

Building a business empire – one wash at a time

You are never too old to learn – or in the case of 44-year old Sibongile Cele, never too old to live your dream! This mother of three and former professional nurse has proven that dedication and hard work do indeed pay off in the long run. As one of the first graduates of the Enterprising Women Programme – hosted by the bhive Enterprise Development Centre (bhive EDC) on the Vaal Triangle Campus of the North-West University (NWU Vaal), Sibongile has turned her entrepreneurial dream into a reality.

Her entrepreneurial venture, Spick and Span Carwash is proving to be a great success and her mobile carwash is now a familiar sight on the campus.

A dream and a newspaper advert

Because of her husband's work, Sibongile and her family has been relocating from one town to another throughout South Africa for the past couple of years before settling in the Vaal Triangle region four years ago. Up till this stage, Sibongile worked as a professional nurse, but admits that she always dreamed of working for herself. With the dream of being an entrepreneur in mind, she did not need a lot of encouragement to sign-up for the first Enterprising Women Programme in 2013. "The moment I saw the advert in the newspaper, I just knew I had to take the chance," says Sibongile and remembers resigning her job soon afterwards. One day whilst waiting in a long queue to have her car washed, Sibongile started to think about the advantages of a mobile carwash service. "I remember thinking that such a service would be able to render a service twice as fast, and by doing so, save customers time and effort", says Sibongile and laughingly adds that she envisioned herself rendering such a service. Then and there, Spick and Span Carwash was born.

After completing the eight month programme at the bhive EDC on the Vaal Triangle Campus, she joined the Young Entrepreneur Business Organisation (YEBO) on campus and set about realising her entrepreneurial dream. "I would not have been able to overcome all the challenges, if it was not for the support and advice from the YEBO team," says Sibongile and adds that starting a business can be very daunting - especially for a new entrepreneur. "There are no words to describe the feeling of being self-sufficient," says Sibongile and adds that especially women can benefit from becoming an entrepreneur. "Because of the faith that was shown to me by the bhive EDC team, the training I received and the skills that I acquired I will now be remembered as a woman who lived her dream", says Sibongile.

* Spick and Span Carewash was officially launched in 2013 and as from 2014 Sibongile and her team are active on the campus premises, serving both staff and students.

Enterprising Women Programme

During the course of the programme, participants are guided through a process to explore entrepreneurial ideas, develop sound business models and subsequently initiate their business with confidence and entrepreneurial know-how. Participants become part of a close-knit peer network of women embarking on an entrepreneurial journey, during which time they can share experiences and learn from one another and other established female entrepreneurs by being exposed to structured learning through workshops and group sessions.

Participants are furthermore guided through various stages of entrepreneurial development such as idea to concept development; business model generation, market research and business plan development.

This year is the last year during which the programme will be fully sponsored by the bhive EDC, with participants paying only a R1 500 deposit - refundable upon successful completion of the programme. Future programmes will not be sponsored by the bhive EDC, so don't miss this final opportunity to benefit from the bhive EDC's sponsorship! For more information about the programme and to obtain the application documents, contact Leonie at leonie@aequis.co.za or alternatively, collect the application documents from the bhive EDC, Building 6 at the Campus in Vanderbijlpark. You can also download the application form from the [website](#).