



Passionate. Ambitious. Diligent.

Women's Month Profile: 15 minutes with...

Tendani Tshavhungwa

My name is Tendani Tshavhungwa and I am a third year audiology student at UCT.

Can you describe yourself in three words?

Determined. Open-minded. Selfless.

How do you think your colleagues would describe you in three words?

Passionate. Ambitious. Diligent.

Describe your work in two sentences or less

My university life, with regards to academics, involves me acquiring the necessary knowledge to become an Integrated Health Professional (IHP).

What do you find most fulfilling about university?

The most fulfilling thing about university is the relationships you form during these four years. I believe they form a crucial part of who you will become and most importantly how you will experience life at university, so choose those people wisely.

What have been some of the highlights of your time at UCT?

The greatest highlights over the past three years have included meeting people who have inspired me to move above and beyond my wildest dreams. I have been able to surround myself with driven, passionate individuals who are constantly pushing me to unlock the greater parts of who I am. From this, I have been able to get involved in societies such as the Golden Key Society (I'm part of the executive committee) where I started a project to help grade 11 and 12 learners from underprivileged schools in Cape Town with university applications. I'm the Head of Health and Rehabilitation for the Pre-Clinical Society which is a new society that I helped start this year and finally I challenged myself by joining student leadership through the Health Science Student Committee. These achievements have been so fulfilling and have helped shape me in more ways than I could imagine.



What are the main challenges of university?

Finding the balance between doing too much and doing too little. I'm someone who thrives under pressure so I usually find myself getting involved or offering to do more things than I can handle. I like to test my limits, and this can come to the detriment of my mental health sometimes.

What do you love or hate about UCT or FHS specifically?

I don't hate this about FHS, per se, however, I think that we could try more to bridge the distance between the Deanery (including some staff) and students. I feel as though there is this idea that there is an "us" and a "them", which can be abolished if we interacted with one another more (I've witnessed this first-hand). In order to achieve this, it would be important for the effort come from both parties. In this way, I believe that the faculty could build an open and supportive environment where we feel free to communicate with one another.

What's the biggest risk you've ever taken?

Believing in myself and the ability I have to achieve even my most unthinkable dreams. It scares me so much because I keep unlocking parts of myself that I didn't know existed and the moment I believe that I am unstoppable, I will know that I can do ANYTHING. How risky is that?

How do you conquer your fears?

"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" – Philippians 4:13

What's your version of self-care?

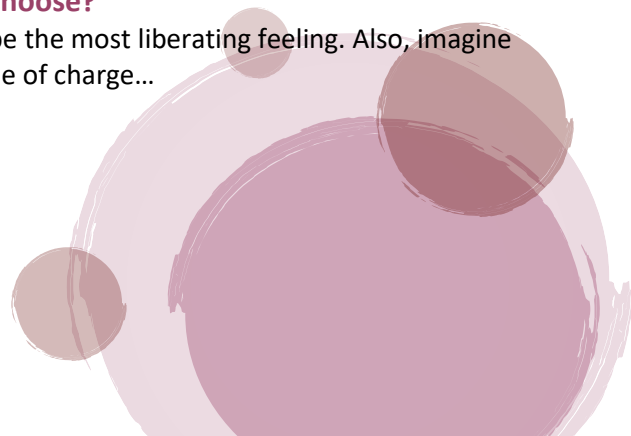
I cook. I will find a new challenging recipe and make it, either with friends or by myself. It makes me feel good when I make good food, it also has this calming effect which I can't explain. Check out my Instagram page @tendi_t (#selfpromo).

If you could change something overnight at UCT, what would it be?

The fees.

If you had a choice between two superpowers; being invisible or flying, which would you choose?

I would fly. I think it would be the most liberating feeling. Also, imagine being able to fly to Tahiti free of charge...





What was the last gift you gave someone?

I got someone a poster of their favourite football team.

What is your advice to young people building a future in academia?

I'm a firm believer in going for what you want. If you feel drawn to academia, then you need to explore it. I think tertiary institutions can gain a lot by having more young people in academia to challenge the status quo.

If you could have dinner with any woman (or anyone), who would it be and why?

It would have to be with my late cousin, Khangwelo. She was my mentor, inspiration and best friend. We still had so much knowledge and advice we needed to share with each other. The love she had for me was so pure and unbiased. She was always so honest with me and I know she always wanted the best for me. So, having dinner with her would be great for us to catch up.

What are your future plans at UCT? What would you like to achieve?

My future plans include graduating, getting my thesis published and then starting my degree at UCT.

