

# Heineken SA celebrates resilience this World Bartender Day

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On 24 February, we celebrate World Bartender Day in which we acknowledge bartenders and their skills, dedication and even the craft of mixology. 2020 has been very tough year for all, but has been particularly tough on bartenders who work in two of the hardest hit industries, namely the alcohol industry and the events and restaurant sector, resulting in a lot of layoffs and bartenders having to persevere in order to survive three periods of alcohol trade restrictions.

Heineken South Africa raises a toast to these dedicated staff this week and would like to highlight the strength of those in the industry through telling the stories of some of South Africa's most loyal working in pubs, restaurants and bars across the country.

## The tenacious trio – tending to the drinks (and sometimes psychological) needs of the nation

**Phomello Pule** (29) is a former banker who possesses a banking qualification from Milpark Business School. His entrepreneurial skills were developed at 11 years old, at which time he worked at his late uncle's tuck-shop, packing snacks to make extra pocket money on weekends. This bartender who works at 717 Hangout restaurant in Hammanskraal in Temba is also a former athlete specialising in long jump, pole vault and decathlon.

At the restaurant, the most requested drink is Heineken® beer and some of the drinks they are most famous for includes a beer cocktail called "7 Phantoms", which is a mix of gin, honey, sprite, mint, lime, hot sauce and Heineken® beer.

Some of his career highlights includes being nominated and shortlisted for *Forbes Africa's* 30 under 30 list in 2018, based on the work he did through his business called Yummy Papi, which is a luxury unisex lip care brand. The Covid-19 pandemic and national lockdown impacted the business because he worked fewer hours, and they had to utilise skeleton staff due to capacity limits, which impacted their ability to keep up with their rent. On a positive note, he got to explore the collaboration of food delivery services and local app developers during the three periods of alcohol ban. This helped to stabilise his cash flow, and retain existing as well as new customers as he managed to design, print, and sell 3D objects via social media to earn extra income. Some of his hidden talents include lip reading, and hip-hop dancing.



Phomello Pule

**Matshiliso (Tshidi) Molefe** works at M&M Tavern that is located in Wallace Dene, Cape Town. The 27-year-old mother of one, who is also the liquor business manager at M&M Tavern studied retail business management and currently holds a diploma in retail. The Covid-19 pandemic along with the national lockdown instigated by the government to curb its local spread has hit the tavern, which has been in operation for more than 29 years, very hard. During the three periods of alcohol trade restrictions, M&M Tavern had to close, closing the taps on their only source of income, while also resulting in the business having to discard a lot of stock due to the expiry dates for this being reached, which was a huge loss for the tavern. In addition, they have seen significant drops in the number of customers over the course of the lockdown, whilst alcohol ban was lifted.

Molefe says that some of the highlights for the business includes the events that M&M Tavern have hosted between 2018 and 2019, which were amongst the most successful that they have had and run in a long time. At the tavern, their most requested cider is Strongbow Gold Apple and Red Berries. Besides running the liquor side of the business and 'manning that bar', Molefe also cooks and makes mocktails for the events that the establishment hosts.



**Katleho**

*Katleho Ramongalo*



*Matshiliso (Tshidi) Molefe*

**Ramongalo** (35) from Orlando East (Soweto) is the proud father of an eight-year-old boy named Rethabile. He works as the bar supervisor at Sakhumzi Restaurant, which is located in the famous Vilakazi Street in Soweto Orlando West and his passions include bartending, and mixing cocktails.

The Covid-19 pandemic and national lockdown has impacted him in a very negative way, because he had to stay at home due to alcohol trade being prohibited three times over the course of the lockdown. This also had a negative impact on his finances since no salary was coming into his bank account, resulting in tremendous stress. As a passionate environmentalist, Ramongalo converted his love for nature into a means to obtain some extra income by recycling, which involves collecting cans and plastic in exchange for cash. "My most memorable achievement includes inventing my own cocktail from scratch, which our customers really loved so much that it was added onto their drinks menu," concludes Ramongalo.

Join us in raising a toast to your local bartenders and be sure to thank them for their service, particularly during this trying time.

#### About Heineken South Africa:

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