

Former UP student receives Mercedes-Benz scholarship

Kabelo Sebetlela, a former mechanical engineering student at the University of Pretoria (UP), received a prestigious four-year scholarship from Mercedes-Benz South Africa (MBSA) to complete his mechanical engineering degree at the Carl Benz School of Engineering of the University of Karlsruhe in Germany from April 2009. The school was named after Carl Benz, the innovator of Mercedes-Benz cars.

Kabelo, who is originally from Benoni, completed his first year in mechanical engineering at UP. He applied for the scholarship together with more than 100 other students, and was one of the five who made the shortlist. Kabelo is only the ninth student to be offered this scholarship.

The scholarship will also give him the opportunity to do practical training at the Daimler manufacturing plant in Germany. "I love figuring things out, as well as the mechanical aspect of engineering. This is a spectacular opportunity for me and I will work hard to reach my goal," said Kabelo. He said his ambition was to specialise in the design of cars, but because the skill is not really sought after in South Africa, "I will initially focus on the technical aspects of producing a car and pursue the design aspect at a later stage."

Once he has completed his degree in Germany, he will join MBSA's graduate programme with the prospect of becoming a full-time employee and joining the production team in East London.

In his spare time, Kabelo enjoys reading books and magazines about cars, modern mechanics and the latest techniques used in engineering disciplines.

The Karlsruhe Scholarship Programme has been running in collaboration with MBSA and its parent company in Germany, Daimler AG, for the past nine years. The programme has produced eight qualified mechanical engineers who are all permanent employees at MBSA's manufacturing plant in East London.

"Engineers from the ranks of the previously disadvantaged are a scarcity in South Africa and in our company. Therefore, this is an opportunity for our organisation to create equal opportunities and empower young students who wish to pursue careers in the spheres of engineering, technology and accounting," said Johann Evertse, vice-president of human resources at MBSA. 🌟