



## INTERNET ARTICLE

### **Nonduduzo attains position three in South African Youth Water Prize national adjudications**

12 June 2024

Nonduduzo Maseko from Middelburg Muslim School in Steve Tshwete Local Municipality, in the Nkangala District of the Mpumalanga Province, attained third position in the national adjudications of the South African Youth Water Prize (SAYWP) competition held on 07 June 2024. She was representing the Mpumalanga Province after becoming the provincial champion during the provincial adjudications.

For her efforts, Nonduduzo who is currently in Grade 9 secured herself a bursary from the department, a laptop to assist in her studies and research endeavours and some cash prize.

Her project focused on the effects of acid rain. "Acid rain is any type of precipitation with a high ph value. It is harmful to agriculture, aquatic life forms and the human respiratory system. The reason behind my research is that acid rain negatively affects people around me and myself in different ways. I hope that by doing this project and conducting research, I can make a change. The research aims to fill the gap in scientific knowledge about the effects of acid rain on agriculture and humans on a small scale. Another objective is to reduce the effect of acid rain on agriculture by favouring alkalinity in the plant as cell, she stated".

Her advice and motivation to other young people is simple and straightforward. "In research, there will always be limitations and errors but it is important to keep trying because as a young scientist, your innovation might be just what the world needs", she advised.

Nonduduzo feels very privileged to have participated in the national competition and met other wonderful and talented learners from the other different provinces of the country. "I feel very privileged to have met such talented young people. Being third amongst them was something I never could have even dreamt of achieving. I have learned to always take any challenge head on because nothing is impossible", she said.

The SAYWP is an educational competition of the Department of Water and Sanitation aimed at Grade 9 to 11 learners not older than 20 years. The participating learners must be individuals or groups of not more than two and they must be innovative and passionate about water and the environment. The participants must identify problems related to water in their school or community and take action that includes initiating a project, do research,

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recommend solutions, and develop a model or invention that will solve the identified problem.

The Water and Sanitation Education Programme (WSEP) aims to educate learners about water use efficiency, protection of water resources, health and hygiene, invasive alien plants and encourage them to pursue careers in the water sector. It is one of the most important initiatives in ensuring that water and sanitation education is achieved within the public schooling system to encourage water literacy and change the attitudes and behaviour of learners towards wise water use and to value water. The WSEP is implemented through the following projects: Baswa Le Meetse, South African Youth Water Prize, Aqua Enduro, Public Speaking, Curriculum Support, Intervention Projects, Career Promotion and Celebration of Special Days.

Nonduduzo is now an ambassador of water conservation and she promised to spread the message of using water sparingly and wisely, and the protection of water resources to her friends, family members and the community at large. “Conserve water as much as you can, find new ways to use water wisely, look at issues that are currently challenging in your area and find new ways to preserve water and water resources. I would encourage more young people to enter this competition so that they can share more ideas and contribute to water security in the country. South Africa is a water scarce country, so we must all conserve water to ensure water supply security”, she said.

**Themba Khoza**

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