

Pitching the future of business

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The frisson of ideas and youthful energy was palpable at the Westlake Campus of False Bay TVET College in September when the Centre for Entrepreneurship Rapid Incubator (CfERI) hosted the Annual Poster and Pitch Competition for student entrepreneurs.



Organised under the theme, *Start, Launch, Build your Business with us*, the event was a great success with a record 510 expressions of interest received from past and present students to participate in the competition. Twenty-nine students were selected to pitch their ideas at the competition for a profitable side hustle or future business.

Among the key sponsors were the Zhauns Group, a major supplier of industrial equipment to SMMEs, and Future Managers, a leading publisher of learning materials for the TVET College sector.

Ms Carla Wyngaard, financial manager for Future Managers and a competition judge, said she was pleased and encouraged to see all the “out-of-the-box” thinkers. She said, “Future Managers has supported the CfE Poster and Pitch Competitions for the past six years, and remains excited to see the entrepreneurial energy of our youth.”

Representing the Zhauns Group, and new to the competition as a contributing business partner, marketing manager Mr Riad Ahmed said: “We have always wanted to partner with government and assist students and the unemployed – empowering them and giving them the ability to improve their lives. Seeing the number of passionate students here today tells me there is great potential for South Africa. We have the right mind-set, we just need to channel it in the right direction.”

Zhauns sponsored the first prize – a Heat Press, attachments and starting consumables to the value of R30,000 – which was won by Nkgetheleng Bocheletsana for ‘Prince Mosia Educare’. She also won a cash prize of R10,000. The other winners were:

Second place: Athenkosi Tima, 'ATM Enterprise', a clothing brand – R5,000.

Third place: Jamie Wilks, 'Wilks Vision Photography' – R5,000.

Fourth place: Usiphile Mjanyelwa, 'The Plug Braided Wigs' – R5,000.

Fifth place: Travolta Lebaka, 'Tshepang Electrical Services' – R5,000.

With South Africa needing to urgently create millions of jobs to stem the tide of rising unemployment, entrepreneurship has been identified as a key driver of business development in the SMME sector to promote economic growth and transformation.

Many organisations are trying to promote entrepreneurship as a viable career path for youth, including the TVET Colleges, SEDA, NYDA, Business Partners, various chambers of commerce, local government and private companies.

In his closing remarks, Mr Abraham Oliver, Centre for Entrepreneurship & Rapid Incubator programme manager said: "Our hope for the future is built on the premise that young people will take ownership of their own destiny and be open to exploring entrepreneurship as a viable economic gateway to sustain themselves while simultaneously creating jobs within their communities. As CfERI, with the support of the FBC Executive, we are committed to establishing Ignition Cafés at all our campuses to create a conducive environment for students and graduates to transform their business ideas into operational businesses."

For more information about the Centre for Entrepreneurship & Rapid Incubator, go to www.falsebayincubate.co.za or contact CfERI at 021 201 1215.

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