



a world class African city



Rabelani Dagada, an IT guru with penchant for teaching

Rabelani Dagada, an Associate Professor at the Vaal University of Technology and an academic at the University of the Witwatersrand, has swapped a life steeped in academia for one that involves prudent management of city finances to eradicate poverty and ensure the fair distribution of resources for residents of Johannesburg.

Dagada was born on 23 July 1971 in Region E's Alexandra Township. As a result of rising incidents of crime and political violence, his parents took him to Venda in Limpopo Province, where he could continue schooling with little disruptions. He lost his father at a young age and had to walk 12km daily to school barefoot until his uncle gave him police-issue shoes when he was in Grade 10. His poor upbringing has made him view poverty as a scourge and he wants to use his position in Council to contribute towards its eradication. He attended most of his primary and secondary schooling under trees.

Dagada obtained a Further Diploma in Education (Computer Based Education) with distinction from the then Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit in December 1998. He received special permission to study two master's degrees simultaneously at two universities (Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit and the University of the Witwatersrand). He also holds a PhD in information systems from Unisa.

He is the inaugural winner of the 2008 ICT Visionary Award for implementing leading-edge technology, which was awarded by the Institute of Information Technology Professionals (IITPSA) in association with ITWeb, the Gordon Institute of Business Science and Gartner Africa. On 12 November 2015, Dagada was presented with the IITPSA Fellowship Award for his "extraordinary contribution to the Institute and the ICT profession through selfless service by bestowing the honour of being a Fellow of the Institute".

He is a published author of books on e-learning, digital commerce, telecommunications, technopreneurship and information systems. Dagada lives in Midrand, Region A, with his three daughters and wife. His son attends a boarding school outside Gauteng.

Dagada says he feels guilty if he spends two days without walking his two dogs. He is a staunch supporter of Bidvest Wits football club and the Golden Lions rugby team. He spends most of his time reading and writing.

Dagada is a reluctant politician who was pushed instead of being pulled into politics. He felt he should forego his personal interests and strive to help entrench South Africa's democracy. It is this impulse that drove him to join the City of Johannesburg's Council in June 2014.

Some of his immediate priorities since being appointed Member of the Mayoral Committee for Finance include achieving city-wide clean audits, updating supply chain management policies to prioritise black economic empowerment, small businesses and local production, enabling the speedy payment of suppliers and resolving the billing errors.