

# Women of PMC

Experience, skill and drive underpin three success stories.

A number of highly motivated women are making stellar careers for themselves in mining at PMC and providing inspiration for scores of other women in the sector.

## Matsela Ntsepe: Process Engineering Manager

Matsela Dolphinah Ntsepe is a chemical engineer with more than 17 years of experience in diamond, coal and copper mining. Matsela is Palabora Copper's (PC) Process Engineering Manager for the Smelter Retrofit Project, a position she earned through hard work and ascending through the ranks. Matsela started her career as a Metallurgical Trainee and rose through various levels including System Engineer, Refinery Technical Metallurgist, Refinery Technical Superintendent, Concentrator and Magnetite Technical Superintendent and Refinery Operations Manager.

Matsela's experience in the mining industry embraces equipment evaluation and selection, plant process audits, treatment and optimisation, initiation, implementation and management of processes, maintaining and improving safety and financial and human resources management.

Matsela or "Tsela" serves as the current Chairperson of the Women in Mining (WiM) PC branch and is an Ex-Officio Executive Member in the Limpopo region. In addition, Tsela is a member of PC Transformation Committee and a Trustee of PC Essop.

Matsela holds a National Diploma and B-Tech in Chemical Engineering from Witwatersrand Technikon and a Management Development and Financial Management Programmes from the University of South Africa.

Being able to acquire mining technical qualifications is hard and being a manager in the mining industry is a difficult ladder to climb. Matsela has achieved both while maintaining her humility and promoting the needs of others. Tsela proved that a woman does not need to behave like a man to be smart, support other women and make it in the mining industry.



Matsela Ntsepe: Process Engineering Manager

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As the member of the PC Transformation Committee, Tsela influences and facilitates the direction of PC's future strategic transformation agenda. This includes recommendations on local economic development projects that take gender mainstreaming and equality into consideration.

Tsela is a finalist for the Limpopo Mine and Safety Council's Women Achievers Award and the Standard Bank Women in Science Award.

## Manyabela Mailula: Manager for Training, Development and Contractor Management

At only 35 years of age, Manyabela Mailula has more than 13 years' experience in technical research and mining in countries such as Turkey, Georgia, USA and South Africa. Manyabela is Palabora Mining Company (PMC) Manager for Training, Development and Contractor Management.

She holds a National Diploma in Metallurgical Engineering from Vaal University of Technology, a B-Tech in Metallurgical Engineering (Tshwane University of Technology), Honours in Management of Technology (University of Pretoria), a Higher Certificate in Education, Training and Development (University of Johannesburg) and a Work Place Assessor Certificate from the Drum Beat Academy.



Manyabela Mailula: Manager for Training, Development and Contractor Management

Manyabela started her career as a Metallurgical Trainee at ASA Metals (Dilokong Chrome Mine). She joined PMC/ Palabora Copper (PC) as a Smelter Training Officer and ascended to the position of Operational Readiness Manager. Manyabela's current responsibilities include the development of PC's training and development strategies, policies and standards.

Manyabela is the Chairperson of Limpopo Region's Women in Mining. She is Chairperson of Employment Equity Skills Development and serves as the member of the board of Phalaborwa's Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) College.

Training and development policies influence how the company perceives safety, gender parity and employment equity. Manyabela has used her role at PC to create training materials that allow for gender freedom and flexibility.

Manyabela is a finalist for the Limpopo Mine and Safety Council's Women Achievers Award and Standard Bank Young Achiever of the Year Award. The latter award is for women who have achieved a lot before the age of 40.

## Zani Kutumela: A leader without a title

Zani Kutumela, 35, is an author, social activist, motivational speaker and mother. She has a BA Degree in Communications, with majors in English and Journalism, from the University of Johannesburg.

Palabora Copper (PC) employs Zani on a full-time basis as an Administrator for the Training Department. Her work involves interacting with people from diverse social, political, economic and cultural backgrounds. The majority interact with PC in order to get some type of assistance (securing employment or learnership opportunities or a

contract). Zani is required to appreciate socio-economic dynamics and balance the socio-economic imbalances which exist in society.

Zani indirectly plays a role in ensuring that PC training, procurement and learnership opportunities are in line with the national transformation agenda and the demands of local communities.

As an author, Zani published a poetry collection titled *Re-routing* in 2018. Her poems criticise gender- and children-based violence. Other poems in the anthology speak to her love for Africa and pride in being an African. As a social and gender activist, Zani is committed to alleviating poverty and to opposing violence. She has for the past three years dedicated time and financial resources to donating food parcels, sanitary towels, school shoes and blankets to disadvantaged families and children, of which the majority are women. This she achieves by asking for donations, and sometimes by utilising her own limited resources. So far in 2019, Zani has donated 156 pairs of shoes to Zamani Primary School and 46 winter blankets to Phulabyehola Primary School.

Zani has also adopted Thabelang Disability Centre based in Makhushane. The Centre houses 56 physically challenged adults and children from the Phalaborwa municipal area. Zani regularly donates food parcels and her commitment has helped attract sponsorships: a borehole has been dug and paint donated.

Zani is a finalist for Limpopo Mine and Safety Council's Best Poverty Alleviation Project Award and Standard Bank Young Achiever of the Year Award. ■



Zani Kutumela: Social activist and author.