



## INTERNET ARTICLE

### **Six Grade 11 Learners from Gauteng claim the first prize in Aqua Enduro category**

13 October 2022

Gauteng learners walked away as big winners in the Aqua Enduro category during the National Adjudication Competitions held recently at Birchwood Hotel and Conference Centre in Boksburg.

This is part of the Department's flagship youth programme known as Water and Sanitation Education Programme which gives a platform to young people to develop innovations that will assist the water and sanitation sector. Furthermore, the programme encourages young people to develop an interest in the water and sanitation sector and bridge the skills gap.

To this end, six grade 11 learners triumphed and walked away with fully funded bursaries from the Department of Water and Sanitation to study at the University of their choice upon completing their matric.

Domica Poonen (17) from Liverpool Secondary School, Elois Jansen (17) from Hoerskool Kempton Park, Bonolo Mokgobowanama (16) from Moletsane Secondary School, Boitumelo Meletse (17) from Moletsane Secondary School, Unarine Nevilimadi (17) from Supero Secondary School and Mpho Ndou (17) from Pretoria Glan Secondary School trounced their counterparts from other schools across the country to claim the prize.

The Chief Director Inter-Governmental Relations, Sector Transformation and Provincial Coordination, Ms Petunia Ramunenyiwa, believes active youth involvement in the water and sanitation sector is the only remedy to address a myriad of challenges facing the sector.

Addressing learners during the National Adjudication Award Ceremony, Ramunenyiwa said it is important to empower the youth so that they can play an active role in tackling the problems facing the sector.

The programme 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 value water.

The programme engages learners and educators on various educational projects where they identify water and sanitation related challenges in their schools and communities, conduct research, come up with recommendation and implement solutions. The WSEP was implemented through the following projects: Baswa Le Meetsi, Aqua Enduro, Public Speaking, Curriculum Support, Intervention Projects, Career Promotion and Celebration of Special Days.

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## water & sanitation

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Speaking to the Gauteng Aqua Enduro Team leader Ms Elois Jansen said,

“I will forever be grateful for the opportunity presented by the department. Not only has it broadened my mind to become more innovative, but it also provided a platform for me to engage with other learners who are talented and innovative,” said an excited Jansen, a 17-year-old learner from Hoerskool Kempton Park.

Visibly impressed, the Gauteng Provincial coordinator, Ms Reshoketswe Malepe, encouraged both educators and learners to “hold hands and continue working together. outlined the importance of leaving the venue as winners, a result that will encourage more school participation from other school learners from the Gauteng region.

“We expect more schools and more learners in Gauteng to take part in the next year’s Water and Sanitation Education Programme because South Africa needs all of us to make it better. Not only are we doing it for us, but we are also doing it for the future generation.

**TSHIGOFATSO MASHILE**

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