



FEMALE ENTREPRENEUR DRIVES HIGH-OCTANE FUEL SECTOR

Tumi Mdluli is a freshly faced 35-year-old businesswoman who has taken ownership of a booming Shell & Spar Express filling station in Golden Meadows along the Johannesburg's busy Witkoppen Road in Fourways.

Fuel retailing has always been a fiefdom for the macho alpha male with deep pockets and strong arms ready to drag the thick diameter fuel pipe from the fuel deliver vehicle into the tank and breath in the toxic fumes with ease. Mdluli has wormed her way in after an accidental introduction to the high-octane fuel retail space littered with exorbitant starting costs, high ownership turnovers and unforgiving environment.

She applied for a Shell franchise which was granted promptly and had run around and raise the required R500 000 personal contribution which is usually put down as a franchise deposit.

Mdluli put together a convincing business plan and raised and deposited the required mandatory

starting capital then approached sefa for more funding in May 2021. sefa approved of her funding applications and bought into her business visions and granted her all the financial as well as business support she required.

TMZ Logistics came to fruition and Mdluli's dream of being a fuel retailer became a reality and the Golden Meadows started taking shape.

"Acquiring a service station isn't easy. It's not a business that is sold over the counter. It's a very long process that tests your entrepreneurial capability, passion, integrity, dedication, honesty and financial discipline."

Her fuel establishment serves Africa's richest mile stretching from Sandton City past Bryanston to Pineslopes, Broadacres then to shopping mall rich Fourways suburb.

Golden Meadows Shell filling station is a licensed Shell products resellers and traders in the company's flagship Shell V-Power 95 unleaded high octane petrol brand which contains a friction reducing ingredient, which is designed to get to work at the heart of a vehicle engine, helping critical parts of a vehicle move freely. This fuel is co-engineered and recommended by Formula One motor racing team Scuderia Ferrari.

She also trades in Shell Unleaded petrol as well as Shell Diesel extra, Shell V-Power Diesel Extra and other franchise related petroleum products.

Mdluli not only deals with petrol and diesel products, but also houses an express Spar shop that trades in hot food, beverages, sandwiches, burgers, sanitary products, sweets as well as Automated Teller Machines (ATM).

She has a staff complement of 35 permanent employees and five students on learnerships.

"My biggest challenge at the moment is keeping business afloat during the times of power outages which happen so frequently and last long hours" said Mdluli.

"I spend about R40 000 on diesel purchase monthly to mitigate the power-cuts and keep the pumps flowing and that is eating into my bottom line and hampering my efforts to reinvest further into the business" she added.

"The sky is the limit when it comes to future growth, and I would like to add on another filling station to my business portfolio," she concluded.

