

Celebrating Namdeb Gems: Mining New Talents

AUGETTO GRAIG

M meet Josephina Lotho (23). This young mining engineer is already carving out a path for her career and professional development, as she secures her place with one of Namibia's most progressive organisations to work for. As one of Namdeb's youngest employees, she is an example to her peers in pursuit of mining for good and for the betterment of her country. Hear her voice and what she has to say about her experience in the world of work and the pride she takes in being part of the oldest diamond mining endeavour in Namibia.

How did you first hear about Namdeb?

I first heard of Namdeb when I was younger as I had uncles who worked for Namdeb or its predecessor CDM as it was known. In university, while studying Mining Engineering, we visited Namdeb operations. I was stunned as to how they mine. The technology used by Namdeb was something I had never seen, not only in their operations, but for safety and security as well.

How did you get your job at Namdeb?

I joined Namdeb as an intern when I had to do my Work Integrated Learning (WIL) which is needed to complete your degree in mining engineering. I started a 6-month internship last year from August until January 2023. I wanted to work here even after my internship and in April I got the job as Geology Assistant until end August.

What work have you done before?

While I was schooling, I was doing holiday jobs in China town in Windhoek and also at Millennium Oil Supplies before joining Namdeb. I also use to do entrepreneurship tasks to make extra money.

What memory stands out from your first day on the job at Namdeb?

A memory that stands out for me was when I had the opportunity to visit the different Namdeb processes and hearing what each lead had to say. It was very different to experience it like that rather than just reading about it. I am always in awe whenever I set foot in the Namdeb operations.

What is your current position at Namdeb and what do you do there every day?

I am now a mining engineering intern, and I am based at stripping. At the moment I am busy with a project at the stripping site which focuses on better performance. My day starts at 05:30 with the morning shift in the mine doing data collection and end with me working in the town offices.

How does Namdeb reflect on your view of the world of work, employment and career development?

I am a strong believer that Namdeb really lives out its commitment towards its vision and purpose. In terms of work I have seen people grow through different departments. Namdeb gives you the flexibility to be yourself and have freedom to express yourself and stand up for safety in whatever role you find yourself. Safety always comes first at home



Q&A with Josephina Lotho

and work. We have wellness activities which is catered for by Namdeb, as well as wellness campaigns and this is what I appreciate about Namdeb. Namdeb employees have been great role models; especially the women in mining where you saw them featured while you are studying, and seeing the real person when you start at Namdeb.

What about working for Namdeb makes you proud?

The safety aspect, belonging and connectedness amongst all Namdeb employees, Namdeb has a very diverse and accepting culture. The way Namdeb takes care of its communities affected by its operations and how they care for the environment.

How has your time at Namdeb changed you as a person?

I have grown as a person since joining Namdeb. I have done better in most modules

in my studies. It has changed my view of life and I see things differently, I also assess things differently. My mental mindset has also improved.

Josephina Lotho is a mining engineering intern with Namdeb, who is based at stripping. PHOTO CONTRIBUTED



What lessons learned at Namdeb have you been able to practice in your life?

I live by the Namdeb values and apply it in my daily routine. Putting safety first, whenever doing anything, even at home, no matter what it is.

Whenever I travel, I am conscious about safety in that area. The value of respect is also important to me, as this is something I apply on a daily basis. Namdeb taught me to respect everybody no matter their current situations.

What do you hope to achieve in your time at Namdeb?

In my early career as a Mining Engineer, which I am busy doing now at Namdeb I hope to learn to the best of my abilities, but importantly I hope to make a great

contribution to the company in terms of any projects, and to upskill myself while at Namdeb's mining engineering space and to broaden my horizons with any other opportunity at Namdeb. I would also like to help other students where I can and mentor future students. I hope to be with Namdeb forever. I want to evolve in my career and social aspects and also to assist the company in CSI (corporate social investment) activities where I can.

What advice would you give to other young Namibians looking to start their own careers?

Always work hard, commit to what you want. Don't lose focus. Don't be shortsighted. Be patient.

Put your studies first and don't take it for granted. Connect and network with people when you have a chance!

It is important to take advantage of expos and career fairs by engaging the people there for information. Choose what you want, do what you love and put in the work.

When was the first time you saw a diamond?

I have not had the opportunity to see one physically yet. With the technology that Namdeb is employing, I was fortunate to see one through virtual reality. I cannot wait for the day when I get to see it physically.



A NAMIBIA DE BEERS PARTNERSHIP

