



higher education & training

Department:
Higher Education and Training
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

MEDIA STATEMENT

It's cool to be a 21st Century Artisan

Mossel Bay, 28 August 2015: Today, the Deputy Minister of Higher Education and Training, Mr Mduzuzi Manana, MP, motivated over 1000 high school learners and youth not in education or training (NEET) to consider career paths in artisanship as it is cool to be an artisan in the 21st century.

This drive will assist the nation to produce a more skilled workforce in the future as well as contribute to our economic growth and development', said Manana.

The campaign was the Western Cape leg of Deputy Minister Manana's flagship project of the Decade of the artisan (2014-2024) where he travels to provinces to advocate about artisanship to youth, learners and employers.

The campaign aims to encourage more young people (high school learners and unemployed youth) to see artisanship as a career of choice. The slogan of the Decade of the Artisan is, *'it's cool to be a 21st century artisan'*.

Deputy Minister Manana said 'as government, in particular the Ministry of Higher Education, our mandate is to establish a post-school education and training system that is responsive to needs of individual citizens and of employers in public and private sectors, as well as broader societal and developmental objectives'.

It is strategic that the campaign is hosted by TVET Colleges. The department of Higher Education and Training (DHET's) high priority is to strengthen and expand

the public TVET colleges so that they become institutions of choice for young people. Key objectives in strengthening colleges include; improving access, throughput rates, management capacity, student support services, and student accommodation, developing management information systems and building partnerships with employers. Government expects that TVET colleges will become the cornerstone of the country's acute skills shortage. Ms Elsie Potgieter, the Principal of South Cape TVET College welcomed the initiative to have been launched at her College.

The Sector Education and Training Authority's (SETAs) play a vital role in facilitating workplace learning partnerships between employers and educational institutions. The Deputy Minister thanked the CATHSSETA for hosting the event together with the South Cape TVET College.

Mr Otto speaking on behalf of the employers made a call to other employers in all sectors to support the Decade of the artisan. He said 'employers have a huge role to play in artisan development'.

Ends

About the Decade of the Artisan

There is a continuous need for suitably qualified artisans to sustain industries and support economic growth within South Africa. In a range of national strategies the need for artisans has been elevated and identified as a priority area for skills development. While the National Development Plan indicates that by 2030 the country should be producing 30 000 qualified artisans per year, this target has been brought forward by the 2014 – 2020 Medium Term Strategic Framework to 31 March 2026. At present the country is producing on average 13 000 qualified artisans per year and so the number has to more than double in the next twelve years leading up to 2026.

To achieve such a significant growth not only needs considerable investment and commitment by all artisan development role players with a special focus on workplaces in South Africa, but will also require sustained, committed and high profile political leadership. Such political leadership has been put into place through the personal intervention of the Minister of Higher Education and Training, Dr. Blade Nzimande, and the Deputy Minister of Higher Education and Training, Mr. Mduduzi Manana.

To this end there should be more focus on:

- Engaging employers to ensure more workplaces are opened up for artisan learners;
- Training of life orientation, community development workers, ward councillors and the Colleges career guidance advisors on artisanal careers
- To expose learners from academic schools to technical and vocational; learning from as early as a Grade 6 level through interactive “try a skill” exhibits.

Issued by the Department of Higher Education and Training.

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