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The Official Quarterly College and SETA Times Publication



WORKING TOGETHER TO EXPAND OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL IN THE PSET SECTOR



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The Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) recently took a decisive step in shaping its future when it hosted a two-day PSET Sector Strategy Session on 16–17 January 2026 at College of Cape Town's Crawford Campus. The session led by Minister Buti Manamela focused on strengthening strategic leadership, improving coordination, ensuring readiness for the 2026 academic year and collective responsibility across the sector, as well as reflecting on the performance of the sector.

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Cover Image

Supplied by: Tumelo Morobe

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Celebrating The Class Of 2026 And Welcoming A New Academic Journey



Lucky Masuku, Acting Chief Director: Corporate Communications and Media Liaison

It is both a privilege and a pleasure to extend our heartfelt congratulations to each and every one of you on your remarkable achievement. Your success in the matric examinations stands as a testament not only to your individual resilience and determination, but also to the collective efforts of our educators, families and broader community who have supported you along the way.

This year's improved results reflect more than statistics, they tell a story of perseverance in the face of challenges, adaptability in uncertain times, and a renewed commitment to excellence within our basic education system. We commend the tireless work of teachers, district officials and all stakeholders who have contributed to creating an environment where you could thrive.

Their dedication, coupled with your hard work, has laid strong foundation for the future.

As you transition into institution of higher education, it is encouraging to note the continued commitment of leadership in ensuring a smooth start to the academic year. The Minister of Higher Education and Training, Mr Buti Manamela, MP, together with his two deputies, Dr Gondwe and Dr Dube-Ncube, has been actively visiting institutions across the country to oversee registration processes and ensure that there is a proactive response to any challenge faced by incoming students. This hands-on approach reflects a shared determination to support you not only in accessing higher education, but also in settling into it successfully.

As you now stand on the threshold of this new chapter, remember that university life is both exciting and demanding. It offers immense opportunities to expand your knowledge, discover your passions, and engage with diverse ideas and perspectives. However, it also requires a heightened sense of discipline, independence and responsibility. The structure you may have relied on before will give way to greater freedom and with that freedom comes the need for self-motivation and careful decision-making.

You will encounter moments of doubts and difficulty, this is natural part of growth. What will define your journey is not the absence of challenges, but how you respond to them. Stay committed to your goals, seek support when needed, and remain open to learning both inside and outside the lecture hall. Remember that success is not always linear, persistence and consistency will carry you through even the most demanding times.

Equally important is your well-being. As you pursue academic excellence, take time to nurture your mental, emotional and physical health. Build meaningful connections, participate in campus life and embrace the richness of the university experience. These years are not only about earning a qualification, but also about shaping the person you will become.

To the class of 2026, you are the future leaders, innovators and change-makers of our society. Your voices matter, your ideas are valuable and your potential is limitless. Step into the new phase with confidence, curiosity and courage.

Once again, congratulations on your achievements. We warmly welcome you to the institution of higher education and wish you every success in the journey ahead!

Statement by the Minister of Higher Education and Training on the state of the Post-School Education and training sector and readiness for the 2026 academic year, on 22 January 2025.

Over the past weekend, leaders and institutions across the Post-School Education and Training system came together to confront a central and difficult question: is our PSET system fit for purpose in the context of the pressures we now face — and the future we must build?

This was not an abstract discussion. It was a sober, practical interrogation of capacity, coordination, and execution.

Today's engagement with the public flows directly from that work. It is part of our commitment to transparency, accountability, and honest leadership.

We meet at a pivotal moment.

South Africa has just recorded more than 650 000 successful matriculants. This is an achievement that must be acknowledged. It reflects sustained progress in basic education and the determination of learners, educators, families, and communities.

But progress carries pressure.

The Post-School Education and Training system currently has approximately 535 000 funded and planned spaces across universities, TVET colleges, CET colleges, skills programmes and workplace-based learning. This gap between success and capacity is real, structural, and longstanding.

The task before us is therefore not to explain it away, but to manage it responsibly, to expand pathways deliberately, and to prevent confusion, despair, or false expectations.

WHAT THE MATRIC RESULTS MEAN — AND WHAT THEY DO NOT MEAN

The 2025 National Senior Certificate results provide important insight into learner outcomes and post-school pathways.

- 46.4% of candidates achieved a Bachelor's pass

- 28.1% achieved a Diploma pass
- 13.5% achieved a Higher Certificate pass

This means that over 40% of learners did not achieve a Bachelor's pass, underscoring a fundamental truth: our post-school system must be differentiated, articulated, and well-communicated.

It is also critical to clarify a persistent misunderstanding.

A Bachelor's pass does not guarantee admission to a university or to a specific programme. Universities apply faculty- and programme-specific requirements, including subject combinations, minimum symbols, and selection processes where demand exceeds capacity.

Where learners and families experience disappointment, it is often not because of failure, but because of misaligned expectations.

Our responsibility is to ensure that learners understand, early and clearly, the full range of credible post-school pathways, not only the most visible ones.

STEM AS A SYSTEMIC PRIORITY

A major structural constraint confronting the PSET system is the pipeline into Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics.

Current trends are concerning:

- Growing enrolment in Mathematical Literacy rather than pure Mathematics
- Stagnant performance in Mathematics and Accounting
- Limited growth in Physical Sciences

The consequences are profound. Learners are excluded from high-demand programmes in engineering, health sciences, ICT, data science, and advanced manufacturing, not

because of institutional failure, but because of subject-level preparation. This weakens our national skills base and limits the system's responsiveness to industrialisation, innovation, and economic growth.

For this reason, the Departments of Basic Education and Higher Education and Training are finalising a formal Memorandum of Understanding to strengthen alignment, particularly around subject choice guidance, learner preparedness, and smoother transitions into post-school STEM programmes.

This is not a short-term fix. It is a medium- to long-term structural intervention.

MANAGING THE GAP BETWEEN PASSES AND PATHWAYS

The growth in matric success reinforces the urgency of moving beyond a university-centric narrative.

South Africa's PSET system was deliberately designed to be differentiated with universities, TVET colleges, CET colleges, occupational qualifications, skills programmes, and workplace-based learning all forming part of a single ecosystem.

We are therefore strengthening coordinated enrolment planning across the system, informed by matric trends and labour-market intelligence.

The newly established Just Energy Transition Skills Desk will play a critical role in linking learner demand to priority economic sectors, particularly renewable energy, construction, grid infrastructure, and electric mobility.

Given infrastructure and staffing constraints, we will increasingly prioritise:

- Short courses and modular qualifications

- Occupational programmes that can be scaled rapidly
- Workplace-based learning including apprenticeships, learnerships and internships

These pathways offer faster labour-market entry while allowing articulation into further learning.

TVET AND CET COLLEGES AS PRIMARY PATHWAYS

Let me state this unequivocally: TVET and CET colleges are not residual options. They are central pillars of the PSET system.

They provide practical, accessible, and work-relevant education to the majority of South Africans and are essential to confronting unemployment, inequality and poverty.

Through these institutions, students progress into:

- Artisan and trade qualifications
- Occupational qualifications at NQF Levels 3–6
- Skills programmes linked to priority sectors
- Employment, self-employment and entrepreneurship
- Further learning and articulation

We are strengthening TVET colleges as sector-focused hubs of skills development through Centres of Specialisation, Trade Test Centres, modernised workshops, and industry-aligned curricula.

The National Skills Fund is currently funding the uMasinga TVET Smart Campus pilot at a value exceeding R350 million, with completion expected by 2027. This project signals the direction we must take: modern, digitally enabled, future-ready institutions.

SECOND-CHANCE AND COMMUNITY EDUCATION

Community Education and Training Colleges remain central to inclusive access.

They are fully prepared for the 2026 academic year and will accommodate youth and adults seeking:

- The Amended Senior Certificate
- The National Senior Certificate Second Chance Programme
- Occupational and skills programmes

The academic year commenced on 12 January 2026, with registrations for annual programmes closing on 27 February 2026, while short skills programmes remain open throughout the year.

FUNDING, NSFAS AND SETA CONTRIBUTIONS

NSFAS remains critical in enabling access for poor and working-class students. However, sustained improvements in basic education, combined with economic constraints, continue to place pressure on the funding model.

Short-term stabilisation measures are in place while a medium-term sustainable funding reform is being developed. The missing-middle fund continues to scale.

For 2026:

- 626 935 first-time applicants are provisionally eligible
- 427 144 continuing university students met progression criteria
- Appeals remain open and active

SETAs continue to play a critical complementary role.

In the 2025/26 cycle, over *15 000 new bursary beneficiaries and nearly 8 000* continuing beneficiaries are supported, with a combined value of almost *R2 billion.*

This diversification of funding sources reduces over-reliance on NSFAS and strengthens system resilience.

STATE OF READINESS AND STUDENT WELL-BEING

Institutions across the sector have undertaken extensive preparations for the 2026 academic year.

This morning, the Ministerial War Room convened to assess readiness. We are confident of a stable opening of the academic year, with ongoing monitoring.

Academic success, however, is inseparable from student well-being.

Higher Health remains the designated wrap-around support institution, operating a 24-hour Toll-Free Crisis Helpline (0800 36 36 36). Over 61 000 students have been supported through this service in recent years.

We are strengthening sector-wide responses to mental health, gender-based violence, food insecurity, accommodation and safety through national norms, preventative interventions, and coordinated protocols.

Students are urged to rely on official DHET, NSFAS and institutional platforms for accurate information. Furthermore, Students are warned to beware of illegally operating private colleges and colleges that offer unaccredited course. The department has a database of all registered colleges available on the website of the department. To first time entrants, only go to campus when it has confirmed acceptance of an application and accommodation has been confirmed.

CONCLUSION

South Africa's post-school education and training system is not static, and it is not in crisis by default. It is under pressure—but it is being deliberately reshaped.

Education, training and skills development in all their forms carry equal dignity and social value. Multiple pathways are not a compromise, they are a strength.

Not every learner will secure immediate placement in their first choice. But every learner must be able to find a credible, supported pathway into learning, skills development and productive participation in society.

That is the task we have set ourselves and that is the work we will continue to do.

I thank you.

DHET successfully hosts the PSET Sector Strategy Session

Supplied by Tumelo Morobe

The Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) recently took a decisive step in shaping its future when it hosted a two-day PSET Sector Strategy Session on 16–17 January 2026 at College of Cape Town's Crawford Campus. The session led by Minister Buti Manamela focused on strengthening strategic leadership, improving coordination, ensuring readiness for the 2026 academic year and collective responsibility across the sector, as well as reflecting on the performance of the sector.

"Readiness is not abstract! It is visible in systems that work, payments that arrive on time, safe residences, stable governance, and support that reaches students before crises sets in," said Minister Manamela in his opening remarks.

Through plenary discussions, and parallel workshops, participants deliberated on critical issues such as mega trends in higher education, international cooperation and scholarship coordination, the role and contribution of private higher education, state of readiness for the 2026 academic year, policy and legislative reforms, articulation and coordination across institutional types, system capacity and size, SETA reforms, the quality of TVET and CET provision; student welfare and academic support.

The session was attended by DHET and its entity's management as well as governance structures, student leadership, industry representatives and other stakeholders.

Minister Manamela indicated that the strategy session was never intended to be a routine stock-take. But a deliberate and candid interrogation of whether the PSET system, as currently configured, is fit for the future that the department is being compelled to confront by economic realities, social pressures,



Minister Buti Manamela addressing delegates at the PSET Sector Strategy Session



Deputy Minister Mimmy Gondwe, Minister Buti Manamela, Deputy Minister Nomusa Dube-Ncube and Director-General Nkosinathi Sishi at the PSET Sector Strategy Session

technological change, environmental instability and shifting global power relations.

"The discussions we have had here must not remain in reports or planning documents. They must translate into action that restores confidence in the

system, expands opportunity for the people of South Africa, and positions post-school education and training as a true driver of inclusive growth, regional integration and national development. Let us proceed with honesty, urgency and purpose," said Minister Manamela in closing.

Mandela-Sobukwe Leadership Camp Pop-Up Empowers Student Leaders

Supplied by Lwandlekazi Gwiji



Deputy Minister of Higher Education and Training, Dr Nomusa Dube-Ncube during a baking session

The Mandela-Sobukwe Leadership Camp Pop-Up took place from 24 to 26 September 2025 at the UJ Island, Vaal Dam. It brought together peer educators and student leaders from CET colleges, TVET colleges and universities within Gauteng and the Free State for a transformative three-day leadership experience. Hosted in partnership with Higher Health SA and the University of Johannesburg, the camp focused on strengthening youth leadership, promoting resilience and addressing real-life challenges faced by students within the post-school education and training sector.

Deputy Minister of Higher Education and Training, Dr Nomusa Dube-Ncube, attended the opening day of the camp, where she welcomed student leaders and emphasised the importance of nurturing a new

generation of ethical and socially conscious young leaders.

Addressing the students, she said, "Leadership begins with recognising the influence you have on those around you. As young leaders, you must cultivate integrity, compassion and accountability. These spaces are designed to help you refine your purpose and strengthen your ability to lead with dignity and courage."

Dr Dube-Ncube further encouraged students to use the camp as a platform to build solidarity, deepen their understanding of complex social issues and champion positive change within their institutions.

Throughout the camp, student leaders participated in a series of engaging activities, workshops and dialogues aimed at cultivating their leadership

potential and empowering them to become active agents of change in their institutions and communities. The sessions provided a safe and open platform for participants to share their experiences, discuss issues affecting young people and collaborate on practical solutions.

Minister of Higher Education and Training, Mr Buti Manamela, emphasised the importance of developing ethical, socially conscious and service-driven leadership among young people. "This camp is not just about developing leaders; it is about shaping a generation that understands the power of service, compassion and collective responsibility. As we reflect on the legacies of Nelson Mandela and Robert Sobukwe, we are reminded that leadership begins with character and the courage to act for the greater good," said Minister Manamela.



The Deputy Minister of Higher Education and Training, Dr Mimmy Gondwe interacting with some of the student leaders

The Deputy Minister of Higher Education and Training, Dr Mimmy Gondwe, was also part of the camp and joined student leaders for a discussion exploring a range of critical issues affecting young people, including civic education, gender-based violence, mental health, suicide and substance abuse. Speaking to the participants, Dr Gondwe emphasised the urgency of equipping young leaders with the tools to navigate the pressures they face both academically and personally.

“Your voices and choices matter. As young leaders, you must continue to create spaces that are safe, inclusive and empowering for your peers. Leadership is not only about influence; it is about responsibility, empathy and the courage to stand up for what is right,” said Deputy Minister Gondwe.

The dialogue also focused on teenage and unplanned pregnancies, unemployment and poverty, disability inclusion, climate change, digital literacy and AI ethics, social entrepreneurship and financial literacy.



Minister of Higher Education and Training, Mr Buti Manamela with students during activities at the camp

Minister Manamela later participated in another reflective activity with the student leaders, focusing on the enduring values and vision of Nelson Mandela and Robert Sobukwe. This engagement encouraged students to consider how they can embody these principles through active citizenship, community involvement and leadership that upholds justice, equality and humanity.

The Mandela-Sobukwe Leadership Camp Pop-Up created an inspiring platform for young leaders to learn, connect and be empowered. Through meaningful conversations and shared experiences, the camp reinforced the Department of Higher Education and Training’s commitment to nurturing responsible, forward-thinking youth leadership that drives positive change in both campuses and communities.

Official Launch of the Step-by-Step NSFAS Programme

Supplied by Boitumelo Seimela



Deputy Minister Dube-Ncube delivering her keynote address at the Step-by-Step NSFAS Programme Launch

In September 2025, the University of Pretoria's Mamelodi Campus hosted the official launch of the Step-by-Step Programme, a new initiative aimed at guiding students through the 2026 NSFAS application process. The event brought together a diverse range of stakeholders, including the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS), Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges, student organizations, and various institutional partners.

The launch was led by Deputy Minister Nomusa Dube-Ncube, who was supported by members of the NSFAS Board, the Portfolio Committee on Higher Education, the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA), the

Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) leadership, and other key stakeholders. The highlight of the event was a live demonstration of the application process, designed to make applying for financial aid and study opportunities more accessible, transparent, and student friendly.

During her address, the Deputy Minister emphasised the need for action, "Today is not about long speeches — it is about action. Our focus is to ensure that every learner who needs funding to continue their studies has the opportunity to apply and access the support they deserve. This programme is about equipping, empowering, and encouraging learners to take the

steps needed to secure their future through education. Together, we are removing barriers, opening doors, and making a tangible difference so that no learner is left behind", said the Deputy Minister.

This launch marked a significant milestone in the effort to enhance access to higher education funding, aligning with the national goals of expanding participation and promoting equitable development within the Post-School Education and Training (PSET) sector. The event underscored the government's commitment to supporting students and fostering a more inclusive educational environment for the future.

DHET and Microsoft partner to advance AI and Digital Skills Development

Supplied by Lwandlekazi Gwiji



Deputy Minister of Higher Education and Training, Dr Mimmy Gondwe, and Mr Vukani Mngxati, CEO of Microsoft South Africa, signing the MoU

On Tuesday, 7 October 2025, the Deputy Minister of Higher Education and Training, Dr Mimmy Gondwe, officiated the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) and Microsoft South Africa at Microsoft's headquarters in Johannesburg. The partnership, which focuses on Artificial Intelligence (AI) and digital skills development, seeks to bridge the country's growing digital skills gap and better prepare students for the demands of the modern economy.

This strategic collaboration represents the third public-private partnership secured by Deputy Minister Gondwe since she assumed office in July 2024, reinforcing her commitment to leveraging partnerships as a tool to address South Africa's unemployment challenges and drive inclusive economic growth.

The MoU establishes a three-year framework for cooperation between DHET and Microsoft to promote digital literacy, enhance teaching and learning in the TVET sector and foster the adoption of emerging technologies in education. Through this partnership, students across the post-school education and training system will gain access to high-quality, industry-relevant training opportunities designed to strengthen their employability and entrepreneurial potential.

During the signing ceremony, Deputy Minister expressed her satisfaction at the realization of this feat. "I'm very excited to see this MoU with Microsoft come to fruition. It will significantly enhance skills development in our TVETs through Microsoft's one-year AI engineering programme and the wider Digital Literacy courses. Digital and AI skills are essential

for navigating the modern world and securing future employment opportunities. It is crucial that our students are prepared for the job market once they exit our sector and have the right skills for employability including self-employment and entrepreneurship," she said.

As part of the agreement, Microsoft will introduce its self-paced Microsoft AI Engineer programme to TVET colleges, offering a one-year blended learning course aimed at developing students' competencies in artificial intelligence and related fields. The company will provide training materials, guidance for facilitators and mentoring to support programme implementation. Additionally, Microsoft will collaborate with its industry partners to strengthen the programme's rollout and ensure that TVET colleges are adequately equipped to deliver world-class digital training.

The MoU also extends to leadership development, with Microsoft offering short courses on AI in Leadership Training for TVET college principals and DHET senior officials. These courses are designed to equip education leaders with the tools and knowledge required to navigate the fast-evolving digital landscape, enhance institutional management, and guide innovation within their respective institutions.

Furthermore, the partnership includes collaboration on the Education Transformation Framework (ETF) Project, an initiative aimed at helping education leaders adapt to systemic changes in the education sector.

Through the ETF, Microsoft will assist DHET in developing strategies on leadership, policy, teaching and learning that support student success and institutional resilience. A broader Digital Literacy Programme will also form part of the agreement, ensuring that students across the post-school sector acquire essential digital competencies to thrive in a technology-driven economy.

The MoU between DHET and Microsoft represents a forward-looking partnership that aligns with government's broader agenda to modernise the education sector, enhance youth employability and strengthen collaboration with industry leaders. It demonstrates a

shared commitment to equipping students with the technical and digital skills required to thrive in an increasingly digitised global economy.

Deputy Minister Gondwe reiterated that partnerships of this nature are essential in addressing unemployment and ensuring that South Africa's education and training systems remain responsive to global trends. She commended Microsoft for its continued investment in education and reaffirmed the department's commitment to fostering similar collaborations that drive innovation, empower young people, and build a sustainable future for the country.

Deputy Minister Gondwe Leads Historic Partnership Between DHET and Takealot

Supplied by Boitumelo Seimela

On 17 September 2025 a significant milestone was achieved in South Africa's efforts to bridge the gap between education and employment when the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) and Takealot Group, the country's leading e-commerce company, signed a landmark Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). The event took place at Takealot's Distribution Centre in Kempton Park, Johannesburg, with Deputy Minister of Higher Education and Training, Dr Mimmy Gondwe, leading the ceremony on behalf of DHET.

The primary aim of the MoU was to foster industry-relevant skills development and create e-commerce business opportunities for young people through the Takealot Township Economy Initiative. Deputy Minister Gondwe expressed her enthusiasm for the partnership, emphasising its potential to provide educational and training opportunities for students.



Deputy Minister of Higher Education and Training delivering her speech at Takealot's Distribution Centre

She highlighted that the MoU also involved engaging Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) to support township entrepreneurs by integrating their businesses into e-commerce platforms. She noted that this agreement was one of five such partnerships secured by her office to date.

Deputy Minister Gondwe reiterated her advocacy for public-private partnerships as a strategic approach to tackling South Africa's high unemployment rate. She pointed out that this MoU built upon existing agreements in Mpumalanga and Gauteng, expanding them nationally with clearly defined roles,

measurable outcomes, and shared accountability. "As a homegrown South African e-commerce business, Takealot is leveraging its platform, logistics, and expertise alongside DHET's priorities and SETAs' support to accelerate skills development, job creation, and inclusive economic growth," she stated.

Frederik Zietsman, CEO of Takealot Group, also expressed his commitment to the initiative. He described the MoU

as a means to utilise the company's platform and logistics capabilities to support government efforts in digital inclusion and economic empowerment. He emphasised that the partnership aimed to leverage e-commerce to change lives positively across the country.

The MoU outlined four main focus areas aimed at enhancing educational opportunities and workforce development: Adoption of TVET or

Community Colleges, expansion of the Takealot Bursary Programme, Distribution of Textbooks to Students and Collaboration with SETAs.

This landmark agreement marked a significant step forward in the country's ongoing efforts to create meaningful employment opportunities and foster inclusive growth through strategic public-private.



Deputy Minister Mimmy Gondwe and Takealot CEO, Frederik Zietsman signing the MoU to formalise their collaboration

The College Clinches PMRAfrica Award for the 11th Consecutive Year

Supplied by Lame Morubane

Motheo TVET College has once again demonstrated its unwavering commitment to excellence by proudly receiving yet another Diamond Arrow Award, marking an incredible 11 consecutive years of being recognised as the highest-rated institution in its category. This prestigious accolade was presented during the Business Excellence Awards Breakfast, hosted at the Kopanong Nokeng Country Lodge

and Conference Centre, and stands as a powerful testament to the College's continued dedication to quality education and strong leadership.

The Diamond Arrow Award, conferred by PMR.africa, is based on the results of a provincial survey that captures the perceptions of respondents across government, business, and education sectors. Institutions are evaluated

on key criteria such as quality, reliability, governance, and service delivery. Motheo TVET College was once again rated as an outstanding training institution, recognised for its exceptional management, sound corporate governance, and reputation as a trusted provider of Technical and Vocational Education and Training.

In her acceptance speech, Principal Prof. Dipiloane Phutisisi expressed deep gratitude and pride, noting that this achievement reflects the collective dedication and hard work of the entire College community. She extended appreciation to the College Council, executive management, academic and support staff, as well as all stakeholders who continue to uphold the institution's vision of delivering quality education and skills development opportunities. "This award belongs to every member of the Motheo TVET College family. It reflects our unwavering commitment to excellence, transformation, and service to our communities. It is through our tireless efforts, innovation, and teamwork that we continue to reach greater heights year after year," said Prof. Phutisisi.

This recognition reaffirms Motheo TVET College's pivotal role in shaping the future of South Africa's workforce and supporting national development goals through high-quality vocational training. The College continues to set the benchmark for TVET institutions, not only in the Free State but across the country. As Motheo TVET College celebrates this milestone, its leadership remains focused on strengthening academic programmes, embracing innovation, and fostering strategic partnerships that enhance student success and employability.



Motheo TVET College Principal Prof. Dipiloane Phutisisi and Chairperson of College Council Mr Jabulani Tshabalala



Mr Geoffrey Odora, Mr Nigel Olin, Prof. Dipiloane Phutisisi, Mr Jabulani Tshabalala, Ms Mosidi Lebona, Ms Refiloe Mohahlane, Ms Jennet Leeuw and Mr Lame Morubane during the Business Excellence Awards Breakfast

ORBIT TVET College Football Club makes historic Premier Soccer League debut

Supplied by Nombulelo Kota

The Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) celebrated a landmark moment as the Orbit TVET College Football Club recently made its debut in the prestigious Betway Premier Soccer League (PSL) at Princess Magogo Stadium in KwaMashu.

Deputy Minister of Higher Education and Training, Dr Mimmy Gondwe, addressed the team ahead of the match, conveying her best wishes

and encouragement on behalf of the Department. She commended the players and management for their hard work, discipline and dedication that led to this historic achievement, underscoring the Department's commitment to developing talent through both sport and education.

Dr Gondwe later joined supporters at the stadium to cheer on the team in their first PSL encounter against

AmaZulu FC. She was accompanied by Deputy Minister Dr Nomusa Dube-Ncube, who also came to show her support. The two Deputy Ministers were warmly welcomed by Ms Tebogo Tlhopile, Deputy Principal for Academics and Student Support Services at Orbit TVET College, Mr Mokoena, Principal of Orbit TVET College and Dr Balkrishen, DHET Regional Manager for Mpumalanga and North West Provinces.

This debut marks a proud milestone not only for Orbit TVET College but for the entire TVET sector demonstrating that TVET Colleges are institutions of first choice, nurturing both academic excellence and sporting talent. Although the Mswenko Boys fell short in their first league clash, losing 1–0 to AmaZulu FC, they displayed remarkable determination and teamwork throughout the game. The electric atmosphere at the stadium, amplified by passionate supporters, reflected the unity and pride of the Blue Nation.

Following the match, Dr Gondwe expressed her admiration for the team's spirited performance. "Our students have shown that TVET Colleges can be breeding grounds for excellence in all fields, including professional sport. We are proud of their resilience and sportsmanship, and we look forward to seeing them grow stronger in upcoming matches."

The Department also extended heartfelt appreciation to the KwaZulu-Natal TVET Colleges for their enthusiastic support at the stadium. Their presence and encouragement greatly inspired the players and highlighted the strong sense of camaraderie within the TVET community.

As the Orbit TVET College Football Club continues its journey in the Betway PSL, DHET encourages all TVET Colleges across the country to rally behind the team in future matches. Together, we continue to Rise TVET Rise showcasing that skills through sport can truly change lives.



Deputy Ministers Dr Mimmy Gondwe and Dr Nomusa Dube-Ncube together with the DHET Regional Manager for Mpumalanga and North West provinces, Dr Nick Balkrishen attending the match at Princess Magogo Stadium, in KwaZulu Natal Province



The President of SATVETSA, the Principal of Orbit TVET College, and senior officials from various TVET Colleges and TVET Branch gathered at Princess Magogo Stadium to support Orbit TVET College Football Club in their match against AmaZulu FC



Deputy Minister Gondwe with the ORBIT TVET College Football Club ahead of their debut in the Betway Premier Soccer League

From NCV to Master's: The Journey of Sinothando Mbongela

Supplied by Tshepo Mokono

Sinothando Mbongela's journey is a powerful reminder of the doors that TVET colleges can open — and the determination of learners who refuse to be defined by closed gates.

After completing Grade 9 in KwaZulu-Natal, Sinothando returned home to find opportunities scarce. Many schools had already closed their applications, leaving her at a crossroads. The uncertainty was heavy, and the silence of “no place, no timetable, no uniform” could have been discouraging. But for Sinothando, it became a moment to hold on to hope.

Discovering a Path with NCV

An aunt, who was a lecturer at eSayidi TVET College, introduced Sinothando to the NCV Office Administration with Applied Accounting stream. Surrounded by adults with varied life experiences, she learned early that sometimes you must carve your own space. Her focus, perseverance, and rising marks quickly drew the attention of her lecturers.

Mentorship That Made the Difference

In NCV Level 3, her mathematics lecturer, Mr Hlophe, went beyond teaching — he actively supported Sinothando's university aspirations. When waiting for admission decisions became another test of patience, he accompanied her to the Durban University of Technology as a walk-in applicant. Despite initial hesitation from university staff unfamiliar with the NCV, his advocacy ensured that her NCV qualification was recognised, and she was accepted.

Overcoming Challenges

Like many learners, Sinothando faced financial hurdles. NSFAS delayed her funding because of prior funding records, but her mother stepped in, paying tuition to ensure she could



Sinothando Mbongela a TVET graduate currently enrolled for a Master's degree

continue her studies. While her mother passed before Sinothando graduated, her dedication left a lasting mark on every achievement. Support from eSayidi College's student services, particularly Ms Migochi, helped secure the funding she needed to continue her studies in later years.

From NCV to Master's

From NCV beginnings, Sinothando has built an impressive academic journey:

- National Diploma in Taxation — Durban University of Technology (DUT)
- Advanced Diploma — DUT
- Postgraduate Diploma — DUT
- Master of Accountancy in Taxation — University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN, current)

She now aims to pursue a PhD by 2027, demonstrating the powerful articulation pathway that TVET colleges provide to university and beyond.

A Story of Inspiration

Sinothando's story is more than personal achievement — it illustrates the impact of TVET colleges, mentorship, and persistence. From a learner without a school placement to a master's student shaping her future, she shows that talent exists everywhere, and with the right opportunities, it can flourish.

Her journey is proof that when learners, educators, and support systems work together, barriers become gateways — and the NCV can truly be a stepping stone to higher education, professional growth, and leadership.

Ubumnandi Abupheli – But You’ll Fund It Later: The TVET Pivot Story

Supplied by Marnus de Klerk

“South Cape TVET College didn’t just teach me skills; it helped me discover who I am and what I’m capable of,” said Sibusiso Appolis.

From the small town of Despatch in the Eastern Cape to a beachfront home and a thriving career, Sibusiso Appolis’s journey is a powerful example of how determination and the right environment can transform a life. After high school, Sibusiso found himself caught in the wrong crowd, heading down a dangerous path. He realised that real change meant more than making better choices, it meant changing his environment completely. “I wanted a fresh start away from my hometown, a place free from distractions where I could focus,” he said.

That decision led him more than 400 kilometres away to Oudtshoorn, home to South Cape TVET College. There, he made a firm commitment to leave behind the high school party lifestyle and rebuild his future through education. When Sibusiso first arrived in 2014, his dream of studying Marketing had to wait, as the course was not yet offered. Refusing to give up, he enrolled in the NCV Safety in Society programme and completed it successfully. When Marketing Management was later introduced in 2017, he immediately registered and never looked back. Three years later, he graduated with a National N-Diploma in Marketing Management, proud of how far he had come.

Sibusiso credits his success to the resilience he built and the strong support he received. Financial aid from NSFAS and his family kept him going, while dedicated lecturers and staff at the College inspired him to keep pushing. “It felt like a family,” he said, adding that his involvement in the Student Christian Organisation (SCO) also helped shape his values and self-discipline. After completing



Sibusiso Appolis a graduate from South Cape TVET College

his studies, Sibusiso turned his focus to entrepreneurship. He launched his own events company in Oudtshoorn, organising music festivals and building valuable business experience. His dedication soon paid off, he secured permanent employment, earned performance awards, and achieved milestones many only dream of, including buying a car and a beachfront property.

Despite his success, Sibusiso remains humble and grounded. He acknowledges the responsibility that comes with achievement, using it as motivation to work harder and support his family. His advice to young people is clear: “Ubumnandi abupheli” the fun never ends. “There’s always time for fun later,” he said. “Right now, focus on building your future. Sacrifice a few years of partying for a lifetime of freedom.”

He urges students to network, engage with their lecturers, and take advantage of every opportunity: “Success comes to those who are too busy to look for it.” Reflecting on his journey, Sibusiso said, “South Cape TVET College didn’t just teach me skills; it helped me discover who I am and what I’m capable of.”

From being “caught up with the wrong crowd” in Despatch to earning a diploma, starting a business, and building a successful career, Sibusiso’s story is the ultimate TVET comeback. His message is clear, your future isn’t defined by where you come from, but by the choices you make next. Choose focus, choose growth, and let your TVET journey be your turning point, because the party can wait, but your future cannot.

The future is bright for a TVET graduate

Supplied by Bennet Nkadameng

Born and raised in Elandskraal near Marble Hall, Limpopo, Dipuo Nancy Twala embodies resilience and innovation. A proud Nkangala TVET College (CN Mahlangu Campus) graduate. She studied NCV Engineering in Boilermaking (2013–2015) and NATED Mechanical Fitting (2016). Her journey reflects her belief in lifelong learning, as she continues her studies with the dream of becoming a professor or doctor in Occupational Qualifications and Training, contributing to South Africa's technical education sector.

Ms Twala's career took off in 2017 when she joined the South African National Roads Agency (SANRAL) on the R573 Moloto Road Project. Her technical skills and leadership earned her a promotion to Consulting Engineer at LEO Consulting, where she helped deliver infrastructure projects that enhanced safety and economic opportunities along key transport corridors.

As the Founder and CEO of Dependable Mate, she has led national projects, including the N1–N4 corridors under Bakwena Platinum Corridor Concessionaire, focusing on sustainability, local empowerment, and community development. Beyond engineering, Ms Twala is a youth empowerment advocate and passionate communicator. In 2019, she featured on a reality TV show for young influencers on DStv VIA TV (channel 147), inspiring young people, especially women to pursue careers in technical fields.

She has created over 100 jobs for skilled youth, partnered with the CSIR to introduce spike detection technology for road safety, and led entrepreneurship and training programmes across five provinces. As an Industry Advisor (2023–2024) on the Minister's Industry Partner and Advisory Panel, she continues to champion innovation and cybersecurity in TVET colleges.



Ms Dipuo Nancy Twala, Founder and CEO | Consulting Engineer | Youth Empowerment Advocate | Technology Innovator

"I am proud to be a product of the TVET sector and a graduate of Nkangala TVET College," says Ms Twala.

"Skilling the Nation for Excellence."

West Coast College Hosts Proteus Technical High School for Groundbreaking Digital Literacy and Skills Training

Supplied by Ivan Swart



Proteus Technical High School learners together with some of the staff of West Coast College

West Coast College, in partnership with BankSETA and the Western Cape Education Department (WCED), recently hosted 14 Grade 12 learners from Proteus Technical High School for a transformative digital literacy and skills programme at its Atlantis Campus.

The two-week Skills Development Initiative (SDI), funded by BankSETA, aimed to enhance ICT proficiency and work readiness. Learners were equipped with critical digital skills aligned with the demands of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR). The initiative supported their academic growth while preparing them to navigate the challenges of a rapidly evolving digital economy. During the programme, learners gained hands-on experience in coding,

robotic processes, data science, and software programming. These practical activities allowed students to apply theoretical knowledge while developing problem-solving and critical thinking skills essential for the 4IR workplace.

Mr Lungisa Mbulawa, Principal of West Coast College said, "The training sessions have empowered learners with valuable digital skills and demonstrated the incredible potential of collaboration between basic and higher education. This initiative shows what can be achieved when we work together to address the skills shortage in the digital space." André Muller, Deputy Principal (Acting): Innovation and Development, added, "This is the first, and certainly not the last, of such

initiatives with Proteus Technical High School. We look forward to more future collaborations."

The programme concluded with a heartfelt closing ceremony at the College's Central Office in Malmesbury, celebrating the learners' achievements and growth. Their dedication throughout the initiative reflects the immense potential of South Africa's youth when provided with relevant, future-focused opportunities.

West Coast College extends sincere thanks to Proteus Technical High School, BankSETA, and the WCED for their ongoing support in shaping futures. Together, they are helping build a digitally skilled and future-ready generation.

SAPCO and AgriSETA Launch Flagship Initiatives to Empower TVET Students

Supplied by Lwandlekazi Gwiji



Deputy Minister Dr Nomusa Dube-Ncube during her address at the SAPCO and AgriSETA launch

On 12 September 2025, SAPCO, in partnership with AgriSETA, officially launched three flagship initiatives at Coastlands Skye Hotel in Umhlanga. The initiatives are aimed at advancing skills development, innovation and youth empowerment in TVET reinforcing the vital role these institutions play in preparing students for the demands of the modern workforce.

The initiatives — the One TVET One Garden campaign, the Legacy Creator Awards and the AAD Rising Chefs Competition are designed to equip students with practical, hands-on skills while promoting leadership, creativity and entrepreneurship. Speaking at the launch, SAPCO President and Sekhukhune TVET College Principal, Mr Tebogo Kekana,

emphasised that these programs provide tangible pathways for students to gain the experience and knowledge needed to thrive in a dynamic and competitive economy. He further noted that such initiatives serve as platforms for students to showcase talent, innovate and develop solutions that can positively impact their communities.

Higher Education and Training Deputy Minister Dr DM Nomusa Dube-Ncube, highlighted the transformative potential of TVET colleges. She said, "Investing in our youth through practical skills and innovation is critical for the growth of our country. TVET colleges are not just institutions of learning, they are incubators for creativity, entrepreneurship and leadership.

Partnerships like the one between SAPCO and AgriSETA ensure that our students are prepared to meet the demands of the modern workforce and contribute meaningfully to South Africa's development."

She also highlighted that through these initiatives, SAPCO and AgriSETA are strengthening the role of TVET colleges as key drivers of skills development, innovation and youth empowerment. By providing students with opportunities to gain practical experience, leadership exposure and recognition for their achievements, these programs are setting a standard for excellence and helping to build a generation of skilled, confident and forward-thinking young professionals ready to succeed in an ever-changing world.

South West Gauteng TVET College strengthens industry collaboration through strategic partnership breakfast

Supplied by Nombulelo Kota

The South West Gauteng TVET College hosted a Strategic Partnership Breakfast at the Garden Venue in Randburg under the theme 'Partnerships Amid the Introduction of QCTO Occupational Programmes in the College.'

The event reflected the College's strong commitment to fostering meaningful stakeholder engagement and served as a platform to celebrate collaborative efforts aimed at advancing skills development and driving socio-economic growth.

Dr Nomusa Dube-Ncube expressed her appreciation for being part of the gathering, describing it as more than just a networking opportunity. She emphasised that the event reflected the transformative partnerships that lie at the heart of South Africa's national skills development agenda.

"This gathering brings together key players in our national skills ecosystem — government, employers, SETAs, and the TVET sector — at a time when the College and the broader TVET system are undergoing an exciting transformation through the implementation of QCTO occupational qualifications," said Dr Dube-Ncube.

Deputy Minister commended South West Gauteng TVET College for convening the engagement, highlighting its importance in strengthening collaboration towards a responsive and industry-aligned skills system.

She noted that the College has distinguished itself as a pacesetter in building strong linkages with industry, government, and communities. "Today's event affirms the College's commitment to ensuring that the education and training it offers are responsive to the demands of the economy and aligned with the



Higher Education and Training Deputy Minister Dr Nomusa Dube-Ncube delivered a keynote address at the South West Gauteng TVET College Strategic Partnership Breakfast held in Randburg

priorities of the Department of Higher Education and Training," she said.

Deputy Minister emphasised that the partnerships celebrated at the event are not merely symbolic but represent the practical realisation of the TVET vision — to produce competent, employable graduates who can meaningfully contribute to economic growth, innovation, and social development.

Through the implementation of the QCTO occupational qualification model, TVET Colleges such as South West Gauteng TVET College are positioning themselves as engines of employability, entrepreneurship, and innovation.

"The occupational qualification model demands deeper collaboration between colleges and industry, and this breakfast is precisely the kind of platform where such collaboration is nurtured and strengthened," she added.

Dr Dube-Ncube further emphasised that the success of the QCTO implementation depends on the strength and quality of partnerships between colleges and industry. "We cannot train artisans, technicians, or occupational specialists in isolation from the workplaces where they will ultimately perform," she said.

She highlighted that industry partners are not optional participants — they are co-educators, curriculum co-developers, and co-assessors in this new model. The Deputy Minister commended all employers and SETAs represented at the event for opening their doors to students and lecturers, stating "Your contribution ensures that our training remains authentic, current, and demand driven."

As the TVET sector transitions from legacy qualifications to occupational qualifications, Dr Dube-Ncube reaffirmed that continued industry involvement in curriculum design,

workplace training, assessment, and certification remains indispensable.

The Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) remains steadfast in supporting colleges during this QCTO transition to ensure the successful rollout of occupational programmes across the system.

The Strategic Partnership Breakfast reaffirmed that collaboration between government, industry, and the education sector is essential for developing a skilled, employable, and adaptable workforce capable of driving South Africa's economic transformation. South West Gauteng TVET College's proactive approach serves as a model for other institutions striving to align education and training with national development priorities.



Stakeholders and staff members at the South West Gauteng TVET College Strategic Partnership Breakfast held in Randburg

Six Bricklaying Students Embark on Prestigious International Programme in Germany

Supplied by Lame Morubane



Six third-year Bricklaying students with Mr Teemane Sebolai (Facilitator) and Ms Pakiso Maoke (Head of Department)

Motheo TVET College's outstanding third-year Bricklaying students recently participated in the prestigious German International Programme, for a period of one month.

Kanelo Lebakeng, Lwasi Maqolo, Nomboqo Salman, Nnuku Rosa Tsoamotse, Olaotse Motse, and Olebogeng Matsheka, represented both the College and South Africa in this global exchange initiative. The delegation was based in Münster, Germany, and did their practicals at Rheine and theoretical studies at the Kreishandwerkerschaft (KH), a highly respected institution in the German craft and vocational education sector.

This programme offered students a unique opportunity for intercultural

exchange and professional development in bricklaying and construction. They were exposed to advanced European construction methods, stringent safety standards, and sustainable practices, complementing the comprehensive training provided at Motheo TVET College. The German International Programme aims to deepen intercultural understanding, enhance technical skills in line with international best practices, foster independence and adaptability, and build international networks for long-term professional collaboration.

During their stay, students participated in workshops, site visits, and cultural excursions that broadened their perspectives beyond the classroom. They gained firsthand experience in the

precision, innovation, and efficiency that characterise the German construction industry, insights they will share with peers and communities in South Africa. The delegation successfully completed the programme and returned home on 27 September 2025, equipped with new knowledge, skills, and inspiration for their future careers.

Motheo TVET College congratulates the six students for this exceptional achievement. Their participation reflects their dedication, excellence, and the quality of training and mentorship provided at the College. We wish them continued success as they apply their international experience to strengthen the construction industry locally and globally.



Six third-year Bricklaying students with Mr Teemane Sebolai (Facilitator) and Ms Pakiso Maoke (Head of Department)

College prepares its students with INSETA Work Readiness Programme

Supplied by Ivan Swart



The 43 INSETA Work Readiness Programme students standing with the West Coast College staff members and a representative of ABSA Bank

West Coast College recently concluded a successful Work Readiness Programme, proudly funded by INSETA. The two-week programme took place at the Atlantis Campus from 27 October to 7 November 2025 and formed part of the College's ongoing commitment to preparing students for the workplace.

The initiative was designed for students who have completed their N6 qualification and are currently completing their 18-month practical experience. Over the course of the two weeks, participants gained valuable

insights into the world of work, developing practical skills, confidence, and a clearer understanding of what employers expect.

As part of the programme, ABSA Bank joined in to share practical financial literacy advice, helping students learn how to manage their money responsibly as they take their next career steps.

Speaking on the success of the initiative, André Muller the Acting Deputy Principal: Innovation and Development said: "Partnerships like this that allows the college to equip

the college to further equip our students and graduates to become more employable is imperative to ensure that we as the college supply industry with a student that is developed not only in theory but with other needed soft skills."

West Coast College is proud of its students' growth and remains committed to forming strong partnerships that help bridge the gap between classroom learning and real-world readiness. Programmes like these continue to ensure that graduates are well prepared to step confidently into their careers.

WPBL Forum Strengthens TVET-Industry Collaboration To Drive Occupational Training Excellence

Supplied by DHET Northern and Western Cape Regional Office

The Northern and Western Cape Workplace-Based Learning (WPBL) Forum convened delegates from TVET Colleges, industry, and the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) for a regional engagement session at the Protea Hotel in Durbanville. The gathering created a platform for dialogue and collaboration aimed at strengthening the link between education and the rapidly evolving world of work.

In his opening address, Boland College Principal Mr Charles Goodwin welcomed delegates from across both provinces and expressed appreciation for the collective effort behind the initiative. He commended the WPBL Forum for driving collaboration between colleges and industry, noting that strong partnerships are essential for equipping students with relevant, future-ready skills. "The strength of our TVET system lies in our ability to listen to industry, adapt quickly, and respond with quality training. When we align education with workplace realities, we empower both our students and our economy," he said.

Forum Chairperson and Boland College Deputy Principal: Registration Services, Ms Wendy Adams, outlined the purpose of the engagement, deepening collaboration between colleges and employers, strengthening lecturer–industry partnerships, and ensuring occupational programmes remain responsive to workplace needs. She said "If we want a workforce ready for the future, collaboration must be intentional. When colleges, industry, and communities work together, we align training with market needs and give students the confidence and opportunity to thrive."

Ms Adams also introduced the regional WPBL team, representing Boland College, College of Cape Town, False Bay College, Northlink College, West



Mr Charles Pule, presenting on Understanding the role of QCTO in a dual modality – an industry perspective

Coast College, South Cape College, and Northern Cape Colleges. The team coordinates internships, placements, and industry engagement to ensure that occupational programmes are rooted in real-world experience.

A key highlight was a presentation by Mr Pieter Buitendag of Lagoon Beach Hotel, who emphasised the importance of industry partnerships in shaping occupational qualifications that reflect workplace demands. He noted that employers value graduates with technical competence, adaptability, professionalism, and digital literacy, and urged colleges to maintain strong industry linkages to keep curricula relevant.

Mr Jeremy Schuster from False Bay College expanded on this, offering insight into the New Occupational Qualification Landscape. He explained that the national shift toward industry-driven, competency-based qualifications aims to produce graduates who are truly work-ready and prepared for lifelong learning.

TVET Specialist Mr Charles Pule added a forward-looking perspective by discussing the characteristics of today's learners, digital natives who prefer interactive, visual, and self-directed learning. He highlighted the challenges of adapting traditional

teaching methods and encouraged institutions to embrace technology-enhanced learning. Mr Pule noted that the 2018–2025 period marks the close of an older training era and the beginning of a more flexible, industry-aligned chapter for TVET education.

The session concluded on an optimistic note as delegates reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening education–industry collaboration, upskilling lecturers, and ensuring graduates are equipped for a dynamic, technology-driven workforce.

Key takeaways included the need to deepen partnerships across TVET Colleges, SETAs, and industry; integrate digital literacy, resilience, and soft skills into occupational programmes; and prioritise lecturer development. The WPBL Forum also announced plans to establish a regional working group to monitor progress and reconvene in 2026 to review advancements in the occupational qualification landscape.

Through this engagement, the WPBL Forum reaffirmed its commitment to excellence, innovation, and alignment within the TVET sector, ensuring that students across the Northern and Western Cape are prepared not just for employment, but for the opportunities of the future.



Ms M Lekay (Assistant Director: Partnerships and Linkages, False Bay College) and Ms Z Ntakana (Assistant Director: Partnerships and Linkages, West Coast College)

From Boxes To Blueprints: A Journey Of Passion, Purpose And Building A Future

Supplied by Madire Mashabela

Hailing from Ga-Matlala, Mamehlabe, Adil Moeketsi Ngobeni has long been passionate about design and construction. His journey began in Grade 5 when he built small houses out of boxes, a humble start that hinted at a much bigger dream. By Grade 8, he had progressed to digital design using a professional laptop, showcasing a remarkable talent for someone his age.

Mr Ngobeni is pursuing his N6 Diploma in Civil Engineering at Capricorn TVET College, Ramokgopa Campus. The programme aligns perfectly with his lifelong passion, equipping him with advanced technical knowledge, design principles, and construction management skills. These competencies not only enhance his

natural creativity but also strengthen his ability to run a successful business.

In 2018, he founded Nas-Adil Designs and Construction (Pty) Ltd, which officially registered in August 2025. As the sole director, he now leads a team of six employees, offering both design and construction services. With design sketches starting at just R20 per square meter, the company blends affordability with innovation.

For Adil Ngobeni, this work is more than a business, it is a source of joy. Creating, building, and watching ideas become real structures is what drives him. His story demonstrates how passion, supported by the right education and dedication, can grow into a meaningful professional legacy.



Adil Ngobeni working on house plans



Adil Ngobeni out serve his community

TVET Innovation Shines: EWC Student Wins Big at ATUPA Youth Competition

Supplied by Phanuel Chauke

Hitekani Mukansi, a Level 2 NCV student in Education and Development at Ekurhuleni West College's Germiston Campus, has made an impressive mark on the international stage. Alongside fellow students Reneilwe Mello and Lucky Letsoalo, Hitekani represented South Africa in the ATUPA Youth Competition, where her innovative e-learning app concept earned her the second runner-up prize of \$2 000 (approximately R34 500).

The competition formed part of the ATUPA Annual International Conference, recently held in Durban. It brought together experts and stakeholders from across Africa to discuss how Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) can drive sustainable development, youth empowerment, and economic integration in the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) era.

Reflecting on her success, Hitekani said, "I'm thrilled to have won this prize. I plan to use the money to develop my e-learning app with support from CfERI and re-enter the competition next year in Kenya."



Hitekani Mukansi, second runner-up in the ATUPA Youth Competition

Winning this prize will inspire other students to participate in opportunities like this."

The event's discussions reinforced the role of TVET in transforming Africa's future. Higher Education and Training Minister Buti Manamela underscored this during his address: "Without a skills revolution, the promise of inclusive growth will remain elusive." The Ekurhuleni West College delegation, led by

the Principal and supported by the Academic Affairs Team Leader, CfERI Manager, SSS Manager, Campus Managers, and SRC representatives, proudly supported Hitekani and her peers throughout the competition.

Hitekani's achievement is a powerful example of TVET excellence and youth innovation. Her story reflects the potential of South Africa's young people to lead change, inspire others, and shape a dynamic, digital future.

College hosts Groundbreaking Entrepreneurship Indaba: Inspiring the Next Generation of Innovators

Supplied by Madire Mashabela

In September 2025, Capricorn TVET College took a major step toward empowering young innovators when it hosted its first-ever Entrepreneurship Indaba at Jack Botes Hall in Polokwane. The event highlighted the dynamic world of entrepreneurship, designing, launching, and managing ventures that drive both financial growth and social impact.

Students from all four campuses gathered for a vibrant pitching competition

where emerging entrepreneurs presented their ideas. The competition featured three categories: general business, tech business, and artisan business. Each category offered a R5 000 cash prize, raising excitement and motivating students to put forward their best work. The Indaba also drew a range of stakeholders dedicated to supporting student-led enterprises and advancing incubation services. The atmosphere was filled with

creativity and collaboration, creating a strong foundation for students to turn their concepts into real businesses.

Delivering the keynote address Mr Michael Rakgantshe shared practical guidance on what it takes to succeed in entrepreneurship. He emphasised balance, confidence, and personal branding, reminding students that being the ambassador of their own business speaks volumes.

"Becoming the chief ambassador of your business tells people what you do before you even start explaining. The answer to every entrepreneurship journey lies in one's hands," he said.

The competition winners: Ms Itumeleng Maelane (Polokwane Campus), Mr Adil Ngobeni (Ramokgopa Campus), and Mr Edward Madiya (Senwabarwana Campus), stood out among twelve

contestants. For them, the R5 000 prize was both a financial uplift and recognition of their creativity, dedication, and entrepreneurial drive.

Beyond the competition, the Indaba reaffirmed Capricorn TVET College's commitment to building an entrepreneurial mindset among students. By encouraging them to think beyond job-seeking and pursue

job creation, the college continues to play a key role in addressing youth unemployment and promoting innovation.

More than anything, the event was a celebration of determination and the power of ideas. For many students, it signaled the start of their journey toward becoming the next generation of trailblazing entrepreneurs.



College officials, partners and a student competitor who won the 'I have an artisan business' category

Minister Manamela officiates the opening of the 4IR lab at Motheo TVET College

Supplied by Mahlatse Galane

Minister of Higher Education and Training, Mr Buti Manamela, officially launched the 4th Industrial Revolution Centre of Excellence at Motheo TVET College's National Artisan Development Academy in Bloemfontein on 17 October 2025.

"The Fourth Industrial Revolution is already reshaping how we live, learn, and work.

Technologies such as artificial intelligence, automation, robotics, renewable energy systems, and data analytics are driving profound change across every sector. That is why President Cyril Ramaphosa established the Presidential Commission on the Fourth Industrial Revolution (PC4IR), to guide our national response and ensure that South Africa thrives in this digital era,"

said Minister Manamela in his address.

The 4IR Centres of Excellence project is an initiative by the Education, Training and Development Practices Sector Education and Training Authority (ETDP SETA) as part of its strategic commitment to support the post-school education and training system in embracing digital transformation.

These centres seek to empower young people with future-ready digital and technical skills while strengthening collaboration between education and industry.

The Centre will focus on Artificial Intelligence, Robotics, Internet of Things (IoT), Data Analytics, and Additive Manufacturing (3-D printing), areas that are central to the new economy, the centre also seeks to

modernise infrastructure and curricula to meet current and future labour market demands. It will also serve as a platform for entrepreneurship incubation, empowering students to develop innovations and create new enterprises in their own communities. It will also equip lecturers on critical digital and technological skills to improve their teaching capabilities and competencies.

Minister Buti Manamela committed to the continuation of investing in young people, strengthening collaboration, and ensuring that TVET colleges remain at the forefront of technological change. He said: "Let the Motheo TVET College 4IR Centre of Excellence stand as a beacon of innovation and transformation, a model of what can be achieved when we work together with purpose, passion, and vision."



Motheo TVET College Principal, Prof Phutsisi, Director for Lecturer Development Mr Sello Sethusa, Minister Buti Manamela and Institutional Student Representative Council President Mr Clinton Leballo



Demonstrations by one of the lectures at the 4IR Lab during a walkabout by Minister Manamela

College Launches 4IR Centre of Excellence to Advance Digital Skills

Supplied by Lwandlekazi Gwiji

Deputy Minister of Higher Education and Training, Dr Nomusa Dube-Ncube, officiated the opening of the 4IR Centre of Excellence at Flavius Mareka TVET College, Engineering Campus, on 29 October 2025. The occasion marked the launch of state-of-the-art Robotics and Cyber Security laboratories, reflecting a significant milestone in the transformation and modernisation of South Africa's TVET sector.

During her address, Deputy Minister Dube-Ncube emphasised that the opening of the 4IR Centre represents more than the inauguration of a new facility; it is a new era of opportunity for young people across the Free State and beyond. "Today we celebrate more than the opening of a new facility, we also celebrate the birth of a new era of opportunity. An era where young people from communities across our country and in the Free State can access cutting-edge knowledge, digital tools and hands-on innovation that will prepare them for the jobs of the future," she said.

The Deputy Minister also acknowledged the visionary leadership and strategic investment demonstrated ETDP SETA in the establishment of 4IR Centres of Excellence across TVET Colleges.



Deputy Minister Dr. Nomusa Dube-Ncube with Flavius Mareka TVET College principal Mr Nkonyane officiating the opening of the 4IR Centre of Excellence

She praised their unwavering commitment to skills development, lecturer capacity building, digital transformation, describing their efforts as "a beacon of what public-private collaboration should look like in action".

The 4IR Centres of Excellence are central to the department's vision of transforming TVET Colleges from traditional training institutions into dynamic hubs of digital skills, creativity and applied research. These centres aim to equip students with the knowledge and practical experience required by industry while fostering innovation and problem-solving capabilities.

Deputy Minister Dube-Ncube highlighted that the initiative aligns with South Africa's broader national development

agenda, including the National Development Plan, the Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan and the recommendations of the Presidential 4IR Commission. By providing access to advanced technologies and digital training, the 4IR Centres of Excellence support the government's commitment to building an inclusive, competitive and future-ready workforce that contributes to sustainable development.

The opening of the Flavius Mareka 4IR Centre of Excellence stands as a testament to the department's dedication to reimagining technical education, empowering students with future-ready skills and driving South Africa's digital transformation in alignment with global technological trends.



Deputy Minister Dr Nomusa Dube-Ncube pictured with Flavius Mareka TVET College Principal Mr Nkonyane, partners from Sasol, FESTO, ETDP SETA, as well as DHET officials and college staff

Drones, Dreams and Digital Futures: ETDP SETA Supports Elangeni TVET College's 4IR Centre

Supplied by Anna-Joy Motene



Students engaging with distinguished delegates during an insightful tour and technical briefing inside the newly unveiled 4IR Centre of Excellence, showcasing innovation and progress in action

The launch of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) Centre of Specialisation at Elangeni TVET College in Mpumalanga Campus marked a significant milestone in advancing future-ready education and skills development. Supported by the Education, Training and Development Practices Sector Education and Training Authority (ETDP SETA), the Centre is part of South Africa's broader effort to prepare youth for opportunities in the fast-evolving digital economy.

In her keynote address, former CEO Ms Sesi Nombulelo Nxesi, described the launch as a collective commitment to building a digitally

skilled nation. Quoting President Cyril Ramaphosa, she reaffirmed that TVET Colleges are the engines of skills development and innovation, essential to unlocking growth and job creation through 4IR technologies.

The decision of Elangeni to specialise in drone technology was praised as visionary. Drones are transforming sectors such as agriculture, mining, logistics, and disaster management. With SETA support, the College has acquired advanced equipment and trained both lecturers and students to ensure learning leads to practical, real-world outcomes. Ms Nxesi noted that Elangeni's Centre forms part of 21 4IR Centres of Excellence

established nationwide, including three in KwaZulu-Natal. These centres, she said, are not only about infrastructure but about creating opportunities for young people to build businesses, find employment and contribute meaningfully to their communities. "This Centre is not just about skills," Ms Nxesi emphasised. "It is about dignity, innovation, and the future of our communities."

The 4IR Centre of Specialisation at Elangeni stands as a beacon of innovation, inclusion, and opportunity, empowering South Africa's youth to thrive in a digital future.

Changing the Narrative: SANAA 2025 Celebrates South Africa's Artisans

Supplied by Patience Makhaphela

The Department of Higher Education and Training, in partnership with Allan Gray, recently hosted the inaugural South African National Artisan Awards (SANAA) under the transformative theme "Changing Artisanal Identity and Status" at the prestigious Birchwood Hotel in Johannesburg. The event

marked a historic milestone in elevating the profile of artisans and reshaping the narrative around technical and vocational careers in South Africa.

The black-tie gala drew over 500 guests, including artisans, educators, policymakers, industry leaders, and

youth representatives. The evening was a vibrant celebration of craftsmanship, innovation, and the critical role artisans play in building South Africa's economy and cultural heritage. Live performances by the South West Gauteng TVET College Band added flair and emotional resonance to the night.

Delivering the keynote address, Minister of Higher Education and Training, Honourable Buti Manamela, MP, cast a bold and inspiring vision for the future of artisanal work in South Africa. "Together, we must build a South Africa that is better because of its artisans," he declared. The Minister emphasised that Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) is not a fallback option, it is a blueprint for inclusive economic growth. He reaffirmed the Department's commitment to transforming the Post-School Education and Training (PSET) system through curriculum redesign, infrastructure investment, and strategic partnerships. "A future worth building, one artisan at a time," he concluded, pledging to mobilise cross-sector support to ensure SANAA becomes a movement that celebrates excellence, nurtures talent, and affirms the dignity of work.

The Awards spotlighted outstanding individuals across the Department's 13 priority trades, including plumbing, welding, electrical work, and carpentry. Winners were selected for their mastery, innovation, and community impact. A unique feature of the ceremony was the inclusion of employer endorsements, which highlighted the real-world contributions of nominees and reinforced the collaborative nature of the initiative.

Aligned with the National Development Plan's goal of producing 30 000



CEO of W&RSETA Tom Mkhwanazi, Acting CEO of merSETA Naphtaley Mokgotsane, DDG of TVET Colleges Sam Zungu, 3rd Place Pipe-Fitter winner Thato Spenza Ramahala and Higher Education and Training Minister Buti Manamela

artisans annually by 2030, SANAA showcased the success of the Centre of Specialisation (COS) Programme, which has expanded from 28 to 53 Centres across 23 TVET Colleges, invested R257 million in infrastructure, trained over 5 000 artisans with a 97% trade test pass rate, achieved a 90% employment rate within 12 months of qualification, established 37 new accredited Trade Centres, and integrated into the Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan (ERRP).

The event's success was made possible through a strategic partnership with Allan & Gill Gray Philanthropies, whose collaboration with DHET reflects a shared vision for transforming South

Africa's artisan and entrepreneurial landscape. Several Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) also joined the initiative, amplifying its reach and impact. As part of Fusion Fest 2025, the gala featured the launch of the Inter-College Competition, celebrating emerging talent and bridging generations between seasoned masters and rising stars in artisanal entrepreneurship.

The SANAAs are more than a ceremony; they are a strategic intervention and a cultural shift. As South Africa continues to invest in skills development and economic empowerment, SANAA will remain a cornerstone of recognition, inspiration, and transformation.



Artisans awarded during SANAAs with Mr Buthelezi DHET Chief Director Special Projects and Kgomotsi Hiine DHET Project Initiation Coordinator

Artisans Excel at Inaugural South African National Artisan Awards (SANAAAs)

Supplied by Ivan Swart



Alex Monk, Mr Lungisa Mbulawa (Principal: West Coast College),
Mr Qwen Bowie (West Coast College Vredenburg Campus: Pipe Fitting Facilitator), Henlee McCarthy,
Mr Brian Madalane (Acting Regional Manager: DHET Northern and Western Cape), Busisiwe Mazantsana

West Coast College is proud to announce that artisans from its Vredenburg Campus achieved outstanding success at the inaugural South African National Artisan Awards (SANAAAs), held at the Birchwood Hotel and OR Tambo Conference Centre in Boksburg on 6 September 2025.

From the College's team of nominees, Henlee McCarthy won first place in the Pipe Fitting Trade category, Busisiwe Mazantsana secured second place in the same category, and Alex Monk achieved second place in the Boilermaking Trade category. These exceptional results mark a historic moment for West Coast College, as its first SANAA nominees became the College's first SANAA winners.

The SANAAAs were established to celebrate excellence among artisans and their trades, bringing together key stakeholders in the skills and

training sector. The prestigious event was attended by the Honourable Minister of Higher Education and Training, along with representatives from Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs), industry partners, and employers.

Reflecting on his achievement, first-place winner Henlee McCarthy said, "The feeling is indescribable, it still feels like a dream. When I look at the award and see my name on it, I realise that I truly did win first place. I am deeply grateful to Mr Bowie, my Pipe Fitting Facilitator, for seeing my potential and nominating me. I believe this award will open new doors, helping more companies notice me and hopefully offer opportunities for growth and employment. Receiving this recognition has certainly put me on the map, and I trust the right people will see my potential."

Commenting on the College's success, West Coast College Principal, Mr Lungisa Mbulawa, said: "We would like to congratulate the artisans on winning these prestigious awards at such an auspicious occasion. We know these awards will inspire many others to pursue trade studies and strive for similar recognition, as artisans are the ones who will build South Africa and keep our country moving forward." This recognition reflects the College's strong commitment to producing highly skilled artisans who contribute to South Africa's economic growth and development.

West Coast College's Vredenburg Campus serves as a Centre of Specialisation in Pipe Fitting and Boilermaking, offering focused, industry-aligned training for aspiring artisans eager to excel in these critical trades.

WorldSkillsZA provincial competitions prepare competitors for the national competition

Supplied by Mahlatse Galane

WorldSkills South Africa provincial competitions took place across all the provinces from 8 September to 31 October 2025.

Twelve Technical Vocational Education and Training Colleges hosted participants from different TVET colleges, Universities, Universities of technology and private training providers and participated in 57 skills areas.

Skills varied from Aircraft Maintenance, Automobile Technology, Bakery, Bricklaying, Auto Body Repairs, Electrical Engineering, Chemical Engineering, Cabinet Making and Cooking amongst others.

Representing the South African Principals Colleges Organisation in Gauteng, Principal of Tshwane North TVET College Ms Tsibogo mentioned that SAPCO stands firm in supporting WorldSkills South Africa competitions during the Gauteng Provincial competitions.

Delivering the message of support on behalf of the Department, Deputy Director-General responsible for TVET Branch Mr Sam Zungu said that the Department remains passionately committed to infusing WorldSkills standards into the national TVET curriculum. "This alignment ensures that the competencies demonstrated here become the norm across all our colleges, and that our graduates are not only employable locally, but capable of competing with confidence on global platforms.

Through initiatives like the Centres of Specialisation, TVET 4IR Labs, and College Entrepreneurship Ecosystems, we are systematically building the foundation for a globally competitive and locally responsive TVET system."

DDG Zungu reminded competitors that the competition, is not merely



DDG Sam Zungu at WorldSkills South Africa Gauteng Provincial Competitions opening ceremony



A bricklaying competitor at the WorldSkills South Africa Provincial competitions at Gert Sibande Skills Academy and Artisan Development Centre

a contest but it is a movement, a catalyst to transform perceptions, elevate standards, and build a PSET system that is truly responsive to developmental aspirations as a nation.

Speaking at the Limpopo provincial competitions closing ceremony, the Technical Delegate of WorldSkills South Africa, Mr Fumane Mboweni highlighted that the hosting of the local and provincial heats of WorldSkills South Africa (WSZA) was a success, and that all attention will now focus on preparations for the national competition expected to take place early next year.

"As the Technical Delegate of WorldSkills South Africa, I am immensely proud to acknowledge the successful completion of all nine Provincial WorldSkills South Africa Competitions and Career Exhibitions, which took

place between 8 September and 31 October 2025, culminating in Limpopo."

The provincial competitions and career exhibitions have showcased the growing strength, innovation, and determination of South Africa's young artisans, as well as the strong collaboration among TVET Colleges, Sector Education and Training Authorities, industry partners and provincial structures. "Across every province, we witnessed excellence in action a true reflection of our nation's collective commitment to quality skills development, transformation, and youth empowerment.

As we look ahead to the national and international stages, we do so with renewed confidence, knowing that it's cool to be a 21st-century artisan, because skills change lives, concluded Mr Ngobeni.

South West Gauteng TVET College Shines at WorldSkills Gauteng Provincial Competition 2025

Supplied by Patience Makhaphela



Ms Thembi Tsibogo Tshwane North TVET College Principal, Mr Mohale Kamohelo welding competitor from SWGC crowned with awarded and Mr Pule Mashele Acting DHET Regional Manager for Gauteng and North West provinces

South West Gauteng TVET College (SWGC) proudly showcased its technical excellence and student talent at the WorldSkills Gauteng Provincial Competition, held from 13 to 17 October 2025 at Tshwane North and South TVET Colleges. The closing ceremony on 17 October at Tshwane North TVET College celebrated the college's outstanding performance across multiple skill categories.

SWGC students demonstrated exceptional craftsmanship and professionalism, achieving top honours in several disciplines. Kamogelo Mohale from Molapo Campus won the gold medal in Welding. Ntokozo John Sibeko, also from Molapo Campus, secured silver in Bricklaying. Avuyile Mehlomakhulu from Roodepoort West Campus earned silver in Electrical Installations,

while Thlatlogo Nkotswe from Roodepoort Campus took silver in Restaurant Services. In Fashion Technology, Themba Mkhwanazi from George Tabor Campus received a bronze medal. In addition, SWGC students in CNC Turning and Social and Healthcare will advance directly to the National Competition in 2026, having faced no provincial competitors in these categories.

These achievements reflect the strength of SWGC's vocational training and the dedication of both students and lecturers in preparing learners for real-world industry demands. The WorldSkills platform provides an important opportunity for young artisans to gain exposure, build confidence, and proudly represent their institutions. Behind every medal is a mentor whose guidance and expertise shaped the

students' journeys. SWGC extends heartfelt appreciation to educators such as Mr Thabo Tsolo, Ms Carrien Swart, Mr Baloyi, Mr Sibusiso Sibiya, and Mr Sylvester Manyama. Their mentorship was instrumental in preparing students for competition and fostering a culture of excellence across campuses.

Looking ahead to the National WorldSkills Competition in 2026, SWGC stands united in support of its champions. Their success brings honour to the institution and inspires future students to pursue excellence in their chosen trades. South West Gauteng TVET College remains committed to skills development, innovation, and preparing students for the demands of the modern workforce. The legacy of excellence continues to grow, one skill, one student, one mentor at a time.

The College Ignites Innovation at 3rd Annual Skills Indaba

Supplied by Madire Mashabela



Innovation Indaba participant in the Electrical Installation category

Capricorn TVET College hosted its 3rd Annual Innovation Skills Indaba on 30 September 2025 at Seshego Campus, bringing together students, staff, and industry experts to celebrate creativity, entrepreneurship, and practical skills development.

The Indaba aligned with the United Nations' call for TVET Colleges to drive skills development for economic recovery and sustainability. It promoted innovative learning, entrepreneurship, and collaboration across various fields.

Keynote speaker Mr James Lentsoane, Programme Manager at Limpopo Digital Skills CoLab, encouraged participants to use innovation and

digitalisation to empower communities and combat unemployment.

Participants showcased their talents across categories such as renewable energy, IT, robotics, hospitality, carpentry, and fashion design. Mr Solomon Mphela was named Best Innovator 2025, while Mr Karabo Moremi secured first place in the cooking category.

Winners (1st Place): Mahandana Vhusani (Internet of Things), Mongatane Mahlatse (Baking), Sebola Makoena (Hairdressing), Moremi Karabo (Cooking), Matlou Andries (Renewable Energy), Ramalekela Livhuwani (Electrical Installation),

Ramavhale Faith (Water Technology), Munyai Mashudu (Decoration), Moloisi Tumelo (Carpentry), Ranoto Merrida (Bricklaying), Mahomole Masilo (Welding), Moyo Martin (Nail Technology), Mamogale Fortunate (Education & Development), Rapatsa Masilo (Beauty Services), Mampuru Keabetswe (Plumbing), Mamabolo Thabiso (Mechatronics), Ngobeni Adil (Drawing Practice), and Chuene Kgothatso (Restaurant Services).

The College congratulates all winners and participants and reaffirms its commitment to innovation, skills development, and community upliftment.

MICT SETA joins MCP Hackathon Africa 2025

Supplied by Xabiso Matshikiza

The Media, Information and Communication Technologies Sector Education and Training Authority (MICT SETA) has officially joined the MCP Hackathon Africa 2025 as a Premier Sponsor, reinforcing its commitment to driving digital transformation and 4IR skills development across the continent. This partnership marks an important milestone in advancing South Africa's innovation and digital skills agenda, in collaboration with leading partners Datacentrix and Season.

Launched by the Cortex Hub, a non-profit innovation hub dedicated to inclusive digital transformation and advanced technologies, the MCP Hackathon Africa aims to embed African languages, cultures, and priorities into the foundation of artificial intelligence through the Model Context Protocol (MCP), an emerging open standard designed to build AI applications rooted in local contexts.

Building Africa's Future Workforce: MICT SETA's participation aligns directly with its strategic mandate, annual performance commitments, and the Integrated Digital Skills Strategy, which prioritise innovation, future-focused skills, and youth empowerment. The hackathon offers a valuable platform to develop critical 4IR skills such as coding, data analytics, design thinking, and rapid prototyping — competencies essential for preparing Africa's youth for the future of work.

Hackathons like the MCP initiative foster collaboration, entrepreneurship, and problem-solving. They create spaces where learners, graduates, and professionals co-create digital solutions to real-world challenges including unemployment, limited education access, and digital exclusion.

"At the core of MICT SETA's mandate is the transformation of South Africa's skills landscape to meet the demands of a rapidly evolving digital

economy. Our partnership with the MCP Hackathon Africa amplifies this mission by creating hands-on learning environments where young innovators can build, test, and apply the very technologies shaping the Fourth Industrial Revolution. This initiative bridges the gap between theoretical learning and industry application, empowering participants not only to gain digital competencies but also to become active contributors to Africa's innovation ecosystem," said Gugu Sema, Senior Manager: 4IR at MICT SETA.

A Continental Effort in AI Innovation: Taking place across more than 40 African cities, the MCP Hackathon Africa 2025 brings together developers, researchers, startups, and students to design locally relevant AI solutions. Participants will benefit from mentorship, access to technical resources, and exposure to international industry leaders. The program concluded with a continental showcase in Cape Town, South Africa, on 11–12 November 2025.

"The Model Context Protocol is Africa's opportunity to move from being consumers of AI to creators of the standards that govern it. By coding MCP servers for our towns and cities, participants will be embedding African contexts, cultures, and priorities into the very fabric of AI's evolution," said Dr Andile Ngcaba, Patron of the Cortex Hub.

A Commitment to Digital Skills and Innovation: Through this partnership, MICT SETA reaffirms its leadership in 4IR-focused education and its dedication to equipping young people with the skills and opportunities needed to thrive in the digital economy. Its collaboration with the Cortex Hub and the wider MCP Hackathon ecosystem will stimulate innovation, strengthen industry partnerships, and advance South Africa's role in shaping the global digital future.

By investing in initiatives like the MCP Hackathon Africa, MICT SETA not only delivers on its skills development mandate but also contributes significantly to Africa's digital sovereignty — ensuring that future technologies are informed by African values, languages, and communities.



SATVETSA 2nd Academic Conference: Transition from NATED to Occupational Qualifications a Resounding Success

Supplied by Tshepo Mokono

The transition from legacy NATED N4–N6 programmes to occupational qualifications has become a major talking point within South Africa's Post-School Education and Training (PSET) sector, and the 2nd Academic Conference of the South African Technical and Vocational Education and Training Student Association (SATVETSA) affirmed this shift as a resounding success.



Minister Buti Manamela delivered the keynote address at the SATVETSA 2nd Academic Conference

Hosted at the Birchwood Hotel and Conference Centre from 11–15 December 2025, the student driven event brought together student leaders, government representatives, SETAs, NSFAS, and college delegates to share insights, experiences, and strategies on how occupational qualifications are reshaping the TVET landscape — from curriculum reform and lecturer development to student employability and institutional alignment.

Opening the conference, SATVETSA President Kgaugelo Chokoe emphasised the centrality of student voices in shaping the future of TVET. She urged delegates to embrace occupational qualifications as a strategic opportunity, positioning students as active partners in driving meaningful change.

Her remarks set a student centred tone, highlighting leadership, engagement, and a shared responsibility to ensure graduates are equipped for the modern workplace.

Delivering the keynote address, Minister of Higher Education and Training, Buti Manamela, hailed the NATED to occupational qualification transition as a critical milestone in sector transformation. He highlighted the role of students as active contributors to shaping solutions and noted that this represents the most significant curriculum reform in TVET since 1994.

The Minister emphasised that occupational qualifications will enhance student success, employability, and industry alignment, encouraging colleges, SETAs, and student bodies to collaborate closely for effective implementation.

Deputy Director General for the TVET Branch, Sam Zungu, reinforced the Department's commitment to hand-on support and strategic oversight. He stressed the importance of integrating curriculum reform, lecturer development, and institutional capacity building into the rollout of occupational qualifications.

Zungu also highlighted the need for industry partnerships to provide students with workplace exposure, ensuring that graduates are work ready upon completion.

The conference featured dynamic breakaway sessions, allowing delegates to engage with specific challenges and opportunities. Discussions included:

- Practical implementation of occupational qualifications
- Student support services and retention strategies
- Strengthening partnerships with industry and workplace based learning

These sessions fostered peer learning, collaboration, and actionable strategies,

ensuring that both policy and practice were effectively addressed. NSFAS reiterated its role in supporting student access, retention, and progression, enabling learners to complete their studies successfully.

Services SETA emphasised the importance of bridging education with employment, highlighting learnerships, internships, and partnerships with industry as essential enablers for TVET graduates.

Students and alumni shared real world stories of graduates thriving in the workplace, demonstrating the practical impact of occupational qualifications.

The conference concluded as a resounding success, with delegates praising the clarity, focus, and strategic relevance of the discussions. SATVETSA's 2nd Academic Conference not only highlighted the NATED to occupational qualification transition but also reinforced collaboration, student engagement, and implementation focused action across the TVET sector.

The event demonstrated that the TVET sector is evolving, student centred, and aligned with the needs of the modern economy — cementing occupational qualifications as a cornerstone of the PSET sector's future.

College Takes a Stand Against Gender-Based Violence

Supplied by Marnus de Klerk



South Cape TVET College students and community during the march against gender-based violence

In a powerful show of unity, Oudtshoorn Campus recently took a stand against gender-based violence (GBV) with a campus-wide march. The event served as both a call to action and a message of hope, urging the community to break the silence surrounding the deeply rooted issue.

Dressed in black to honour victims and survivors, staff and students walked side by side in a moving display of solidarity. Escorted by the Oudtshoorn

Traffic Department, the march wound through the town's streets, amplifying the message of awareness and collective responsibility.

The event also featured an insightful address by Ms Bokang, a Social Worker from the Department of Social Development, who spoke passionately about the far-reaching impact of GBV. Her talk highlighted not only the emotional and social consequences but also the vital support services

available to those affected.

This initiative was more than just a march, it was a meaningful step toward education, empowerment, and social change. It reinforced the importance of standing together to end all forms of GBV.

South Cape TVET College remains steadfast in its commitment to building a campus and community where safety, respect, and equality are at the heart of everyday life.

College Launches Campus Safety Forum to Strengthen Student Security

Supplied by Makaroka Mphahlele

In a major step toward promoting safety and security in higher education, the South African Police Service (SAPS), in collaboration with the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), officially launched the Campus Community Safety Forum at Vhembe TVET College's Makwarela

Campus on 22–24 October 2025. The two-day event marked the Limpopo provincial launch of the national Campus Safety Programme; a strategic initiative aimed at curbing crime in and around Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges.

The launch highlighted a shared commitment among law enforcement, College management, and students to foster safer learning environments. The initiative was introduced in response to growing concerns about criminal activities affecting students, with SAPS management emphasising

the importance of early intervention and proactive safety measures.

The forum served as a platform for open dialogue between students, law enforcement officials, and college leadership. Discussions focused on pressing issues such as theft, assault, substance abuse, and Gender-Based Violence and Femicide (GBVF). Students also received guidance on personal safety, crime prevention, and available support systems.

Major General T.N. Mathonsi from Visible Policing and Operations, together with Major General M.A. Lekhele from Detective and Forensic Services, outlined the programme's objectives: to strengthen partnerships between SAPS and the campus community, raise awareness about crime prevention, and ensure rapid response to safety concerns.

Leading the official launch, Mr M.S. Ramulifho, Deputy Principal of Vhembe TVET College, commended the collaboration and underscored the collective responsibility of all stakeholders in promoting campus



**Ms N.P. Nemalili, DHET Chief Education Specialist
signing the pledge of a joint commitment to ensure student safety**

safety. "Together we can do more. This initiative represents a major milestone in strengthening community participation and eliminating criminal activities that affect our students and staff," said Ramulifho.

Ms N.P. Nemalili, Chief Education Specialist: TVET at the Limpopo DHET Regional Office, echoed this sentiment, stressing the importance of a secure

learning environment. "Safety is a vital foundation for effective teaching and learning. Without safety, education cannot flourish," she said.

The event concluded with the signing of a pledge of commitment by all participating stakeholders, signifying their collective dedication to maintaining safe, peaceful, and conducive learning spaces across campuses in the province.



South African Police Services officials exhibition on campus

MICT SETA Champions Digital Skills Development at the Cybersecurity Indaba

Supplied by Xabiso Matshikiza

The Media, Information and Communication Technologies Sector Education and Training Authority (MICT SETA) reaffirmed its critical role in securing South Africa's digital future, announcing major investment in advanced skills development at the 2nd Annual Cybersecurity Indaba, hosted by CyberM8 in Pretoria at the Innovation Hub on Wednesday, 29 October 2025.

The Indaba, held under the theme "Next-Gen Cybersecurity: Innovation for Tomorrow's Challenges," brought together policymakers, industry experts, academia, and innovators to address the nation's cybersecurity readiness and digital resilience.

In the keynote address, the MICT SETA Chief Executive Officer, Mr Matome Madibana, highlighted the indispensable role of Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) in enabling national digital transformation. The address, titled "Unlocking South Africa's Digital Economy Through Digital Skills Development," underscored the importance of forward-looking investment in ICT human capital.

"South Africa stands at a defining moment. The global digital economy is projected to contribute over \$20 trillion by 2030, but our success hinges on how fast we can equip our people with the right digital capabilities. SETAs play a pivotal role in funding demand-driven programmes and building human

capital that is agile, innovative, and ready for this future of work," said Mr Madibana.

The CEO emphasised the cross-sectoral impact of these skills, noting that MICT SETA continues to drive collaboration across industries, academic institutions, and government to expand access to innovation hubs.

"Through strategic partnerships with institutions such as TUT, WITS Business School, and MLAB, we are investing in emerging technologies and innovation ecosystems that enable start-ups and SMMEs to thrive. Our mission is not only to produce users of technology, but digital entrepreneurs who can build solutions for South Africa and beyond," Mr Madibana added.

MICT SETA's initiatives are directly developing 4IR-aligned qualifications in Artificial Intelligence, Cybersecurity, Data Science, and Systems Development. More than 13 000 learners are supported annually through these digital skills programmes, with several locally developed digital solutions set for adoption by public sector institutions in 2026.

The Indaba was officially opened by the Deputy Minister of Communications and Digital Technologies, Mr Mondli Gungubele (MP), who stressed the urgency of building a cyber-resilient South Africa.

"As our country digitises through initiatives like the National Digital and Future Skills Strategy, cybersecurity cannot be an afterthought, it must be the foundation of our digital transformation. We must empower youth and women in the digital security field, invest in next-generation innovation, and embed cybersecurity into every national strategy," said the Deputy Minister.

As a transversal SETA, MICT SETA continues to lead national efforts to democratise access to digital technologies, foster cyber awareness, and strengthen South Africa's position in the global digital economy.

"Together, we can secure South Africa's digital future - one skill, one learner, and one innovation at a time," concluded Mr Madibana.

About MICT SETA

The Media, Information and Communication Technologies Sector Education and Training Authority (MICT SETA) is a public entity established in terms of the Skills Development Act, 1998 (Act No. 97 of 1998). Its main role is to enrich industry skills set to meet the demands of rapidly changing economies, new technologies and to promote inclusive economic growth in South Africa within the Advertising, Film and Electronic Media, Electronics, Information Technology, and Telecommunications sub-sectors.

"Shaping Skills, Pioneering Industries, Empowering Futures"

My Disability Does Not Determine My Destination: Limpopo TVET Colleges Host Disability Indaba

Supplied by Madire Mashabela



Attendees of the Disability Indaba hosted by Sekhukhune TVET College in Groblersdal

Eighteen differently abled students from Capricorn TVET College recently joined peers from other Limpopo TVET institutions at the Disability Indaba, hosted at Sekhukhune TVET College's Development Skills Centre in Groblersdal.

Under the theme: ***"My Disability Does Not Determine My Destination,"*** the event united differently abled students, caregivers, disability advocates, and academic leaders in a powerful day of dialogue, empowerment and reflection. The Indaba created a vital platform for engagement between government representatives, community organisations, the private sector, and students themselves. Discussions focused on breaking social barriers, strengthening partnerships,

and ensuring equal opportunities for differently abled people.

Delivering the keynote address, Joseph Mabanga, who lost his sight during his teenage years, inspired the audience with his moving words. He urged differently abled students to claim their rightful place in society, emphasising resilience, determination, and self-belief. His message directly challenged stereotypes and reaffirmed that disability should never dictate one's destiny.

"Inclusivity is not an act of charity but a commitment to equity, dignity, and opportunity for individuals to thrive," said Mabanga. He called on institutions to treat differently abled persons as equals, focusing on their strengths and

potential rather than their limitations. Stressing the importance of empathy, persistence, and shared responsibility, Mabanga reminded all present that no student should be left behind in higher education.

The Indaba concluded on a high note, with stakeholders pledging to strengthen inclusivity across Limpopo TVET colleges. Participants left with a renewed commitment to building an education system that is accessible, empowering, and inclusive of all students. More than just a reminder of the challenges that remain, the event stood as a celebration of progress, a bold step toward creating an educational landscape where every differently abled student can thrive.

Empowering Persons with Disabilities Through Skills Development

Supplied by Anna-Joy Motene



ETDP SETA Gauteng Provincial Manager, Mr Gerrard Francis, together with the graduates

In a powerful step toward inclusive education and employment, the Education, Training and Development Practices Sector Education and Training Authority (ETDP SETA), in partnership with KellyGirl Skills Academy, has successfully completed a six-month funded training programme designed to empower unemployed persons with disabilities across Gauteng.

Launched in March 2025, the initiative equipped 100 learners with practical, industry-aligned skills that bridge the gap between unemployment and meaningful economic participation. The comprehensive programme covered a range of disciplines, including Reception and Call Centre Skills, Office Administration, Introductory Financial Accounting, Property Management, and Health and Safety, which encompassed First Aid, SHE Representation and OHS Regulations.

Learners also gained valuable technical experience in cell phone and laptop

repairs, supported by training in Basic Computer Literacy. Each module blended theory with hands-on application, ensuring that participants could confidently apply their new skills. To encourage continued growth, every learner received a personal laptop for ongoing access to digital learning resources.

The impact of the training extended far beyond the classroom. Many learners expressed heartfelt gratitude for the opportunity, praising the professionalism, empathy and dedication of the facilitators. The programme has already opened doors to new possibilities, with several participants now positioned for entry-level employment in administration, finance, call centres and property management, while others are preparing to launch micro-enterprises in cell phone and laptop repairs. Beyond professional outcomes, the initiative has also nurtured personal growth, boosting learners' self-confidence, independence and sense

of social inclusion.

The journey culminated in two inspiring graduation ceremonies held in September 2025 at the Harvey Cohen Centre and the Gauteng Innovation Hub. These celebrations marked not just the completion of the training, but the beginning of new journeys for each graduate, a testament to resilience, achievement and hope for the future.

This initiative stands as a shining example of the transformative power of collaboration between SETAs, training providers and communities. By aligning with national skills development priorities, the programme demonstrates how inclusive training can unlock potential and promote sustainable livelihoods for persons with disabilities. The ETDP SETA and KellyGirl Skills Academy remain committed to expanding such initiatives across South Africa, ensuring that inclusivity, equity and opportunity move from aspiration to reality.

From Lip-Reading to Life-Changing Tech: Ayamkela's Breakthrough

Supplied by Marnus de Klerk

Ayamkela began her academic journey at South Cape TVET College's Mossel Bay Campus in 2025, having completed her matric solely through lip-reading. Her determination to pursue education despite this profound challenge is truly inspiring. To keep up with lessons, she always sat at the front of the class, an effort made even more demanding in dynamic environments like laboratories, where instructors often moved or faced away from her.

After a challenging start, Ayamkela has now been fitted with a state-of-the-art hearing aid. The device uses the latest technology and connects to an app on her phone, allowing her to adjust settings such as Classroom Focus, Assembly, or Quiet Mode to manage different sound environments effectively. This advancement enables her to engage confidently in both her studies and work-integrated learning toward her National N-Diploma, with the device expected to last for at least five years.

Ayamkela's success story is a reflection of the College's unwavering commitment to student support, a process that took approximately six months from her initial declaration to the final handover of the device. To make this possible, the College partnered with Kind2Hearing, a company with over 20 branches nationwide, renowned for restoring the ability to hear and connect. Their focus on exceptional customer care and ongoing support ensures clients' long-term independence and well-being.

The South Cape College community continues to embrace its responsibility to foster an inclusive and supportive learning environment. Ensuring that



Ayamkela Sobhayi

every student feels valued, safe, and empowered to declare their needs is essential to creating a sense of genuine belonging.

Ayamkela's story stands as a powerful testament to resilience, innovation,

and the College's dedication to removing barriers to education. Students are encouraged to declare any support needs to access the funding and assistive technologies that will help them reach their full academic potential.

Successful Two-Day Graduation Ceremony at NADA Campus

Supplied by Lame Morubane

Motheo TVET College proudly hosted a memorable two-day Graduation Ceremony on 10 and 11 September 2025 at its National Artisan Development Academy (NADA) Campus, celebrating the academic success of 1 822 graduates from various programmes. The event brought together Council Members, the Executive, and Broad Management, who gathered to honour the achievements of the graduating class.

In her opening address, Principal Prof. Phutsisi expressed heartfelt appreciation to the College Council for their continued support in driving the institution's strategic goals. She also took the opportunity to announce an important academic transition, the phasing out of N1–N4 programmes and urged students to complete any outstanding qualifications by the end of 2026. Prof. Phutsisi further highlighted the College's forward-thinking approach by introducing Occupational Programmes, a major step towards equipping students with industry-relevant and practical skills. This initiative aligns with the national drive to enhance employability and reduce unemployment across South Africa.

A particularly inspiring moment of the ceremony came from the keynote address delivered by Clifford Machete, a former EWC student and proud member of the Deaf community. His powerful message encouraged graduates to work hard, remain humble, and face the future with hope and determination.

As part of the celebration, the College recognised outstanding academic achievers across various programmes. On the first day, top achievers included Hamer Therese Vera from Visual Art and Design, who achieved 80% and received the Principal's Award; Malebaco Gabankitsi Calphenia from Business Management, who achieved 88%



Regional Director FNB Public Sector Mr Josy Sehloho, Chairperson of College Council Mr Jabulani Tshabalala, Top Achiever (Principal's Award Recipient) Calphenia Gabankitsi Malebaco and her mum



Chairperson of College Council Mr Jabulani Tshabalala, Best Performer Fortune Tinitenda Zihura, his mother Ms Maximina Fimba and Motheo TVET College Principal Prof. Dipiloane

and received a Special Principal's Award (Disability Award); and Lehasa Amogelang from Human Resource Management, who achieved 77%.

On the second day, exceptional students included Zihura Fortune Tiniotenda from Electrical Engineering N6 with 84%, Ramalitse Tebello Gladys from Management with 84%, Pitso Masilofu Thandiwe from Marketing Management N6 with 82%, and Sefali Khauhelo Macdonald from Civil Engineering and Building Construction Level 4 with 81%.

These remarkable graduates serve as shining examples of perseverance, dedication, and academic excellence,

and the College congratulates each of them for their outstanding achievements. In total, the 2025 ceremony recognised graduates across several qualifications, including 1 397 in NATED Business and Engineering N6, 236 in Diplomas, 165 in NCV Level 4, and 24 in NQF Level 4 programmes.

Motheo TVET College extends its warmest congratulations to all graduates and their families. The College is immensely proud of their accomplishments and looks forward to seeing them thrive as they embark on their next journey — contributing to their communities and to the country's development.

TVET College Graduates Begin Their Next Chapter

Supplied by Marnus de Klerk



South Cape TVET College Senior Management and Campus Managers with guest speakers

The Mossel Bay Town Hall was filled with pride and celebration on 11 October 2025 as hundreds of South Cape TVET College graduates gathered with their families, friends, staff and stakeholders to receive their qualifications.

A vibrant performance by the Mossel Bay Campus Choir opened the ceremony, setting the tone for a memorable day. Dr Tercia Terblanche, who is the Principal of South Cape TVET College, welcomed guests and commended graduates for their resilience and dedication. She encouraged them to embrace new challenges, seek inspiration, and continue building a future marked by success and service to their communities.

Mossel Bay Executive Mayor, Cllr Dirk Kotzé, inspired graduates to go beyond seeking jobs and to become creators of opportunities. He reminded them that true wealth lies in unlocking their potential and acting on their ideas. Former student leader Lumko Jonas delivered a powerful keynote address focused on purpose-driven leadership, perseverance, and using one's talents to create meaningful change.

The College also honoured its top achievers from the NCV Level 4, Report 191 N6, and Higher Certificate in Education programmes. National N-Diploma and ECD Level 5 graduates proudly walked the stage as their families celebrated this major milestone. South Cape TVET College expressed sincere appreciation to its sponsors; ABSA, Cape

Book and College Supplies, Eden FM, Future Managers, Macmillan Education, Oxford University Press and UNISA for their generous support in recognising outstanding student performance.

Special thanks were extended to lecturers and support staff for their unwavering dedication and guidance.

Congratulations to the Class of 2025! As you step into the next chapter, may you use your knowledge, skills, and networks to build thriving futures. South Cape TVET College is proud of you and looks forward to the incredible impact you will make. Parents and guardians were appreciated for their constant support and for choosing South Cape TVET College as a trusted partner in their children's education.

Clean Audit Triumph for SWGC: A Milestone of Integrity and Excellence

Supplied by Patience Makhaphela

In an era where Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges often struggle for recognition as institutions of first choice, South West Gauteng TVET College (SWGC) has achieved a landmark moment that redefines its trajectory. For the financial year 2023/2024, SWGC has been awarded a Clean Audit Outcome, an accomplishment that speaks volumes about the College's unwavering commitment to excellence, transparency, and responsible governance.

This achievement is far more than a compliance checkbox. It is a bold affirmation of the College's internal strength, the dedication of its teams, and its readiness to lead with integrity. It signals to stakeholders, students, parents, funders, and partners that SWGC is not only delivering quality education but also stewarding its resources with precision and accountability.

In a landscape where TVET colleges must work diligently to earn public trust and student preference, this

Clean Audit Outcome is a beacon of credibility. It reinforces SWGC's position as a reliable, future-focused institution, one that is ready to be the first choice for post-school education and training.

As SWGC continues to raise the bar, it invites the broader community to challenge outdated perceptions and embrace TVET as a strategic pathway to success. Because at SWGC, we believe that vocational education is not a second option, it's a first-class opportunity.

Higher Education Portfolio Committee Oversight Visits in KwaZulu-Natal

Supplied by Boitumelo Seimela

On 6 to 10 October 2025, the Portfolio Committee on Higher Education and Training undertook a series of oversight visits across KwaZulu-Natal, demonstrating its ongoing commitment to ensuring that South Africa's Post-School Education system effectively serves students and society at large. These visits, part of a week-long legislative and monitoring initiative, encompassed a range of institutions, including universities, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges, and community colleges.



Students and lecturers at the KwaZulu-Natal CET College, Sibusisiwe Learning Centre displayed their baking products

The week began with the committee's visit to the uMfolozi TVET College Nkandla Campus where members engaged with college management and stakeholders to assess institutional progress and challenges. The committee visited a newly built residence which was funded by the National Skills Fund and took a tour to electrical workshops of the institution. These oversight activities aimed to monitor infrastructure development, governance, and funding issues, with a particular focus on how well the institutions aligned with national education priorities.

Later, the committee visited Durban University of Technology Indumiso campus in Pietermaritzburg, University of Zululand, KwaDlangezwa Campus, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Westville Campus, Elangeni TVET College's Pinetown Campus, and KwaZulu-Natal CET College where discussions with management and stakeholders highlighted ongoing efforts to modernise facilities and expand training programs.

The committee scrutinised infrastructure projects, including residences, and engaged actively on issues surrounding

governance, NSFAS funding, and infrastructure development. Deputy Director-General responsible for planning Ms Nolwazi Gasa reassured students that the Department was working closely with the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) to ensure timely funding for all qualifying students, emphasising that financial exclusion posed a significant barrier to inclusive education and committed that her branch will continue to work closely and monitor progress on infrastructure in institutions of higher learning.



Members of the Portfolio Committee on Higher Education and Training along with DDG Sam Zungu at uMfolozi TVET College

Building Safe, Modern, and Future-Ready Learning Environments: Why OHS and Infrastructure Matter in TVET

Supplied by Roshin Schmidt

In South Africa's growing Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) sector, infrastructure development and Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) have become essential drivers of academic excellence and institutional resilience. At False Bay TVET College, a renewed focus on OHS, facilities, and infrastructure is helping to create safe, compliant and future-ready learning environments.

At the centre of this work is Estelle May, the College's Facilities and OHS Officer, who leads efforts to align infrastructure, compliance systems and programme accreditation across all five campuses and the Central Office. Under her leadership, the College has shifted from a "tick-box" approach to a proactive safety culture. This work has been critical to the rollout of 21 new Occupational Certificate programmes in 2024, almost tripling the previous year's offering.

A standout example is the Megawatt Workshop, designed as a fully compliant, industry-aligned training space equipped with modern tools and strict risk-control systems. The workshop has attracted strong industry interest, demonstrating that safety and innovation strengthen one another. Ms May notes that the consequences of non-compliance, ranging from legal penalties and programme delays to reputational damage, make OHS a strategic priority rather than an administrative task. "Compliance doesn't slow us down. It allows us to move faster and more confidently," she explains. To support uninterrupted teaching and safe campus operations, the College invested in key infrastructure projects in 2024, including upgraded fire-safety systems, generator installations, UPS replacements, accessibility improvements at Fish Hoek Campus, and water network



Ms Estelle May, the College's Facilities and OHS Officer

upgrades at Westlake Campus. These enhancements directly reinforce learning continuity and operational reliability.

A major part of the College's progress has come from empowering staff as active contributors to campus safety. Through targeted training, employees serve as First Aiders, Fire Wardens, Evacuation Marshals and Health and Safety Representatives.

"Compliance is everyone's responsibility. When staff are informed and equipped, safety becomes instinctive," said Ms May. Her work also extends across internal committees such as the OHS Committee, Bid Specification Committee and Skills Development Committee, ensuring that safety planning is integrated into institutional decision-making. Looking ahead Ms May encourages TVET institutions to adopt preventive maintenance plans, embed cross-departmental compliance structures, digitise safety systems, invest in staff development, prioritise universal

accessibility, benchmark with peer colleges and align infrastructure plans with accreditation requirements.

She emphasises that OHS is a continuous journey: "There will always be areas for improvement. What matters is a collaborative culture that prioritises safety, functionality and shared accountability," she said. With over a decade of experience, Ms May has contributed to the accreditation of more than 20 qualifications and remains committed to creating safe, modern and innovative learning spaces that strengthen the TVET sector.

False Bay TVET College invites industry partners to collaborate in building world-class facilities that prepare students for real-world workplaces. Investing in college infrastructure is an investment in the future workforce — one that supports quality training, economic growth and meaningful employment opportunities.

EWC Successfully Hosts Try a Skill Career Fair, Empowering Future Leaders

Supplied by David Muleele

Ekurhuleni West TVET College (EWC) hosted a dynamic “Try a Skill” Career Fair in partnership with the Gauteng Department of Education, Ekurhuleni South and North Districts on 12 September 2025. The impactful event brought together learners from 31 schools across the Kathorus and Tembisa areas, who converged at the Germiston Campus to explore exciting opportunities within the TVET sector.

The Career Fair aimed to promote the TVET sector, showcase the College’s diverse offerings, and highlight career and entrepreneurship opportunities available to high school learners. Its interactive structure allowed participants to engage with various speakers, visit exhibition stalls, and experience the College’s workshops and simulation facilities, offering them a comprehensive insight into the world of technical and vocational education.

Learners gained immense value from the event. They received clarity on College programmes and NSFAS bursaries, explored various fields of study, and participated in practical projects that sparked their interest in Engineering Studies and informed their future study choices. The event also provided insights into different career paths and offered learners a first-hand experience of campus life.

With more than 1 500 attendees, the Career Fair was a resounding success. Supporting organisations such as Manufacturing, Engineering and Related Services Sector Education and Training Authority (merSETA), Construction Education and Training Authority (CETA), Wholesale and Retail Sector Education and Training Authority (W&R SETA), South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA), the Department of Labour, Independent Electoral Commission (IEC), Tshwane South TVET College, Ekurhuleni East TVET College, FESTO, and NEPO made valuable contributions that enhanced the event’s overall impact.



Learners visiting different exhibitions stalls



Learners learning about robotics at Festo exhibition stall

Renowned South African actor, choreographer, and television personality Somizi Mhlongo delivered a powerful motivational address that inspired learners to pursue their passions, while DJ Tira kept the atmosphere lively and energetic with his performance.

EWC extends its sincere appreciation to the Gauteng Department of Education – Ekurhuleni South and North Districts, as well as to all partnering organisations for their support and endorsement. The event empowered future leaders with knowledge, confidence, and inspiration to make informed decisions about their academic and professional journeys.

By hosting this Career Fair, Ekurhuleni West TVET College reaffirmed its commitment to transforming lives and building futures through quality education. As a beacon of excellence

in technical and vocational training, EWC continues to prepare students for successful careers in an ever-evolving global economy.



Somizi Mhlongo motivating learners attending the exhibition

Driving Change Through Skills: Gauteng and Free State TVET and CET Colleges Lead the Way

Supplied by Patience Makhaphela



Gauteng Free State TVET and CET colleges Marketing and Communicators Forum members

From the heart of Bloemfontein to the bustling streets of Springs, a powerful movement recently swept across Gauteng and the Free State Province. The Drive-by Campaign for TVET and CET colleges was more than a roadshow. It was a declaration that vocational and community education is not a fallback, but a first-choice pathway for South Africa's youth.

Over five days, branded vehicles and passionate teams travelled through townships, rural areas, and city centres, spreading a unified message: skills-based education builds futures. Led by the Gauteng Free State TVET and CET Colleges Marketing and Communication Forum (GFSMCF), the campaign brought together 12 TVET colleges and two CET colleges in a regional alliance committed to reshaping public perceptions of technical and vocational learning.

The campaign officially launched at Motheo TVET College's National Artisan Development Academy

(NADA), a beacon of hope for young people who are Not in Education, Employment, or Training (NEET). From Bloemfontein to Welkom, Kroonstad to Johannesburg, and finally Springs, the initiative reached more than 20 000 people, including learners, educators, parents, and community leaders.

Each stop featured career guidance sessions, live demonstrations, and alumni success stories, bringing the promise of TVET and CET education to life. The campaign's unique mix of hall-based presentations and class-to-class activations ensured both wide visibility and personal engagement. Learners received programme brochures, information on funding, and one-on-one guidance from college representatives.

Student Support Services played a vital role, assisting participants with National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) and offering insight into campus life, reinforcing the message that TVET and CET

colleges are accessible, inclusive, and empowering. The campaign also leveraged digital platforms, using TikTok challenges, Instagram reels, and Facebook stories to extend its impact far beyond the physical route.

At its core, the Drive-by Campaign was a cultural shift. A call to honour artisans, innovators, and creators as key drivers of South Africa's progress. It reminded communities that the hands shaping metal and wiring circuits are just as vital as those signing contracts or drafting policies. As the final convoy arrived at Ekurhuleni East TVET College (Benoni Campus), the sense of momentum was undeniable. The GFSMCF now aims to inspire other provinces to replicate this powerful initiative and build a national movement of TVET and CET champions.

Because when education meets community, and purpose meets passion, change does not just happen, it drives forward.



Baloi Labase from Maluti TVET addressing learners at Alex High School during the Drive-by Campaign

EWC's Open Bus Blitz: Empowering Communities through TVET Education

Supplied by David Muleele

In October, the Ekurhuleni West TVET College (EWC) embarked on an "Open Bus Blitz" to promote its College offerings. The campaign has been a huge success, with EWC staff engaging with potential students in key locations such as Alberton, Boksburg, Kempton Park, Germiston, Kathorus, and Tembisa.

The campaign was aimed at informing prospective students and the public about the college's programmes, application processes for the 2026 academic year, assist with National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) funding applications for the 2026 academic year, and encouraging prospective students to choose TVET colleges as a first option for building their futures.

The campaign has made a significant impact in promoting the College and TVET sector as a whole and empowering

communities. By taking education to the people, EWC was sparking an interest in TVET education, and motivating a new generation of prospective students to consider TVET as a viable and attractive option for their future careers. EWC's Open Bus Blitz demonstrates the college's commitment to empowering communities through education. The campaign's success was a result of the collaborative efforts of EWC staff and the Marketing and Communications division.

TVET colleges play a critical role in providing students with the skills and knowledge required to succeed in the workplace. With the TVET sector transformation, EWC is changing the way colleges deliver education by phasing out NATED/Report 191 courses and introducing occupational programmes. The Bus Campaign was one of the ways of informing and promoting occupational programmes,

which provide students with more relevant and industry-specific training, increasing their employability and entrepreneurship opportunities.

Communities were also informed about the importance of TVET colleges, including its offerings, hands-on training and practical experience, preparing students for the workplace, TVET graduates being in high demand, with many employers seeking skilled and trained professionals, and TVET students gaining the skills and knowledge required to start their own businesses and become entrepreneurs. By engaging and informing the community about the importance of TVET colleges and the transformation to occupational programmes. Let's keep spreading the word about the TVET sector and empowering our communities through education!



Flora Matloa, Marketing Official, explaining different career paths offered by the College



David Muleele, Marketing and Communication Manager, sharing information about the College offerings

Colleges Shine at the Solar and Storage Expo

Supplied by Roshin Schmidt



College students and lecturer with the Premier of the Western Cape, Alan Winde at the Soland & Storage Live Expo

West Coast and False Bay TVET colleges proudly showcased their renewable energy training programmes at the Solar and Storage Expo, held on 15 and 16 October 2025 at the Cape Town International Convention Centre (CTICC). The Expo attracted strong interest from learners, industry professionals, and the public, eager to explore how TVET colleges are preparing students for opportunities in South Africa's expanding green economy.

Thanks to sponsorship from the Department of Economic Development and Tourism (DEDAT), both colleges secured exhibition space to highlight their Solar Photovoltaic Technology (SPVT) training programmes and engage with learners, professionals, and stakeholders. Akhona Winisi, SPVT facilitator at False Bay College, said the event was both inspiring and valuable.

"We attended the expo with learners from both colleges to showcase our renewable energy training and explore alignment with evolving occupational qualifications. These engagements opened possibilities for academic linkages that could benefit students pursuing advanced studies in solar energy," she shared.

From West Coast College, recruiter Bonke Mzolo noted that the experience opened doors for collaboration. "The expo positioned our College among industry pioneers and created opportunities for work placements and student exchanges, including with an international stakeholder from India. Such exposure strengthens our reputation as a forward-thinking institution in solar training," Mzolo said.

The Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), in partnership with the Quality Council for Trades

and Occupations (QCTO), is currently phasing out traditional NATED (Report 191) programmes to introduce occupational qualifications that better align with industry needs. The Expo provided a valuable platform to discuss this transition and how it will ensure students are equipped with relevant, practical skills for the renewable energy sector.

DEDAT representative Melissa Parker, reaffirmed the province's commitment to developing green skills. "This partnership demonstrates that the Western Cape Government means business when it comes to skills development and creating a sustainable provincial economy," she said.

The Solar & Storage Expo successfully highlighted the crucial role of TVET colleges in driving innovation, strengthening industry partnerships, and preparing youth for a greener future.



higher education & training

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