

Cardiothoracic Surgeon receives the LIBERO FATTI Medal for his Exceptional Performance



SMU Cardiothoracic Surgeon Dr Dambuza Nyamande was recently awarded the LIBERO FATTI medal for his exceptional performance during the Fellowship examination of the College of Cardiothoracic Surgeons of South Africa. The medal was donated by Davis & Geck in 1992 in honour of the late Dr Libero Fatti, Associate Founder of the Colleges of Medicine of South Africa (CMSA), who pioneered cardiothoracic surgery in South Africa. Dr Nyamande spoke to Focus about this great achievement.

Congratulations on being awarded the LIBERO FATTI MEDAL and how do you feel about it?

Thank you so much, credit goes to my department of Cardiothoracic Surgery at SMU and my family for the support throughout my career. I see

this as a departmental and family award, as it means a lot more than just an individual award.

What have you done to qualify and be conferred with this prestigious award and how does it feel to receive it?

I was awarded this medal for performing well in the Colleges of Medicine of South Africa 2021, Cardiothoracic Surgery fellowship final examinations. It feels great definitely, and I am grateful for the support provided to me which is continuous.

What are the benefits of receiving this award?

The benefits would be on a personal level as well as departmental or Institutional levels. Personally, it just gives me the satisfaction and the motivation to continue working towards becoming better every day. I believe that the institution also gets inspired for further future and even better awards. If there was someone at Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University who was doubtful for one reason or the other, I guess they would know that they can aim and achieve higher in their field. I see it as an institutional paradigm shift from the "YES WE CAN", to "IT HAS ALREADY BEEN DONE, LET'S AIM HIGHER AND HIGHER", kind of thing. That's how I see it.

Since its inception, how many people have received this award?

Very difficult to be exact and accurate on that one, but I'm told it's now three people who have been awarded thus far and the last recipient before me was almost two decades ago.

What motivated you to choose a career in Cardiothoracic Surgery?

Cardiothoracic Surgery has been my dream since undergraduate medical school. I always got excited whenever we studied anything to do with the heart and chest. Funny enough, the final motivation was when I watched the cardiac surgery-related movie "SOMETHING THE LORD HAS MADE". I immediately knew that I was heading into cardiac surgery.

Which surgery projects are you currently busy with?

I am currently focusing and working towards establishing myself in aortic surgery and minimally invasive cardiac surgery. I see myself doing more in those areas in the future. Thank you for having me in this interview, and a huge thank you to my department at SMU. 