022.

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