

How A Pair Of Stained Takkies Led A Young SA Entrepreneur To His Calling

A pair of prized All Star takkies ruined by old engine oil was how Moses Mokgosi's passion for the proper disposal of used lubricant oil started.

Moses was only 14 when he became aware of the problem of used oil not being disposed of correctly. He was visiting a friend when he accidentally soaked his first pair of All Star takkies in used oil from a five litre container which was placed under a chair by his friend's father who had left it there after servicing his car three months before. Immediately Moses started pondering how used oil is properly disposed of and says that the challenge was quite huge in Soweto back then.

Fast forward to the present day and Moses is now a used oil collector registered with the ROSE Foundation (Recycling Oil Saves the Environment) and operates from Soweto, servicing the greater Johannesburg, Tshwane, Mpumalanga and North West regions. After initially taking up a position as a call centre leader in Midrand, Moses returned to his passion and started his used oil collection business in 2009 with a single bakkie and lots of enthusiasm to make his entrepreneurial venture a success. Ten years later and he employs four other staff members in his business "Auto Blue Oil & Projects", who collect over 300 000 litres of used oil per year.

"Getting the business up and running presented a fair amount of challenges – from accessing start-up funding, to getting a foot into the markets, creating necessary systems and processes, and of course meeting the requirements on an ongoing basis for the necessary compliance within our industry."

In 2012 Moses was selected to do an internship in the United States through the Young Entrepreneurs Program (YEP) – an initiative that is designed to foster young South African entrepreneurs by mentoring and training them - ultimately promoting the success of their businesses.

Moses traveled to the US where he completed a six week internship at two top waste management companies that allowed him to learn about the underlying principles and concepts required to ensure business success within this sector. He also studied Entrepreneurial Leadership through the Sierra Nevada College as part of the internship.

"I am extremely proud that my business is celebrating 10 years of ongoing success in a highly competitive industry. We remain stable and sustainable," says Moses.

"However the safe disposal of used oil as a hazardous waste still remains a challenge in our country and I urge used oil generators to only allow compliant, ROSE registered collectors to remove their oil for safe disposal through responsible recycling."

Moses is one of 170 ROSE Foundation licensed oil collectors situated across South Africa who collect and transport used oil to refineries for proper processing and recycling. They are frequently audited, comply with the rigorous legislation governing waste management in the country, spend many hours undergoing hazardous waste training, and attending fire-fighting as well as first aid courses. The ROSE Foundation has successfully been driving the collection and recycling of used oil for 25 years – championing the collection of over 1.5 billion litres in this time.

For more information on the ROSE Foundation visit www.rosefoundation.org.za.