



MONTIGNY

"we add value"

DECEMBER 21
No. 09

Inccoodzi

The Wood Pecker





Visitation of Usutu Forest Products by EEA

Usutu Forests Product boasts a 20% conservation status of the plantations total area. Our conservation areas are not only awe inspiring but also happen to be one of the major contributors to the kingdom's national conservation goals. Usutu Forest Products has High Conservation Values (HCV'S) these are biological, ecological, social and cultural value areas of outstanding significance and critical importance.

On the 1st of December we were honoured as a company by Government officials including (EEA) Eswatini Environment Authority (MTEA) Ministry of tourism and Environmental Affairs) and Eswatini National Trust Commission (ENTC) for the purpose of acknowledging efforts done by the company in implementation of environmental stewardship program through conservation. Of these HCV areas our guests were only able to tour some of them, like C18W01 an open area rich in important species such as Proteas, secondly was Enrich dam, a wetland and a varied ecosystem services hub with a magnificent waterfall. Lastly, the guest toured A15W01, which is also an open area with a breath-taking aerial view of part of the plantation as well as the cities; Matsapha, Malkerns and Lozitha area.



Based on the appreciative remarks from our honoured guest, who expressed sincere gratitude that was evident from their animated facial expressions after the tour, we can conclude that the tour was a remarkable success. Of key note is that our conservation status stands at impressive levels, all thanks to the FSC certification which has standards that are way above our national standards.... We add value!

"The perception of our Forest plantation being an ecological dessert was wiped out"



Forest Department Project – Tea Tree

The Forestry Department has reserved 60 hectares of the forest to plant tea trees. Planting of the trees started in December 2020. The tea tree also known as *Melaleuca alternifolia*, should not be confused with the plant that produces leaves used to make tea beverage like Rooibos or Five roses.

It rather produces an essential oil that has many uses, including fighting germs and preventing infections. Tea tree oils contain several compounds, that have been shown to kill certain bacteria, viruses, and fungi.

The Tea Tree is native to Australia and has been used for centuries as traditional medicine. The native Australians crush tea tree leaves to extract the oil, which is then inhaled to treat coughs and colds or applied directly to the skin for healing. The tea tree oil is versatile and can be useful today in the manufacturing of hand sanitizers, insect repellants, antiseptics and many more.



Cattle Feedlot

The Forestry Department has established a cattle feedlot within Usutu. Young bullocks will be fed at this feedlot which has a carrying capacity of 100 cattle. The advantage with a feedlot is that it is the most economical way to raise many cattle for beef production. Thus, less stress is placed on the environment and fewer greenhouse gases are emitted to produce the same amount of beef. Montigny's feedlot will supply local retailers and cattle breeders' premium quality cattle. NO hormones or steroids are used for the enhancement of growth on our cattle. 100% organic beef!



We currently have about 700 cattle, 77% Brangus (cross breed of Brahman and Angus cattle), 16% Nguni breed, and 7% Bonsmara breed. Bonsmara is type of breed where several breeds were scientifically selected and combined for their superior traits. It known for its high-quality beef and resistance to local diseases. On the 3rd of December 2021 our 1st lot of cattle went into our newly established feedlot. The estimated time it will take for them to be ready for selling is around 12 weeks.

Artificial Insemination

Technology is also being utilized at the Company's cattle to increase efficiency of bull usage. Artificial insemination is the technique in which semen with living sperms is collected from the male and introduced into female reproductive tract, usually during the last half of standing heat, with the help of instruments. This increases the rate of conception. Artificial insemination is not merely a method of bringing about impregnation in females. Instead, it is a powerful tool mostly employed for livestock improvement. It is also used to create new bloodline of superior quality and eliminating inbreeding within your herd

Maize Fields

Usutu has planted 23 hectares of yellow maize in the forest to produce silage for our cattle. Silage will be used during the winter when the quality and quantity of grazing grass is at it minimum.

Usutu also planted weeping crass (*Eragrostis curvula*) for additional grazing to assist with cows and calves to generate more milk and more healthier calves.

Being in a highveld, the cold winters can cause a surge in cattle feed prices and by planting the yellow maize and grass, Montigny can ensure that the animals have reliable supply of adequate nutrition in a cost-effective way. This is also to offset the scarcity of cattle feed during seasonal changes such as drought.



It is a short rotation tree, which means it is a small tree that becomes ready for harvesting within a two-year period. After the 1st harvest, the tree naturally regrows again, called coppice, and the leaves are then harvested every 12-15 months for 7 years.

Usutu grows organically certified tea tree. That means that no chemicals or fertilizers are used to grow the trees and to produce oil.

The project is also has also benefitted the Communities of Mhlangeni and Ngogodla, as over 40 people employed in this project are from these surrounding areas.





Montigny Nhlangano Foreman Make History

It was the 14th of September 2020 @ 10h00 when the Mohale Emmanuel Consulting Services (MECS) Team of Takhona Vilakati and Sive Simelane lead by George Mamaila descended on Montigny Head Office at Bhunya for a meeting with the Montigny Human Resource Team of Mzwandile, Ayanda and Nokphila lead by Ms Thembi Maphanga. This was the beginning of what would be a historical journey for Montigny South and Montigny as a whole. This was echoed by Mr. Rijkenberg Senior (Mkhulu) at the Nhlangano Foreman Leadership Development Programme graduation held on the 3rd of November 2021 at Phumula Lodge when he said that it was the first program of its kind in Montigny's more than 30-year history.

The first day and opening session at Pasture Valley was graced by Mkhulu who gave a speech and told the delegates and all present about the history of Montigny. He went on to say that Minister Neal Rijkenberg's Mom's side of the family comes from France and owned a Chateau called Chateau de Montigny. The session also saw addresses from Mr Kruger, Ms Maphanga, Mr Ziyane and Mr Hlophe in front of very nervous and anxious candidates of Jimmy Zubuko, Norman Simelane, Mpendulo Mkhaliphi, Bernard Ndlovu, Norman Dlamini, Vincent Simelane, Patrick Mabuza and Machawe Mazibuko who were later joined by Israel Mkhonta and Siphelele Zwane. Given MECS's clientele, which boasts the likes of Total Sports, Eswatini Royal Insurance Corporation there was a concern initially of how the program will be tailored for the Montigny environment given the dynamics of education amongst other things.

The Foreman at Montigny Nhlangano were taken through the following modules: an overview and introduction to leadership, effective leadership, communication, instituting continuous improvement, performance management and making decisions. The program is structured in such a way that it allows for application,



identification structuring and implementation of projects in the work environment. The Foreman attended in blocks which allowed for implementation of learning back in the workplace. At the start of the program, a meeting was held between General Manager Coenraad Kruger, Ayanda Hlophe, Mzwandile Ziyane, Takhona Vilakati and George Mamaila to discuss what was termed "pain points". This was to ensure an address of these "pain points" and further customization of the program for Montigny.





Projects

The teams prior to the leadership development program were working in silos. This was identified during a preparatory meeting between MECS, HR and Coenraad. Projects were identified with the Foreman given benchmarks that were carried out. These identified projects were presented by the Foreman to the Heads of Department who gave their support and guidance. Progress updates were given to the Management Team. The delegates had to ensure continuous housekeeping improvements in their respective departments. One of the projects feedback sessions was attended by Boesman Badernhorst who gave his support and encouragement to the Foreman.

The Foreman and Heads of Department also held their first meeting in 2021 to discuss progress and issues identified at the plant with the view to come up with solutions for improvement. There has been visible growth of the Foreman crew who now take more ownership and responsibility for their respective areas.

The projects were:

- Chip Board – waste reduction. By Reducing the unpressed mats length at the forming station the team was able to achieve a saving of more than E160 000 per month which would amount to more than E2 000 000 per year.
- Engineering – To eradicate and minimize plant downtime to less than 10% thus increasing plant availability to production to meet their targets. The project involved knowledge management which included compiling manuals and drawings for all machines in the plant. Progress to date includes reduction of downtime as the right parts are being ordered and drawings are fast tracking trouble shooting. This project is still ongoing. The team also saved the company more than E1 000 000 per new logger by rebuilding loggers using old frames

- Stores – the stores project involved a process which would contribute to efficiencies across all departments through improved stock management. This involved identifying frequently used stock items and improving how parts and any stock is stored with proper labels and shelving thus minimizing stock losses
- Sawmill – improved safety, quality and housekeeping. Injury free month and monthly incident statistics have shown that the Lost Time Incidents have decreased. The department has seen improved productivity – recovery rates have increased up to 51.7% in some months. There has been zero customer claims – customers have not come back to complain about the products.

Remarks on Graduation Day

The graduation held at Phumula Lodge was attended by the Wives of the Foreman who supported them through the year, Heads of Department and the MECS Team. Each of the candidates shared their individual journey since the start of the program. They shared what they learnt and how this impacted their individual lives with one even saying “I have become a better husband” through the program. It has been a life changing journey for the Foreman as they had never done any presentations and they started because of the leadership development program.

Montigny arranged for the Foreman to attend a Microsoft End User Training so that they learn how to do presentations on power point which was part of the requirement for presentations. Most had never done any computer training. The Foreman were grateful for the opportunity to learn and be trusted with the transference of knowledge to the work environment. They thanked the Management Team for their support and guidance and the Human Resource Team for the opportunity presented to them. They made a commitment to continue to learn and improve the work environment.

The Mohale Emmanuel Consulting Services Team expressed gratitude to Montigny for the partnership to develop their leaders and “we believe that this is a long-term partnership as we add value to your business”. The return on investment has been good given the projects carried out by the Foreman with the support of Coenraad and his Management Team they added. The decision by Coenraad and Team to roll this out to the Supervisor Team and in the future look at up and coming leaders as



Phillip Lapidos An Illustrious Career

well as possibly non managers is indicative of the 3-to-5-year partnership commitment as discussed at the start of the program in 2020. Its rare to find a company that is so committed to people development.

Ms Thembi Maphanga

"A journey of a 1000 miles starts with a few steps, we appreciate that whenever we visit Nhlanguano there is always something good happening. Put into practice what you have learnt. You are pioneers of the Leadership Development Program at Montigny".

Mkhulu

"You are family to me" said an emotional Mkhulu. "You are the ones who make the machine run, Neil and Ward send their congratulations, I spoke to them the previous night. We employ 11 000 people. Thank you for the wives who have supported you". Mkhulu then lead a viva shout and emphasized that people should be united and there should not black and white. At Montigny we should be one united family he concluded.

Mzwandile Ziyane

Mzwandile thanked Coenraad and Ayanda for the foresight of seeing the importance of the program. He added "Congratulations, this is the highlight to see a group of people who worked in silos now working as a team. Apply this in your workplace and your life in general, learning never stops"

Coenraad Kruger

"You have learnt a lot, you have presented the practical of the theory, go back and implement what you have learnt back in the workplace. Make the right choices, you are all capable of more than you realize, believe in yourself and have a positive attitude"

Ayanda Hlophe

Ayanda said that the "Foreman were always excited to go the workshop" He thanked the MECS Team for being flexible in accommodating and tailor making the program to suit our environment. He said to the Foreman; "The next chapter begins, we need to see a continued return on investment, there are signs of improvements already". He continued to say "You mentioned improvements we knew about, and we have seen them, well done. The program covered pain points as we discussed with George and Team in the beginning including communication, safety and unity" he concluded.

Who is Phillip Lapidos?

Mr. Phillip "Lilly" Lapidos is a 39 year old man from Mantabeni. Phillip stays with his spouse and they have 2 children, a 9 year old boy named Jody and a 12 year old girl named Amy. He completed his schooling at St Marks in Mbabane in 1999. In 2000 he went to South Africa. He was unsuccessful with job seeking and came back home.

Lilly used to play soccer and played for then Swaziland under 23 teams when he was still at school. After he matriculated, with the money that his mother gave, he had to choose between buying soccer boots to turn professional and join a premier league club or buy a chainsaw. With the help of his mom Ms Finchie Lapidos, he bought 2 chainsaws. Phillip was introduced to cutting wattle trees by a friend Mciniseli Dlamini back in 2002 after seeing a number of fellow locals doing it and he wanted to try it. He started going to the Chiefs looking for wattle and sending it to Mr Ward Rijkenberg who was at Armagh before it became Montigny. Lapidos started supplying wattle from 2002 until 2004.

Mr Lapidos then worked with Bruce Sales who was at the sawmill at the time who loaded wattle and gum on his tractor to deliver to customers. In 2004, Phillip Lapidos realised that he was getting low production as there were more people cutting. He went knocking at Nathi Steenkamp's company called Banesto. Banesto was subcontracted to Armagh to cut timber. He worked there from 2004 to 2006 as a chainsaw operator cutting logs of 6.1m down to 2.5m and 3.1m sizes. Even then, timber started getting finished. Nathi gave Lilly a machine to operate called double edger machine. Phillip worked on it for 6 months before a new branch was opened in Bulembu by Mr Ward. Lapidos still worked under Nathi which was subcontracted under Ward. Lilly started running the plant as Supervisor which he did for one year before he went back to Nathi in Spocosini at the end of 2007.

A company called Natro was based in South Africa and Phillip's ambition of wanting to work in South Africa was then realized. Ward opened in Badplaas and Lilly joined from 2008 to 2010 as Foreman for 3 years until 2010 when timber finished. In 2010 Nathi and Ward parted ways and in 2011 Ward inherited Lilly from Steenkamp. Lilly had been working directly with Mr Ward, though subcontracted under Mr Steenkamp.

In 2011 Mr Phillip "Lilly" Lapidos joined Montigny in Bhunya. Montigny's mill opened in 2011 April and Phillip was given a shift as a Shift Foreman with 80 people reporting to him. He was working with Sanele Tsela as there were 2 shifts. Usutu was bought and there were 3 shifts. Lapidos was foreman for a year and half. In 2013 he was moved to dispatch and he was controlling stock. At the end of 2014 Phillip



Mr Phillip Lapidos joined the team at Nhlanguano and has been Sawmill Manager from September 2015 to date.

Phillip gained experience by being on the ground.

When asked about lessons learnt from his journey, a smiling Lilly said "hard work, determination, loving what you do and enjoying it is what contributed to the rise to the top." Phillip completed an assessment which showed that "I am a competitive person and I never wanted to be beaten by anyone" and so "I continue to set higher targets for myself and my team."

Phillip's motto is "Today's target is tomorrow's standard". When he started, the team was producing 60 cubes per shift. The Sawmill Team at Nhlanguano is now at 150 cubes per shift. In the first year they reached 120 with 1 shift. They now we have 2 shifts at Nhlanguano.

Always aim for higher than targets set

One of the lessons learnt by Phillip on his illustrious career journey is to be honest and transparent. He said, "I have learnt to implement changes as it helps you to be better." Lilly said that he used to think "change presses you down" He has learnt to be flexible as change is for better outcomes. Lapidos continued and reiterated that "if you are honest and flexible, you will go far". He added that people should be passionate about their jobs. Lapidos looks at everyday as a new challenge for him. His commitment and determination allowed him to gain experience from working for a small company which got him to work for a big company such as Montigny.

Continuous pushing for better

In 2021, Montigny Nhlanguano under the leadership of Coenraad Kruger, started a Leadership Development Programme (LDP) for Heads of Departments (HODs) facilitated by Mohale Emmanuel Consulting Services with Mr. George Mamaila as the lead facilitator and supported by Ms. Takhona Vilakati. Phillip says the LDP "helped me move from defensive mindset to open minded and willing to help in other areas". The leadership program forms part of a journey described by and in the words of General Manager Coenraad Kruger as a "3-year journey to transform Nhlanguano to deliver and perform to the best of its ability". The LDP session was opened by Mr. Rijkenberg Senior (Mkhulu) who took the team through the history of Montigny and gave words of encouragement. Lapidos says because of the program he now invites other HODs to

his department so that they can give feedback on areas that in Lilly's words "I can see what I can improve on". The school he says has helped him now to think outside the box. One of the main things "I was taught that Nhlanguano as a plant is not just my area. That changed how I see things and how I think. I now have totally different thinking".

Lapidos says he now has seen the light, he understands and now thinks about the business overall not just his area to improve. He now leads his team differently. Lilly said that he used to do all things by himself and was afraid to delegate. Phillip says that now he doesn't talk to Supervisors and Junior Staff unnecessarily as he works through the Foreman and only engages lower-level staff when it is absolutely necessary. He laughingly says that he does not scream at them anymore. Lapidos said that he now holds monthly meetings and "we have checklists in place which has yielded 99% improvement from my Foreman and team. The checklist put in place also guide the Supervisors. He said that the Supervisors now have clearer idea of what to do and what is expected of them because of the changes he and his Foreman team have made in how they work. He is looking forward to the Supervisors going for their supervisor development training as it will further cement what they have already started implementing in his department.

Phillip Lilly Lapidos said that he looks more forward to going to work as they are now involving people more. He further said that pressure is good if you take it positively. Phillip firmly believes that the LDP has changed his life and he is becoming more of a coach and with his soccer background, he is enjoying transferring the experience, skills and knowledge gained from back in 2002 when he started in the industry.

When asked about a message he has for Colleagues at Montigny Phillip said "Never give up, always push to the best of your ability; you will be recognized. Sometimes it takes time; but you will be recognized. I was recognized from chainsaw operator to manager. Take ownership of the work, show you have taken ownership it helped me over the years. Grab any opportunity with 2 hands, keep pushing harder, be serious in what you are doing, be honest". He continued to say: "Determination is also key. Love what you do, be passionate, even the lady cleaning is as important and has a role and she is key to the team. Everyone is important at all levels. Know that you have to start somewhere. I did not give up when I did not get job in SA, I took advice from others. I even bought a bakkie with wattle cutting money".

Phillip Lilly Lapidos concluded by saying that he learnt a lot when he ran a mill alone in South Africa. He added that he came from a poor background and used to earn E25. He grabbed opportunities he was given with 2 hands and made a success of it.



Life Skills training

To ensure the well-being of all employees, the HR department at Bhunya Mill invited Family Care & Wellness Eswatini for a three-week training on Life Skills. Life skills are psychosocial competencies that enable us to handle or respond positively to our day-to-day problems. The main aims of this training are to help people make positive health choices, make informed decisions and recognize and avoid harmful behaviours.

The training, led by Mr. Makhanya, was conducted by three facilitators from Family Care & Wellness Eswatini. Mr. Makhanya who brought in his energy and wealth of knowledge, thus making the training fun and informative. He also ensured full participation of employees through group discussions and completion of assignments. Topics covered include results of lack of psychosocial competence in a workplace or family setting, decision making skills, emotional management skills, effective communication skills, critical thinking skills, aspects of self-awareness, and unhelpful thinking habits, just to mention a few. The employees showed great enthusiasm and engaged with Mr. Makhanya's contributions. They found various ways of applying what they learnt to their own personal lives which added to the success of the training. On numerous occasions, Mr. Makhanya emphasized on how Life Skills were an application course therefore it is important to self-reflect from time to time.

On the last day, the Training Manager Mr. Mzwandile Ziyane presented certificates of completion to those who participated on the training. The Human Resources Manager Mrs. Thembi Maphanga also thanked employees for partaking in this training and mentioned how some



employees had approached her privately with positive feedback on its impact in their lives. In addition, she mentioned how Montigny Investments will have more lessons in the future. By investing in the lives of their employees, the company hopes to create a happy work environment and improve overall success and productivity of every employee.

A testimony from one of the employees...

Through the duration of this course, we have collectively learned that the power of such transformation within ourselves lies in our values and attitude towards self-development, that indeed positive self-actualization, development growth should be a way of live that which empowers our thought processing and actions. I personally have particularly learned that words are equally as powerful if not more, as our actions or as often at times, inactions. I know have known that the right empowering question to ask to someone that which is going through some personal tragedy or suffering, is what happened to you? as opposed to the decimating What is wrong with you? a value that I personally aim to practice in earnest and also pay it forwards. I have also learnt that we are more alike than we would like to believe and



collectively we have the agency and cognitive tools to change our fates.

**Summatively,
We have been taught that,
Life skills are:**

- **A way of life.**
- **A way of continuous learning and application.**
- **They take about dedication and courage to nurture.**
- **Discipline really is a virtue when it comes to life skills.**

Indeed, knowledge is power.



Foresters in training program

In January 2021, Montigny took on four students to be part of the Foresters in training program.

- Mduduzi Junior Khoza.
- Stephen Angucia Sifiso Dlamini.
- Mcebo Wandisa Mhlanga.
- Mzwandile Praise Shongwe.

This program involves the training up of students in becoming knowledgeable top-class Foresters.

The students lived on plantation at the Tango Students quarters where they underwent daily training in all aspects of forestry operations. Below are the main subjects that were covered in their training.

Silviculture

- Land preparation.
- Establishment of the stands.
- Maintenance of the stands.
- Coppicing.
- Nursery
- Pruning.

Fire protection

- Fire safety.
- Fire break preparation and burning.
- Fire equipment and its uses.
- Fire duty and SAP's including weather monitoring.
- Fire mitigation.

Roads

- Pegging out new roads and new road construction.
- Road drainage.
- Road maintenance.
- Road equipment.

Harvesting and transport

- Mechanical pine harvesting, extraction and hauling.
- Merchandizing decks and different pine commodities produced.
- Thinning's, extraction and hauling.
- Gum harvesting extraction and hauling.
- Building and Fencing merchandizing and all commodities produced.

All four students proved to be very willing and completed the training successfully.



From left to right: Mcebo Mhlanga, Mzwandile Shongwe, Mduduzi Khoza, Stephen Dlamini.

Unfortunately, there was only vacancies for two students to be selected by Montigny as Junior forester. Mcebo Mhlanga was placed in the South plantations with Shannon Wratten and Stephen Dlamini placed in the North plantations with Jonathan Gower.



Students learning all aspects of fire behavior and how to burn out stands safely



Students learning to calibrate their spray equipment.

A message of hope, encouragement and goodwill to our community

Foreword,
Dear beloved reader,
As we draw nearer to the end of the year and looking back in retrospect, needless to say the COVID-19 era has marked a remarkable period never before lived in recent human history. This year and the last have been particularly turbulent for us all, in essence we are all just waiting to exhale.

To my amusement and liking and in spite of such unprecedented and life changing events, there seems to be one enduring human quality, the resiliency of the human spirit, that which when faced with adversity, we rise to the occasion with resolve and as history would have it, in our time of need and despair, we all have come together for a collective good, it is what we humans do best! It is often in times as chaotic and seismically dissonant as this one, that the ideals at the very core of our humanity, are strengthened and continue to propel us to greatness.

Evidently, business sectors, communities, and people as a whole have all had to swiftly adapt to the "new normal". Mine is a plight of millions of working - class academic students across the globe who in similar fashion have also had to adjust and "get on with the new programme" and in my case, in an instant, my life had become an education in its very own nature, quite the irony! In a haze of a

second , life as I knew it had become different. Indeed, and poignantly so, the grim picture of reality that the pandemic has painted is one marred by misfortune, a paradox that has reverberated to a new pandemic, that of social and mental distress. To that end, I urge every member of our professional and social constituency to pluck up courage and to seek remedy, be it medical or spiritual, we simply cannot loose anymore than what we already have.

Personally, there is somewhat of a tacit consensus within my conscience and mind that on the upside, the silver lining has been that of a social reset, finally, and after a while, humanity got to value itself within its very own construct and as peoples of diverse social backgrounds and creeds, have and continue to find the inherent agency to lean towards one another for support, comfort, and healing. The resultant and outlaying outcome has been that of compassion, collaboration, fortitude, forbearance, and tenacity for which we are greatly indebted to each and every one of us, perhaps it is not wealth or power that we so much seek to thrive, but the very nature of us, one another.

I have written for this column to encourage all of our people, particularly those at the peril of the



pandemic, those who have lost loved ones, friends, and colleagues as they continue in their varied daily pursuits, that even in such desolate times there is greater hope for life and success. Your future is still on the radar, and as the late great Dr. Maya Angelou would say,

"Tough situations do not last, but tough people do". As you read through the contents of the newsletter texts, my only hope is that you truly feel inspired and renewed in your personal and professional purpose. Above all and whatever the context of your belief orientation, I also wish that you find the innate courage within yourselves from which to tap and take from when in need as you pursue in your personal, professional, and academic vocations, and for whatever it is you choose to endeavor. I hope that this column will serve a reminder, that your existence and dreams matter and that they are both worth your relentless effort and dedication. May the festive holidays be a time of some much-needed reflection and contemplation as well as being a time of laughter, family, and Joy! May you all have the merriest and safest of Christmases and a prosperous New Year!

Contributor: Fana Miles Shoba, Risk Department

New Faces



Simphiwe Dlamini
– Fitter Supervisor



Sibusiso Nhlabatsi
– Stores Manager



Sifiso Dlamini
– Driver



Melusi Mthethwa
– Environmental Officer



Sandzilsile Mkhonta
– HR Intern



Mvuyo Dlamini
– Mechanical Engineer in Training



Montigny Apprentices granted Remission

Congratulations to the following Employees and Apprentices who have, in accordance with the Industrial and Vocational Training Act, 1982, been granted remission on their 5-year apprenticeship programme.

Apprenticeship refers to a system by which a learner (the apprentice) acquires the skills for a trade or craft in an enterprise learning and working side by side with an experienced craftsman, usually complemented by classroom-based instruction. Apprenticeship starts from a training contract between apprentice and employer. The employer commits to training all relevant skills for a trade, structured as workplace-based learning and supplemented by theory classes and practicals in a vocational school. The Directorate will issue certification valid from October 2021:

Name	Position	Department
Sikhumbuzo Gina	Electrician	Electrical Workshop
Bongani Dlamini	Electrician	Bhunya Sawmill
Bongumenzi Gwebu	Electrician	Electrical Workshop
Nkosinathi Masuku	Apprentice	Electrical Workshop
Nkosinathi Mnisi	Apprentice	Electrical Workshop
Siyabonga Mngomezulu	Apprentice	Engineering Workshop



Congratulations to Bongiwe Mbetse who successfully completed her 2-year training programme at the end of September 2021. She has since been offered a permanent position as a Civils Technician under the Engineering department. She will be responsible for Construction, repairs and maintenance of building works and Projects site management.



Siyabonga Mngomezulu



Sikhumbuzo Gina



Nkosinathi Mnisi



Nkosinathi Masuku



Bongani Dlamini



Bongumenzi Gwebu

World AIDS Day 2021

On the 1st of December 2021, Montigny Investments commemorated World AIDS Day to show support to those living with the virus and to remember those who have lost their lives. This day is commemorated globally not only to spread awareness about the virus but also to remind the people and governments that HIV has not gone away. Eswatini is one of the countries that have worked very hard to raise awareness and ensure that people living with HIV have access to medication and as a company we thought it very important to participate the best way we could.

This year's event was one of a kind. The company was joined by three remarkable speakers who presented at the two-day event at Bhunya mill on the 1st of December and Montigny South on the 2nd of December 2021. The speakers included Mr. Vusi Matsebula who is the second Liswati to declare his HIV status in the country and has been living with the virus for 25+ years, Ms. Gcebile Ndlovu the country's first woman to declare her HIV status and has also been living with the virus for 31 years, and lastly, Mr. Siyabonga Mabuza who is a psychologist and mental health tutor at the University of Eswatini. Our speakers brought on their expertise. They spoke about how they have managed to live with the virus and the challenges they have had to overcome. The aim of bringing high

profile survivors is to empower employees who need support and help. They shared words of encouragement to those who currently live with the virus and those who are afraid to take a test. They also emphasized the point that, "If you are not infected you are affected."

Siyabonga's competence in his field was a great addition to the program because he spoke on the importance of establishing healthy coping mechanisms when living with HIV/AIDS. Being a psychologist, he had valuable insight on how neglecting your mental health could possibly affect one when living with a lifetime virus. After the presentations, the staff gave positive feedback and asked the speakers thought provoking questions. This enthusiasm was pleasing to the HR department who had coordinated the event.

Montigny strongly encourages its staff to know their status and get all the information they need regarding HIV/AIDS hence the provision of healthcare facilities onsite. The Human Resources Manager Mrs. Thembi Maphanga ended the event by thanking our distinguished speakers for their willingness to share some of their personal experiences, the staff for attending the presentations, and reminded everyone on this year's theme which is "Together ending AIDS, inequalities, and pandemics."

Coping: Covid-19, unrest, and holidays

It is that time of the year again, or is it? Normally holidays are a time of joy, happiness, laughter and of joyful memories, formulating new memories and spending quality time with our loved ones. The stress caused by Covid-19, and the unrest is causing anxiety to a lot of people. To some they are skeptical whether they will make it to the holidays and get to enjoy the holidays, to some this will be their first holidays without their loved ones, to some they are drowning in sorrow with covid survivor guilt, remembering their loved ones etc.

We would like to acknowledge that it has not been an easy year, it has been full of uncertainties and a lot of things we are not in control of. This has been weighing heavily on everyone. Congratulate yourself you are strong, you are enough, you are worth living and you made it this far.

We also would like to empathize with those that have lost their loved ones, those affected and infected, those that find it hard to cope and we salute you for resilience. Even this shall pass.

What to do when coping during this trying times.

- Acknowledge how you feel. When you are not okay it's okay to say the words "I am not okay"- our minds never fight a battle we do not recognize. When your mind records that you are not okay, but you confess that you are okay- the abnormal becomes your continuous normal and you condition your-self to be okay with not being okay.
- Talk to someone you trust, about how you are feeling.
- Empathize with victims of unrest.
- Check on loved ones.
- Share coping mechanisms with loved ones.
- The four A's of coping this December are adapt, avoid, alter, and accept-.

Adapt to the new normal, practice covid regulations- sanitize, vaccinate, wear a mask. Adapt to the abnormal and find happiness within that.

Avoid - unnecessary gatherings, news about covid and unrest. Avoid impulsive spending, trying to impress and avoid acting strong.

Alter - change your perception and attitude, do not expect this year to be all other years.

Accept - accept what you can and what you cannot change, covid is part of our lives, life needs to move on.

- **Thought regulation** - the thoughts we have about what has happened to us will affect our daily lives. Let's try and think about the good memories we had with our loved ones and celebrate instead of focusing on the pain- as difficult as it is. Our mental health matters.
- **Self-care:** exercise, do what makes you happy, spoil yourself, rest, make memories with your loved ones have non-destructive fun.

What not to do.

- **Stigmatization** - either self-stigma or external stigma.
- **Alcohol and drugs** as a way of coping- as this will result to substance use disorders, accidents, and many other problems.
- Self-blame.

For those who are not able to cope they are encouraged to seek professional help. Being strong is knowing when you are weak and need help!!! **Kukhala kuyasita (crying helps).**

