



Communication and Marketing Department  
Isebe loThungelwano neNtengiso  
Kommunikasie en Bemerkingsdepartement

Private Bag X3, Rondebosch 7701, South Africa  
Welgelegen House, Chapel Road Extension, Rosebank, Cape Town  
Tel: +27 (0) 21 650 5427/5428/5674 Fax: +27 (0) 21 650 5628

[www.uct.ac.za](http://www.uct.ac.za)

10 April 2025

## First recipient of Uyinene Mrwetyana Scholarship bags BA degree



Luhlanganiso Majebe graduated on 3 April.

Photo: Lerato Maduna

Luhlanganiso Majebe, the first recipient of the Uyinene Mrwetyana Scholarship, has graduated from the University of Cape Town (UCT) with a Bachelor of Arts degree, majoring in political studies and law. This significant achievement comes four years after receiving the prestigious scholarship, which honours the memory of Uyinene Mrwetyana, a first-year UCT student whose life was tragically cut short in a brutal murder at the Clareinch Post Office.

The scholarship is an initiative of the [Faculty of Humanities](#), which has been established in partnership with UCT's Development and Alumni Department (DAD).

Majebe understands the circumstances that led to the scholarship's establishment. "I remember seeing the banner asking, 'Where is Nene?' and that's where we started having the conversation. I was head girl at the time [at Springfield Convent], and I had just been announced [in 2019] and I felt that it was my responsibility to have the conversation about what gender-based violence (GBV) is, particularly because I went to an all-girls school."

She added: "Her story radicalised me in a way in that it not only gave me a sense of awareness but also a duty – and that culminated in the scholarship, meeting her family and people from the foundation. My duty is to carry her name and continue to make her be remembered."

The scholarship is intended for eligible students in the Faculty of Humanities. It provides comprehensive funding that covers tuition, textbooks, accommodation, and health and wellness expenses for the recipient's undergraduate degree programme. As part of the scholarship agreement, Majebe needed to contribute to the work of the Uyinene Mrwetyana Foundation. It also necessitated that she enlists to volunteer at a non-profit organisation whose work addresses GBV at community level.

When asked about the pressure to give the scholarship a positive name through its requirements and her good deeds, she said: "Yes it was pressure because I was not representing myself. I'm representing her and her family. I'm representing what her name is. When I was in my first year, I didn't understand the full scope of the responsibility. But I've grown within myself as I've been part of social initiatives and the spaces I've occupied in the university. It's been necessary for me to be a voice for GBV, have tough conversations and take on leadership roles within the university and call out people who have been doing wrong."

She further said: "One question I remember from the interview [for the scholarship] was 'What is it about Uyinene's story that touched me?' and I'll never forget the question because what I said was it was because of her identity, which was intersectional, and a lot of South Africans could relate."

Humanities dean, Professor Shose Kessi, said: "Luhlanganiso Majebe was selected as the first recipient of the Uyinene Mrwetyana Scholarship due to her academic excellence and her strong alignment with the values that the scholarship upholds – resilience, leadership and a commitment to social justice. Her journey has been inspiring, and her graduation is a significant milestone in honouring Uyinene's legacy."

Professor Kessi added: "This scholarship plays a vital role in keeping her memory alive by supporting and uplifting young women in academia. It is hoped that Luhlanganiso's story will inspire future recipients to make meaningful contributions in their fields and communities."

The foundation's co-founder and Chief Executive Officer Nomangwane Mrwetyana congratulated Majebe on her graduation: "As she steps into the next chapter of her journey, we implore her to continue being a beacon of hope and a voice for justice among young people. The fight against gender-based violence and femicide is one that requires courageous and compassionate leaders, and we have no doubt that Luhlanganiso will continue to inspire and uplift others in her path."

"We extend our deepest gratitude to UCT for establishing this scholarship in remembrance of Uyinene. This initiative honours her legacy in a profound way and supports the next

generation of changemakers who are committed to creating a safer and more just society. Luhlanganiso will always be an ambassador of the Uyinene Mrwetyana Foundation.”

Majebe shared: “I would like to extend a big thank you to the Humanities faculty for taking a chance on me. I also want to say thank you to Uyinene’s family – especially her mother, Nomangwane Mrwetyana. She is someone I have been in contact with since first year and has continuously been supportive.”

She is currently busy with her two-year postgraduate LLB degree at UCT.

*Story by Kamva Somdyala, UCT News*

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**Issued by: UCT Communication and Marketing Department**

**Ridovhona Mbulaheni**

Media Liaison and Monitoring Officer  
Communication and Marketing Department  
University of Cape Town  
Rondebosch  
Tel: (021) 650 2333  
Cell: (064) 905 3807  
Email: [ridovhona.mbulaheni@uct.ac.za](mailto:ridovhona.mbulaheni@uct.ac.za)  
Website: [www.uct.ac.za](http://www.uct.ac.za)