



# STANDING STRONG: A MAN DRIVEN BY PASSION AND TRUST

Not only a certified project manager, green star accredited professional, LEED professional, the first accredited tier design expert in the world from the Uptime Institute in the USA, and a managing director, Olu Soluade is also the current president of ASHRAE-SA Chapter.

Having completed his training at the University of Lagos, Nigeria, Soluade started his career as a contractor and site-engineer. He was very fortunate to be employed at a company that explored a wide scope of projects.

Moving on from there, he joined a consultancy firm (also in Nigeria) in 1994 where the principal was a member of the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE). It was then in the early 90s where he had his first glimpse into what ASHRAE was all about.

Soluade noted, "When I initially saw the technical manual from ASHRAE I became very excited and looked for any information I could find in it. I then joined ASHRAE as a member in 1996 for a few years and rejoined in 2005 – and have been a member ever since."

Soluade completed his Masters in Industrial Engineering and came to South Africa the same year, joining a consulting firm in Braamfontein, Johannesburg in 1996. He then moved to other employment before he felt it was time to move on to start his own business in 2008 from his home with a humble R80 000 project value. Today, AOS Consulting Engineers, where Soluade serves as the managing director, is involved in a wide range of disciplines including specialised services, and holds a special interest in green and sustainable development.

Looking forward, Soluade believes that sustainability and green technology has changed the design landscape. In the past sustainability used to be difficult to manage and was also plagued by challenges because clients didn't see the value. Now, operational costs are more important than ever and not only the capital that is invested. The entire lifecycle of a project must be considered, and in doing this the capital cost lands up being miniscule compare to operational costs. The

client's choices are going to be around for the next 30+ years and spending an additional couple of percent on capital can result in as much as 40% savings in operational costs.

"The analogy with sustainability I like to make is that when God created the earth one of the key things he gave us with plants is their seed. The seed you plant brings fruit that you eat – when you go back and replant the seed it continues to grow – this as a continual cycle of sustainability that we should continue to maintain in all aspects of life. We must further ensure that we are not stagnant with our knowledge and continually create value for the client," Soluade says.

This leads into the vision for his term as ASHRAE-SA Chapter president: Together Each Achieving More (TEAM) – much more can be done and achieved together by working towards the common goals, and each member then has the opportunity to better themselves from when they started.

As a final thought, Soluade concludes, "South Africans are sometimes quick to condemn the society we are in and this definitely requires a mindset change that must be adopted. God has blessed this society and each one of us has a mandate in what we should do. Not to take away from the country's obvious problems – if we focus on our own businesses with integrity and honesty as we should, we will get the blessings from God. For He is a faithful God." **RACA**



Olu Soluade

*Olu Soluade has a passion and drive to remain faithful in the little things, and believes the big things will follow.*

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