

The MasterCard Foundation Scholars Programme (MCFSP) hosts 290 scholars at the University of Pretoria (UP). The foundation targets academically talented yet economically disadvantaged young people in Africa who will contribute to the transformation of the continent through their knowledge, skills, attitudes and values, evidenced by their leadership skills. Community service and internships are essential components of the programme. The Scholars Entrepreneurship Programme (SEP) is a recent initiative that was launched in 2019 within the foundation to provide entrepreneurship skills to the scholars, to deepen the transformative leadership and give back opportunity.

Through a competitive process, scholars submitted propositions of their social ventures directed towards addressing the second Sustainable Development Goal (SDG): Zero Hunger. Two projects were selected after adjudication by a panel of experts. One of the projects, Thlobollo Thuthuka, entails building vertical gardening structures that are made from wooden pallets. The second project incorporates crop production – beetroot, spinach and cabbage farming at a medium scale.

Our community partner is the Mamelodi Business Clinic located at UP's Mamelodi Campus. A piece of land (1 000 sq m) has been allocated for farming purposes at the Mamelodi Campus. The objective of this project is to ensure that healthy and affordable crops are made accessible to members of the community and to empower the youth with agricultural skills. Currently, scholars participating in the two projects tend to the crops by irrigating and managing the health of the vegetables. Harvest week is scheduled for the first week of October, and scholars are expected to demonstrate leadership and execute sales competencies to ensure that the crops are marketed and sold in Mamelodi at affordable prices.

Project Tl hobollo Thuthuka's vertical gardening structure enables individuals and families with no or limited access to land to practise subsistence farming as an intervention to meet their basic vegetable needs. Scholars source the wooden pallets from a retired member of the community; in so doing, economic support is provided as purchasing takes place within the periphery. After procurement, a well-designed and

Our scholars received training and support from Enactus UP Members on safety, the use of power tools and making of vertical structures. Joint Community Project (JCP) students at UP helped to develop a cheaper irrigation system, namely a bucket irrigation system. The community will in due course be trained to build this system for their crops.

The vision of our SEP initiatives at UP is to contribute to food security in Mamelodi and surrounds by providing fresh and affordable vegetables. In addition, we want to capacitate the interested youth and elderly in the community of Mamelodi and surrounds with simple and sustainable agricultural skills. Furthermore, we want to foster an entrepreneurial mindset among our scholars so that they have added skills to give them a secondary advantage of securing jobs in the diverse world of work after graduation.

