



Today, tomorrow, together.

Carla Tapson

Gauteng

Age: 24



A FANTASTIC OPPORTUNITY

My father worked on the mines and we moved around a lot which meant that I had the privilege of growing up in various small towns in Southern Africa. I matriculated in Grahamstown in the Eastern Cape.

I have always been interested in the banking sector but as a new graduate without formal work experience I found it difficult to land a job. I learnt from a personal contact about the Letsema learnership. The learnership was my road directly into the bank and was the opportunity I was looking for to get my career going and I grabbed it with both hands.

Through the Letsema learnership I have realized that we can create our own opportunities if we want to. I firmly believe in the principle that says: "Life doesn't just happen to you – you have to make it happen".

The learnership has changed my life in two ways: firstly it taught me to overcome frustration and despondence and

remain focused when facing obstacles and secondly it helped me to kick start my career in Investment Banking.

I feel so privileged to be in the job that I have now, and I got there by being proactive through applying for the learnership. I would recommend the experience for everybody. Remember, there are people out there who are willing to help you, so go and find them! This is a fantastic opportunity – make the most of it.

I plan to become a known and respected member of the Investment Banking community.

I would love for other young South Africans to experience what I have experienced and to get themselves to a place where they want to be, just like me.



Christmas Nyikila

Free State

Age: 32



THE HEART OF A LION

I was born on Christmas Day in 1974, hence my name is Christmas. After being blinded in 1982 I attended Thiboloha School for the Blind and Deaf, in Phuthaditjhaba in QwaQwa. After matriculating from Filadelfia Secondary School in Soshanguve in 1994, I enrolled at the University of the Witwatersrand where I completed B.A, LLB and LLM degrees.

I have always had the dream of working in the financial services sector. The Letsema Learnership has assisted me to achieve this objective. The learnership is fantastic, fabulous, strategic and developmental.

One of the most important lessons I have learnt from the programme is not to expect others to do things for me. I have also learnt the importance of being creative and strategic.

I have achieved a lot in people development myself. I am a true role model and a leader of my time.

I attribute my success on the programme to having the heart of a lion, strong and determined, and the ability to adapt to the difficult circumstances I experienced before, during and after the learnership.

BANKSETA

Eva Tabane

Gauteng

Age: 24



*D*EDICATED TO ACHIEVE

I am a Sowetan girl from White City Jabavu the first born in my family, a hard worker, outgoing and confident. I matriculated at Thesele Secondary school in 2001.

After matriculating I applied for a study loan and was heartbroken on hearing that it was not approved. Unemployed and finding myself in abject poverty – my hope of making something of my life was completely dashed.

I decided to complete a Learnership application form at my local church and I was accepted onto the Letsema programme. I knew then that my life was about to change.

I would describe the Letsema Learnership as magnificent, challenging and life changing. I see the world through different eyes. I am now able to provide for my family and am proud to be the breadwinner.

Through the learnership I have learnt about my potential and that of others, it has also taught me the value of honesty and being a team player. I enjoyed the challenges of studying and going to work everyday.

After completing the learnership I am more responsible and I have learnt not to give up without a fight.

I plan to further my studies and up skill myself in the Banking and Micro Finance Sector. My success on this programme can be attributed to my dedication to achieve. I am pleased to say that I am now permanently employed at the BANKSETA in the Learnership Department. I find that I am able to motivate other young people who come from a similar background.

To the BANKSETA, thank you for developing this initiative and to the Sector the learnership would not be possible without you. My hope is that the BANKSETA and the Sector are able to continue with this initiative for many years to come.



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*T*HE THEORY OF 'POSSIBLENESS'

The Letsema Learnership not only makes one employable, but grooms the youth. It is highly likely that you will find employment on completion of the programme.

Born in Pimville Soweto, the Letsema Learnership has proved a life-changing experience for me as I am now not only employed in a permanent position, but I have been given the opportunity to further my studies and to realise my dream of becoming a Chartered Accountant.

At Imperial Bank we are given the chance to expand our knowledge. This is an opportunity which I would never have been offered if it was not for the Letsema Learnership. My confidence has grown and my experience in the banking field is improving each day. I used to view the world as an

Emmanuel Sithole

Gauteng

Age: 21



unreachable sphere for the previously disadvantaged, but I have seen that the sky is the limit. If you work hard at what you want; anything is possible. I call it the theory of 'possibleness'.

The learnership has taught me that learning is a privilege. I have also learnt the importance of honesty and patience.

I am currently studying part-time for a B Compt degree.

I urge young South Africans to believe in themselves – being previously disadvantaged is not an excuse for not working hard. Challenges are there to make you stronger not discourage you.

Jessie Mogoba

Gauteng

Age: 25



A LIFE-CHANGING EXPERIENCE

I am the first in my family to obtain a tertiary qualification. My father is a driver and my mother works in a jersey factory. My parents made many sacrifices to fund my Diploma in Cost Management Accounting that I was doing through Vaal Tech University. In my second year, I managed to secure a government student bursary.

Eager to start work, I sent out 68 CVs while in my final year at university. My hopes for an exciting career were soon dashed when all 68 CVs were rejected. Rather than sit at home, I decided to apply for the Letsema Learnership. This proved to be a life-changing experience. The learnership empowers you. It has enabled me to gain valuable work experience.

I am very proud and happy to be employed at Investec. I have always dreamt of being employed here. Currently a junior private banker, my ambition is to become a senior private banker.

My advice to the unemployed youth in South Africa is not to despair. Persevere and have self-belief. Opportunities are there – take them. Remember, that things will not always go your way, but that you can do it.



Johannes Khosa

Limpopo

Age: 27



FINDING A DREAM JOB

I was born in the Mudabula village in the Limpopo province. I obtained my B Com degree in Economics from the University of Limpopo. I found getting into the banking industry without work experience very difficult and was unemployed for more than a year while looking for an opportunity to start my career. Then I read an advertisement in the newspaper about the Letsema post-graduate learnership and applied.

The Letsema Learnership has helped me to gain valuable work experience and has opened the doors to my dream job. With the allowance I received from the learnership, I was able to support my family. The learnership experience also helped me to expand my CV and add an additional qualification, a certificate in Business Management.

I would encourage the youth to participate in initiatives such as the Letsema learnership. Without experience it is difficult to secure employment in South Africa. Although the programme does not guarantee job opportunities at the end, it gives people, particularly the previously disadvantaged youth, a chance to prove themselves. It also offers a free qualification that is recognised nationally, putting people in better positions to secure employment.

I consider myself a role model for other young South Africans because I have seen that despite your family background and the place that you were born, you can make it to the top when you work hard.

Since completing the Letsema Learnership I have been appointed as a junior economist at Nedbank. I plan to complete a Masters Degree in Economics.



Lerato Mabula

Gauteng

Age: 23



ACHIEVING AGAINST ALL ODDS

I am a success. I am what I am today because of the Letsema Learnership.

I have achieved against great odds. Whilst I was still at school my mother went through a difficult divorce and as a family we had to move in with my grandmother. I matriculated from Northview High School in 2001 and I completed the first two years of a Public Finance qualification through the University of Tshwane. Unfortunately, my mother was unable to afford my fees and I was forced to abandon my studies.

Determined to find another path, I opted to study Financial Accounting and Business Information Systems through PC Training, a more affordable option. It was here that I first heard about the Letsema Learnership. Committed to make this a success and complete my studies I had to simultaneously balance the Letsema learnership and my

PC Training courses. I used my learnership allowance to fund my tuition fees as well as my travel expenses.

Despite the fact that I love to socialise with my friends I realised the importance of putting my studies first. On a personal level the Letsema learnership has given me the opportunity to see what I am capable of and practise discipline.

My personal goal is to become a Human Resources Executive. African Bank has given me the opportunity to prepare myself for this. I am currently on a three-year Cadetship programme sponsored by African Bank.

My message to the young unemployed youth of South Africa is to constantly look for ways to improve themselves and not to be weighed down by their current circumstances.



Octavia Moteka

Gauteng

Age: 22

SEEING THE WORLD THROUGH DIFFERENT EYES

I grew up in Soweto, the eldest of four children. My family struggled to get a study loan for me to further my studies after matriculating. They were unsuccessful because they did not earn enough. I was unemployed for a while and was always depressed while I sat at home doing nothing. Then I learnt about the Letsema learnership from a friend.

Many people have stereotyped the banking sector as only being about depositing money but I have always been curious about exploring the side of banking that was unfamiliar to me. The learnership allowed me to do just that. I love accounting and believe that I have now found my niche in life.

The Letsema Learnership has made me see the world through different eyes. I used to think there were no opportunities for people from disadvantaged backgrounds, but this programme has proved me wrong. I now feel confident that if I set my mind on doing something, I can

achieve it. I have realised that through hard work, nothing is impossible. When you persevere, someone will give you a chance. If you give it your all, you will reap the results!

The learnership was an amazing experience, and one for which I will always be grateful. I would recommend the learnership to others like me because it is a once in a life time opportunity. It has helped me to get my career going, something that I never thought possible. I believe furthermore that this programme helps to boost our economy and creates employment for more people.

Since completing the Letsema Learnership, my world has changed dramatically. Employed as a junior book keeper at Sasfin Bank, I am now studying part-time for a B Compt and have set my sights firmly on becoming a chartered accountant.



Riedwaan Salie

Western Cape

Age: 24



WINNING THE LOTTO!

I am born and bred on the Cape Flats, the youngest of four children. I am blessed with great parents who, even through difficult times, ensured that I got a good schooling. After school, I found a job as a sales consultant at one of South Africa's biggest sunglass retailers.

After two years I took a leap and started my own small business supplying dairy products to households and offices. However one of my debt collectors disappeared with my money. This left me having to close down after a year of hard work and one very good lesson learnt.

It must have been fate because after seeing and applying for the Letsema advertisement in the newspaper, I was selected to be on the Letsema II Learnership.

The learnership has opened my eyes to so many opportunities in banking that I was previously unfamiliar with.

I consider myself to be extremely fortunate to be permanently employed by Standard Bank where I did my in-service training. Standard Bank has also afforded me the opportunity to further my studies in Project Management.

Programmes like these are the answer to unemployment and the skills gap issues in South Africa. If anybody has the opportunity to go on this programme I would strongly recommend they grab it with both hands. Look at it as if you have just won the lotto!

The Letsema learnership is no walk in the park. For one to be successful I believe that it is imperative that you have the drive and commitment to want to excel in life.

All I have accomplished thus far with my career stems from the learnership and I cannot be grateful enough to the BANKSETA for providing such interventions.



South African Reserve Bank

Sylvia Mahlangu

Mpumalanga

Age: 24



A WORLD OF OPPORTUNITIES

I grew up in Mpumalanga and matriculated in December 2002. I was unemployed for a while before I learnt about the Letsema learnership programme from a friend.

On a personal level the Letsema learnership programme has helped me to realise that nothing is impossible in life. I am a grown woman now, I know where I am heading, and I know my strengths and weaknesses. I can work with different personalities and cultures. I have learnt to be responsible and loyal to the people close to me. I have also learnt that the world has excellent opportunities to offer and it is up to us to grab it and make it possible.

I have gotten more from the learnership than I expected. It provides you with the necessary skills to help you overcome circumstances. You are exposed to different working environments. You learn lots of great things about yourself that you did not know previously. Your thinking and reasoning

skills improve. You do not wait for things to happen, you make things happen for yourself and the country. You are able to make a difference.

I attribute my success on the programme to the support that I received from the workplace, coordinators of the programme and the bank, colleagues and friends.

My message to other young, unemployed learners is that if you want to be successful in life you have to start at the bottom. Learnership programmes are for us, they will change your life in a way you have never expected. It only requires that you work hard.

I am currently employed as a trainee clerk and am studying part-time for a B Com in Management Accounting. I want to be a qualified Accountant. I also want to start my own business in the next three years.



Welcome Ngcobo

North West

Age: 29



*R*ISING ABOVE CHALLENGES

I am a physically challenged man who can be introverted and shy at times but who enjoys a number of sporting activities and a good laugh. My family stays in the Eastern Cape. I wrote my matric in 2001 in Durban and was unemployed when I read about the Letsema Learnership in The Star “Workplace”.

The Letsema learnership has given me hope and a positive attitude towards living and pursuing my dreams regardless of the challenges.

For me the Letsema learnership was an eye opener and I found the support of the staff at the bank overwhelming. I attribute my success on the learnership to the branch staff, my counsellor, the lecturers and my class mates. When I was sick at some point during the programme the branch staff jumped in to assist me in a selfless and caring manner. I will always be grateful to them for helping me in my hour of need.

My ambition, now that I have finished the learnership, is to study towards a B Com in Accounting.

I believe that the Letsema learnership has a role to play in alleviating unemployment as it equips a person for the workplace. It also provides you with entrepreneurial skills and an opportunity to further your studies. The scope of work covered by the learnership as well as the work environment exposure provides learners with the background to discover and build on their leadership skills.

Wow! I am permanently employed. A big thank you to the Standard Bank, Carletonville branch management and staff!

My sincere thanks also goes to the BANKSETA for the opportunity that the learnership has provided me – I am now a taxpayer, instead of a “beneficiary” and I am physically challenged instead of being “disabled”.



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Yagandhren Naicker

Kwa-Zulu Natal

Age: 24



*G*REATLY HONOURED

I am the son of vegetable farmers and matriculated at Umkomaas Secondary. I heard about the Letsema Learnership from friends.

The learnership has provided me with everything I need to get myself ready for banking life. The most important thing that I have learnt is that knowledge is power. I have also learnt to take my place in this world.

I am proud to say I have completed an Asset-Based Finance Learnership. It has given me confidence knowing that I can get a job and knowing that I am more marketable.

Being part of one of the first groups of Letsema Learners in KwaZulu-Natal, I helped to set the standards of motivation for students in the years to come. As such, I consider myself a role model.

My message to other youth in a similar position is to give it your best and your all. You will never regret it! These programmes have an important role to play in enabling the development of skills for unemployed people in our country.

After completing the learnership, WesBank offered me a six month contract. Not even two months later, I was offered a permanent position. Today, I am happy. I have a good job in one of the best departments: the bank's Legal Collections Departments.

I would like to further my studies. My goal is to complete a NQF Level 6 learnership.

I am greatly honoured and appreciate the opportunity of being on the learnership. It has been a great experience.