



Joseph Zinyana elected SAIW President

African Fusion talks to Joseph Zinyana, who was elected to be SAIW's new President at the first meeting of the board of directors on September 22, 2020.

A renowned welding consultant in South Africa and abroad, Joseph Zinyana hold two MSc Degrees, in Welding and Metallurgy; an Inspector of Pressure Equipment (IPE) certificate and an International Welding Engineer (IWE) qualification, which makes him an ideal choice for taking the SAIW through the turbulence the welding industry is likely to experience over the next few years.

"What you dream of when you are young and what you become are never the same," he tells *African Fusion* when asked about his early career choices. "When I left school I went to university to study maths and science, thinking it would help me to become a pilot. I did my first degree at the University of the North in chemistry and applied mathematics. But in my final year, I met and married my wife, Suzan, and we immediately started a family.

"I completed my degree in 1993, and I had to get a job at the beginning of the freedom year, 1994. It was a tough and uncertain time, so people weren't yet interested in hiring. I heard of a school that required a maths teacher in Soshanguve, though, and after a meeting with the principal, I was appointed on the spot and asked to start on the very next day," he says. "So my career began in a government school as a teacher of maths and science. A year later, I moved to a Catholic school, also as a maths and science teacher, where I taught for a further three and a half years.

Then in 1998, Joseph Zinyana decided to go back to University to study metallurgical engineering. "This led to a post at Mintek, researching the different types of gold, a fascinating period. Shortly after that I joined Iscor Steel in Newcastle, where I worked in the Chemical department, researching steel making processes for basic oxygen furnaces.

"I then joined Sasol as a Metallurgical Engineer, which put me onto the welding career path. I soon became a quality engineer and six months later, after completing my Welding Engineering degree at Wits, I became a Sasol welding engineer with joint responsibility for managing the welding activities on the Secunda site. That was in 2002. And when I go back to Secunda today in my current consultancy role, I still see my name on many of the Sasol welding procedures and quality guidelines," he says.

Having realised that further promotion was unlikely and that, with the onset of retrenchments at Sasol, corporate careers were no longer guaranteed, Joseph and Susan Zinyana decided to establish their own company. "In fact, with her logistics background, Susan was the one who set up New Age Engineering, our company. In 2004, I resigned from Sasol and began to work as a welding consultant with New Age," he informs *African Fusion*.

Being a welding consultant led Zinyana to developing an ever closer relationship with the SAIW. "I joined the SAIW as a personal member because many of the corporate companies I was consulting for regarded SAIW membership as an essential requirement for a specialist in welding. I was also involved in setting up welding business systems, most notably, ISO 3834 welding quality systems under the SAIW's Welding Fabricator

Certifications Scheme," he informs *African Fusion*.

Today, New Age offers a comprehensive range of project management services, engineering consultancy, welding/mechanical related services and products, and fabrication solutions for structural and pressure components. In terms of South Africa's transformation and black economic empowerment, Joseph and Susan Zinyana have created one of South Africa's most uplifting success stories.

Describing the importance of the SAIW for helping others to follow in his footsteps, Joseph Zinyana says that South Africa has serious skills shortages and we are unfamiliar with the many modern technologies that can make us successful. "Many youngsters are unaware of careers in welding, boiler-making, pipe and mechanical fitting and other artisan-based skills. They all want to become computer programmers, like I wanted to be a pilot.

"The broader community doesn't understand the importance and value of skills-based careers like welding, weld-inspection and quality control. We need to see many more artisans starting their own businesses, as they all used to, by doing private work in small garages, from where they slowly grow their income streams, their skills levels and capabilities," he suggests.

The SAIW has a vital role in broadening the knowledge and awareness of welding as a valuable career opportunity. "We need to make our youngsters understand the great need we have for skilled people. It is vital for our economic wellbeing.

"SAIW also brings the South African community into touch with the modern technologies that can make us globally competitive. We can bring these technologies and the knowledge and skills to apply them to ordinary South Africans, so they too can have much more successful futures.

"To do this, we need to broaden and grow SAIW memberships so members can take on a bigger role in growing the South African economy," he believes. "When employed in a welding career, it is always easy to find work, and it is easy to grow your career and have pride in what you do.

"Looking back, I think I made excellent career choices. Even though I didn't become a pilot, I now know they don't earn as much I had believed anyway, and our welding, fabrication and quality business has made me very proud," Zinyana concludes.

Newly elected SAIW board members

Joseph Zinyana – New Age Engineering Solutions
 Michel Basson – Sassda
 Anthony Boy – CEA
 Paul Bruwer – Sasol
 Gert Joubert – SAIS
 Andy Koursaris – Retired
 Muzi Manzi – AFSA
 Morris Maroga – Eskom
 Dawie Olivier – OSG
 Tony Paterson – Retired
 Johann Pieterse – AFROX
 Willie Ranking – Retired
 Carel van Aswegen – Steinmüller
 Kevin Xaba – ESAB