

ISSUE 14 December 2011

# Achieve

LEADERS IN CLOSING THE SKILLS GAP

## merSETA-BUILDING ON PREVIOUS **SUCCESS**

merSETA Partnership Yields Big Fruit  
in Maths and Science



**merSETA**  
MANUFACTURING, ENGINEERING  
AND RELATED SERVICES SETA  
ISO 9001:2008

TALKING NOTES | A VIEW FROM THE TOP | EVENTS OF THE QUARTER



# Vision

leaders in closing the skills gap

# Mission

facilitating sustainable  
development of skills,  
transformation and  
accelerating growth in  
manufacturing, engineering  
and related services



**merSETA**  
MANUFACTURING, ENGINEERING  
AND RELATED SERVICES SETA  
ISO 9001:2008



#### ON THE COVER

Mr Wayne Adams  
merSETA Chief Operations  
officer



PG. 15

Team SA Remarkable  
improvement



PG. 22

Celebrating historic milestone



PG. 29

UD Trucks proves its mettle  
in skills development

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UD Trucks

# TalkingNotes

After the hard work achieving what we set out for at the beginning of the year, it is now time to take stock. All stakeholders had objectives, and some of the objectives were met while others were not.

**T**he break gives us time to profoundly reflect and make amends. We need to improve continuously and set the bar higher.

Being at the coal face of skills development gives us a clear understanding of what is expected. Though we have recorded notable success, we are mindful that more needs to be done to overcome challenges that threaten to impede progress in accelerating skills development.

We can never sit on our laurels -- we always need to strive for innovation as well as being consistently strategic in our approach. The recess gives us time to take stock, and ensure that we come back recharged and ready to deliver the best service to you, our clients.

Getting back to business, we talk to our Chief Operations Officer, Mr Wayne Adams. He takes us through NSDS III and how the merSETA will implement the strategy.

We report back on the WorldSkills competition that was held in London recently. More needs to be done to galvanise support and market the competition vigorously. Competing with the world's best is a matter of national interest and it should be afforded the appropriate status in our country.

Moving on, the Department of Higher Education and Training held its first skills conference. It is heartening that the Minister of Higher Education and Training, Dr Blade Nzimande, painted a positive picture of what his department is doing to address the skills shortage, especially among

young people. The conference also dealt with the recently signed national skills accord which seeks to accommodate learners who have completed their qualifications but cannot get practical training.

Lastly, we bring you up to speed with events that took place in this quarter.

From all of us at the merSETA, we take this opportunity to wish you and your families a glorious festive season and a splendid new year. For all those travelling, please be cautious on the road and look after yourselves.

Till next year...

Be blessed!



Sibongiseni  
Zinjiva Ka-Mnguni  
Editor



# A view FROM THE TOP

All indications are that our economy is again growing, with latest data showing that we have surpassed the low growth rates of the past two years.

Statistics South Africa says South Africa's manufacturing output grew by 7.7% year-on-year in volume terms in September this year compared with a revised 5.9% expansion in August.

**A**t the same time, retail sales jumped 8.3 percent in September compared to the same month the previous year. And with the festive season taken into account, but whose figures will only surface in January, retail sales are expected to rise by about 10 percent compared to the previous year - all this on the back of a debilitating economic season for the European economy.

Analysts say the automotive industry is the largest contributor to this manufacturing output increase. And they are the biggest contributor to merSETA's levy income.

In the period January - October 2011, total market sales of vehicles were 476 724 compared to the 409 134 for the same period in January-October 2010. The economy grew an annualised 1.3 percent in the second quarter after a contraction in mining and manufacturing.

These figures suggest optimism about our economic growth despite a host of factors affecting output, including the severe downturn in Europe's economy and the labour disputes that struck our industries in July this year.

A factor that caused our slow growth was the two-week stoppage by about 320 000 workers in the metal industry in July that saw the engineering, packaging, chemical and petroleum sectors down tools for 18 days.

We are still Africa's largest economy, and we are steadily recovering from the slowest growth in almost two years of the worldwide slump.

The manufacturing sector, especially the automotive industry, contributes about 15% of gross domestic product (GDP) with more than 500 000 jobs.

Statistics South Africa says our GDP rose by 2.7% in 2001, 3.7% in 2002, 3.1% in 2003, 4.9% in 2004,

5% in 2005, 5.4% in 2006, 5.1% in 2007 and 3.1% in 2008.

Predictions are that we might reach 4.5 percent for the year 2011.

While we have shedded jobs since the world slump began in 2008, we are still endowed with the necessary prerequisites to ensure economic growth.

The country has abundant natural resources, well-developed financial, legal, communications, energy and transport sectors, a stock exchange ranked among the top 20 in the world, and a modern infrastructure supporting efficient distribution of goods throughout the southern African region, government analysis points out.

Our entry into the Bric stable (Brazil, Russia, India and China) is a major boost as it places us squarely in the emerging markets portfolio. This then allows for us to engage export markets that are worth trillions of dollars.

Naamsa expects car sales for 2011 to rise between 16-18 percent compared to 2010, with higher export volumes.

We are surely on the high road to sustained economic growth.



Dr R Patel  
CEO merSETA



# SKILLS CONFERENCE GETS THUMBS UP

By Achieve Correspondent

Skills development became a winner when the National Skills Authority (NSA) and the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) hosted a conference under the theme: Investing in skills to secure a better future for all.

**M**ore than 1000 delegates attended the conference which sought to address challenges facing post-school education. The conference attracted academics, providers, community, organised labour and organised business.

**The objectives of the conference were to:**

- Deepen understanding of the post school system;
- Strengthen skills development in the post-school system;
- Fast track artisan development and encourage international practice on skills development;
- Promote youth, women and people with disabilities for productive work and inclusive growth; and
- Re-skilling those retrenched (skills development for the growth of the economy and creation of jobs).

Addressing a high powered conference delegation, Minister of Higher Education and Training, Dr Blade Nzimande, noted several successes of the DHET. "Over the last two years, the DHET has made strides in creating a new institutional framework



Minister of Higher Education and Training Dr Blade Nzimande addressing the skills conference

– I am proud to say the department is fully established and hard at work. We have made strides in strengthening the SETA model and enforced relations by ensuring that SETAs work closely with Further Education and Training (FET) Colleges, while also ensuring SETA boards are manageable."

Dr Nzimande said the DHET had undertaken to synergise all quality councils that drive young people into a cul-de-sac – where young people pass at FET colleges yet they cannot be accepted at universities or university of technology.

"We recently signed a national skills accord that will see students, who require further training as apprentices, get the opportunity to be trained. Government has already put money in place to ensure that training and development becomes a reality.

"Every workplace must be a training space both in the public and private sector -- even the municipalities must be spaces for training and development," elaborated Dr Nzimande.

Acknowledging challenges faced by post-school education in South Africa, Dr Nzimande said vocational training should be at the centre of skills development, although more still need to be done in changing the attitude of learners opting to go to a university instead of an FET College.

Speaking on the challenge of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), Dr Nzimande said in order to respond to developmental challenges – stakeholders need to engage robustly and constructively around RPL. "You can't have a post-school without RPL," commented Dr Nzimande.

Professor Peliwe Lolwana, from the University of Witwatersrand, said a systematic plan for the education of out-of-school youth and adults is required.

"There's a need to ensure that there are increased linkages between institutions of learning and the workplace. This should assist with lecturer development, curricula development, assessment (external), and placement of learners," pointed out Prof Lolwana.

SETAs needed to play a far more active role in enabling these linkages and simplifying processes, she said.

With the objectives of the conference clearly articulated and understood by all, all eyes will now be on the role of stakeholders, and the implementation of resolutions.



anti-clockwise from top: COSATU President Mr Sdumo Dlamini, Department of Higher Education and Training Director - General Mr Gwebinkundla Qonde and merSETA representatives

**"We recently signed a national skills accord that will see students, who require further training as apprentices, get the opportunity to be trained. Government has already put money in place to ensure that training and development becomes a reality...."**

# merSETA - BUILDING ON PREVIOUS SUCCESS

By Sibongiseni Ziinjiva Ka-Mnguni

Building on previous success, the merSETA is eagerly facing the challenges lying ahead. In this interview, merSETA Chief Operations Officer Mr Wayne Adams unveils a bold plan to lure the future generation of artisans and engineers into the manufacturing and engineering sector.

**W**hen the Minister of Higher Education and Training Dr Blade Nzimande unveiled the National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS) III last year, it was clear that it is not business as usual in the Skills development environment.

“For the first time, the skills strategy talks to the needs of the economy as well as the broader social imperatives – it is more qualitatively-driven. The previous system contributed towards the exploitation by some service providers and organisations, the emphasis being on the number of learners trained, irrespective of whether they were employed or not

“With artisan development being the exception in terms of targets, the NSDS III now asks how we implement Sector Skills Plan (SSP) in our sector. There’s clear focus on how we can contribute holistically and address the 10 priority areas as identified by the strategy, with more emphasis on rural development and career guidance.

“From the strategy it is clear that we cannot drive NSDS III with the same vehicle. We need to align our approach and further engage internally on how best to roll-out the new strategy. It goes without saying that there will be changes and we need to prepare ourselves,” commented Mr Adams.

“For instance, on NQF Level one, there was little practical element built into the qualification, and now it provides us with an opportunity to improve on what we didn’t do well in the previous strategy.

He further remarked that the strategy is needs orientated, and this will ensure that training is driven by the needs of the sector and the economy. The strategy ensures the employability of people that are being trained, and similarly provides an opportunity to be flexible as markets change from time to time.

Commenting on changes regarding the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QTCO), Mr Adams is adamant there are certain functions that will move from ETQA, not only at merSETA, but across all the SETAs.

“We envisage minor changes in the short to medium term. What is going to be important for us is how we manage the change without major interruptions with regards to workflow. SETAs need to work closely with the QTCO as functions like accreditation and certification will be centralised.

“As soon as we know what will be delegated to us, we will then embark upon a major communication campaign to explain the amendments and implications to all our stakeholders.”

Mr Adams believes the changes will present merSETA with an opportunity to be truly innovative.

“Two things are imperative -- obviously to focus on our niche market - artisan and rural development. There are a lot of unexplored opportunities from the rural perspective and we need to make sure we provide sustainable jobs, entice learners, lure more women into the sector, and forge partnerships with the FET and HET sectors to ensure we maximise available resources.

“We need to explore avenues that contribute positively, particularly in artisan and engineering development. We need to employ different programmes for different interventions as well as source funding for training from other avenues.”

Mr Adams also believes in progression: “We need to explore progression from FET to higher education and find ways to have a seamless progression from FET to HET. We also need to ensure that NQF Level 5 provides progression without compromising the quality of training.





Chief Operations Officer Mr Wayne Adams

**“As soon as we know what will be delegated to us, we will then embark on a major communication campaign to explain changes and implications to all our stakeholders.”**

The learner exiting our training must be much sought after,” adds Mr Adams.

He points out that funds allocated to merSETA are geared towards training, and if companies do not make use of mandatory grants, these funds will be transferred to discretionary grants to reach more people.

Commenting on the Sector Skills Plan (SSP), Mr Adams remarked that this will ensure merSETA positively contributes to the achievement of government’s priorities relating to artisan development by producing adequate artisans and engineers.

Mr Adams points out that in order for the country to produce artisans and engineers, more concerted and robust career guidance is required.

The “wheels in motion project” initiated by the merSETA in Northern Cape, where youngsters from participating schools, are building a car from scratch is a case in point. It shows that learners are exposed to training linked to merSETA unit standards and qualifications whilst being in school.

He also makes mention of a try-a-skill concept, where learners are given an opportunity to try their skills first hand and mentioned the merSETA conference and the Automechanika exhibition as some of the merSETA initiatives to market and make engineering a career of choice.

He also sang the praises of the Science, Engineering and Technology project (SET), another merSETA project aimed at increasing the pool of science and technology candidates. He says SET serves as a pipeline to close the skills gap in the manufacturing and engineering sector. The project has recorded

remarkable success in the previous year.

As the strategy advocates for partnerships with different organisations, especially public FET Colleges, Mr Adams says it shows merSETA is a progressive SETA.

“merSETA started partnerships long before the introduction of NSDS III and plans to maintain its leadership in the SETA fraternity as a thought leader.” He says the challenge is for companies to open their factories to youngsters to know and understand the industry through industrial tourism.

Asked about transformation in the sector, Mr Adams admits it is still male dominated – with women and disabled persons still occupying the lower levels in the sector.

“The structure in factories has to accommodate more females and disabled persons. We have to determine what kind of disabled people are suitable for certain jobs within our sector.

Another challenge we are faced with is to ensure the progression of elementary workers into the upper level, in line with the Workplace Skills Plan and Employment Equity Plan”.

“We are embarking on a long journey and there is hard work ahead, but we take comfort in facing the challenge as a collective, and making a meaningful contribution towards the lives of our people.

We will build on what we have achieved, and our philosophy remains “Customer is King”. We must not only meet but exceed stakeholder expectations, and also maximise the return on investments made into training,” concluded Mr Adams.

# INTRODUCING: NEW merSETA GOVERNING BOARD MEMBERS



Name	Phindile
Surname	Nzimande
Designation	Chairperson of the Governing Board
Constituency	Ministerial Appointee

**Board member background and experience:** After graduating with a B Proc and an LLB from Wits University and serving articles, Phindile Nzimande became a Professional Assistant at Wright Rose Innes, Germiston. An admitted Attorney and Conveyancer, she joined a law firm in Pretoria for a year and left legal practice in 1994 to take up a role in government as Strategic Management Team Legal Advisor to the then Gauteng MEC for Housing and Local Government.

In 1996, Phindile joined the Metropolitan Council of Johannesburg where she held a number of key positions and was ultimately appointed the Executive Director of Contract Management for the City of Joburg in 2001, which entailed managing and regulating the relationship between the City and its Municipal owned entities.

In June 2003, Phindile accepted a fresh career challenge as CEO of EDI holdings, the state owned company tasked with project managing the restructuring of the electricity distribution industry in the Country, Which essentially entails merging the distribution division of Eskom and electricity departments of municipalities and thereafter carving the entire industry into six financially viable Regional Electricity Distributors (REDs) throughout the country.

She has served on a number of boards such as Nurcha, a presidential lead project established to facilitate investment in the financing of low cost housing, Sanparks and Momentum. She currently serve on the boards of merSETA, Common Purpose and the Wits University Council

Phindile is the proud mother to Thandolwethu. She plans to eventually return to legal practice.



Name	Dana
Surname	De Villiers
Designation	Member of the Governing Board
Constituency	Organised Labour
Education and training	Holds a Bachelors Degree in Commerce from the University of Potchefstroom, Honours in BCom, Industrial Sociology and an MBA from the University of the Free State.
Board member background and experience	Presently Chief Executive Officer of Motor Industry Staff Association (MISA), the position he has held since 2005.



Name	Johan
Surname	Van Niekerk
Designation	Member of the Governing Board
Constituency	Organised Labour
Board member background and experience	General Manager (Human Resources and Management Services, Transnet (Autonet)).  Member of Transnet Bargaining Council, served on Board of Directors for 10 years: Autonet Sub-Divisions.  8 years as Senior Manager UASA  Board member at Sentinel

Name Malebo  
 Surname Mogopodi  
 Designation Member of the Governing Board  
 Constituency Organised Labour  
 Board member background and experience National Skills Co-ordinator at NUMSA



Chairperson of the merSETA's ETQA Functional Standing Committee.

Represents COSATU on the QCTO

Represents NUMSA on the COSATU SETA Forum

Represents Organised Labour on the Artisan, Technician Development Ministerial Technical Task Team.

Name Jeanne  
 Surname Esterhuizen  
 Designation Member of the Governing Board  
 Constituency Organised Employer  
 Board member background and experience: Medium and Small Company Business Owner



Ms Esterhuizen has been in business for 25 years (self employed). Training received in Business and Commercial Accounting, HR&IR, Business information and Management systems, IT & Accounting Software, Corporate Governance, Tax law, LRA, SDA & regulations and Business 24 Different Positions held as Office Bearer held in Retail Motor Industry since 2001 on both Labour and Business side.

RMI FS/NC Chairperson

RMI Board Member

RMI National Labour Chamber Member (VC)/ RMI National Business Chamber member , RMI Wage negotiating team member

RMI National Training Committee Chairperson

ADTTT (HRDC) committee member

SAMBRA FS/NC Chairperson/ SAMBRA GB Member

MIBCO President (National)



Name Alex  
 Surname Mashilo  
 Designation Member of the Governing Board  
 Constituency Ministerial Appointee  
 Education and training Master of Arts (MA) Degree (Wits)  
 (Labour Policy and Globalisation

National Diploma - Engineering

NQF 7 Diploma (GIMT) - Labour Law

Trade Certificate (COTT, now INDLELA - Engineering, Electrician

Senior Certificate and N3 Certificate

Board member background and experience:

Presently working for NUMSA as Head of Department for organising, campaigns and collective bargaining

Previously served in NUMSA as national education officer and head of department of education and training, head of election campaign and spokesperson

Received training and worked in the automotive industry, served since matriculation to date as community activist with focus on youth and matters affecting them, education and training being one.

Previously served in student leadership at institutions level, provincially and nationally in further education and training

Previously served in the energy sector education and training authority

# TEAM SA - REMARKABLE IMPROVEMENT

By Sibongiseni Ziinjiva Ka-Mnguni

**T**eam South Africa came back with their heads high from competing in London at the WorldSkills competition. South Africans vied for top honours in their chosen trades. The competition was held over four days at the ExCel London exhibition centre in the United Kingdom between October 5 and 8.

More than 150 000 visitors graced the event, which saw 944 competitors from throughout the world compete against each other. Team SA sent eight competitors didn't disappoint – the results revealed improvement. Team SA moved up the ranks and is currently ranked 42 out of 48 countries.

WorldSkills is a biennial event that showcases the skills of young people (younger than 23 years) in 46 skills categories including landscape gardening, graphics design, automobile technology, beauty care, welding, mechatronics, refrigeration and floristry to name a few. WorldSkills is open to agencies or bodies promoting vocational education and training in their respective countries/regions.

It provides a unique means of exchange and comparison of world-class competency standards in industrial trades and service sectors of the global economy. The merSETA and Services Seta once again were the driving force behind the country's participation in WorldSkills.

Given the imperative of developing a skilled work force that is employable and globally competitive, the two Setas have been providing the funding and scouting the country for skilled competitors for the competition since 2003.

Commenting about the benefits of participating in the competition, the technical delegate for South Africa, Mr Andre Vermeulen, says it allows for the benchmarking of skills taught in each country against the highest levels in 46 skills areas. This year, South Africa competed in six skills areas

namely welding, mechatronics, autobody repairs, refrigeration, automobile technology and mobile robotics.

"Our young skilled professionals got an opportunity to test their real world skills against the most highly skilled competitors in the world," says Mr Vermeulen. The London competition saw the return of SA's participation in automobile technology and auto-body repairs, two skills areas where we have not competed since 1999.

"The competition was an exploratory one for these skills so that we can touch base with the latest technologies, techniques, processes and assessment procedures internationally in preparation for the 2013 competition.

"As for mechatronics, mobile robotics, refrigeration and welding, this was a third attempt to improve on the results achieved in previous competitions. An enormous effort at great cost due to geographical logistics has gone into the training of competitors; it was now up to them to achieve the best results they can," he explains.

Welder Chris Van Zijl represented South Africa at the 41st WorldSkills Competition and says it was a great honour for him to represent the country. Van Zijl holds the title of The Southern African Institute of Welding (SAIW) 2010 Young Welder of the Year.

"It was a very big break for me and I am privileged to have been afforded an opportunity to represent my country," says the 21 year-old from the Eastern Cape Midlands FET College.

"The competition has helped to raise my profile locally, and competing with the world's best was a dream come through for me."

Besides the eight competitors, the two Setas also sent a delegation of trade experts to the competition as a learning experience. These



Team South Africa

experts brought back to SA new insights regarding latest technologies and trends.

They will also assist in preparing the next generation of WorldSkills competitors and in encouraging more young people to pursue technical and vocational careers – an area where there is a dire shortage of skills.

South Africa is not alone in promoting vocational training and the trades – the biggest name in UK vocational education, City & Guilds, has for the past six years produced the Vocational Rich List. The list charts the wealth of UK millionaires – dubbed “skillionaires” – who made big money while following vocational careers.

“You don’t need to marry into money, appear on Big Brother or go to university to become rich. The City & Guilds Vocational Rich List shows all you need is talent and ambition to become the next ‘Skillionaire’,” Aidan Jones, chief executive of WorldSkills London 2011, commented.

“The competition aims to open people’s eyes and capture people’s imaginations, allowing thousands to discover their career aspirations and show that you can achieve your ambitions through skills.”

The SA delegation consisted of eight competitors, 15 experts, three officials and the head of the

delegation was the merSETA CEO, Dr Raymond Patel.

The eight - man competitor’s team competed in six skills areas: welding – Christiaan van Zijl; Mechatronics – Tulani Mzayidume and Khumbulani Sigenu; mobile robotics – Tremaine Ferrira and Allan van den Berg; refrigeration – Dewet Britz; Auto Body Repair – Tasleem Nicholas; Auto Technology – Frederik Bezuidenhout.

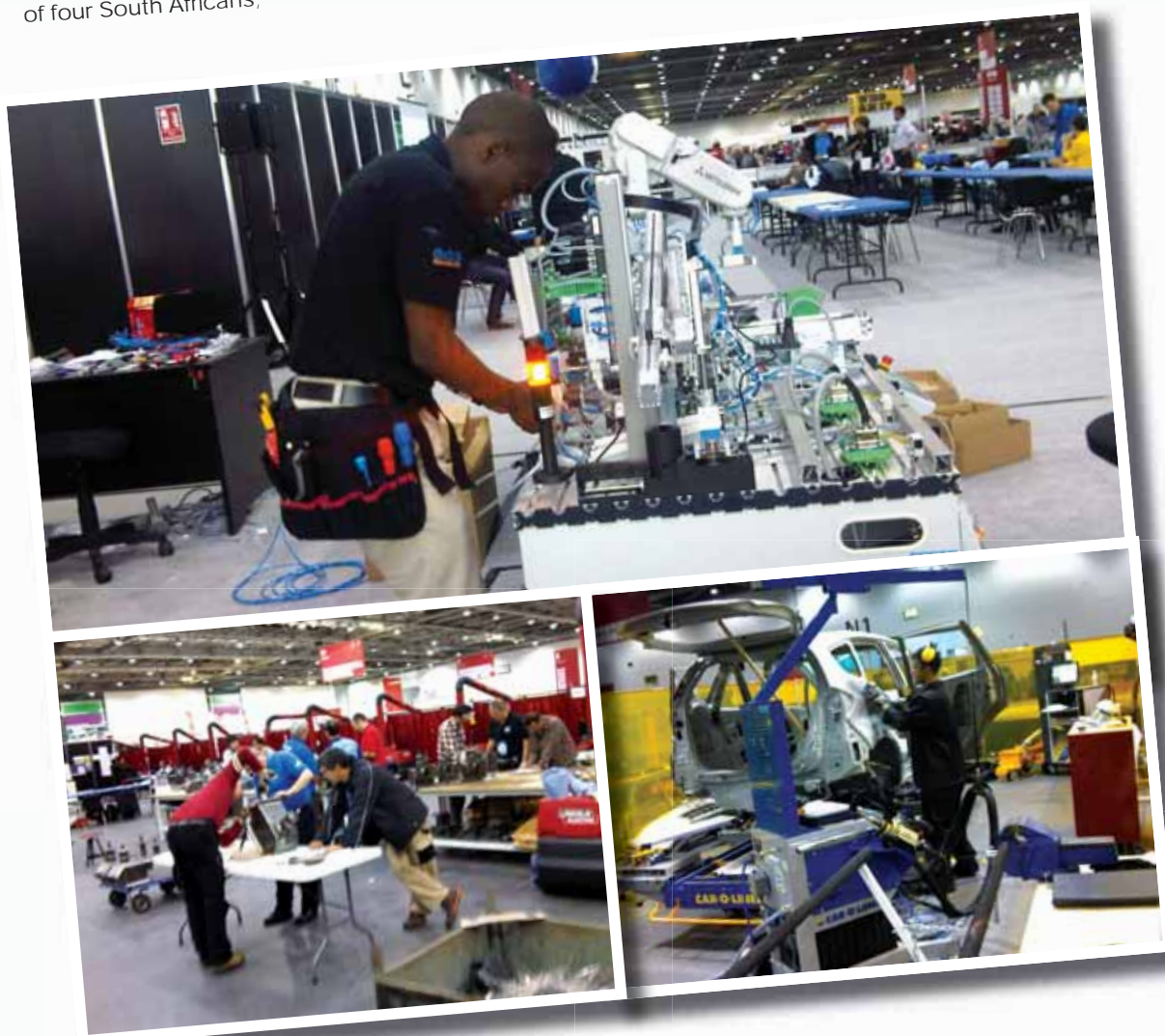
#### SA participation in WorldSkills through the years

- 1990 – South Africa becomes a member of WorldSkills International;
- 1993 – Competition held in Taiwan. SA sent 12 competitors to the then Youth Skills Olympics;
- 1995 – Competition held in France and then called EUROEXPO. Total of 28 countries, 478 competitors and 350,000 visitors participated. SA competed in 14 competitions and improved its performance;
- 1997 – WorldSkills competition held in Switzerland. SA competed in nine competitions but struggled to perform due to lack of exposure to high level of technology;
- 1999 – WorldSkills held in Canada. Total of 33 countries and 567 competitors. SA competed in six areas demonstrating much improved performance;
- 2001 – WorldSkills in South Korea. South Afri-



**“The competition was an exploratory one for these skills so that we can touch base with the latest technologies, techniques, processes and assessment procedures internationally in preparation for the 2013 competition....”**

- ca's membership halted due to the implementation of the new Skills Development Act;
- 2003 – WorldSkills Switzerland. South Africa's membership is reinstated with Services Seta driving the process in an attempt to create an international platform as a benchmark for SA skills. SA competed with 36 member countries in only one competition namely hairdressing;
- 2005 – Competition held in Finland. Thirty-four countries and 696 competitors. Services Seta and Chemical Seta funded participation of four South Africans;
- 2007 – Competition held in Japan. Total of 46 countries, 706 competitors. Services Seta and the merSETA funded participation of six SA competitors;
- 2009 – WorldSkills in Canada with 46 countries and 845 competitors. Services Seta and merSETA supported the participation of 12 South Africans;
- 2011 – WorldSkills in London. The merSETA and Services Seta covered the costs of participation of eight competitors and supporting team. Forty-eight participating countries.



Clockwise: Team SA battling it out at the WorldSkills competition



**merSETA**

MANUFACTURING, ENGINEERING  
AND RELATED SERVICES SETA

The merSETA is one of the 23 Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) established to promote skills development in terms of the Skills Development Act of 1998. The 23 SETAs broadly reflect different sectors of the South African economy. The merSETA encompasses Manufacturing, Engineering and Related Services.

The various industry sectors are covered by chambers within the merSETA: Metal and engineering, Auto Manufacturing, Motor Vehicle and Components, New Tyre and Plastic.

*Facilitating sustainable Development of Skills , transformation and accelerating growth in manufacturing, engineering and related services*

## Learnership

### What is a learnership?

Learnership is a professional education and training programme which aims to combine structured learning and work experience so that a learner obtains a qualification that is registered on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF)

### Who is eligible to enter into the learnership programme?

Any person, employed or unemployed may apply to register for a learnership.

- If you are unemployed, you may register for a learnership programme within the sector where your company or organisation operates; or
- If you are unemployed, you may register for placement in a learnership programme at your local labour centre or employers in your area. The Department of Labour refers unemployed individuals who meet the minimum criteria to employers looking for learners.

### How does one apply for a learnership programme?

- If you are unemployed, find out what learnership are available in the sector in which you work. Upon deciding which learnership programme is appropriate you will need to enter an agreement with your employer stating your rights and responsibilities as a learner.
- If you are unemployed, you must register your profile at the nearest labour office, at which you may be referred to employers who may be looking for learners on a learnership programme.

## Apprenticeship

### What is an Apprenticeship?

The apprenticeship system is a well known training system which includes practical and theoretical training. Apprenticeships are offered in designated trades, and upon passing a trade test the candidate will be recognized as an artisan.

**Leaders in closing  
the skills gap.**

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### Who is eligible for an Apprenticeship programme?

Any South African citizen, 16 years or older. There are different admission requirements for the various trades. Competence in Maths, Science and English will enhance your chances of selection.

### How does one apply for the Apprenticeship programme?

- If you are unemployed, you may apply to a company that is offering an apprenticeship programme.
- If you are employed, consult with your employer as to the correct procedures to be followed so that you may pursue such training.

## Bursaries are available for the following courses:

### University Undergraduate

B.Sc/B.Eng Engineering Electrical (light and heavy current) and Electronic;  
B.Sc/B.Eng Engineering (Chemical);  
B.Sc/B.Eng Engineering (Metallurgy and Materials);  
B.Sc/B.Eng Engineering (including Mechatronics);  
B.Sc/B.Eng Engineering (Industrial);  
and other priority skills identified by sector stakeholders.

### University Postgraduate

Management and Executive Leadership programmes.

### University of Technology Undergraduate (Semester courses)

#### National Diploma

Chemical Engineering;  
Electrical Engineering (Light and heavy current);  
Engineering Metallurgy and Materials;  
Mechanical Engineering (including Mechatronics);  
Industrial Engineering;  
Production and Operation Management;  
and Polymer Technology.



# BMW COMMITTING R2 - bn TO SA

By Independent Correspondent

**B**MW in Munich, Germany, have placed a R2-billion vote of confidence in South Africa's motor industry competitiveness with its decision to manufacture the new 3-series BMW in Rosslyn near Pretoria.

The massive expansion plan is already falling into place. The plan is to step up production from the current 50 000 vehicles a year to 87 000. At present, 78% are exported. That percentage will increase as production rises. The quality of cars coming off the line matches those at any BMW plant in the world.

Indeed, the SA-manufactured 3-series won the JD Power sales satisfaction award in SA this year. And an estimated 500-600 jobs will be generated in the new series 3 expansion, provided the plant introduces a third shift.

Plant director Johannes Gingseder is proud of what he calls "not just an assembly works but a fully-fledged, world-class plant" and predicts "a bright future".

The Rosslyn plant is fairly efficient in rolling a new car off the line every 3.75 minutes. It has some way to go, however, in matching Munich, where a new car is produced every 5.5 seconds.

At the moment, in the body-in-white shop there are 96 (Kuka) robots and the automation level in the plant is 88%. After the expansion, there will be 148 robots and the plant will be 96% automated. Bodies in white are exported to BMW assembly plants.

The robots represent competition for National Union of Metalworkers members. They underline that nowadays things are made largely by things. The need for workmen is accordingly reduced. As the Economist reports: "robots don't complain". Those in the BMW plant will out-weld any human.

There are 8 000 parts in the body and 20 000 in the engine but only 700 employees per shift actually

make a contribution on the production line.

Engines, gearboxes and X-drive (BMW's patented all-wheel drive transmission) are the highest tech items. These are all imported. Still, about 53% of the car by weight is deemed to be local.

That might be an exaggeration because any component from a local supplier is deemed local, when in fact parts of a component, such as a seat, might be imported.

Gingseder observes: "It's not easy when Munich wants to save 4% on the cost of vehicles and wage costs go up 8% and Eskom's power by 35%. Fortunately, we have been able to reduce energy use by nearly 50%."

BMW employs 2 159 people at its plant. There are at least 15 000 dependent jobs in 60 different SA suppliers. Already 20 new 3-series cars have been built on the existing plant. Some 80 will be built. They will be used for testing, and then crunched into big steel cubes for recycling.

The cars we saw were present-day 3 series. There is no question that they will end up on the dealer's shelf after the new 3-series becomes available. These cars have all been ordered and will presumably be a bit more affordable than the new model.

On the assembly line, a car destined for Australia can be right behind one heading for the USA. Left or right hand drive makes little difference in the manufacturing process. These are checked every inch of the way and defective components thrown out.

When the car is completed, its computer system can pick up manufacturing faults. Gingseder says scrupulous quality checks justify the premium at which BMWs sell.

The TransUnion Automotive seminar on the motor industry underlined that the SA car buyer is spoiled for choice. There are 61 brands and 2 133 derivatives to choose from.

**They are particularly perturbed because, like BMW, Mercedes Benz SA, VWSA and Ford have made large investments in increased production. The industry is one of the most important in SA, contributing 7% of GDP, 16% of manufacturing output, employing 307 000 and accounting for R70bn in exports.**

The premium segment is already fiercely contested between the Big Three Germans - BMW, Mercedes-Benz and Audi. BMW and Mercedes exchange leadership positions from month to month but BMW was crowned king of the castle in 2010.

Cheaper competitors are also nipping at the heels of the Big Three, producing luxury cars at lower prices.

Motor manufacturers at the recent Johannesburg International Motor Show complained bitterly about manufacturing disadvantages in SA -- they mentioned high labour rates, the loss of 20.6 million days to strikes, 160% increases in electricity cost since 2007, high water costs and the most expensive ports in the world.

They said it would be difficult to achieve government's target of doubling output to 1.2 million vehicles by 2020 and begged the authorities to look at items holding back the Auto Production and Development Programme (APDP).

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So, given the disadvantages, why do they stay here and increase their investments in an industry that is not even 1% of world production?

The APDP is clearly favourable towards the manufacturers. It permits them to import other models in their range pretty freely, subject to 26% excise duty. The industry runs a balance of trade deficit of some R30 billion, though this is scheduled to fall as exports outrun local purchases. And, longer term, they see Africa as an exciting prospect.

BMW puts up McKinsey figures for Africa. They show GDP growing, urbanisation continuing at a pace and generally look enticing.

# CELEBRATING HISTORIC MILESTONE

By Achieve Correspondent

**W**hen the Minister of Higher Education and Training, Dr Blade Nzimande, unveiled the National Skills Development Strategy III (NSDS III), he placed greater emphasis on partnerships between SETAs and stakeholders.

This is also clearly expressed in NSDS III where it places a high premium on the necessity of industry, SETAs and Further Education and Training (FET) colleges to work together towards quality education and training.

The minister must be smiling and applauding the move made by the Sedibeng College, Heidelberg Campus, when they began engaging Arcelor-Mittal to assist with advice and assessment methods. The campus, still at a developmental stage, was grateful to receive a custom-built electrical panel which will enable students to perform various combinations of electrical tasks like panel wiring, circuit design, fault finding etc

Spokesperson on Training for Arcelor Mittal Mr Terrence Harrison made a commitment to assist the engineering campuses in Heidelberg, Sebokeng and Vereeniging with advice on equipment, the training of lecturers as well as affording students the opportunity to visit the plant as part of their training.

The merSETA's Gauteng South Client Relations Manager, Mr Sabelo Buthelezi, attended the ceremony and commended the partnership – pledging the assistance of merSETA. Mr Buthelezi commented that it was the merSETA's priority to

intensify the partnerships with FET Colleges that fall within the primary scope of merSETA.

Elaborating on the kind of assistance merSETA will offer, Mr Buthelezi explained that the college is already accredited but will be assisted in extending the scope of accreditation to other qualifications and trades, offering learning material on accredited qualifications, advice on the kind of equipment that needed to get full accreditation on trades, and also advise on which programmes are common to the local industry and can be offered at the college.

The other joint initiative with merSETA involves Arcelor-Mittal, Sedibeng College, the University of Bremen, Volkswagen, the Vaal University of Technology and the University of North West. This initiative involves Competence Measurement and Learning (COMET) aimed at developing a psychometric tool to measure competency of artisans as well as developing a holistic approach to problem-solving and training.

Students from the college are already participating in the assessment research. Heidelberg Campus is accredited to offer fitting & turning apprenticeship and related skills programmes, and staff members at the college are accredited assessors and moderators.

Principal and CEO of the College Dr Abe Mashele expressed gratitude to Arcelor Mittal and, Mr Harrison in particular, as the driver of the initiative.



Anti-clockwise from top: Dr Abe Mashele handing over a plague of appreciation to Mr Terrence Harrison; left to right: Ms Hannelie le Roux, Mr George Mothapo, Mr Sabelo Buthelezi, Dr Mashele, Mr Peet Lottering, Mr Terrence Harrison, Mr Henning van Wyk and Mr Johan Riekert

# THE BEST AMONGST THE BEST AT JO'BURG MOTOR SHOW

By Achieve Correspondent

The largest international automotive event in Southern Africa -- the Johannesburg International Motor Show (JIMS) -- took place recently at the MTN Johannesburg Expo Centre, Nasrec.

**A**ffectionately known as the comprehensive automotive lifestyle showcase, the show attracted tens of thousands of people from throughout the country. The show runs in conjunction with two additional shows, "Auto Shop" and the "Johannesburg Truck Show", which showcased the full spectrum of sub-Saharan Africa's motor industry.

The objectives of the event included enhancing South Africa as an international automotive business, attracting and stimulating buyers, showcasing new and future automotive technology, building the international profile of the South African motor industry through international attendees and exposure with a view to stimulating exports and technological advances and placing the motor industry under the spotlight.

South Africa's automotive industry is a global, turbo-charged engine for the manufacture and export of vehicles and components. The sector accounts for about 10% of South Africa's manufacturing exports, making it a crucial cog in the economy.

With annual production of about 535 000 vehicles, the automotive sector is a giant in South Africa, contributing about 7.5% to the country's gross domestic product (GDP) and employing about 36 000 people.

Speaking at the opening of the show, National Association of Automobile Manufacturing of South Africa (NAAMSA) President David Powels said the South African motor industry is no different to that in the rest of the world. He said the South African motor industry is emerging from an extremely tough business environment in which it was forced to re-examine its business model to ensure global competitiveness. Mr Powels said NAAMSA was working closely with government to ensure the new Automotive Production Development Programme

takes the industry to new levels. "The outlook for the South African domestic vehicle market is encouraging. We forecast growth of around 8% year on year. Importantly, we anticipate slow, but steady growth in the medium term."

Despite the severe recession, the South African manufacturing industry has invested about R9-billion in the past three years, with a further R4,6-billion on the cards.

The show saw giants of the automotive industry unveiling their top of the range fleets. Mercedes-Benz unveiled its sleek SLS AMG Roadster, while its Concept A-Class attracted beaming comment from visitors. The concept vehicle displayed a glimpse of this Stuttgart-based company's future design language, especially in terms of compact hatches.

General Motors were not to be outdone; it unveiled the Opel Astra GTC (132 kW from a 1.6-litre turbocharged petrol) and the new Chevrolet utility bakkie. However, the star of GM's display was the Miray concept. Using a hybrid powertrain with compact dimensions, it could show not only future design cues that will be coming from Chevrolet, but also the powertrains it could implement. It was indeed a mouth-watering affair.

**"The outlook for the South African domestic vehicle market is encouraging. We forecast growth of around 8% year on year. Importantly, we anticipate slow, but steady growth in the medium term."**





# YOUNG XOLISWA - SCIENTIST IN THE MAKING

By Sibongiseni Ziinjiva Ka-Mnguni

Young and ambitious, Ms Xoliswa Ndaba is a breath of fresh air and indicative of a new generation of women who don't get intimidated by the unknown. In this interview, Ms Ndaba bares her soul.

**T**ravelling the road less travelled and daring the high and mighty, Ms Ndaba is on the verge of realising her dream.

Cherishing the fine moments she spends in a laboratory experimenting with different chemicals, she is clearly a person on the move – a mover and the shaker indeed.

After passing her matric with flying colours - registering two distinctions and an exemption -- she enrolled at Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU) in Port Elizabeth, Eastern Cape, to pursue a career in analytical chemistry. She is in her second year.

"I needed a new challenge and my first year was extremely difficult – far away from my familiar surroundings in Ulundi. Symptoms like loneliness and homesickness started creeping in, but my Mom motivated me to work hard and to believe in myself.

"She reminded me of what I set out to achieve. Having said that, the highlight was when I was visited by the merSETA representatives. This was exactly what the doctor had ordered - their visit was like a paradigm shift as it got me back on track.

"I had to fight tooth and nail after failing one of my subjects in my first year, but the merSETA encouraged me to join a study group. Their advice yielded results as my performance improved significantly afterwards.

"Being far away from your loved ones helps you to grow as a person and I love it. It gives you an opportunity to explore and allows you to find your true self," points out Ms Ndaba.

She paid homage to her friends who helped her settle in the "friendly city" – she believes you must choose your friends wisely. "You need to befriend people who have the same vision as yours, people

who will motivate you when the chips are down; People that will support and stand by you.

"Our aim is to make a difference and in chemistry, you get an opportunity to help people. Working on different chemicals in the laboratory is phenomenal. I have started practising what I am studying as I always analyse the ingredients before I even start eating," explains Ms Ndaba.

Analytical chemistry is one of those careers that is less popular with many people. Ms Ndaba believes many people are scared of the unknown terrain – and yet chemistry is like any other career or course.

"It is one of those careers that are not in everybody's eyes. Fortunately, I got exposed to it through a career week exhibition at our school when I was doing grade 12. It was then that I was able to make an informed decision," remarks Ms Ndaba.

Analytical chemists perform qualitative and quantitative analysis. They use sampling, defining, isolating, concentrating and preserving samples; set error limits, validate and verify results through calibration and standardisation; perform separations based on differential chemistry properties; create new ways to make measurements, interpret data in proper context and communicate results.

They use their knowledge of chemistry, instrumentation, computers and statistics to solve problems in almost all areas of chemistry. Analytical chemistry is a challenging profession that makes significant contributions to many fields of science.

Taking us through the personal attributes one must have to study analytical chemistry, Ms Ndaba says one needs to have good laboratory and mechanical skills as well as the patience to perform tedious procedures for precise and accurate measurements. Good communication



merSETA bursary holder Ms Xoliswa Ndaba

**“My dream is to have my own bursary scheme one day and help mentor and motivate young people to realise their true potential. By helping others, you are also helping yourself in the process...it is uncharacteristic of our generation to be found playing small....”**

skills and the ability to learn and keep up with new techniques, instrumentation and technology are essential, she adds.

On the question of intelligence versus hard work, she vehemently argues that at school you can be intelligent, but at university you need to be intelligent and work hard twice as much.

“You are basically on your own – this is where focus and discipline comes to play. I’ve got a note in my bedroom written: ‘Xoliswa wake up, the bursary is not going to be renewed if you fail’. Whilst watching TV with my friends, they often quip: Xoliswa wake up and we will laugh it off. Come to think of it now, my friends have copied it and it has become their mantra.”

Ms Ndaba speaks highly of her bursary sponsor’s, merSETA. She says her background is a motivational factor to do well. “I know how it’s like when somebody believes in you and all what you have to do is to produce the results. Getting a bursary for me was a life - changing experience.

The merSETA could have sponsored somebody else, but they saw potential in me and I am not prepared to disappoint them and disappoint my family.

“My first-year lecturer told me about her life and in the process inculcated a culture of having to believe in my abilities, talents, hard work and to be humble. Most people become big-headed when they have achieved and being at her level, she hasn’t changed at all. She remains humble, greets you with a smile. She’s very warm and easily approachable.

“My dream is to have my own bursary scheme one day and help mentor and motivate young people to realise their true potential. By helping others, you are also helping yourself in the process...it is uncharacteristic of our generation to be found playing small and settling for less in this day when there are opportunities galore out there. We have to make hay while the sun shines,” concludes Ms Ndaba.



Ms Xoliswa Ndaba explaining her viewpoint

# UD TRUCKS - PROVES ITS METTLE IN SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

By Sibongiseni Ziinjiva Ka-Mnguni

The country's top truck exporter, UD Trucks Southern Africa, held a glittering graduation ceremony in Pretoria recently, where 30 learners graduated.



UD Trucks graduates in high spirit

**W**hen the famous writer and lecturer Dale Carnegie said: "The person who gets the farthest is generally the one who is willing to do and dare. The sure - thing boat never gets far from shore," he energised tens of thousands of people who have weathered the storm and circumstances to turn their lives around.

It was a moment of joy when 15 disabled learners graduated with the National Certificate: (GETC): manufacturing, engineering and related activities; NQF Level 1, and 15 UD Trucks staff graduated in general education and training certificate: business practice; NQF Level 1.

According to UD Trucks, this forms part of a programme to assist shop floor workers to better understand business concepts. It also serves as part of their ongoing efforts to up-skill their labour force.

Chief Executive of UD Trucks Southern Africa Mr Johan Richards pointed out that the company passionately believes in training and investing in the future of their employees and surrounding areas.

"The objectives of the programme are to provide ongoing developmental opportunities that not only allow us as a company to achieve our business objectives, but also empower and contribute to the overall development of the participating learners."

Through this merSETA - accredited programme, disabled learners gained qualifications that address the specific needs and requirements of the manufacturing industry.

Disabled learners completed a gruelling 12 months training in modules ranging from numeracy and literacy to production concepts, employer/

employee relationships and hand and measuring tools.

Whilst shop-floor learners, who completed the general education and training certificate, will continue to the next level, their focus will be on commercial vehicle industry - related qualifications. Some will continue in production related studies, while others will continue in the warehouse and distribution direction.

Regarding disabled learners, UD Trucks is exploring how to accommodate these graduates on the next level.

"Trucking forms an integral part of the South African economy and it is of great importance to ensure that the wheels of industry continue to turn effectively and productively.

"One of the ways to ensure this vitality is to empower people through learning and skills training opportunities. As a company, it is a privilege to provide these opportunities to our staff and our community," concluded Mr Richards.

The merSETA congratulates the graduates.



Clockwise: Graduates



# merSETA PARTNERSHIP YIELDS BIG FRUIT IN MATHS AND SCIENCE

By Special Correspondent

**T**he quest to improve Maths, Science and Technology has seen merSETA and its partners invest heavily in these much sought after subjects.

The results of these partnerships was evident at the recent merSETA Maths, Science and Engineering Development Plan (MSEDP) certification and bursary award ceremony that took place at Somerset East in the Eastern Cape. This follows

the success of the Science, Engineering and Technology (SET) project in which 300 learners were registered, 296 of whom passed and 106 received distinctions last year.

The merSETA together with the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU) and Govan Mbeki Mathematics Development Unit (GMMDU) took a giant step by initiating the MSEDP. The project is geared at promoting mathematics,



merSETA representatives and the recipients of ten merSETA sponsored bursaries





Mr Christo Basson congratulating Jeanpierre Manuel

engineering and problem solving expertise in line with the national strategy for mathematics, science and technology education.

The successful implementation of the project yielded results when a total of 50 educators received their certificates and 10 learners received bursaries worth R20 000 each to pursue a career in the manufacturing and engineering fields funded by the merSETA. He made a further pledge for additional support for the bursars, after year one, depending on learner's performance.

Educators were assisted with regards to using modern technology in the teaching and learning of mathematics, whilst learners were assisted in improving mathematics problem-solving skills to meet the challenges of the new NCS syllabi for mathematics.

Jeanpierre Manuel, of the Middleland Secondary School, was ecstatic about his achievement.

"I'm excited about this achievement. I'll be studying motor mechanics at NMMU next year and I am looking forward to it. My passion for the course started when we visited the VW plant during the engineering week. This is where I saw how cars are manufactured and I fell in love with the manufacturing of cars," explains Jeanpierre.

Speaking at the certification ceremony, merSETA Chief Operations Officer Mr Wayne Adams said the merSETA has a longstanding partnership with the

NMMU. He further said through this relationship, the merSETA was able to connect with the Govan Mbeki Mathematics Development Unit which implements the project.

"This alliance makes it possible for the merSETA to improve the quality of Mathematics, Science and Engineering related subjects at a school level," remarked Mr Adams.

He congratulated educators and learners who sacrificed their time to attend the workshops during weekends and holidays.

"You have shown commitment by taking your own personal development seriously. This gives the merSETA the inspiration and motivation to continue with the project."

Mr Adams also commended the excellent work done by Gill College which provided accommodation infrastructure for the project.

"Gill College is a shining example of how schools can become and remain shining beacons of hope. To us, you are a model of operating which others can copy. In our country's current state, it's not useful to have resources and facilities and not have the right attitude to serving development and sharing."

# Events of the Quarter



Anti-clockwise from top: delegates at the merSETA AGM; master of ceremonies at the AGM Mr Tom Mkwanazi; merSETA Chief Financial Officer



Officer Lindiwe Movundlela; Professor Ahmed Bawa and delegates at the KZN AGM



# leaders in closing the skills gap.

The merSETA is one of 21 Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) established to promote skills development in terms of the Skills Development Act of 1998. The 21 SETAs broadly reflect different sectors of the South African economy. The merSETA encompasses Manufacturing, Engineering and Related Services.

The various industry sectors are covered by five chambers within the merSETA: Metal and Engineering, Automobile Manufacturing, Motor Retail and Components Manufacturing, New Tyre Manufacturing and Plastics industries.



**merSETA**

MANUFACTURING, ENGINEERING  
AND RELATED SERVICES SETA

ISO 9001:2008

*facilitating sustainable  
development of skills,  
transformation and  
accelerating growth in  
manufacturing, engineering  
and related services.*

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