



public works
& infrastructure

Department:
Public Works and Infrastructure
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Issued by Chief Directorate: Communications Enquiries: Zara Nicholson: 066 0183 395

Issue Date: 9 January 2020

Speech by Minister of Public Works and Infrastructure, Patricia de Lille, MP

Minister Patricia de Lille awards bursaries to more than 50 matriculants to study in various built environment fields

Note to editors: The following speech was delivered by Minister De Lille at the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure's annual Bursary ceremony in Pretoria today.

Honourable Monica Mochadi, Limpopo MEC for Public Works, Roads and Infrastructure
Councillor Fortune Mampuru
Acting DG of the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure, Samuel Thobakgale
DPWI officials
Principals from schools in various provinces that are part of DPWI's school's programme
Matriculants
Award recipients
Ladies and gentlemen

Good morning, goeie more, molweni, Dumelang, Ashee, as-salaamu ailakum, shalom, Namaste

It is my great honour to be here today with such a large group of achievers especially our class our 2019 matriculants.

Please join me in giving a round of applause to congratulate our matriculants who just yesterday received the good news of passing their final year in school.

You have reached an important milestone and I am sure that many of you have overcome some difficult times with exams and in some cases personal circumstances but you have done it and you can all be very proud of yourselves.

You all are now standing on the brink of the next exciting chapter of your life and today we celebrate you but we are also here to give you a head-start and encourage you for the next and even more important phase of your lives and careers.

As they say, this is where adult life starts and where you will really start to put in the hard work to build a life for yourself and a successful career.

I am very honoured that as the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure (DPWI) we have a full pipeline programme to help pupils with boost in life and to assist students who do not have the financial means to obtain a tertiary qualification especially in the built environment where so many skills are needed in this sector in our country.

We are here today to award over 50 bursaries to 2019 matric pupils to study in the built environment at universities across the country.

Now that you all have enjoyed a nice summer break, in a few days' time you will walk through bigger doors of learning to start the next chapter but you have a major source of relief in that these bursaries will mean there is no added burden for your parents to finance your tertiary studies.

I always say that young people are not only our future, they are also our present and I am excited to see what you all will achieve as the next generation of leaders of our country.

I want to say to you all - you are in charge of your destiny. In life you have choices and you can choose to study further or you can choose to become a criminal. It doesn't matter where you come from or what difficulties you have faced - you can achieve anything.

The road ahead of you will also come with obstacles but I want to appeal to you to stand firm with your dreams like Siya Kolisi, Caster Semenya, our Miss Universe Zozibini Tunzi and Trevor Noah and push through any adversity to become the best person you can be

Our country is in need of leaders and professionals that will continue to build this country and our economy and your chosen fields of studies and your careers will take our country forward.

Today is also an important demonstration of the Batho Pele principles of "putting people first". By awarding these bursaries and with the investment we are making through the schools programme and the various skills programmes, we are investing in our country's greatest assets – our people.

DPWI's Professional Services Branch's mandate strives to build the internal capacity of the department, lead the development of the capacity of the State and cover the entire skills pipeline that will be able to be deployed into the industry and give effect to transformation imperative.

Lack of capacity has become an excuse for inefficiency and poor performance. Lack of capacity is when you have the wrong people with no skills in positions they are not fit to be in. It is very painful to see people in positions without the required skills and people with skills are roaming the streets looking for jobs.

The aim of DPWI's Professional Services Branch is to mobilise skills, knowledge and best practice to effectively build capacity to transform the built environment.

The Department also has partnerships with various private industry bodies such as the Institute of Real Estate Management South Africa (IREM SA), South African Institute of Black Property Practitioners (SAIBPP), South African Property Owners Association (SAPOA), Higher and Further education institutions and others that will fast-track the registration of Property Practitioners and help us position South Africa at an internationally competitive level.

Today, we are indeed proud to award another new cohort of pupils with bursaries and to also recognise those older graduates and beneficiaries who have completed our artisans training programme, our intern programme as well as our Young Professionals Programme.

More than 50 pupils who have been part of DPWI's selected Schools Programme who have secured university entrance to pursue built environment/property studies at any South African traditional university are receiving bursaries today.

The Bursary Scheme provides funding opportunities to disadvantaged students to access built environment qualifications.

The bursary accommodates the following study areas: Electrical, Mechanical, Marine and Civil Engineering; Property Studies, Real Estate, Actuarial Science, Quantity Surveying, Construction Project Management, Landscape Architecture, Architecture, Town and Urban Planning.

The DPWI Bursary Scheme is aims to:

- Increase number of disadvantaged groups in the built environment to represent the demographics of the country and ensure transformation in the sector.
- Serve as feeder to the Young Professionals Programme and later form a pool of qualified built environment professionals to serve in the State.

The bursary covers all university costs including tuition fees, residential fees, meals, textbooks, project and compulsory study resources as well as a monthly allowance.

Pupils who were part of the Schools Programme and who are receiving bursaries today are from schools in Limpopo, the Western Cape, Kwa-Zulu Natal and Mpumalanga.

Schools programme:

This pipeline programme starts with DPWI's schools programmes where a whole school development intervention is done at selected schools targeted at the learners, educators and school management in order to positively influence the outcomes of the programme.

Some of the Schools Programme Objectives includes improving the participation and performance of learners in Science and Maths and increasing the number of learners with Maths and Science pass that enables them to pursue built environment fields of study.

The programme also aims to nurture talent and promote built environment and property related careers.

Some of the activities in the schools programme to support teachers include: strategic planning, Maths and Science Teacher Workshops and the principals' forum.

Support for pupils in the schools programme includes maths and science camps, motivational sessions, career days and science and entrepreneur clubs.

Since 2014, a total of 40 schools have participated in the schools programme which is a direct feeder into the Bursary Programme.

Bursary Programme:

Once matriculants from the selected Schools Programme schools are selected for bursaries based on good performance, DPWI also runs the Bursary Care support programme focused on student's academic, physical, mental and emotional wellbeing.

Since 2014, a total of 298 bursaries have been awarded and 145 students have since completed their studies aided by DPWI's Bursary Programme since 2014. Many of the remainder of the 298 students are still busy with their studies.

Eighty seven (87) of 145 students who have graduated are currently in the DPWI participating in the Internship or Young Professionals Programme. A further thirty (30) are expected to join the department in 2020 for their internship programme. The remainder of the 145 students have taken up opportunities in the private sector.

DPWI has made substantial investment into the education of young people to enter the built environment and has spent R60million towards bursaries since 2014. A total of R20million spend on the bursary programme is projected for the 2020/21 financial year.

Tomorrow, DPWI will also host the University Readiness Workshop which is aimed at equipping bursary holders with basic knowledge and understanding of university life in order to make an easy transition from high school to university.

Internships and Young Professionals Programme:

After completing their studies, the students join DPWI for the Internship Programme and they later join the Young Professionals Programme to become registered with relevant statutory councils such as the Engineering Council of South Africa and the Project Managers Council of South Africa amongst others.

Apart from the bursaries to pupils, today we are also recognising graduates who have been through the Young Professionals programme and who have been registered as professionals with the respective industry bodies in the built environment.

This is the recognition of built environment professionals who have participated in the structured Candidacy / Young Professionals Programme within DPWI and Provincial Departments of Public Works.

Thirty three (33) Professionals will be recognized; 12 from DPWI head office, 6 from Eastern Cape Roads and Public Works, 3 from Limpopo Roads and Public Works, one from Mpumalanga Roads and Transport.

The Young Professionals & Candidacy Programme is a structured mentorship programme to accelerate professional registration within the built environment.

Areas of training include: Engineering (Civil, Structural, Transport, Electrical, Mechanical, Chemical and Hydrology); Construction Management; Quantity Surveying; Architecture; Landscape Architecture; Urban and Regional Planning; Water Care; Property Studies and Interior Design.

This programme aims to address the shortage of critical and scarce skills within the built environment; to capacitate Public Works and the State and to transform the built environment by accelerating professional registration of the previously disadvantaged groups.

Once candidates obtain professional registration, candidates will be absorbed permanently into DPWI to address technical capacity constraints in the department.

One hundred and twenty (120) professionals obtained their professional status through the programme since its inception in 2007.

Artisan training:

Another important skills set we need to continue to build is that of artisans and today, 123 qualified artisans will also be recognised.

They have participated in structured Artisan Development Programmes within DPWI and Provincial Departments of Public Works.

The Artisan Development is a structured programme aimed at producing artisans to support the department's maintenance strategy. The Programme covers the following training areas, Bricklaying, Plumbing, Welding, Carpentry and Building.

A total of 287 trainees have been participating in the programme since 2017 through funding received from various sector education and training authorities and a total of 150 have obtained their trade certificates.

And finally, today, we will also recognise DPWI staff members that have gone through the Internal Audit Technicians programme.

All of these programmes are aimed at empowering a young people and building capacity to address the skills shortage in the very important built environment sector of our country.

It is my hope that those who are benefitting from bursaries and other training programmes will not take this opportunity lightly as we need good professionals to take our country forward.

All the beneficiaries here today must also take heart that they have been selected for this opportunity and there are many young people out there who are struggling for opportunities so I appeal to you all to please not waste what you have been given but put your skills and talent to good use.

It is only by empowering one another and investing in people that we can take this country to its full potential.

In closing, I want to thank all the officials and partners who were part of the various training and mentorship programmes as well as the principals from the various schools for making these programmes a success.

Let us all continue to move forward with the impetus to make a difference and build a successful and prosperous South Africa.

Thank you all and good luck with the studies. I hope to see the bursary recipients in the coming years when you reach the Young Professionals programme and become big names in the built environment industry. Thank you, baie dankie, enkosi and God Bless.

ENDS

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