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Prof. Dorcas
“Dee” Khosa



Here to be Persistent

The professor who kept knocking until the doors opened: Building bridges between the classroom and the world of work.

Professor Dorcas Khosa did not build her career around one dramatic breakthrough. She built it through persistence and a determination to create opportunities for others.

Throughout her career, she observed a recurring challenge facing young people completing their studies. Graduates left university with qualifications and ambition, only to encounter employers demanding experience they had never been given a chance to gain. Prof. Khosa believed universities had a responsibility to help close this gap.

When she took responsibility for work-integrated learning in the Department of Law, Safety and Security Management at Tshwane University of Technology, she

viewed student placements as more than an administrative requirement. They were a critical link between education and economic participation, enabling students to gain practical experience while showing their capabilities.

Prof. Khosa actively forged relationships with institutions including the South African National Defence Force, PSIRA, the Cross-Border Road Transport Agency, the Department of Correctional Services, the Tshwane Management and Leadership Academy, the Gauteng Department of Community Safety, SALGA and the Limpopo Department of Transport and Community Safety.

These partnerships created opportunities for students to gain workplace exposure and strengthen their prospects of employment.

Between 2020 and 2025, she secured contracts from the Safety and Security and Local Government SETAs, supporting bursaries, internships, work-integrated learning and student development. The investment translated into tangible outcomes: 90 unemployed graduates were placed in municipalities across Limpopo, 28 unemployed students entered PSIRA training, and more than 400 students benefited from placement and internship programmes.

For Prof. Khosa, however, the greatest measure of success lies in lasting outcomes. Seeing graduates transition from temporary opportunities into permanent employment is evidence that the system is working.

Today, Khosa is a professor in the Department of Criminology and Security Science at the University of South Africa. Even there, her commitment to creating pathways into opportunity continues. Fifteen Unisa students have already been placed with PSIRA, receiving stipends while undergoing training, with permanent absorption being pursued.

Her academic contribution is equally noteworthy. Thirteen doctoral and 22 master's candidates have completed their degrees under her supervision. Perhaps her most powerful legacy is reflected in the simple transformation: an unemployed graduate once told to return when they had experience, can now confidently demonstrate the experience needed to build a career.