



GAUTENG PROVINCE

EDUCATION
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

MEDIA STATEMENT

To: All Media

Att: News Editors

For immediate release

28 January 2013

Gauteng learners rewarded for their hard work

Gauteng Premier Nomvula Mokonyane handed over 1200 bursaries worth R128-million over the next three years to top three learners in no-fee paying schools in the province.

Addressing over 1000 learners at Turffontein Racecourse this morning Premier Mokonyane said the government had made great strides to improve the lives of our people with education as the number one priority.

“Today’s historic event is not about celebrating the results only but accelerating the implementation of the Gauteng Master Skills Plan, which is driven through the Gauteng City Region Academy (GCRA). Through this programme the government invests in young people by providing them with bursaries to access institutions of higher learning to pursue their academic careers.

“Increased access to Institutions of Higher Learning provides young people with relevant skills that are required in the labour market, and that will increase and sustain a pool of economically relevant skills. The positive results are that it will thus eradicate poverty and halve the unemployment rate in the province,” Premier Mokonyane said.

The bursaries are worth R50 000 per learner and they cover tuition fees, accommodation and prescribed textbooks. This bursary project was launched in 2008 targeting 1500 beneficiaries. Since then the department has approved and provided bursaries to 6 915 learners.

The project has managed to produce more graduates that actually complete the qualification and find employment after the completion of their qualification.

The bursary project directly relates to the National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS) III which seeks to encourage and actively support the

integration of workplace training with theoretical learning. The NSDS III aims to facilitate the journey individuals make from school, college or university to sustained employment and in-work progression.

In 2010, the Gauteng Provincial Government has adopted the Gauteng Skills Master Plan to identify scarce and critical skills needed for the economic growth of the province. The pillars of the strategy include strengthening the capacity of the education system in province; continue targeted interventions for responding to the skills needs of Government in Gauteng; enable the economic growth of the province through education; and partner with key sector organisations to respond to the skills priorities in Gauteng.

Terry Simelane a, learner who received a GCRA bursary in 2011 encouraged the new bursars to work hard as university is not easy. "Life at university can be very stressful but use opportunities to participate in various sports and activities that are available. You should also network and make friends," said Simelane.

Simelane, from Eldorado Park south of Johannesburg passed her first year at the University of Pretoria very well. She is studying Bachelor of Arts majoring in linguistics.

For more information contact the Gauteng Department of Education's Head of Communication, Charles Phahlane on 011 355 1530 or 071 860 4496.

Issued by the Gauteng Department of Education

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