

## **2019 FHAS Graduation Speech-Miss Ntokozo Msiza**

Good evening ladies and gentlemen. My name is Ntokozo and I was a former student at Fort Hare University at Alice campus. I was doing my final year in BSc Agriculture majoring in Pasture Science. My journey with FHAS-FES started in the following way...

When I applied for FES I initially did so to improve my credentials and to participate outside my field of interest which is Agriculture. I was so excited when I was short listed and went to the interviews. Not knowing that I would later be chosen to be part of the class of 2018. Fortunately, the experience I gained since the start of the programme was absolutely beyond my expectation. It was very informative, educational and eye opening. From the first to the last module I gained a lot of knowledge on politics as I did not have much knowledge about.

I remember in some of the sessions I would do more listening than talking, because some of the political science terms that were used were so confusing, and sometimes difficult to comprehend. But with the discussions that I had with my colleagues after the sessions they helped me get a better understanding of the concepts that were presented. The programme has given me an opportunity to explore and broaden my knowledge on socio-political issues that affect our society and how it also affects me directly as a citizen of the country.

Being in the space of 19 other talented, exceptional and young leaders made me feel honoured to be part of them and to interact with about critical issues that are facing our societies. They come from different spheres of life and I appreciate the kind of leaders they are. Our second module which took place in Chinsta was one of the most exciting modules from the program for me. With the different presentations that took place, I liked in particular the presentation by Virginia Magwaza who extensively explored with us the topic of understanding patriarchy in the South African context in relation to her own lived experience as well.

Deputy Minister of Justice and Constitutional Development in South Africa, Mr John Jeffery (aka JJ) gave a deep insight on the constitution, its historical development and the short comings that our government is facing, which is hindering them from achieving some or even most of the socio-economic rights that are stated in the Bill of Rights. I dearly appreciated another presentation by Imraan Buccus as it was very enlightening to know more about public participation in policy making in South Africa, deepening democracy and deliberative democracy. This has encouraged me to participate in local government.

Lastly, the programme has been immensely rewarding for me, it has taught me to be a critical thinker. I will be forever be grateful to FHAS together with FES for seeing potential in me to

be part of the school, and to have groomed me to be a more knowledgeable person. From all I have learnt I believe that I can positively be able to contribute towards co-creating a just society, and have my influence filtering to all levels of society. To the class of 2018, continue to be extraordinary leaders in all that you do in life. Continue making your communities great and always stay humble.

To the class of 2019, this will be a process for you to learn and unlearn and to be critical thinkers. Engage and enjoy the program. It is an opportunity of a life time.

Thank you