

SATC a “big deal” for Transport Engineering students

The Southern African Transport Conference (SATC) bursary student, Nahungu Lionjanga, will present a paper titled, “Time-Series Analysis of Accessibility in the City of Johannesburg,” during the Urban Transport session of the SATC on Tuesday, 11 July 2017.

Her paper explores the evolution of accessibility for poor, public-transport-captive households in the City of Johannesburg, by calculating accessibility to jobs from a select group of locations biennially from 2009 to 2013.

Lionjanga first heard about the SATC Conference in 2015. She subsequently entered the Student Competition and won the bursary, which secured her an invite to present at the 2017 event.

The 24-year old from Gaborone, Botswana, is enrolled in the University of Pretoria and is busy with her Masters degree in Traffic and Transportation Engineering. She assumes posts as an assistant lecturer and a tutor for undergraduate modules when required and is a member of the Golden Key Honour Society.

She has the prospect of pursuing her Master’s degree, under the expert supervision of Professor Christo Venter. Her Master’s research will predominantly focus on the accessibility of various public transport modes and its relationship with job opportunities for poor households.

Her presentation at this year’s Conference will describe the ease of use of public transport, a topic she has personal experience with. “I understood this difficulty when I resided in Olympus in Pretoria East and used public transport to get to the campus,” she explains.

Lionjanga says she took an interest in the transport sector in her third year of University in 2013, finding the topic highly relatable. “Transport has a strong social concern. I am socially conscious and transport has a huge impact on the quality of people’s lives,” she says.

Lionjanga believes the Conference is an “amazing” platform for students to get much-needed exposure. “The SATC allows students to realise the value of the profession they are studying towards. It is a big deal.”

Though nervous about presenting to a learned audience, she says she is also excited and honoured to have the privilege of doing so. “It is a new challenge for me and I’m looking forward to it.”

Her advice to other transport engineering students is to keep fighting the good fight. “Keep going when it gets tough. Understand that the purpose of what you’re doing lies in serving people. It is a service industry. Students should want to better people’s lives,” she says.

Now in its 36th year, SATC’s conference theme is “Southern African Solutions to Public Transport Challenges.” Over 600 delegates are set to attend four days of plenary and breakaway seminars, where peer-reviewed research papers covering infrastructure, urban and rural transport planning, transport regulations, multimodal networks, safety, freight and logistics and many more will be presented. Delegates can register at www.satc.org.za.

For sponsorship and exhibition opportunities at the event, contact Jacqui Oosthuyzen (Conference Secretariat) on 012 804 3762 | 083 324-9622 | satc.conference@gmail.com.