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UCT student to represent southern African at the World Economic Forum

The University of Cape Town's Shamiso Kumbirai, a master's candidate in the Department of Civil Engineering, has been selected to represent the voice of the southern African youth at the World Economic Forum (WEF) in Davos in 2018.

Kumbirai is a member of the World Economic Forum Global Shapers which is a network of inspiring young people under the age of 30 working together to address local, regional and global challenges. The Global Shapers Community is spread in over 378 city-based hubs, in 160 countries, with more than 6 000 members.

Every year, the WEF selects 50 Shapers from across the world to represent the voice of the youth and showcase the impactful work they are doing to change their local and international communities. This year, Kumbirai was selected for her work as a Water Engineer at global engineering and infrastructure advisory company Aurecon and her involvement with WomEng, a multi-award winning social enterprise working to develop the next generation of women engineering leaders in society.

Kumbirai says: "This is a wonderful opportunity to raise the need for infrastructure development on the African continent and advocate for the advancement of African women in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM)."

Kumbirai is a water engineer with experience in bulk water supply and hydropower engineering across Africa. She works with the fundamental belief that the removal of water as a development constraint and the ability to harness this resource as a tool to help power Africa will positively change the lives of millions who call it home.

In addition to her love for sustainable infrastructure development Kumbirai is passionate about advancing women in STEM. Since 2011 she has been involved with WomEng, where she served as the Development Director in 2015. Through her work in the water sector and WomEng in 2017, she was invited to host proceedings at the African Sustainability Summit and is spearheading a Sani4Schools project aimed at improving the water and sanitation facilities for a no-fee school in the Mamelodi area with over 1200 learners.

With her master's degree, Kumbirai is focusing on participatory upgrades in large-scale water and sanitation infrastructure projects.

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Issued by: UCT Communication and Marketing Department

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