

MEDIA STATEMENT

15 June 2022

DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING SUCCESSFULLY HOSTS THE WORLDSKILLS SOUTH AFRICA BIENNIAL NATIONAL COMPETITION, CONFERENCE AND NATIONAL ARTISAN CAREER FESTIVAL

“As the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), we are hosting the biennial WorldSkills South Africa National Competition as an important mechanism of promoting artisan skills as a viable career choice as well as to open up potential partnerships with industry. This WorldSkills South Africa (WSZA) National Competition was preceded by Regional Competitions which provided critical platforms for us to select our competitors. Through these regional competitions we were also able to assess the levels of our apprenticeships and artisan development in addition to advocating for the uptake of artisan careers as careers of first choice by our students”, said Minister Nzimande at the opening ceremony of the WorldSkills National Competition, Conference and Career Festival in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal.

Hosted under the theme “Ratcheting up the production of 21st Century Artisans”, the 2022 WSZA National Competition incorporated a two day WSZA Conference at the Inkosi Albert Luthuli International Convention Centre and a Career Festival which took place Mgungundlovu, Esayidi and Mthatshana TVET Colleges, respectively.

The career festivals were preceded by marketing blitz in all the three hosting townships. The intention of the blitz was to provide information to the community about the career festivals, but also to educate the communities about WSZA and opportunities the programme provides to the youth of South Africa, particularly Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) students through its competitions. The aim is also always to reduce the stigma related to artisan careers, provide information on artisan careers and possible career prospects. At the opening ceremony, the Executive Mayor of eThekweni, Cllr Kaunda emphasised Minister Mzimande’s sentiments. He said the WSZA national competition is in line with the vision of government to work with industry and business to transfer skills to local communities. “We are confident that partnerships with industry and business put us in a better position to boost our efforts to develop today’s market skills”, said Cllr Kaunda.

Director-General, Dr Sishi took the conference through the key and fundamental work or programmes the Department is pursuing in ensuring that it delivers on its mandate and mission to provide national strategic leadership in support of the Post-School Education and Training system for improved quality of life of South Africans. The Director-General spoke extensively about current developments and discussions the department is having with different stakeholders and partners as the department works towards aligning its work to the success of the entire post-school

education and training system. The Director-General also used the opportunity to invite business and potential partners to work with the Department in driving its vision.

“Ladies and gentlemen, we have a plan. As the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Innovation, we have what we call a decadal plan which ensures that the HESI, which is the Higher Education, Science and Innovation system reaches its full objectives as set out in our strategic documents. I want to call upon the delegates of this conference to please interrogate the decadal plan to help us to indeed align the PSET system in the manner that will see all of us achieve the objectives we have set for our sector”, said the Director-General.

The conference was attended by members of the portfolio committee on higher education, science and innovation, led by the chairperson, Ms Nompandolo Mkhathshwa who commended the competitors for their courage to reach the national competition stage where they’d compete for a shot at the international stage. Also in attendance at the conference were Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) and Community Education and Training (CET) Colleges Principals and college councils members, Sector Education and Training Authority (SETA) chairpersons and Chief Executive Officers, members of organised labour and business and other entities of the Department of Higher Education and Training. Indeed the conference was used as a launching pad for the promulgated National Apprenticeship and Artisan Development Strategy 2030 as it allowed a variety of inputs on the direction the country needs to take in closing the gaps or blockages skilling young people in the country.

At the closing ceremony, the Director-General said “WorldSkills South Africa has become a flagship programme for the entire country and thanks to our colleagues who would, I am sure, agree that they would not have done this great job had it not been for the actual participants or competitors in this programme”.

The competition kicked-off on 7 – 10 June at the Durban Exhibition Centre. The four-day long activities saw students from universities of technology, different employers and colleges across the country wrestle it out in different skills categories for the number one spot that would secure them an opportunity to participate at the international competition.

While the results for all other skills are out, only twenty four (24) out of thirty (30) skills which were initially planned for the competition, were competed in. The skill Cyber Security had to be taken off the competition list while the skill Additive Manufacturing was only an exhibition skill at the competition.

Competition dates for the four (4) remaining skills (Car painting, Heavy Vehicle Technology, Autobody Repair, Electrical Installations) will be announced in due course.

The link below provides the WSZA 2022 National Competition Results.

<https://www.dhet.gov.za/SiteAssets/Latest%20News/WSZA%20National%20Competition%20Results.pdf>

Enquiries:

William Somo
Somo.William@dhet.gov.za
072 270 1487

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