

## **Against the odds: KZN local's transformative 15-year journey to graduation**

Two years into a BCom Accounting degree at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Sashyn Moodley felt his life wasn't on the right track. "I realised that it wasn't for me and chose to leave university," he recalls. That decision would unknowingly change his life and eventually send him to the Shoprite Group's Home Office in Cape Town.

His parents, Shan and Sharon Moodley, were disappointed about him leaving university in 2008, but still supported his decision. Back home in Tongaat, Sashyn came across a 12-month Retail Apprenticeship Programme offered by the retailer. He applied, was accepted in April 2009, and was placed at Shoprite Tongaat.

"The apprenticeship exposed me to all aspects of the business, and I was eager to learn as much as I could," he says.

Sashyn started as a Returns Clerk but was hungry to try new things. When a Price Surveyor vacancy arose in Shoprite's KwaZulu-Natal divisional office, he jumped at the opportunity. The timing was perfect because the retailer began rolling out SAP, an enterprise system managing everything from inventory to supply chain logistics. His new role included software training, which became the cornerstone of his career.

"Although my role only needed me to cover a small portion of the SAP training, we participated in the entire two-week course. My passion for computer applications and curiosity drove me to pay close attention to every section."

Sashyn was promoted to Buyer's Assistant, then Master Data Officer, becoming part of the SAP data team responsible for pricing, promotions and product ranging.

In 2020 he joined the Group's National Rewards team at its Cape Town Home Office as a Pricing and Promotions Officer, taking on a central role in ensuring accurate product data within SAP systems while executing Xtra Savings deals and delivering targeted campaigns to millions of customers.

The move from KwaZulu-Natal to the Western Cape meant leaving behind close-knit family and friends. But Sashyn, who lives with cerebral palsy and has always embraced new endeavours despite challenges, quickly found his feet. He continued pursuing opportunities to learn more about retail and further his education. In 2022, he achieved SAP certification. He also started his degree through Shoprite's Retail Leadership Development Programme, in partnership with Regenesys Business School, in March 2023.

In April this year, the 37-year-old celebrated both 15 years with the company and completing his Bachelor of Business Administration in Retail Management – an achievement reflecting years of late nights and academic commitment.

He was able to complete this degree in two years due to his retail experience and credits he built up.

"As I walked across the stage during graduation, a rush of emotions hit me – joy, relief, and gratitude. It was validation of my academic efforts and my dreams for the future. This degree was something I'd always wanted, but I didn't have the means to fund it myself. The Group's support made it possible," he says.

His parents were over the moon. "They always believed in education and cheered me on, even when things got tough. When I graduated, it felt like we did it together, proving all their sacrifices were worth it."

His advice to his younger self? “I would encourage him to embrace the journey ahead, acknowledging countless opportunities to learn and develop skills outside the classroom. Persistence, adaptability, and a lifelong passion for learning would be key to finding success and fulfilment.”

**University students currently enrolled for their 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> year for Retail Business Management can apply for a Shoprite Group bursary [here](#).**

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