

NEWS RELEASE

UP Food Science graduate aims to nourish both mind and body



Josiah Muriuki at UP's 2025 Autumn Graduation.

PRETORIA - "Education has no end," says Josiah Muriuki, who has graduated with a BSc (Hons) degree in [Food Science](#) from the University of Pretoria (UP) in May as part of UP's autumn graduation season. "The more you know, the more you realise you don't know and the thirst for knowledge increases."

Muriuki is dedicated to improving food sustainability, an interest that was sparked from his lived experiences, having had to survive intense hunger as a child and propagated more when he learned about the [United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals](#) (SDGs). He was inspired to contribute to meeting [SDG 2](#) specifically – Zero Hunger.

"With the high level of undernutrition in Africa, I am inspired to study African legumes such as the cowpea, which are drought resistant and often underutilised," explains Muriuki, who graduated from the [University of Nairobi](#), Kenya, in 2021 with a BSc in Industrial Chemistry as a first-generation graduate. "Apart from fighting hunger, I am also interested in the impact of food in preventing non-communicable diseases that are on the rise in our society."

After completing his undergraduate studies, Muriuki was faced with the reality that he would need financial assistance to pay for his postgraduate studies. He applied and secured funding from the [Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program](#) (MCFSP) where he has continued to make an impact on the lives of students since his arrival at UP. Muriuki was elected as Chairperson of the MCFSP, and has helped over 15 students to apply for tertiary education at UP through the initiative, Beta Mentor Africa.

Through participation in various global conferences within and without the area of food science, Muriuki has taken his passion for fighting hunger all over the world. He has participated in several food science conferences, including the [Harvard Africa Business Conference](#), hosted at the [Harvard Business School](#); the [South African Association for Food Science and Technology Conference](#); and the IFT FIRST Conference of the US-based [Institute of Food Technologists](#) (IFT). He also serves as a member of the [Global Food Science Board](#) of the IFT's Student Association.

Additionally, Muriuki has received several grants for his efforts, including the Social Impact Seed Funding from the [Aspire Institute](#). He was also named the inaugural recipient of the [PepsiCo Hybrid Scholarship and Travel Grant](#), and a recipient of the IFT's Feeding Tomorrow Fund.

A lifelong learner, Muriuki is continuing with his studies.

"At the end of my honours project, I came to understand how powerful an informed mind is," he says. "My research will contribute to the current body of knowledge, and since I am continuing with a similar sort of study for my master's, I believe I can do more to further food security."

He secured funding for his master's degree from the prestigious [Mandela Rhodes Foundation Scholarship](#).

"Food is medicine," he says. "We are what we eat. And just as Hippocrates, the father of medicine, said: Let food be thy medicine and medicine be thy food."

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ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA

The University of Pretoria (UP) is one of the largest contact and residential universities in South Africa, with its administration offices located on its Hatfield Campus in Pretoria. This 115-year-old institution is also one of the largest producers of research in South Africa.

Spread over seven campuses, it has nine faculties and a business school, the [Gordon Institute of Business Science](#) (GIBS). It is the only university in the country with a [Faculty of Veterinary Science](#), which is ranked the best in Africa. UP has 120 academic departments and 92 centres and institutes, accommodating more than 56 000 students and offering about 1 100 study programmes. It has the most academic staff with PhDs (70%), NRF-rated researchers (613).

The 2025 Times Higher Education subject rankings placed UP first in South Africa in the fields of [Accounting](#)

and [Finance](#); [Architecture](#); [Electrical and Electronic Engineering](#); Law; Sport Science; and Veterinary Science. UP's Faculty of Law has been ranked as the top law school in Africa for a remarkable eighth consecutive year.

Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) ranked the University among the top five in Africa, as part of their [2024 World University Rankings \(WUR\)](#). UP was the only South African university featured in the [2023 World University Rankings for Innovation \(WURI\)](#), falling within in the 101-200 range of innovative universities.

For more information, please go to www.up.ac.za