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Attend career expos to find work, says Sapref intern

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Sapref intern Snethemba Mhlongo's road to bagging two year internship at fuel producing company started by attending a career expo.

DURBAN - A Mangosuthu University of Technology graduate has bagged an internship with fuel producers, the South African Petroleum Refineries (Sapref).

Snethemba Mhlongo attended the Youth Employability Indaba & Careers Expo at the Durban Exhibition Centre in May this year and left her CV with Sapref officials.

The quantity surveying graduate applied when an opening for internships became available, and was duly successful with her application.

Sapref's talent development manager, Hlengiwe Hlela, said they were excited to source young talent into the organisation. Mhlongo has joined the company on a two year internship which started in July.

"We are glad to have been able to source such a talented young woman from the Careers Expo and hope that such events will continue in order to create a platform for companies like ours to reach more young people", said Hlela.

Speaking to IOL on Friday, Mhlongo said she had been job hunting for a few weeks after graduating in April 2018 when she was alerted about the expo through Sapref's Facebook page.

Mhlongo had previously done six months inservice training with a contractor who was building houses for the eThekweni Municipality during her second year studies.

The eMpangeni-born 22-year-old said when she went to the expo she had not begun pressuring herself about finding work, as she had only graduated a few weeks earlier.

"I approached Hlengiwe at the Sapref stand and I asked her about what they offered at Sapref. She asked what I had and I told her I had a diploma and she wanted to see my academic results, which I showed her and she was very impressed with," she said.

Mhlongo's academic record had an impressive showing of distinctions, five out of six subjects in her first year, two out of six in the second year, one out of three in the third year and three out of six in her final year.

A few weeks later she was called in for an interview and by July she was starting induction at the company.

"My mum is very happy," she said. "I was raised by my grandmother, by she died in December, but I am sure she is very happy," said Mhlongo.

Mhlongo said adapting to the work environment was not easy, but she was coping.

"I am adapting, the transformation from school to work life is not easy, but people here are pleasant and we have engagements at a personal level with managers, which helps because we can talk to them when we have personal issues at home and they understand if you are not performing as you normally do," she said.

Mhlongo encouraged young South Africans who were seeking work to attend career expos and urged them to always be prepared, with their CVs and necessary copies of qualifications and certificates.

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