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and animals.

Burglars left office in a mess.

MMC Mnisi celebrates journey of artisans

Students have completed their three-year apprenticeship with the City of Johannesburg in various trades.

The training was funded by the Local Government Sector Education and Training Authority (LGSETA) in partnership with the City of Johannesburg (CoJ), Joburg Water (JW), City Power and the Department of Economic Development (DED).

The MMC for Economic Development, Nomoya Mnisi said the graduation ceremony marks an important delivery milestone for the city and further re-affirms their commitment to the National Skills Development Strategy.

"The day was also proof that the government is serious about addressing the skills gap and drawing significant numbers of the unemployed into productive work. The Expanded Public Works Programme Artisan Development Programme was piloted in 2020 as part

of the city's skills intervention strategy. The aim was to train 100 learners from the CoJ geographic region," Mnisi said.

"The Department of Economic Development approached JW in February 2020 to assist with the implementation of apprenticeships for 97 unemployed youth. These included 12 plumbers, 13 bricklayers, 12 painters, 12 plasterers, 12 fitter-welders, 12 carpenters and joiners, 12 electricians, 12 tilers and 12 welders."

JW applied for funding from the LGSETA for the implementation of this project. The funding application was approved for R16 005 000.

"After the funding agreement was signed, the JW appointed the Olifantsfontein Artisan Academy as the training provider. The apprenticeship started in June 2020. Included in the LGSETA funding agreement was a stipend of R2 500 per month per person, with additional co-funding from the COJ.

"The DED then extended the stipend by R1500 per month. DED also came on board to provide a toolbox for each learner. JW is the implementing agent in partnership with DED.

"DED secured workplaces with CoJ departments and entities such as City Power, City Parks, Joburg Water and Housing (private construction companies) and agreements were signed with various CoJ departments to host the learners and ensure mentors were available depending on the trade."

Mnisi told the students the path they had taken had been fraught with obstacles such as Covid-19, load-shedding, riots, and financial hardship, but they had persevered.

"You can pat yourselves on the back for the sacrifices you endured to reach your goal, and in the process make this programme a success. Upon completion, you will be well-equipped and qualified artisans, and ready to enter the job

market or register your own companies.

"This is a further reminder that our government prioritises issues affecting the youth. The experiential value you draw from this programme cannot be quantified simply in monetary terms."

A word of thanks

"I would like to thank all those departments and entities who have and continue to assist the learners with the workplace training. This reminds us that when we work together with all stakeholders, both the public and private sectors, we can deliver skills and jobs.

"In doing so we can improve the lives of our people.

"As we celebrate this milestone, we also pause to remember the two colleagues who lost their lives due to a car accident on June 23, 2022 - Stephen Mafela who was a mentor from City Power, and Lumanyano Mzaca, one of our learners. May they rest in peace. We dedicate this ceremony today to their memory."

Mnisi said the number of students remaining in the programme is 81.

"With this qualification as artisans, you are on the right path to meaningful

employment, contributing to economic development with increased future potential earnings as your reward for all the hard work."

He said the government is assisting with exit strategies for learners as far as possible.

"As the government, we want to see a positive return on investment. So far, your efforts justify our investment in your training.

"This also gives us the confidence and courage to replicate the programme throughout the city, thus contributing to the overall job creation targets of the National Development Plan. This programme has proved that partnership is the key to achieving our goals as a government," said Mnisi.

"To the graduates today I say, we congratulate you all for your hard work over the past three years. To those who still need to complete their trade test, I encourage you to dig deep into your energy reserves to recommit to working hard and to emerge triumphant.

"I wish you well in the future. You are the future of the built environment in South Africa," said Mnisi.

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Artisan Gudani Mugovheli and MMC Nomoya Mnisi.