

UKZN's top medical student writes a book



Ashiq Pramchand

Final-year medical student, Ashiq Pramchand recently published his first book. With a passion for medical writing, Pramchand's book, titled 'The Great Medical Student Odyssey-Tales and Adventures in Medical School' is a biography of Ashiq Pramchand's journey at UKZN's Nelson R. Mandela School of Medicine and illustrates the incredible adventure and harsh realities of medical students in South Africa.

The Crawford College La Lucia matriculant, ranked third in the KwaZulu-Natal Grade 12 NSC examinations among students from independent schools scooping distinctions for all his subjects. He

joined UKZN's medical school and developed a passion for medical writing whilst serving as a research placement at the Centre for the Aids Programme of Research in South Africa (CAPRISA) and the KwaZulu-Natal Research Innovation and Sequencing platform (KRISP) laboratories. His passion resulted in three publications (two with Pulse magazine and the Albert Einstein College of Medicine and one with the Harvard Medical Student Review Journal).

Slugged as one of the top medical students at UKZN, Pramchand has been instrumental together with his twin brother, Ishq, in the creation of a student organisation on campus that aims to improve the speaking and writing skills of healthcare professionals, through the development of lectures and study resources for students. The club, BROCA, also produces a student magazine, called the BROCA Times, which is distributed to students.

He has also played an active role in UKZN's South African Medical Students Association (SAMSA) for five years, during which time he served as its Vice President, treasurer and research director. Through SAMSA, he formed a partnership with Habitat for humanity, an NGO, which builds homes for disadvantage rural communities. Whilst working in rural Umgababa, Pramchand was instrumental in Tuberculosis education and awareness as well as arranging free HIV testing for community members.

Pramchand said he is a keen pianist, with over 17 years of classical training and a student of Northern and Southern Kung Fu styles at the Chinese martial Arts and Health Centre in Durban. He also manages a small technology company called ZavourIT which creates Apps to help South Africans find solutions to unemployment. "In my anecdotes, I try to capture this profoundness. The clinical years are where the real adventure begins," Pramchand said.