



INTERNET ARTICLE

Thengwe High School pupil wins Limpopo's South African Water Youth Prize

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The Department of Water and Sanitation in Limpopo hosted this year's South African Youth Water Prize provincial adjudications, which saw a huge interest from learners across the province who wanted to be part of the solution to this country's water and sanitation challenges. The competition was held at the end of April, in Seshego, outside Polokwane.

Uatshila Munenyiwa, a 16 year old pupil from Thengwe High School in the Vhembe District, came out as a provincial champion after choosing to participate in the inventory category and will be representing the province in the upcoming nationals to be hosted in Gauteng later in May.

The learners tasked to identify a problem in their community or school and propose a solution to the problem, demonstrated some research skills and knowledge of the sector in their presentations and showed interest in the environment around them.

Ranging from innovations about reusing of grey water, river water purification, water conservation and protection of water sources – pupils also touched on issues around hygiene, healthy lifestyle and the effects of loadshedding on water and sanitation services especially in rural areas.

Munenyiwa impressed judges with her inventory – promising to be a viable solution to her current school crisis of shortages of water due to loadshedding facing the country. She says toilets are not fully functional during power cuts which lead to water cuts, resulting to a bad smell and unhygienic ablution facilities in her school.

Her technical innovation, using solar pannels and an LED light when the weather isn't favorable, won her school first place - beating ten other schools that participated on the day. Among the schools Thengwe High School was up against were some of the high performing schools in the province including Mbilwi High School, SJ Van Der Merwe and Dendron High school - represented by a maximum of two pupils each while Munenyiwa was flying solo.

The competition, aimed at encouraging and empowering the youth to participate in integrated and community-based water resource management, is held at provincial levels then proceeds to the nationals and then goes international at the Stockholm Junior Water Prize to be held in Stockholm, Sweden, during World Water Week in August.

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