

## AT THE TOP OF HER GAME ON THE FIELD AND IN THE OFFICE

The ASISA Academy's [Fezeka Graduate Programme](#) is a very intense introduction to investment management for promising Black female graduates, yet somehow Laylaa Davids is managing to juggle membership of the programme with playing hockey at international level.

The 23-year-old is quick to point out the support she has received from the ASISA Academy – which delivers the programme in partnership with business consultancy Joint Prosperity – as well as her host companies. Everyone has made it clear that they want her to succeed in the office and on the field, she says.

Alicia Davids, CEO of the ASISA Academy, says: "Laylaa's host companies have been very flexible, which has made it possible for her to continue to play hockey at the highest level while continuing her participation in the programme, which includes both academic work and workplace activities. The graduates get five days leave during each five-month rotation, but the demands of playing sport at this level mean that Laylaa needs more time away from work, and her host companies have supported her in this."

Having only just missed out on going to the Olympics in Paris in 2024, Davids toured Namibia with the South African indoor hockey team in May and has been selected to play in the Indoor Hockey World Cup in Croatia in February 2025.

Before joining the Fezeka Graduate Programme, Davids says she wasn't sure if she should commit to the very demanding programme, or focus on hockey. She had several discussions with the ASISA Academy about being able to do both, and the support she was promised persuaded her that she could manage it.

"I know a lot of people say they will do things, but they don't actually implement them. To be at the companies and see that they actually are very accommodating of my hockey is great."

Davids has played hockey since she was 8 years old, starting at Central Hockey Club in Athlone, Cape Town, and playing for Maties through her university studies at Stellenbosch University. When not on the field, she was studying for her B Com Financial Management (2022) and B Com (Hons) Strategy and Innovation Management (2023).

She is "really feeling the support" as she manages her workload between competitive hockey, study and work experience rotations, she says. Fortunately, she sometimes gets to apply skills learnt in one area to another.

"Playing hockey at a competitive level has taught me invaluable life skills that are helping me to navigate the graduate programme," she says. "As a student athlete, I was forced to be highly disciplined and to develop my time management, communication and collaboration skills, all of which has helped me to find the balance between playing hockey and immersing myself in the graduate programme."

As a midfielder, Davids is accustomed to moving between attacking and defensive phases of play, which demands speed, focus and adaptability, skills that are also serving her well in the Fezeka Graduate Programme, which combines theoretical knowledge, professional development and practical work experience.

Combining an extremely demanding graduate programme with an international hockey career is doing a lot more for Davids than avoiding being boring, the danger we are told comes with 'all work and no play'. She says: "Because of hockey I am a lot more confident in myself and believe I am capable of doing anything I put my mind to."



**Promising Investment Professional and accomplished Athlete, Laylaa Davids.**