

FET College goes green, job opportunities for youth

The Central Johannesburg College (CJC) is reportedly the first public Further Education and Training (FET) College in South Africa to take advantage of world trends by training youth towards artisan opportunities in the green industries. Training of the first group of twenty youths in solar geyser installation started in May 2010 at the Alexandra Campus and will result in the development of additional learnership opportunities by 2014, spurred by the Department of Minerals and Energy's project to install one million household geysers by 2014.

"For South Africa, the current energy crisis creates a sense of urgency for the implementation of green industrial strategies that require a new skills development agenda," says Motsumi Makhene, principal of CJC. "The college's goal is to create urban energy solutions to meet community skills development needs in collaboration with the local government and private sector."

Retrofitting at colleges

According to Makhene, the CJC is planning to replace an estimated 75 geysers across its eight sites with solar geyser technology.

Encouraged by the City of Johannesburg's award for its leadership in energy efficiency in March 2010, the College has initiated its first green retrofitting project, by converting a 100-year-old heritage building to house the Centre for Employment and Entrepreneurship Development (CEED). The scope of green retrofitting includes installation of photovoltaic technology, solar geyser, water harvesting, low energy lighting and cooling systems among other built environment adjustments to meet international compliance standards.

Created to provide innovative solutions to workforce development needs, CEED has responded to recent trends by promoting green career and business opportunities to youth as part of its mandate. Already, the Centre has initiated a business plan competition for 50 youth around the theme of green innovation.

Prospective public and private sector partners interested in these undertakings are invited to contact CJC at +27 (0) 11 642 1993 or email green@cjcceed.com.