

Profiles

Passionate about community work

Wiseman Mthiyane

THE first thing that strikes you about Siyabonga Godwin Mbanjwa, the Manager of Operation Sukuma Sakhe (OSS) in the City of uMhlatuze is his love and passion for community development.

Born and bred in eSikhaleni township, Mbanjwa is the son of former city councillor and activist Get Mbanjwa and Bangizwe Mbanjwa who came to eSikhaleni in 1975.

Caring is within his nature. He has been exposed to community work all of his life and believes nothing will separate him from his community.

‘I am a product of my community. I was raised by my community. I live for my community and I commit to doing everything to better the lives of my community,’ he says.

Mbanjwa is armed with both education and leadership skills.

He is the product of Thakasani Primary, eSikhawini HP School and Mdlamfe High School, where he matriculated, before enrolling for a Secondary Teachers Diploma (STD) at the then Eshowe College of Education.

He taught at Ngwenya High School in Gingindlovu for 19 years before joining local government, in 2015.

He was appointed by the City of uMhlatuze in Public Participation and Councillor Support as Manager in the Office of Operation Sukuma Sakhe (OSS).

He is no stranger to community service and has served as a ward committee member for 10 years and was once the chairperson of the City of uMhlatuze

Youth Council.

Outlining his scope of work, Mbanjwa said poverty and HIV infections have been his biggest challenges so far.

‘It worries me that in spite of all the interventions we have made in our War Rooms meetings, we are not reducing the number of those living in the poverty line.

‘My role is to ensure the functionality of all the 34 War Rooms within the city. The objective of the War Room is to fast track and facilitate the delivery of services at a local level.

‘This is a forum that serves as a mini government, bringing together all stakeholders, including government departments, non governmental organisations, Community Care Givers (CCG), traditional leadership and councillors who are War Room champions.

‘Ours is to tackle issues affecting our community such as social ills, crime and diseases, and to make interventions when needed on poverty eradication programmes.

‘We strive to ensure that programmes such as the Extended Public Works Programmes (EPWP) benefit poverty stricken families.

‘At some stage we do receive support from the private sector in helping with house building for the poor and for awareness programmes.

‘I also work as a coordinator at a Local Task Team level (LTL) which incorporates all War Rooms.

‘This is where we bring issues to the attention of the district level for intervention. We are a rapid response team.

‘We also coordinate programmes with

government departments to avoid duplication of work in the social cluster,’ added the 44-year-old Mbanjwa, who is married to Sthabile Mkhize and they are blessed with two children, Hlelo and Nsika.



Siyabonga Mbanjwa in his office