

#YouthMonth: How Hasheel Tularam developed his outdoor addiction into a fulfilling career

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BY: HASHEEL TULARAM

Hasheel Tularam is a senior environmental scientist at **SRK Consulting**. He's passionate about protecting and preserving the natural environment and feels blessed to live in a country so full of natural beauty.

This #YouthMonth, Tularam shares a bit about his journey in his chosen career, his thoughts on the significance of Youth Day, and some advice for other young South Africans who have similar goals to make a difference in their communities/industries.



Hasheel Tularam, senior environmental scientist, **SRK Consulting**

Share a little bit about yourself, and why you chose this particular field as a career?

Hasheel Tularam: I was born in Durban, South Africa, and spend most of my free time in the outdoors – at the beach, camping, hiking, swimming or fishing. I also travel frequently to different parts of the country. Being an outdoor junkie from a very young age, I developed a real connection with mother nature; as a result, I developed a flair for geography during my schooling career. I always found it fascinating to relate my outdoor practical experiences with what I was learning in the classroom.

My tertiary education began with a degree in Geography and Environmental Management at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN). In my honours and master's dissertations, I explored the relationship between air pollution dispersion and meteorology along the coastal areas of South Africa. I am currently working on my PhD, which aims to develop a hybrid air pollution prediction dispersion model for Durban.

It was my natural outdoor addiction that led me to select this field as my career at a young age – and I have carried it throughout my studies and my professional consulting career. I started working as an intern at the age of 19 and today I am a senior environmental scientist at **SRK Consulting**. I guess the saying is true: “Find something you enjoy doing, and you will never have to work again.”



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As a junior 3D visualisation artist at the Paragon Group, Ashna Premji found the perfect job where her passion for both architecture and interior design collides...

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What are you passionate about?

Tularam: I am passionate about protecting and preserving our natural environment. As South Africans, we are blessed to live in a country that is full of natural beauty. Our coastal areas are among my favourite destinations and, being a keen angler, I am often travelling along the coast exploring the outdoors and venturing into uncharted territory. If we want to continue enjoying nature's beauty, we need to protect our environment for ourselves and future generations.

What is the significance of Youth Day to you?

Tularam: Youth Day commemorates the Soweto Uprising, which began on 16 June 1976, where thousands of students were ambushed by the apartheid regime. I admire these students who bravely fought for the liberation of South Africa from apartheid in response to the introduction of Afrikaans as the medium of instruction in local schools. Youth Day's significance to me is that I have benefited from a high-quality education, to some extent due to the sacrifice of those students.

Name one thing you would change about today's youth?

Tularam: Sometimes I do wish that our Y-generation would engage in outdoor activities more often. Today's youth seem really focused on their digital life, with cell phones, tablets and laptops. I wish they would take the time to look up from their screens; I can't help but wonder how many potential memories or interesting moments they're missing. I hope the younger generation comes up with a solution for all of us. I have faith in them.

What is the best piece of advice you received from an elder/mentor?

Tularam: I was taught that your life is your responsibility, since you are the only person that you can control. That includes your energy, happiness, fulfilment, career and other choices. What a tremendous gift to be able to shape, craft, build, mould and create your own life! But it's only when we recognise it's ours and ours alone that we can realise our power.

Self-care is also important, as you're better equipped to take care of others when you take care of yourself. The responsibility is ours for how we perform in the world – for when we are born, we are only given a limited time. All we must decide is what to do with the time that is given us.



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Musa Thomo is operations manager at Sparrow FET College, a social enterprise that specifically caters for the disenfranchised youth of South Africa...

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What advice do you have for other young South Africans who have similar goals to make a difference in their communities/industries?

Tularam: A big determinant of a young person's success in life is their educational attainment. As such, my personal advice for young South Africans is to take their schooling careers very seriously, as this is the foundation of their future.

I would also advise younger generations to have a five-year plan. Start with where you want to be in five years and then work back, step-by-step, including each task, project or accomplishment you will need to achieve to move between steps.

Surround yourself with people who have a positive influence on your life. These may be people who provide an example of what you want to attain, or those that encourage you to achieve your goals.

Dream big always and aim for the moon; if you fall short, you will surely end up amongst the stars!

What are your plans for the future?

Tularam: I am currently completing my PhD while developing my professional consulting career at SRK. I believe the SRK business model provides an excellent platform for one to excel in their career and I look forward to realising the opportunities available to me. I also have a passion for becoming a pilot and hope to start realising this goal after I have completed my PhD.