



# PALA CONNECTOR

OCTOBER - DECEMBER 2022 EDITION

## PMC's pioneers honoured



CEO'S CORNER | FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK | SHEQ CORNER | LEADERSHIP CORNER  
WOMEN IN MINING | STRESS MANAGEMENT | PAST EVENTS HIGHLIGHTS

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## CEO's Corner

Mr Jinghua Han

**Great things are never done by one person in business, they are done by a team of people – Thank you to all of you!**

As I reflect on the year 2022, We have overcome many challenges, not only at Palabora Mining Company but in the mining industry and Africa as a whole. From dealing with the effects of a global pandemic to injuries and fatalities that we suffered, the increased scourge of violence and lack of employment effect. As a business, we can safely say: "We made it!"

It is our ultimate wish that we end each year with ZERO fatalities or injuries, with that in mind I appreciate the positive contribution that each and everyone of you has made this year. This year we remember Lunga Kopolo, our fallen colleague we lost earlier in the year. Let us continue to remember our colleagues whom we lost on duty or not and dedicate our everyday positive behaviour to their legacy.

There were many "wins" this year, PMC continued to show resilience even though the markets were volatile. Teams pulled together and showed up when required to do so. Leaders stepped up and made efforts to acknowledge and reward hard work. We managed to contribute millions of rands into sustaining the lives of our local villages and townships. Giving back to the same community where we live is the greatest feeling of fulfilment. It was inspiring to see our contractors following our value of caring, by giving back to the community. This is the kind of collaboration that is needed in order to build a sustainable future.

We are appreciative of the fact that we were able to interact with each other after a few years of no events and meeting. Human contact and visible leadership have proven to be effective in improving engagements and participation amongst employees and leaders. With these few words, I would like to say, congratulations to the nominees and winners of the employee of the year awards. This initiative is a great tool that we aim to utilize to inspire employees and teams to improve their work ethic. Continue to shine in 2023, may your work encourage others to do the same or more.

As most of us will be taking some time off this festive season, let us remember that we need to be responsible for our health and safety. Our behaviours need to be exemplary to our colleagues, family, and friends at home. The culture of safety does not only apply at work alone, but we need to maintain an honest and responsible lifestyle during the holidays so that when we return in the new year, we are safe and geared up to conquer new frontiers. Thank you to each and everyone of you for your dedication and hard work this year, your valuable contribution to the success of PMC is highly appreciated.

I wish you a healthy and safe festive season, for those who will be travelling, drive carefully.

**Do not drink and drive. Always Act Responsibly. "Khumbulekhaya"**

## From the Editor's Desk

*Wishing you and yours, a safe festive season and a prosperous 2023!*



Reaping the rewards of hard work.

Where did the year go? We have really come full circle in 2022. There were so many lessons and painful moments in the past few months, just as much as there has been many blessings.

Personally, the end of the year marks the beginning of a new season, a time to reflect and make new resolutions. Even though we may have set many goals to achieve in the year 2022, some may not have been achieved. It is a time to make new plans and learn from the mistakes and challenges faced throughout the year.

It is also a time for family and appreciating all the people we hold dear in our hearts, be it at work or at home. After two (2) years of not having any mass events at PMC, it was a pleasure for me to form part of the team that put together the Long Service and Employee/ Teams of the Year Awards. It was a clear indication that our leaders do care about the employees. For employees and teams who go above the call of duty, it was inspiring to see them being rewarded.

2022 had a lot of ups and downs for the business, let us celebrate the positives and learn from the challenges that we faced. In this final edition of the Pala connector for 2022, you will find a number of stories which shows how teamwork played a part in ensuring the success of the business, such projects are railway upgrade and completion of some of our community projects.

We all deserve a break from the hecticness of the year and I would like to urge you to take some time and spend it with your family and friends. For those who will be working over the festive season, like myself, please know that it is greatly appreciated. If you are going on leave, remember to be safe and responsible wherever you will be.

Let us march into 2023 with our heads held up high and ready for whatever promise of a new beginning can bring. Remember to send your feedback comments! We truly appreciate them.

Sincerely

**Lavish Mhlarhi**

**E-mail:** Lavish.Mhlarhi@palabora.co.za

# Mental Health Awareness

The month of October has been declared Mental Health Awareness Month with the objective of not only educating the public about mental health but also to reduce the stigma and discrimination that people with mental illness are often subjected to.



Mental health problems, such as depression, anxiety, substance abuse and job stress are common, affecting individuals, their families and co-workers, and the broader community. In addition, they have a direct impact on workplaces through increased absenteeism, reduced productivity, and increased costs. Very few South Africans seek treatment for their mental disorders. Mental illness can be treated at your nearest clinic, hospital, healthcare provider, or your ICAS Employee Wellness Programme (EWP).

Whilst the workplace can contribute positively to a person's mental health, it may also exacerbate an existing problem, or may contribute to the development of a mental health problem. It is with the utmost importance to recognise mental health early and be treated effectively.

An estimated 400 million people worldwide suffer from mental or neurological disorders or from psychosocial problems.

### Like physical disorders mental and brain disorders, mental vary in severity. There are those that are:

- Transient (like an acute stress disorder)
- Periodic (like bipolar disorder, characterized by periods of exaggerated elation followed by periods of depression)
- Long-lasting and progressive (like Alzheimer's disease)

### Other conditions include:

- Schizophrenia
- Dementia
- Depressive disorder
- Obsessive compulsive disorder
- Panic disorder
- Post-traumatic stress disorder

### Impact of an unstable mental illness in the workplace:

- Stopping you from getting on with life
- Causing you to have suicidal thoughts
- Affecting your mood regularly
- Making you feel demotivated and less interested in personal growth
- Drug use
- Overcommitting oneself to financial burdens
- Work overload
- Family differences

### What can we do better to support each other as colleagues?

- Keep information about your colleague's mental illness to yourself
- Avoid using your colleague's illness as an example in work-related discussions
- Do not discriminate against colleagues based on their mental illness
- Avoid stigmatizing colleagues living with mental illness
- Be informed, read more on mental health

If you or your loved one suspect they might have a mental illness, reach out to your **ICAS EWP**.  
Toll-free: **0800 204 481** (Free from landline and mobile phones or request a call back: **\*134\*905#** Company App Code: **PAL001**)

Alternatively, you can contact the onsite **EWP Consultant** on: Ext: 2051 Cell: **0764555918**

Special Thank you to Editorial Contributors:

Zani Kutumela, Zani.Kutumela@palabora.co.za  
Linah Rabothata, Linah.Rabothata@palabora.co.za  
Ehleketani Mbhungele, Hleki.mbhungele@palabora.co.za

# Leadership Corner

## Knowledge is not power, the application of it is true power!

### Inspirational session with PMC's Chief Engineer

After a year of serving in one of PMC's core leadership positions, Itumeleng George Ngoae shares his story from his humble student beginnings. An inspiring story of dedication, resilience and to be who he is today. This energetic leader is sometimes found on the sports field, mostly supporting PMC's sports structures. A great example of creating a harmonious workplace for employees.

#### 1. Please tell us about yourself: Family life, birthplace.

I am originally from a small town in the Free State Province called Wepener, in Bloemfontein, I was born and bred there. I matriculated from a catholic school called Maria Sdal High school in 2001 and happened to be in the top 100 Matriculants in the Free State. I was awarded a bursary to Study Bsc. Electrical Engineering at the University of Cape Town by The Free State Department of Education and duly completed my qualification in 2005. I am married to my beautiful wife Mmathapelo, blessed with two sons, Phenyano and Keamohetse.

#### 2. Please take us through your career journey prior to and at PMC. Are you affiliated with any professional Engineering bodies?

Before joining PMC, I worked as a Junior Engineer with Anglo Coal at an Open cast mine in Witbank. I then acquired my

Government Certificate of Competency (GCC) in Mines and Works in Electrical Engineering. Later appointed as a Section Engineer in 2008 at the opencast where I was primarily responsible for all Load and Haul Diesel Machines, support and rehabilitation machines, dewatering of the pit amongst other responsibilities. I then joined PMC in 2010 as a Superintendent for Workshops, then moved to Electrical and Instrumentation. In October 2011, I was promoted to Refinery Maintenance Manager. I then acted from February 2012 as the Refinery Operations Manager until November 2012 when I was promoted into the role of Refinery Operations Manager. It is a role that I held for three very solid years which I believe shaped my role as a leader especially the responsibility one had towards customers as Refinery was and is still responsible for primarily supplying the South African cable industry with copper rod and Cathodes at LME standard or specification.

In 2015 I was transferred to Smelter Maintenance. In 2017, I was laterally transferred to Lift 2 Maintenance to gain experience in Underground mining and managing large projects. In 2021 November I was promoted to the role of Chief Engineer. A challenge I cherished for a very long time, however when it happened it did so during a difficult period for PMC as we went through a bad safety performance where 3 employees lost their lives, and all the fatalities were engineering, or equipment related. However, as tough as the role is, I am now 12 months in the role, and my quest to improve safety at PMC burns even brighter.

I am registered with the Engineering Council of South Africa (ECSA) and I am also a member of Association of Mine Resident Engineers (AMRE). I am a registered mentor by the Department of Minerals and Energy for Engineers in Training.

#### 3. What are your main responsibilities in your current role?

As the Chief Engineer I have the responsibility for assets and to give clear direction on maintenance tactics, replacement capital, asset replacement plans, sustaining capital Projects, and continuous improvement strategies and to ensure consistent application of legal requirements across the business.

#### 4. Do you have someone that has had a tremendous impact on you as a leader and why?

Just to name a few, Kobie Naude, he practically sold PMC to me. He was one of the people who was passionate about Phalaborwa and really believed my small family would be happy here. Oom Kobie as I affectionately called him, always put family first, and instilled the same values to his subordinates.

Patrick Boitumelo is a goal driven individual, always revising expectations with the objective of improving subordinate output. He instilled the value of talent management, people development and

ultimately building your own talent pool internally which is key for PMC when one looks at its geographical location.

Zakes Malepe instilled the value of always looking for business risks, identifying, assessing, putting mitigation plans in place, as well as monitoring the residual risks. This is extremely difficult, however his focus and relentlessness on this and the joy that ultimately comes with avoiding business interruptions has made me appreciate this a lot.

#### 5. How do you keep your department motivated? And what other measures have you implemented to align the people that you lead?

People want to know what is it that needs to be done and why, once that is clear, I delegate responsibilities to individuals with clear goals and timelines, lastly, I provide resources to support them. I generate an action plan with timelines and provide regular updates to the relevant employees.

#### 6. What is your strategy in terms of business optimization and improvement?

The focus in 2022 was on improvements or restoring all assets and equipment to their original design, and executing critical infrastructure upgrades like the hydrosep substation, maintenance of the Overhead lines and installation of devices like baboon anti climb devices to eliminate the downtime caused by wildlife. Lastly, to improve Safety in the workplace, although the number of safety incidents are approximately equal in 2022 and 2021, the severity has reduced in 2022 and this is also supported by less work stoppages in 2022 compared to 2021.

#### 7. What do you do in your personal time?

I love playing or watching soccer, I am a big fan of Mamelodi Sundowns and Chelsea. Riding bicycles, watch boxing and UFC. Lastly, I am also passionate about investigative programs like "Seconds from Disaster" or "Airplane accidents investigations".

#### 8. What do you love the most about being a leader at PMC? If there was something you could change, what would that be?

Almost everything in the mines or workplace can be recovered over time except loss of life and limbs as a direct result of workplace incidents.

The beauty about PMC is that we do not have head office, as a leader you are given authority to make decisions that one would not normally make in an organization, and that has allowed me to grow tremendously as a Leader and Engineer.

#### 9. With PMC moving to solar energy, what does this mean to the engineering fraternity?

Reality is that the Electricity supply outlook in South Africa will not improve in the short term, and Mines like PMC needs electricity in order to mine and produce finished products like Copper rod, Copper cathode, Magnetite, Vermiculite etc. It is therefore imperative that energy efficiency becomes key focus in the long-term sustainability of PMC, whether it is through initiatives associated with reducing energy consumption or alternative means of generating electricity e.g. solar or waste heat boilers.

#### 10. What are some of the projects/initiatives that you are proud to have seen through successfully in 2022? Any plans for 2023?

Successes in 2022: executing the mine wide annual shutdown without a health and safety incident, commissioning the hydrosep substation with limited downtime to

both Magnetite and Concentrator, being part of a team that reduced Water Circuit downtime from approximately 30 days in the first 6 months of 2022 to approximately 5 days in the second 6 months of 22. Jointly with the Training Department, optimizing the training program for Engineers in Training, which led to three candidates acquiring their Government Certificate of Competency.

- Plans for 2023: I would like to see the successful implementation of PDS/VDS systems for both Surface and Underground in quarter 1 of 2023, setting up of the Engineering Team that will support the Auxiliary Services Manager to restore the tailings facilities handling and deposition facilities. Lastly to assist the copper stream to perform consistently and minimize the business interruptions associated with equipment failures or stoppages due to non-compliance with Mine health and safety Act.

**Itumeleng Ngoae - PMC Chief Engineer**



# Humble Sebola goes to retire



When you spend all your adult life at work in one company, you end up feeling like work is home. That sentiment is shared by a lot of people about their workplaces, especially those who have dedicated over three (3) decades working tirelessly in one company. The team at Concentrator: Crushers and Automills section organized a farewell lunch on the 14th of October 2022, for their colleague, who would be hanging his safety boots and hard hat for retirement.

Mahlaba John Sebola was born in Ga-Modjadji village, Limpopo and joined PMC in 1984 and worked at the Secondary crushers as an Operator till his retirement in October 2022.

The somewhat shy and introverted Sebola spoke fondly about how he will miss his colleagues and friends when he goes to retire. After dedicating thirty-eight years

of uninterrupted service to PMC, he beams with pride when he speaks about his wife and three children. One of his sons, Lucas was present at the farewell party organized by the concentrator team to celebrate their colleague.

Colleagues took turns in sharing their fond and memorable moments that they shared with Sebola. One of the things that was evident from their relationship was that their colleague, Sebola became a father figure to them. He would be remembered by his humility and willingness to assist those in need," Even though as his supervisor, I am younger by age, Sebola always spoke to me with respect and was diligent in his work," said Bob Marule, Sebola's supervisor.

In his thank you speech, Sebola had very few words to say except that he was grateful

for PMC and his colleagues for organizing the event, he urged his colleagues that they should "work hard and look after their health so that they can also go to retirement while in good health." When asked about his plans for retirement he mentioned that he will mostly be relaxed as he worked in an active environment. "I will be taking my long-awaited rest and looking after my health, I am just grateful to God to have made it this far", he concluded.

Your graciousness and teamwork will be missed by your PMC family.

Thank you for all your hard work and dedication, nate Sebola. Wishing you a contented retirement!!!!

## New Employee Feature

### Getting to know – Thabo Tibane *Accounts Payable Supervisor*

Thabo Tibane is a 33 year old man from Rolle, a village situated outside of Thulamahashe in Bushbuckridge, Mpumalanga. He comes from a family of three (3) boys him being the middle child. Tibane lost both his parents between 2004 and 2005 while he was doing grade nine (9) and 10 in Godide High School. After completing his high school studies, he took a few gap years before he could further his studies with Tshwane University of Technology known as TUT. Tibane holds a B.Tech in Cost Management Accounting from TUT, a certificate for first line managers from UNISA and a Bachelor of Business Administration honours with MANCOSA.

Hardworking, disciplined and goal driven are the three words that Tibane's close friends or new colleagues use to describe him. He shares that his initial career choice was to be a social worker which was inspired by the lack of support while growing up. He dreamt of being the change he wanted to experience. He relocated to Phalaborwa from Bushbuckridge in 2009 where he worked in a family business as a driving school instructor.

Tibane recently joined Palabora Mining Company (PMC) in August 2022 as the Supervisor Accounts Payable in the finance department. Before PMC he worked in the finance department for some of the biggest manufacturing companies in Southern Africa.

He describes Vusi Mhlongo as his influencer and role model since he inspired him when choosing careers.



Spending time with family is crucial to Tibane as he believes family is everything. If he is not spending quality time with family, he is watching current affairs to be up to date, football or riding his bike since he is a part time cyclist.

"Your attitude determines your altitude" are words of counsel that Thabo has received that stayed with him.

We hope that your new journey with us will be exciting and fruitful. Welcome aboard, Thabo!

# SHEQ Corner

## Lift II Underground Construction Team conduct a safety stand down – “Golden Rules”



Growth Lift II leaders organized a safety stand down with Lift II contractors on Friday the 11th of November 2022 with the theme “Golden Rules” at Seboka Lapa as part of their campaign to alert and remind employees about the importance of being safe and always adhering to company rules. Eight (8) Life Saving “Golden Rules” were shared with all present and how our actions affect others as well as our families at home.

It was mentioned that even in the beginning of time, rules were created for the people’s own good. The fact that we have rules in our workplace, schools, homes and government is for our own good. Rules were created to ensure that we all live peacefully in harmony with each other and our own working environment. If we all lived without rules, surely there would be no control or peace within our surroundings. Safety rules are really one’s best tools for being productive and safe.

**Employees were given small license card size tags to carry with them as a reminder of the eight (8) Life Saving “Golden Rules”.**

These can conveniently be kept together with the employee license cards.

The Life Saving “Golden Rules” shared were:

1. **Lockout/Isolation** – No work to be done on equipment if not isolated or on lockout
2. **Working at Heights above 1.8m** – Ensure that the area is declared safe to use scaffolding and safety harness is correctly hooked up.
3. **Lifting of equipment** – No Lifting of → 5 tons without qualified Rigger and no work to be performed under load.
4. **Operation of equipment** – Employee must be in possession of a valid license and certified competent to operate the equipment.
5. **Barricading and Barriers** – No entry into barricaded zone, no work on an excavation edge unless proper barricade and barriers are erected.
6. **Working in unsupported area** – No work allowed in areas where support has not been installed to standard.
7. **Ventilation** – No work in areas where ventilation is not up to standard or if the area has been declared unsafe.
8. **Drilling operations** – No drilling of face when there is a misfire.

In his closing remarks, Senior Manager for Growth and Lift 2 Concentrator, Aidan Schoonbee shared the following words: *“We all want freedom, but we need to understand that without rules, real freedom is impossible”.*



# PMC's pioneers honoured, best employees and teams crowned



It was a fun-filled afternoon with smiles and cheers on Friday the 09th of December 2022 at the Mopani TVET College when PMC's long serving employees, their spouses and leaders gathered to celebrate the milestones and achievements for the employees. A total of 125 employees were awarded for their PMC long service awards. PMC's Chief Operations Officer, Mr. Wei, as he is affectionately known, gave his keynote

address and mentioned how important it is for the business to celebrate and honour the loyal PMC employees from twenty (20), thirty (30) and forty (40) years of service. "We are immensely proud to be able to recognize and reward employees who excel at work, teams that are innovative and inspire others to do the same. "I believe this culture of rewarding hard work and

dedication will ensure that talented and skilled individuals are retained within the business which will ultimately contribute to its long-term success", he said. The air was filled with excitement and loud cheers as the recipients made it to the stage, accompanied with their significant other on their arm.





One of the two forty (40) year recipients, Butana Lawrence Dlamini was elated to be honoured at the event. Even though he officially went on retirement in September 2022, he mentioned that he felt special to have been honoured that way at the event. "It is important for one to be appreciated while you are still alive, I gave my best years to PMC, and I am grateful to know that my contribution was instrumental to its success".

This year, the Employee and Teams of the year were honoured at the same event. A clear testament that the adjudication committee had a tough time choosing the winners from all the received nominations. The winners for this year were as follows: Employee of the Year award was Bongani Samuel Kubayi of Vermiculite Business and Michael Doubell of engineering services, Asset Management. "I was shocked to find out that I have won, even happier to know that such an award came with a price. It really made my day", said employee of the year winner, Kubayi.

Mike Doubell from the engineering services shared a similar sentiment: "Thank you so much for a fantastic function, I feel honoured and excited on receiving this award", "none of this would have been possible if it was not for my dynamic leaders and a great team behind me," he said.

*"You could compare this with holding up the rugby world cup, which is only possible if: Your leaders have a detailed and clear vision of what they want and expect from you. You and set up a game plan with their unconditional support and trust. You have unshakable trust in your team and their capabilities, and they believe in you. Then you play as one unstoppable force that has to be victorious in the end. You hold the trophy high."*

The teams of the year were the Phase One Take Over Team – Asset Management and Security Team. The Most Innovative Team went to the Scamont Pump Project Team. The big winner for the day was Vermiculite Business Team who walked away with the Best Division for 2022, a double blessing after their employee scooped the employee of the year award! A special surprise award was given to everyone's favourite security guard, Marvellous Mathebula as Exceptional Employee of the Year, a great inspiration for constantly displaying a positive attitude on duty, loud cheers and a standing ovation before his name was called proved that PMC employees and leadership appreciate the energy that Marvelous brings to work each day! The mood was brightened further when he danced all the way to the stage to receive his price. Thank you to all the award recipients for all your dedication and hard work, without you PMC is nothing. Continue setting a great example for all your team members!!!!



"We are very pleased with the achievement and recognition from PMC family. I personally appreciate the efforts of all PMC and vermiculite business employees, contractors, management and all the other stakeholders. My team mentioned that they developed "goose bumps" earlier in January when they ended the first quarter with one of the all-time production record involving more than 45 Kt of crude vermiculite during the rainy season, which included several days of operational delays due to protests. The record volumes continued past the second and third quarter, and currently forecasting the highest volumes in 10 years along with highest monthly performance bonus payout to all vermiculite eligible employees. This award was somewhat not expected, but I am very pleased with the recognition. It is very easy to reach the summit of the peak, and at times difficult to maintain."



*"We plan to remain consistent and improve on other areas where our performance was not ideal. Thanks once more PMC Family." – Senior Manager Vermiculite Business, John Makgatho, on winning best division of the year.*

**Check more photos from this event at the event highlights page!**



# PMC's Railway Upgrade Support business objective to optimize operations – Trains do not wait



Palabora Mining Company's Railway Upgrade Project is a Tailored Solution to support the business objective for optimized operations. Railway freight is one of the oldest and efficient forms of cargo transportation which has proven to be cost effective in moving goods. Industry partners such as Transnet and Grindrod Freight Services came to the event held at PMC on the 29<sup>th</sup> September 2022 to support and celebrate the successful completion of this project.

Rail carries a wide range of bulk commodities such as but not limited to; construction materials, food, chemicals,

equipment, metals, and now newly added to the list is PMC's Magnetite. Railway transportation is well known for its efficiency and a simple, reliant medium to connect people, goods and places timeously and safely. It is the number one choice as a preferred mode of transportation for many people and industries, due to its reliability.

It is no wonder then, that in the year 2021, PMC embarked on a project to upgrade its railway infrastructure to enjoy tailor made solutions that satisfy the business, customer needs and ensures sustainability for the community of Ba -Phalaborwa

at large. When we are profitable, this turns into more spending related to the B -BBEE requirements on Socio Economic Development and Enterprise and Supplier Development. The logistics team led by Supply Chain and Logistics Senior Manager, Sanda Zungu together with the Projects team led by General Manager Asset Management, Zakes Malepe have collaborated to tackle the railway capacity expansion on site, optimizing its design with a 4km extension, enabling it to load and clear 80 wagons in one trip, to the maximum of 5 train trips a day.



This expansion means, improved efficiency at the loading facilities and reduced magnetite cost of sales for the business. The new rail tracks are laid to accommodate the Transnet locomotives. Transnet transfers are now able to collect Magnetite and Vermiculite directly from the exchange yard and out to the Maputo or Richards Bay ports without breakage.

The Railway Upgrade Programme is also a strategic move for the teams. Its implementation is in line with our business objective to be innovative and showcase continuous improvement. It is therefore not surprising that PMC, an organization that identifies itself as a leader in the mining industry, would challenge itself with a

high risk and costly project and execute it successfully within 100 000 hours, achieving our safety objective of Zero -Harm.

Words of gratitude go out to the Projects and Logistics teams in conjunction with the three (3) main contractors who worked tirelessly to ensure the success of the railway upgrade project:

- R&H Consulting for design and simulation
- PGN for Civil works
- Y&F for Per way installation

"I feel very excited that the project was completed on time with zero injuries," said Reginald Phooko, Logistics Operations Superintendent. "We are happy about the quality of the work done on the rail, and I am optimistic that this will increase productivity which will result in more tonnages being dispatched from PMC to Port".

***We are looking forward to those record-breaking cargo dispatches with no safety injury or incident!***

# 2022 – A year in preview



The PMC Women in Mining forum was established to create a platform for women in the business to raise and address some of the issues and challenges faced by women at PMC. It forms part of the International Body. For the past year, the WIM forum has been actively engaged in activities around the mine to improve the work environment and conditions for women working at PMC. A massive road show was conducted to elect new representatives for the various sections at the mine.

Some of the projects conducted are:

- Sectional Representatives Nominations
- Dedicated ablution facilities for women
- PPE Survey – Even though female PPE was successfully recommended and implemented at PMC, it has proven not to be conducive for the more petite employees as the sizing is still too large.

In 2023, this will receive attention

- Industry Meeting Attendance – Some of the learnings from these sessions are that some mining houses have already started issuing sanitary towel packs to female employees. Women Leadership development still needs to be addressed for women to occupy higher management positions.
- GBV – Although this was not addressed in 2022, in the new year, it will receive attention.

**PMC Women in Mining Representatives – Here is a list of PMC’s sectional representatives.**

REPRESENTATIVE NAME	SECTION	ROLE
<b>EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND SUPPORTING MEMBERS</b>		
Matsela Kwinana	Process Engineering	Chairperson
Rosemary Moagi	Concentrator & Magnetite Technical	Alternate Chairperson
Vutomi Mnisi	Marketing and Sales	Secretary
Mbali Sikhwari	Procurement	Alternate Secretary
Tshidi Moila	Human Resources	Training and Development
Tshidi Ngobeni	HR: Transformation	Transformation
Lavish Mhlarhi	HR: Transformation	Communications
Zavetha Chabangu	Magnetite Production - Stream 1	Union Representative

### SECTIONAL REPRESENTATIVES

#### VERMICULITE BUSINESS

Anikie Mametja	Vermiculite Business	
Pearl Shikwambana	Vermiculite Operations	

#### HUMAN RESOURCES

Tshidi Moila	Human Resources Training and Skills Development	
Crasiah Marobela	Pensions	

#### SHEQ

Katekani Mgiba	Safety	
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#### ASSET MANAGEMENT

Memory Rikhosto	Asset Management - Planning	
Mahlatse Sebopetsa	Asset Management - Planning	

#### GROWTH

Mpho Nyarela	Growth: Lift II Construction and Concentrator	
Nokuthula Lushaba	Growth: Lift II Mining and Technical	

#### MAGNETITE PROCESSING AND TECHNICAL

Sharon Mashiloane	Magnetite Production	
Ndivhuwo Neluvhalani	Magnetite Technical	
Boitumelo Kekana	Magnetite Operations	
Khensani Chawane	Magnetite Operations	

#### FINANCE

Dipuo Shingange	Finance - Chemlab	
Mahlatse Seerane	Business Value Planning	

#### UNDERGROUND CONCENTRATOR

Venetia Shokane	Concentrator Maintenance	
Martina Matsemela	Concentrator Operations	
Lorna Hlungwani	Concentrator Technical - Product and Dams	
Elsa Senyolo	Concentrator Technical	
Mokgadi Malatji	Concentrator Operations - Crushing and Auto Milling	
Brenda Monareng	Concentrator Operations - Crushing and Auto Milling	

#### LIFT 2 UNDERGROUND MINING

Mahlatse Mosoma	UG Mobile Maintenance	
Mapula Moloto	Auto Mills - Maintenance	
Geneva Chilwane	UG Mining	
Portia Chauke	UG Maintenance	
Mmabatho Phakula	UG Mining Maintenance	
Morongwe Mbotho	UG Mining Maintenance	
Catherine Malatji	Secondary Crushers - Maintenance	
Lucia Khoza	UG Mining	
Portia Chauke	UG Maintenance	
Eva Mogotse	UG Gantries	
Dineo Malatji	UG Mining	
Maureen Mabaso	UG Mining	
Petronella Morokolo	UG Operations - Haulage	

#### SMELTER AND REFINERY

Pinky Mashile	Smelter Maintenance	
Priscilla Hiine	Smelter Maintenance	
Rendani Rathogwa	Power Plant and Gas Handling	
Mpho Ramuntshi	DSB Furnace Operations	
Nhleko Mahumani	DSB Furnace Operations	
Judy Mkhombo	Smelter Gas Handling and Acid Plant	
Molebogeng Mokoena	Smelter Electrical	
Tintswalo Zita	Refinery Operations	
Sibongile Nyati	Refinery Operations	

# Ten employees selected to complete DMRE Blasting Certificate



The business philosophy is to grow and develop employees from within to support the business objectives and talent management processes. As a result, ten (10) employees from Underground Mining have been selected to undergo the Learner Miner Program where they will be required to complete DMRE Blasting Certificate of Competence. The program will enable employees to progress into a Coordinator / Miner's role where they will hold certain legal responsibilities as contained in the MSHA. Miner's role has been classified as critical on the National Sector Skill Plan for the Mining Industry.

Training, Skills and Development Manager, Mabore Macheru was elated at the congratulatory event held in late October. "We have good success stories around this program where some of our beneficiaries have even progressed further to Shift boss, Mining Engineers and Mine Overseer positions. We have established service level agreements with several conventional mines within the country to assist our learner miners with skills and modules that cannot be closed within our mine".

Calvin Nemathithi shared his background with the employees: "this is the route that I personally followed to be where I am today. You should consider yourself fortunate and use the opportunity effectively. Having been in the program doesn't not guarantee promotion but it will position you to better compete for promotion", he exclaimed.

The lucky employees to benefit from this programme are: **Happy Gomoesoana, Andrea Baloyi, Thulie Modipane, Sydney Mapfumari, Gift Nkuna, Reckson Nkambule, Solly Sikhonze, Mmaki Mahlako, Ferdinand Kelder and Eddy Mnisi.**

# PMC Managers' Pilot Coaching Programme Receives a Thumb Up



In February 2022, the business identified a need for a professional coaching service for Managers. The aim of the program was to support Managers to perform and produce results at the required leadership level. The coaching journey facilitated a transitioning process for Managers, focusing on the required skills, time application and work values to deliver the required results at the right level effectively. This was a pilot program, and 10 Managers were nominated to take part in this initiative by their direct leaders. DABS Professional Services was appointed to carry out the coaching program for these Managers over a period of approximately 4 months.

During the close-out session held on Friday, 14 October 2022, Mabore Macheru – Manager: Training, Development and Contractor Management, shared the program background and the approach that was taken to ensure the success of the programme. The Ten (10) nominated Managers who enrolled in the programme were: Amos Mabetha (Manager Concentrator Maintenance), Mpho Maloma (Manager Horizontal Development), Eric Mualusi (Manager Value Improvement Projects), Bridget Mayayise (Manager Concentrator Operations), Xolisa Sidandala (Manager Mining Maintenance), Rendani Nemathithi (Manager Mining Operations),

Kevin Ntimane (Manager Risk & Compliance), Peet van Rensburg (Manager Asset Management), Michael Mbele (Manager Projects) and Sakkie Van Wyk (Manager Construction).

This is one of the interventions that the business embarked on to improve the quality and effectiveness of leadership skills for Managers and to improve business results within PMC. Managers presented their feedback on the overall coaching journey to the Senior Managers present at the session based on their key learnings, shifts made and application of learnings. They also shared their gratitude to the PMC leadership and the coach for this valuable coaching experience.

In the Manager's individual feedback, they emphasized that not only did this journey change their perspective on leadership, but also shared how they personally felt empowered, enlightened, and are now more conscious of their actions. Some of the key learnings shared was around some of the following coaching topics: how to deal with different challenging situations, managing time and boundaries, delegating, empowering others, holding others and yourself accountable, assertiveness, to mention a few.

Exco leaders, present at the event, shared their positive feedback with the coachees and the coach, especially the positive influence that this programme has brought into the Managers' areas of work. All the coachees appreciated the PMC Executive for allowing them the opportunity to engage in this pilot programme and shared how they hoped to continue with the journey and to have similar interventions. The coachees made a plea for business to also consider making it possible for other Managers or perhaps even Superintendents and front-line Supervisors at PMC to benefit from this programme.

"The high level of integrity and commitment that was displayed by the Managers was commendable," said Tshidi Dabula, the Coach, "This is only the beginning of your journey, go through the learnings and use all the tools you have learnt to develop yourselves and other leaders in your work areas," she concluded.

***As John C. Maxwell once said: "A leader is the one who knows the way, goes the way and shows the way".***

# Kgosi Selwana presides over sod turning event for 3km road extension



Palabora Mining Company (PMC) has allocated resources to extend the first 3km road it built in Selwana village by a further 3kms. On the 11th of July 2022, PMC executives together with government officials handed over a 3km asphalt road to Kgosi Selwana and his community from the Integrated Development Plan. Four months later, on the 18th of October 2022, PMC executives reached another milestone through delivering on their commitment. The mining giant demonstrated understanding of local context by prioritizing the safety and infrastructure development of Selwana village once again.



Limpopo MEC of Public Works, Roads and Infrastructure, Councillor Nkakareng Rakgoale, in her capacity as the custodian of all provincial roads, together with Executive Mayor Pule Shai, were both in attendance and praised PMC for being a strategic partner that continuously invests in social and socio-economic development as well as contributing towards lifelong sustainability within Ba-Phalaborwa communities.

Selwana village is predominately known for its crop farming activities. Therefore, investing in constructing a new road or rehabilitating a damaged road is key, for the following reasons:

- It will meaningfully improve the travel experience in and out of Selwana.
- It will enable easy access to town or neighbouring communities.
- It will ensure the safety of learners travelling to schools and adults travelling to work.
- It creates an enabling environment for the local farming business to yield the expected production and revenue.

Most importantly, at Selwana, a good road will fast-track economic growth. A good road will reduce travel time to the city market to sell fresh produce. This improved experience, will hopefully inspire

the locals to seek alternate means to diversify the economy, beyond reliance on government or PMC to create employment opportunities.

“There is no Phalaborwa without PMC. Their existence is so integrated and seamless. You cannot tell one apart from the other” explained Executive Mayor Cllr. Pule Shai, praising PMC for delivering beyond the guidance of the mining charter. MEC Rakgoale announced the turnaround at the Road Agency Limpopo promising that government is now able to contribute also. “Do not destroy this new infrastructure because if you do, we will not come back to fix again” she advised the locals.

## Employee Feature

# Humphrey Mandlazi: a man who shows up no matter what

When we talk about a show-up man, we are referring to Humphrey Mandlazi. He describes himself as a man that does not pull a no show in life simply because his family and community members look up to him for encouragement and hope for a better future.

Born and bred in one of the local villages, Ga-Mashishimale, Phalaborwa. Mandlazi is a second born from a family of two (2). He began his primary journey in Mabine Primary School and further went on to complete his high school at Maphokwane High School. Mandlazi prides himself as a family orientated man. A dedicated husband and father to his three (3) children and he believes in the practices of ubuntu. Mandlazi did not think twice to describe himself as a resilient, collaborative, and thoughtful man.

His career started way back on the 18th of January 2013 when he joined Palabora Mining Company (PMC) as a Metallurgist graduate before being absorbed a year later within the Concentrator and Magnetite Technical Department. The resilient Mandlazi climbed up the ladder as he occupied Metallurgist and Specialist roles in the Concentrator and Magnetite processing value chain before becoming Operations Superintendent at Magnetite Processing which he is currently occupying.

This may come as shocking news for most employees to find out that Mandlazi studied Bachelor of Medicine, Bachelor of Surgery Degree (MBChB) commonly known as Medicine at University of Pretoria for a period of two (2) years but dropped out upon discovering that he shares an identity with someone. He spent a year resolving



the issue of identity which he calls it a blessing in disguise as it changed his perspective about life and career.

Just like any other employee, Mandlazi also had challenges navigating in his career/field. During his graduate tenure, there were instances where he was tasked to lead employees who were old enough to be his parents and most of them were from his village. In order for him to overcome these challenges he came up with fundamentals of strategic leadership that allowed him to lead smoothly, whilst maintaining his ubuntu. Mandlazi appreciates that his current position enables him to be the light that shines for others to get their desired Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) and exercise practice of moving away from "me" to "we" which is proof enough that the spirit of teamwork resonates within his team.

Spending quality time with his family and reading about psychology and leadership is what Mandlazi gets up to when he is off duty. He also mentioned that his favorite dish is pap and mopani worms (matomani or masonja).

Furthermore, Mandlazi's passion lies on helping other people in realising their full potential in life as he believes a candle never loses any of its brightness by lighting another. *"Today, it is you and I that are responsible for ensuring that PMC is sustained for the future generations of Ba-Phalaborwa residents," these were last words from Mandlazi to his fellow colleagues.*

## Employee Profiling

### Martha Dapa

#### 1. Tell us about yourself and family? Kindly share a brief family background.

I was born in Greater Tzaneen and raised in Namakgale, Ba-Phalaborwa. I was raised in Namakgale because my parents lived here due to work, my father was an employee at Palabora Mining Company (PMC) Finance division (procurement – stores). I come from a family of five (5) girls, did my primary schooling at Phalaborwa Primary School and completed my high school studies in Sebalamakgolo High School.

#### 2. What is your current role, please share your qualification background?

I am currently working at Asset Management Department as a Cost Controller. I hold a B-Tech in Financial Information Systems with Tshwane University of Technology (TUT), National Diploma in Management Accounting from CIMA and Postgraduate diploma in Business Management. I am currently busy with my Master's in Business Administration (MBA).

#### 3. How did your career start in the mining industry? Has this always been your career choice?

My career started in 2005 when I applied for the role of Management Accountant in Finance which I occupied until 2015 when I moved to Asset Management. Management Accounting has always been my career choice as I dreamt of becoming a Chief Financial Officer (CFO) one day however studying MBA gave me a different perspective.

#### 4. What is that one thing people would be surprised to know about you?

I am big on women empowerment initiatives. I love to read books, I love fashion and looking good all the time. It is a form of self-respect.

#### 5. What are some of the challenges you have faced in your career and how did you overcome those challenges?

We have obtained different qualifications however the organisation is like a big house with many rooms, you must find a place within where your strengths can be maximised. I call it the right fit within the organisation.

#### 6. What motivates or inspires you to keep going in challenging times?

Staying true to my personal values because they are my guiding star in all challenges faced.



#### 7. What is it that you love about your current position?

My current role gives me the opportunity to interact with people from all levels and departments throughout the mine.

#### 8. When you are not at work, what activities do you get up to?

Making a positive contribution to humanity has been one of my life's greatest missions and I get to make a positive impact by being deeply involved in community work, motivating young people, coaching, and giving back to the less privileged.

#### 9. If you had an opportunity to change one or two things at PMC or our community, what would you change and why?

Unity – together we can go far. "Unity is strength, where there is teamwork and collaboration, wonderful things can be achieved".

#### 10. What are some of your take outs from 2022? Your words of encouragement to your fellow colleagues.

I was truly happy to see management finally honouring and recognizing employees who have been loyal to the organisation and going as far as reviewing policies.

Let us work together to ensure that we are properly aligned to the company's strategic goals. Always be safety conscious and encourage your fellow colleagues to do the same!

# PMC Sections commemorate World Aids Day



World AIDS Day is commemorated each year on the 1st of December and is an opportunity for every community to unite in the fight against Human Immune Virus (HIV) and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS), show support for people living with it and remember those who have died. PMC CEO, Mr Jinghua Han encouraged teams at PMC to observe the day and brief teams on the theme for 2022. Leaders at PMC headed the call, namely Vermiculite Business and Asset Management dedicated some time to educating employees on HIV-AIDS and the stigmas surrounding people living with the disease.

This year's theme is Equalize and Integrate to end stigma and exclusion, Asset Management team, led by General Manager, Zakes Malepe gathered outside their building for the sessions. with the presence from mine clinic Cecil Mathale, peer educator and PMC OMD Dr Ian Mgiba to relay and disseminate information surrounding HIV/AIDS and answer questions that employees may have. The theme is against the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic's negative impact on HIV and Tuberculosis services locally and globally. The mine clinic team were also invited to the



Vermiculite Business area for an awareness session led by Senior Manager John Makgatho. Integrate COVID-19, HIV and TB services to ensure awareness, testing and treatment interventions. Integrate and Equalize health services to break barriers against access to prevention, treatment, and care. Integrate to scale up efforts to find patients who have been lost to care. Equalize to end stigma and exclusion. Equalize by respecting human rights. Employees were encouraged to visit the mine clinic should they need more information about HIV-AIDS, TB or any health concerns.

Zakes Malepe, General Manager at Asset Management closed off the awareness on high note by encouraging his team members



to check their HIV status, avoid having multiple partners and always be responsible. "We might be seeing each other for the last time in the year 2022, I would like to wish everyone a safe festive season and a merry Christmas. My wish is to meet up again with everyone in the year 2023," he concluded. We appreciate the leadership of these divisions by caring about the wellbeing of the employees.

# Ba-Phalaborwa Clean-up campaign yields positive results

Palabora Mining Company (PMC) in partnership with Ba-Phalaborwa Municipality kick started the year 2022 with good news for the residents of BaPhalaborwa when they launched the BaPhalaborwa cleanup campaign on the 17th of January 2022. It is safe to say that the objectives set for this campaign came into life as one can witness that the streets of Ba-Phalaborwa and its host communities are getting cleaner day by day. Residents, tourists, and visitors can attest that they have been seeing people wearing Personal Protective Equipments (PPE) busy on the side of the roads picking up garbage.

The objective of this cleanup campaign is to create environmental awareness and reclaiming back the dignity that Ba-Phalaborwa town once held as the cleanest town of which the efforts are now evident. We have seen business and public confidence in the Central Business District (CBD) and its host communities.

New job opportunities were created through this initiative as 32 local people are employed which is a positive impact towards combating the unemployment rate we are facing as a country. One employee who resides in Ga-Makhushane uttered words of gratitude on behalf of the other employees and the community at large. "My appreciation goes out to PMC management, the municipality, Phalaborwa Natural Heritage Foundation (PNHF) and Phalaborwa Bollanoto Secondary involved in this initiative for making sure it is a success," said the employee. Residents are urged to avoid the practice of illegal dumping and have personal responsibility when it comes to waste management by utilizing the skip bins for dumping of waste.

As a business, PMC erected 16 signage boards on several illegal dumping areas



around the Ba-Phalaborwa communities to assist in disseminating information and advising residents not to litter. Tshidi Ngobeni, Transformation Superintendent was quite excited due to the success of the project. She highlighted the huge positive difference that came with this cleanup campaign and how they made an impact by employing Ba-Phalaborwa residents. "We could not have done it on our own. I would like to express my humble appreciation to our local stakeholders

for always supporting us in our projects to bring change and develop our communities of Ba-Phalaborwa. The festive season is upon us, and we will be experiencing a lot of people coming into our town to explore what we have to offer, and we are more than ready to welcome them because our town is relatively clean," she mentioned.

# Why Stress Management is important!



## Introduction:

Stress is a daily part of our lives for most of it. Even if you are relatively unstressed, you will at some point experience stress. While a small amount of stress is a natural response to environmental influences, continuous and large amounts of stress does take its toll on your mental and physical wellbeing. For this reason, it is important to have a stress management plan in place.

If you need help, please do not hesitate to reach out to your Inhouse EAP Practitioner:

Ext: 2109  
 Cellphone: 076 455 5918  
 Email: [nandi.nkosi@palabora.co.za](mailto:nandi.nkosi@palabora.co.za)  
 Office: Based at Pensions Building.

## Developing a Stress Management Plan

The best way to feel like the stress in your life is under control is to actively take steps to manage it. Here are some easy tips to get you started on developing your own plan:

### Exercise regularly

Exercise is the silver bullet for mental and physical conditions from stress to high blood pressure. Exercise moderately for about 30 minutes on most days of the week and feel the benefits, including reduced stress levels.

### Socialise

Taking time out to spend time with your family and/or friends has been shown to be very important for stress management.

### Sleep well, and enough

Get between seven and eight hours of good quality sleep every night. Sleep helps you cope with problems, and sometimes even solve them. Sleep in a cool, dark room and go to sleep and wake up at the same time every day.

### Put work away at the end of the day

Work/life balance is an extremely important part of a stress management plan. When you're at work, work well, so that when you get home, you don't have to think about work, and you can enjoy your home time.

### Laugh, and do things you enjoy

Make time for the things you enjoy, of course life can be hectic but a life without some fun can only lead to stress.

### Positive thoughts

Stop negative self-talk to reduce stress.

### Get a message

The physical contact and forced relaxation helps reduce stress.

### Listen to music

Music really does have healing powers.

### Meditation

It can significantly improve your ability to manage stress, pain and difficult situations on a day-to-day basis.

# What is Bipolar Disorder?

The month of October has been declared Mental Health Awareness Month with the objective of not only educating about mental health but also to reduce the stigma and discrimination that people with mental illness are often exposed to. The only way to curb this stigma, is by educating ourselves about the different mental illnesses and what they are all about. Therefore, this week we will be looking at bipolar disorder. Bipolar disorder is a mental health condition that causes extreme mood swings that include emotional highs (mania) and lows (depression).

## Types of Bipolar Disorder

- **Bipolar I:** Characterised by severe mania, and severe mood swings. It significantly interferes with one's daily life.
- **Bipolar II:** Symptoms are less severe than bipolar I. Depressive and manic episodes are less noticeable and can be as mild as irritability. Depressive periods tend to last longer than manic periods.
- **Cyclothymic disorder:** A much less severe form of bipolar disorder where the depressive and manic periods are not nearly as pronounced as other forms of bipolar.

## Risk Factors

Factors that may increase the risk of developing bipolar disorder or act as a trigger for the first episode include:

- Having a first-degree relative, such as a parent or sibling, with bipolar disorder.
- Periods of high stress.
- Drugs and/or alcohol abuse.

## Treatment

- Hospitalization may be required in the acute phase to control symptoms.
- Antidepressant drugs may be given.
- Sedatives may be used to control mania in the initial phase.
- Lithium may be used to stabilize the mood.

- Anti-epileptic medication (used to treat seizures) may be used.
- Therapy may also be needed for emotional support.
- Tendency to be easily distracted.
- Uncharacteristically poor judgement.
- Increase energy and less need for sleep.
- Spending excessively.
- Increased sexual drive (maybe indulging in risky sexual behaviour).
- Aggressive behaviour.
- Substance abuse.
- Experiencing hallucination or delusions.

Some people respond to treatment quickly and stabilize soon after starting. Others take longer and might even have to try different medications or combinations before they feel better. Don't lose hope if you or a loved one face treatment challenges. It is just a matter of finding what will work for you or them.

## Symptoms:

Typically, the illness is characterized by alternating between depression and mania, with periods of normal behaviour in between.

## Mania Episode

The symptoms for a manic episode typically include:

- Extreme happiness, hopefulness, and excitement.
- Sudden changes from being joyful to being irritable, angry and hostile.
- Extreme optimism and impulsiveness.
- Making grand and unattainable plans.
- Increased physical activity, such as rapid speech and restlessness.
- Agitation and irritability.
- Recklessness (including taking chances and dangerous or illegal behaviour).

## Depression Episode

The symptoms for a depressive episode include:

- Feeling sad, apathetic, pessimistic, hopeless, anxious, irritability etc.
- Loss of interest or pleasure in almost all activities.
- Changes in appetite or weight.
- Insomnia or excessive sleep.
- Headaches, stomach aches or unexplained aches and pains.
- Neglecting responsibilities and personal appearance.
- Slowed or restless movement.
- Fatigue and loss of energy.
- Feeling helpless.
- Feeling worthless or excessive guilt.
- Difficulty thinking, concentration and making decisions.
- Recurring thoughts of death or suicide.

If you need help, please do not hesitate to reach out to your Inhouse EAP Practitioner, contacts on [page 27](#)

# Past Events Highlights

## Long Service Awards and Employee of the year awards





Long Service Awards and Employee of the year awards



Railway Upgrade Event



## Christmas messages from employees

*"It is that time of year again, where we get to take a breather and reflect on how we have worked on our goals throughout the year 2022. Christmas is thanksgiving season, time to rest and spend quality time with family while spreading love and kindness. Please allow me to wish everyone happy holidays, merry Christmas, and a happy new year."* - **Hleki M, Training and Development Department**

*"We have come to the end of the year once again. It is a period for celebrations and reunions with friends and family. As you celebrate Christmas, make wonderful memories that will linger in your home, make great friendships that will last a lifetime and may this season be filled with peace and joy. Have a merry Christmas."* - **Daniel Maluleke from 2RM Security company**

*"I want to thank everyone for the encouragement and support I received throughout the year. It is always a pleasure to work with fantastic team members that are supportive and make work much easier. May we all enjoy Christmas responsibly with our family and friends."* - **Lucia Khoza, Underground Mining**

*"May your festive holidays be filled with peace, joy and happiness. Let us not forget to keep ourselves and families safe as there are a lot of movements happening around this season and let us obey all the rules of the road. I am hoping that we will all reunite in the year 2023, happy holidays and a new year."* - **Geneva Chilwane, Lift II Mining**

*"Christmas to me is more of a time to cool down, recollect and re-energize. I only have one (1) piece of advice to my fellow colleagues and the community at large. Let us utilise our finances wisely, avoid spending on things we do not need because the year 2023 still requires us to use money to survive. I would like to wish everyone a marvelous Christmas and a prosperous 2023 filled with lot of blessings."* - **Buhte Kapa Human Resource Department**