

FROM ODD JOBS TO OPERATIONS ANALYST: BRIAN MGWILI'S JOURNEY INTO ASSET MANAGEMENT

How the IMACS@TSIBA programme opened the door to a career Brian never imagined.

Brian Mgwili didn't take the conventional route into asset management. After finishing school in Ennerdale, south of Johannesburg, he didn't have the funds to go straight to tertiary education. He worked odd jobs, ran a small events company, and bided his time – until a friend told him about TSIBA. A friend initially told me about TSIBA. While completing his degree, he learned about the IMACS programme, which he took as an elective.

"I've always been interested in business, not specifically investments," Brian recalls. "But when I learned about the IMACS programme, I was very interested in joining."

Sponsored through the programme, Brian began studying investment management administration and client servicing. The course opened his eyes. Guest lecturers from the industry came in to teach modules – among them, one on sources of business income, delivered by Alex Dearman, who would later become his colleague at Granate Asset Management.

"Having all of these people come in to give us these lectures was a bonus," Brian says. "We got to talk to people who were already in the industry. Just seeing what they were doing was really motivating for someone who was aspiring to be part of it."

Before his internship placement, Brian managed to secure two weeks of work experience at Investec, which gave him additional grounding. That exposure proved to be valuable: when Granate's MD, Paul, called him the Thursday before he was due to start work at a publishing company – asking him to come in for an interview the next day – Brian was ready.

He got the job, and he started on the Monday.

That was 2019. Brian joined as an intern, then became Granate's first graduate on the firm's own graduate programme. Today he is an operations analyst, executing trades for the fixed income team and supporting the broader business – a role that has steadily expanded since he first walked through the door.

From that unexpected Thursday phone call to a role that keeps finding new edges to push into, Brian's trajectory is proof positive that when the opportunity is real, and the right support is in place, the rest takes care of itself.



Brian Mgwili, Operations Analyst at Granate Asset Management.