

Inspiration, hard work and someone to believe in him - the secret to this CA(SA)'s success

By [Lia Labuschagne](#), issued by [SAICA](#)

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The internal audit department of the Kannaland Municipality in Ladismith is in good hands. While building up the department as its current head, chartered accountant [CA(SA)] Enrico Kleinbooie is also responsible for the training and development of two young professionals pursuing their Institute of Internal Auditors of South Africa internal audit designations. A beneficiary of the Thuthuka Bursary, Enrico shares his story...



At 32 years of age, Enrico is ultimately responsible for providing independent appraisals in relation to internal control and risk management, as well as the governance processes needed for the municipality to obtain a clean audit report for its annual financial statements. While ensuring compliance with the relevant laws and regulations, his department also ensures that its internal audit assignments conform to the International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing as issued by the Institute of Internal Auditing.

But doing making this type of contribution to society seemed like an unachievable dream when he was young...

Enrico grew up with his grandparents in Riebeeck West in the Western Cape. Although they were not financially well off and he lacked things like pocket money, "I received a lot of love and guidance from my grandma and especially my grandpa, who told me that I was going to do big things in the future. This prediction came true when I obtained my bachelors and honours degrees from

Stellenbosch University (SU) and later became a qualified chartered accountant."

One of the sad things in Enrico's life is the fact that he lost his grandfather, Daniel Fortuin, before qualifying as a CA(SA). "I am sure he is in heaven smiling down at me." He adds: "I used my faith to overcome my greatest obstacles."

His dreams as a youngster were "to one day have a good job, have money, have a car a house and to be able to look after my family", but he was not sure how to achieve that.

Having attended Riebeeck West Primary School and Schoonspruit Secondary School in Malmesbury, Enrico decided that he wanted to attend SU after seeing one of their advertisements – this was long before Enrico had decided what direction he would study in. However, when he was in Grade 11, he heard Thembelani Vanqa speaking about becoming a CA(SA) and discovered how SAICA's Thuthuka Bursary works. This possibility opened the door towards funding for Enrico's studies. "I had great support from my teachers, Mrs Lategan and Mr Van Harte, and was one of the top performing students at our school for grades 10 to 12. I worked hard to obtain top grades to qualify for the CA(SA) programme, and the rest is history.

"Obtaining both my bachelors and honours degrees with my grandpa, grandma and my mother by my side was incredibly special – goosebumps stuff!"

Once he completed his honours degree, Enrico enrolled into SAICA's Training Outside Public Practice (TOPP) programme, but "was not impressed with myself when I missed passing auditing. I pulled up my socks and eventually articulated at the Auditor General of South Africa (AGSA), where I honed my skills as auditor." But passing the two SAICA qualifying examinations did not come easy and "I had to pick myself up a lot during this journey," reports Enrico. He

praises two ladies at the AGSA in particular – Ntosh Ndzamela and Anette Krieg – for their belief in him and for "pushing me towards professional greatness".

A Thuthuka-supported journey

Enrico's journey towards becoming a CA(SA) prepared him for all the facets of running a fully functional and compliant business, organisation or municipality. His training at the AGSA added to his confidence to "pick up on all the internal control deficiencies and make relevant and easy-to-follow recommendations to address findings that can result in material misstatements in the annual financial statements and annual performance reports, as well as in material non-compliance with laws and regulations."

Importantly, "working in various audit teams, auditing different clients and being exposed to different internal control environments develops one's ability to work in complex environments and with different types of people."

He has learnt that, in addition to an in-depth depth understanding of accounting framework and compliance, the skills needed for the job include a natural affinity for working with numbers, a knack for seeing and making improvements in any relevant area, and the ability to work with and manage people with different personalities.

The impact of Thuthuka in getting Enrico where is today, was immense: "It totally changed my life, since it funded my CA(SA) dream. I am so grateful!" He adds: "The camp we had during our first year at university was particularly great, since it installed a sense of group work and being comfortable with one's fellow students. During my honours degree year, I battled depression – but I overcame it and Thuthuka gave me another chance to achieve that goal."

The bursary also had an impact on the life of his family, because Thuthuka helped him enter articles at the AGSA. Once he reached that stage, he could start giving back to his grandparents.

He encourages anyone with top marks in English, mathematics and accounting who qualifies for the bursary to apply to Thuthuka for support on their CA(SA) journey: "Your life will change for the better!"

Dreams — and advice

Enrico's current professional dreams are to obtain the Certified Internal Auditor (CIA) designation from the Institute of Internal Auditors of South Africa. "I also want to pursue a master's degree in public and development management, and thereby add more value to what I do in the public sector in South Africa. I see myself as Chief Financial Officer at a local municipality one day."

He encourages anyone who wants to study further: "Give it no further thought. Go and study! You won't regret it."

This is something he has always stood beside. In fact, while studying for his APC, the second SAICA qualifying examination he notes how important research actually is: "It broadens your mind. A CA(SA) is ultimately a business advisor – and as nobody knows everything at any one point in time, research becomes your best friend when providing proper advice to clients and other relevant stakeholders."

In terms of his personal aspirations, Enrico says he wants to "be a great dad to my one-year-old son Ferruccio. I have dreams relating to property development and am already an investment property owner and landlord in Tableview, Cape Town. I would also like to have my own consulting company."

Community involvement

Enrico believes CAs(SA) have a wide spectrum of knowledge that enable them to add value anywhere in society and communities. "We can advise non-profit organisations and small business owners at reasonable prices to improve their businesses. Since we learn how to transfer skills and knowledge to fellow professionals in our reports, it also prepares us to become involved in training and development programmes."

Enrico adds: "I have encountered many challenges during my personal journey, but have also had family members, friends and 'angels' coming my way to encourage me to never give up and to keep my eyes on my personal goals." He hopes to be able to do the same for others.

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