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department of
Economic, Small Business Development,
Tourism and Environmental Affairs
FREE STATE PROVINCE

MEDIA STATEMENT

08 AUGUST 2022

TOURISM IS THE FUTURE CAREER OF CHOICE

The Free State proudly hosted its inaugural Provincial Tourism Career Expo (PTCE), the first province in South Africa to ever-do this.

The two-day event marked a significant date in the calendar of tourism in the province for sector role players but most importantly for tourism, hospitality and consumer studies learners from across the province. The career expo was held at the Central University of Technology (CUT), from the 04th – 05th August 2022, in Bloemfontein.

The tourism sector was one of the fastest growing sectors pre-COVID-19 after mining; it is also the largest employer of women. It is with these reasons amongst others that the Department of Economic, Small Business Development, Tourism, and Environmental Affairs (DESTEA) initiated the PTCE to inspire learners to look at tourism not just as another school subject but one that will in future open doors of opportunity for them to become entrepreneurs.

To ensure that the career expo ticks all the boxes, the Department commissioned the Free State Tourism Sector Strategy 2020-2030, which is the blue print towards total recovery of the sector following the devastation by the COVID-19. The strategy, indicates that, skills development in this industry, like all other industries, is essential for sustainable operations of business related activities and productivity.

In order to fulfil the mandate of the PTCE, the Department intentionally collaborated with the stakeholders in the skills development sector, sister departments, as well as higher education institutions such as Free State Department of Education, CATHSSETA, CUT, Motheo TEVT College and other tourism role players.

The career expo, commenced with a Schools Competition, where 30 Grade 11 tourism, hospitality and consumer studies learners competed in three categories namely; public speaking, cooking and baking as well as development of new products.



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The winners of the competitions were announced at a grand Gala Dinner hosted by Motheo TVET College at the newly built Artisan Building. The winners were awarded with medals and certificates of attendance, winners from this competition will represent Free State Province at the National Tourism Career Expo planned to take place in September 2022.

The second day of the insightful career expo saw the 395 learners presented with an opportunity to interact with leading industry experts who exhibited at the venue. The learners also attended to presentations by 25 leading industry experts from across tourism sub-sectors such as tour guiding, events management, transport management, accommodation services, tourism marketing as well as academia to mention but a few.

Delivering his Key Note Address, DESTEA HoD, Dr Mbulelo Nokwequ emphasised the importance of partnerships and collaborations in rebuilding tourism in the province, he said “in order to rebuild the tourism sector back to its glory day pre-COVID-19, we need all the partners and sector role players to collaborate and strategically work together”.

The winners of the Schools Competition are as follows:

Hospitality Studies:

Bonolo Lesupi: Sasolburg High

Alicia Els: Sasolburg High

Jennifer Van Niekerk: Wessel Maree High School

Consumer Studies: Cake Baking

Aresha Ahmed: Ficksburg High

Sadia Muqri: Ficksburg High

Thato Radebe: Setjhaba Semaketse



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Consumer Studies: Soft Furnishing

Sholeen Philander: Panorama Combined School

Luciano Greef: Panorama Combined School

Tourism Public Speaking

Reitumetse Moseme: Unitas

Refiloe Mokokoane: Moemedi

Promise Setoki: Motswela Secondary School

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