

FROM INTERN TO PARAPLANNER: ZHARNE WHITEBOY'S JOURNEY IN FINANCIAL PLANNING

Growing up in Goodwood, Cape Town, Zharne Whiteboy had an interest in finance that developed from a young age, supported by an inclination toward saving and understanding the value of money.

She knew she wanted to work in the financial world, but finding the right career path took time. After starting with financial accounting at UWC, she says it felt like something was missing, so she switched to a BCom majoring in finance, investments, and information systems. But in her final year, an email from her lecturer about the ASISA Academy's IFA Internship changed everything.

Zharne applied and was accepted for the 12-month internship at Delfin Financial Advisors in 2024. What she found there, she says, went beyond just technical training – she discovered the transformative power of genuine mentorship. “It’s important to me to learn, not just get the right answers. I want to understand why,” she explains.

That distinction – between simply completing tasks correctly and truly understanding the principles behind them – became the foundation of her professional development. Delfin created a nurturing environment where mistakes were seen as learning opportunities rather than failures.

This combination of patient mentorship and the supportive culture helped Zharne to thrive. In March 2025, Delfin made her a permanent staff member where she now works as a paraplanner, assisting with clients' comprehensive financial planning.

Zharne recognises that financial decisions are often shaped by personal experiences and beliefs. “Financial planning is not just about numbers; it’s about understanding people and what matters most to them,” she says. This perspective is further reinforced by her personal experience of how a lack of planning can impact a family during times of loss and uncertainty. “You cannot prevent loss, but you can prevent financial chaos,” she says.

Wanting to expand her technical knowledge, Zharne decided to pursue her postgraduate studies in financial planning. During her time as an intern, she had been introduced to the Women in Finance network. The organisation offers a bursary for South African women pursuing postgraduate studies in financial planning, aimed at fostering equality in a male-dominated industry. Zharne applied, and after a rigorous process of screening and selection from almost 50 applicants, she was announced their 2026 bursary recipient.



Zharne Whiteboy, centre, pictured with Kim Potgieter, MD of Chartered Wealth Solutions and founder of The Women in Finance Network (left), and Alicia Davids, CEO of ASISA Academy (right), on the day she was announced the recipient of the bursary.

Now in her third year at Delfin Financial Advisors, Zharne balances full-time work, motherhood and her studies. While the demands are considerable, the same support structure that helped her to thrive as an intern continues to sustain her.

From that first email about the IFA internship to helping to empower families through financial planning, Zharne's journey highlights the vital role that the ASISA Academy plays in developing future financial professionals, creating pathways from education to meaningful careers.