

## **Meet the 30-year-old managing worldclass new Gauteng DC for Africa's largest retailer**

*Joshua Darley-Waddilove once dreamed of becoming a chef, but a chance encounter with the Shoprite Group changed everything. Today, he's leading one of the country's most critical distribution centres. He is proof that purpose, passion, and progress can come from the most unexpected places.*

As a kid growing up on a quiet farm in the Southern KwaZulu-Natal Midlands, Joshua Darley-Waddilove (30) was more interested in recipes than roadmaps.

His childhood dreams involved food, not as freight, but as flavour. "I wanted to be a chef," he says. "I've always had a deep passion for cooking and loved exploring new recipes and concepts."

But today, instead of plating meals, Josh is the driving force behind Africa's largest retailer's [new 94 000m<sup>2</sup> Riverfields Distribution Centre](#) in Gauteng, a major logistics node that moves thousands of essential goods to stores across the region. "Logistics, surprisingly, gave me the structure, challenge, and creativity I didn't know I was looking for."

Josh grew up in Ixopo, Kwa-Zulu Natal, where his parents, Ian and Dana, raised him with the values of perseverance, fairness and resilience, which would guide him throughout his career. "My dad taught me the value of hard work and owning your outcome. My mom always instilled this idea in me: even if you're not in your dream job, be excellent at it. That stuck."

After high school in Pietermaritzburg, Josh headed to Stellenbosch University where he earned his BCom in Management Sciences, followed by Honours and a part-time Master's degree in Quantitative Management. His academic path was rigorous, but it laid the groundwork for the problem-solving and big-picture thinking that now defines his approach.

Josh first encountered the Group at a campus career fair in 2015, but it wasn't until the following year, as he began to look beyond university, that he realised it's more than just another corporate company. "Something about the Shoprite Group's energy and scale pulled me in. I joined in January 2017 through the Supply Chain Graduate Programme and haven't looked back."

Since then, his trajectory has been impressive: from Trainee Manager, to Analyst, to Project Manager and now DC Manager. His most recent accomplishment? Spearheading the launch of the Riverfields DC and integrating it seamlessly into the retailer's Inland Supply Chain. He brought together a brand-new team from diverse backgrounds and managed to coordinate and stabilise the DC before its first peak season.

"There is nothing more fulfilling than sharing a moment as an individual realises that their part helped deliver the result, no matter how small or big it was." Josh says that's the kind of impact that makes the long hours, and problem-solving both fun and worthwhile.

What sets Josh apart is not just his analytical skill or relentless drive, it's his humility and ability to engage with people across all levels. "I believe in progress over perfection. It's the small daily wins that build something sustainable." He's also a deeply organised leader who can juggle complex tasks while keeping his eye on the bigger picture and the small nuances that matter.

For Josh, the Group isn't just an employer, it's a place of purpose. "Here, you can grow, you can make a difference, and you're surrounded by people who care deeply about what they do. If you're hungry to learn and ready to work hard, this is the place."

As part of the retailer's internal 40 Under 40 recognition programme, Josh's story is a reminder that the road to success doesn't always follow a straight line. Sometimes, it starts in a farm kitchen and leads to a logistics empire.

Nine years into his career, he hasn't stopped dreaming.

"My goal is simple: to make an impact. Whether it's in supply chain, leadership, or just in how I treat people every day. That's what success looks like to me."

- **University students currently enrolled for their 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> year studies in Supply Chain or Logistics-related fields can apply for a Shoprite Group bursary [here](#).**