

DPW brightens the future of matriculants

By Motlhabane Motlhabane

The Department of Public Works (DPW) has once again continued to bring light to the lives of deserving learners from previously disadvantaged backgrounds across the country.

Public Works Minister Mr T W Nxesi who was accompanied by Director-General Advocate Sam Vukela, Corporate Services Deputy Director-General Mr Clive Mtshisa and other top managers from the Department, gave 40 learners who completed their 2018 matric qualification on top of their class – bursaries worth R150 000 per learner, per year of study.

This took place during the 6th annual DPW bursary awards ceremony held at Umhlanga in the north of Durban on the first day of school opening on 9 January 2019. The bursary covers tuition, meals, accommodation, text books, academic resources and monthly allowances.

The bursary allocation by DPW is part of the Department's mandate to transform the built industry and invest in young people studying towards careers in the built industry. The event also forms part of an ongoing Schools Programme which is led by the Professional Services Chief Directorate through the Human Capital Investment (HCI) unit in the Department. HCI looks at the complete life cycle of identified learners from Grade 10 where the actual support begins, throughout tertiary life and ultimately when they join the young Professionals Programme at the end of their first degree. These learners who were awarded bursaries are part of that group which received continuous support from Grade 10, who were mainly doing mathematics and sciences.

As part of its plan, with this investment, DPW is looking into strengthening the technical skills' pool in the country in general but more specifically in the built environment that has a massive shortage. These learners who are worthy recipients, will be studying at various universities across the country, pursuing careers such as built or property studies, urban and regional Planning, construction management, architecture, civil, mechanical, structural and electrical engineering among others; which are skills that are demanded by the economy. The Departments' investment in these young people translate to over R6-million a year and serves as testimony of the Department's commitment to empowering young people.

Part of the bursary award ceremony was a recognition of registered artisans and professionals who participated in the artisan development and Young Professionals Programme. There are 110 young professionals who have obtained professional registration since the introduction of the Young Professionals Programme in 2007.

To date, 145 bursary recipients have completed their studies and 57 of them are currently working for the Department of Public Works, completing their internships and some being part of the Young Professionals Programme.