



HWSETA DONATES A WHEELCHAIR TO A YOUNG GIRL IN FORT BEAUFORT EASTERN CAPE

As part of its robust Corporate Social Investment (CSI) initiatives, the Health and Welfare Sector Education and Training Authority (HWSETA) donated a specially designed wheelchair to five-year-old Luphiwe Dlepu from Fort Beaufort in the Eastern Cape. Luphiwe has cerebral palsy, a neurological condition that significantly affects her movement, muscle tone, and posture, preventing her from walking independently.

The wheelchair handover ceremony took place on October 7, 2020, at Luphiwe's modest family home, surrounded by her supportive family members, friends, and community representatives. Since receiving the customized wheelchair, Luphiwe's grandmother has noticed remarkable progress in her granddaughter's physical development and overall wellbeing. She believes there has been a significant improvement in Luphiwe's spinal alignment, as she can now sit upright for extended periods, something she was previously unable to accomplish without assistance. The wheelchair's accompanying adjustable table has also empowered Luphiwe to feed herself with minimal supervision, further fostering her independence and sense of dignity. Most importantly, she is thoroughly enjoying her new mobility aid and has transformed into a much happier, more engaged child with improved prospects for development.

HWSETA remains steadfastly committed to supporting individuals with disabilities as part of its broader mandate to develop and enhance the health and social development sectors across South Africa. The organization is pleased to have played a meaningful role in enhancing Luphiwe's quality of life and hopes the wheelchair will continue to bring positive, transformative changes for her and her extended family in the years to come.



HWSETA GIVES HOPE

TO THE YOUNG PEOPLE OF LUNEBURG



In a strategic collaboration with the Luneburg Non-Governmental Organization, HWSETA has provided comprehensive funding for deserving students from Luneburg to pursue specialized studies in Animal Health at the Tsolo Agriculture & Rural Development Institute (TARDI). This forward-thinking initiative, which commenced in 2019, aims to uplift and empower young people from the historically disadvantaged rural region of KwaZulu-Natal by providing them with the specialized skills and qualifications necessary to secure sustainable employment opportunities in the agricultural sector.

The extensive funding package covers full tuition fees, a monthly living stipend, and essential transportation costs, as the college is located in Tsolo, Eastern Cape, a considerable distance from the students' homes. HWSETA strategically launched this transformative project to empower individuals from underserved rural communities, enabling them to acquire valuable skills and subsequently provide adequately for their families and contribute to local economic development. In the program's initial phase, all admitted students received comprehensive funding for the entire three-year duration of their studies. In subsequent enrolment cycles, an annual renewable funding model was introduced to ensure ongoing financial accountability and student commitment.

The diploma in Animal Health is an intensive three-year program, with students completing their final semester through structured work-integrated learning placements.

During this crucial practical phase, they gain invaluable hands-on experience in diverse professional environments, including commercial farms, regulated abattoirs, established livestock organizations, and pharmaceutical companies. This carefully designed exposure helps them develop professional confidence, build practical technical skills, and meet the rigorous minimum competency requirements for qualified Animal Health Technicians.

Many participating students have responsibly used their monthly stipends to support their immediate and extended families. One dedicated student assisted her parents with purchasing essential groceries, while another ambitious participant helped his mother realize her lifelong dream of building a proper family home. Several forward-thinking students also invested in professional driving lessons, significantly improving their future employability prospects, as most coveted animal health technician roles require a valid driver's license as a prerequisite for employment. Notably, eight determined students from the 2015 cohort secured permanent employment positions immediately upon graduation, largely due to their additional driving qualifications obtained through prudent use of their stipends.

Dr. Nandipha Toyota Ndudane, the esteemed Principal at TARDI, emphatically highlighted that assured tuition funding alleviates significant financial stress for students, allowing them to focus wholeheartedly on their academic studies without constant financial worries. This comprehensive financial support has demonstrably contributed to markedly improved academic performance metrics across the institute. Upon successful completion of the diploma program, graduates become eligible to work as fully qualified Animal Health Technicians for the state, assisting with essential regulatory functions related to monitoring and controlling zoonotic diseases. They may also secure promising career opportunities in specialized research laboratories and prestigious academic institutions.

Dr. Ndudane passionately emphasized that Animal Health represents a dynamic and intellectually rewarding field, effectively bridging the interconnected domains of animal care, environmental conservation, and public health. During critical disease outbreak scenarios, animal health technicians play a vitally important role in epidemiological surveillance and disease traceability, making this an essential and increasingly relevant profession for safeguarding both public health and environmental sustainability in South Africa.

HWSETA FUNDS SOUTH AFRICAN VETERINARY ASSOCIATION (SAVA) MENTORSHIP TRAINING



What began as a modest pilot program in 2020 with just 27 dedicated mentors has since expanded dramatically, now providing comprehensive support to over two-thirds of all Compulsory Community Service (CCS) veterinarians (mentees) with 73 experienced mentors in 2021. The structured mentorship program, spearheaded by the South African Veterinary Association (SAVA) in strategic partnership with the South African Veterinary Council (SAVC) and generously funded by HWSETA, aims to provide consistent, high-quality guidance to newly qualified veterinarians entering the profession.

The program follows a systematic annual cycle, beginning with the careful recruitment of both qualified mentors and eligible mentees, followed by a thoughtful matching process based on the mentor's specific expertise and the mentee's individual development needs and career aspirations.

For the 2021 program cycle, mentor skills training was successfully completed according to the established curriculum. All participating mentors are highly experienced veterinary professionals who voluntarily dedicate their valuable time to nurturing and developing young professionals entering the field. The inaugural training session for the year took place from February 22 to February 23, 2021, at the prestigious Emperors Palace conference facility in Kempton Park. Veterinarians from multiple provinces including Gauteng, Limpopo, North West, Mpumalanga, and the Free State actively participated in the comprehensive training.

Special recognition was extended to Dr. Nomsa Mnisi, a distinguished member of HWSETA's Executive Board, who generously contributed her extensive expertise as a SAVA/SAVC mentor for newly qualified CCS veterinarians in 2021.

The intensive professional development training, expertly conducted by IMSIMBI Training consultants, focused on essential mentorship skills and best practices. The comprehensive curriculum covered crucial modules addressing important topics such as self-awareness, active listening techniques, effective mentee discussion strategies, building sustainable mentoring relationships, and implementing ongoing mentorship processes.

Despite geographical barriers and distance challenges, mentors and mentees maintain consistent communication through contemporary digital communication platforms including Skype, WhatsApp, Zoom, and Microsoft Teams. This innovative use of technology enables real-time guidance, timely support, and effective problem-solving regardless of physical location.

Following the successful Johannesburg training session, a second comprehensive two-day training workshop was conducted at the eco-friendly Verde Hotel strategically located near Cape Town International Airport. This well-attended session facilitated valuable networking opportunities among veterinary professionals from diverse regions including the Eastern Cape, Midlands, Durban, West Coast, and Western Cape.

The collaborative event fostered new professional relationships and created a supportive environment for mutual encouragement among all participants.

To ensure consistent program effectiveness and quality assurance, mentors must diligently observe and regularly report on their mentees' professional progress and development. During the structured training sessions, SAVA's dedicated Manager of Mentorship provided practical guidance on efficiently integrating necessary documentation requirements into daily clinical activities without overwhelming the already demanding schedules of practicing veterinarians.

HWSETA's continued financial and operational support for this transformative mentorship program is instrumental in developing a new generation of skilled, confident veterinarians, ultimately strengthening South Africa's animal health sector and ensuring sustainable growth in this critical field.



THE SUCCESS OF THE HWSETA CAREER GUIDANCE PORTAL

In March 2021, HWSETA proudly launched its innovative Career Guidance Portal, www.hw-careers.co.za, with the primary strategic objective of assisting learners from an early age in accessing comprehensive, user-friendly information on the vast array of career opportunities available within the health, social development, and veterinary sectors. The portal was enthusiastically welcomed by learners, educational stakeholders, and the media, and it garnered significant attention from other SETAs for its groundbreaking approach as an all-encompassing, one-stop digital resource for career-related information and guidance.

HWSETA achieved a remarkable milestone by becoming the first organization within the SETA landscape to develop a sophisticated career guidance portal that not only provided learners and job seekers with valuable insights into various sectors but also allowed them to systematically navigate specific career paths, match available opportunities to their qualifications, interests, and personal ambitions, and make well-informed choices about their educational and professional futures.

In June 2021, the specially designed Youth Month Competition attracted an impressive 4,176 entries across different prize categories, demonstrating the platform's growing popularity and reach. Over the subsequent quarter, the portal recorded over 5,295 new registrations from approximately 12,800 unique visitors, indicating substantial user engagement. Demographic analysis revealed that Gauteng accounted for the majority of visitors (75%), followed by KwaZulu-Natal and the Western Cape (10% each). A fundamental aim of the portal was to promote awareness of lesser-known yet vital careers within the sector.

For instance, the specialized field of phlebotomy, previously unfamiliar to many prospective students, gained significant popularity due to targeted digital advertising and an engaging learnership competition.

Visitors could thoroughly explore various career paths, understand required subject prerequisites, learn about typical course durations, and gain valuable insight into the day-to-day responsibilities of professionals in these fields.

The comprehensive portal provided visitors with an extensive wealth of information and practical tools, including:

- ✔ Personalized assistance in selecting a suitable career path aligned with individual strengths and interests.
- ✔ Comprehensive career research resources, meticulously detailing job roles, educational requirements, accredited training institutions, and various entry pathways.
- ✔ An extensive directory of higher learning institutions and their available courses relevant to the health and welfare sectors.
- ✔ Detailed guidance on relevant subject choices at the secondary school level to prepare for specific career trajectories.
- ✔ Clear explanations of learnership and internship application processes and requirements.
- ✔ Information on alternative funding sources, such as bursaries, scholarships, and student loans for higher education.
- ✔ Exploration of alternative career paths for learners who did not take mathematics and physical science as school subjects.
- ✔ Regularly updated information on scarce and critical skills within the sector, highlighting the significance and potential of careers beyond the commonly known roles of doctors and nurses.





LAUNCH OF THE GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AND FEMICIDE (GBVF) ACTIVISTS TRAINING

Gender-Based Violence and Femicide (GBVF) remain a pervasive and deeply concerning reality for many South African women across all socioeconomic backgrounds. Recognizing the urgent national priority of this issue, President Cyril Ramaphosa officially declared GBVF the country's "second pandemic" alongside COVID-19, emphasizing the need for comprehensive, coordinated responses. In direct response to this crisis, HWSETA, in strategic collaboration with the Department of Social Development, launched an innovative pilot project to professionally train 50 dedicated GBVF volunteers from the most severely affected provinces. These committed volunteers, already actively serving in their respective communities, were previously unskilled or unemployed but are now comprehensively trained to address GBVF issues effectively and systematically.

Through the intensive training program, the volunteers have been thoroughly equipped to:

- ✔ Report cases accurately and efficiently, providing detailed, actionable reports to the Department of Social Development for appropriate intervention.
- ✔ Refer cases appropriately to relevant stakeholders and specialized service providers, including the national Gender-Based Violence Command Centre for immediate assistance.

- ✔ Educate vulnerable populations and raise critical awareness about GBVF prevention and response at the community level, targeting both potential victims and perpetrators.
- ✔ Implement the multi-faceted National Strategic Plan on GBVF, specifically focusing on essential elements of response, care, support, and healing for survivors.

HWSETA provided comprehensive funding for an intensive ten-day Community Capacity Enhancement Methodology (CCE) training program, expertly facilitated by the National Institute for Community Development (NICDAM). Additionally, demonstrating its long-term commitment to addressing this national crisis, HWSETA will provide a substantial 12-month stipend to each of the 50 volunteers, enabling them to dedicate their time and expertise to assisting GBVF victims within their communities without financial hardship. At the official program launch on October 15, Minister of Social Development Lindiwe Zulu emphasized that prevention through community education remains the most effective strategy in addressing the root causes of GBVF, while HWSETA CEO Elaine Brass highlighted the critical importance of targeted skills development and capacity building in effectively combating this pervasive social challenge.



RURAL COMMUNITIES HELP FIGHT COVID-19

HWSETA established a strategic partnership with the Afribiz Foundation and Ruu and Rui Medicals to support underserved rural communities in producing essential medical supplies to combat the spread of COVID-19. These specialized organizations excel in training rural populations to manufacture medical-grade products meeting national standards, and HWSETA provided substantial funding for the comprehensive training of seven cooperatives, non-governmental organizations, and Community Development Centres across multiple provinces.

Each participating cooperative consists of approximately 60 women with limited formal education and previously minimal household income opportunities. A particularly successful initiative was the sanitary towel manufacturing program implemented in Mpumalanga province, covering diverse communities such as Pienaar, Barberton, Nkomazi, and Waterval Boven. Over a six-month implementation period, the program successfully created 240 sustainable jobs and provided previously unavailable financial stability for participating households. Similar well-structured initiatives were subsequently implemented in KwaZulu-Natal, the Eastern Cape, the Western Cape, the North West, and Limpopo provinces, collectively leading to the creation of over 700 sustainable employment opportunities in economically disadvantaged communities.

The comprehensive program also facilitated the production of other essential healthcare items including natural soap products, moisturizing lotion, toothpaste, reusable sanitary wear, and ethanol-based hand sanitizers meeting safety standards. Msinga Clothing Factory, one of the notable program beneficiaries, has since expanded its operations and now manufactures quality garments for the Foschini Group, a major retail corporation in South Africa. Additionally, HWSETA provided targeted funding to two Community Development Centres in Msinga and Gauteng to establish facilities producing affordable N95 surgical masks for both government healthcare facilities and private sector use during the pandemic.



UNEMPLOYED YOUTH CONTRIBUTE TO COVID-19 HEALTH EDUCATION CAMPAIGN

HWSETA formed a strategic partnership with Pax (Pty) Ltd to recruit, comprehensively train, and systematically deploy 750 previously unemployed youth over a six-month period as part of the innovative 750AMPED campaign. This initiative aimed to educate socially vulnerable communities about COVID-19 prevention, symptoms, and appropriate health-seeking behaviors. While originally conceptualized for implementation across all nine provinces, the initiative strategically focused on the five hardest-hit regions due to pandemic-related logistical and resource challenges.

The multi-faceted campaign sought to:



- ✓ Gather and scientifically analyze comprehensive data on COVID-19 transmission patterns, particularly in densely populated communities where physical distancing measures were difficult to implement consistently.



- ✓ Develop a nuanced understanding of public attitudes, perceptions, and existing knowledge about COVID-19 to tailor educational interventions effectively.



- ✓ Provide accurate, culturally appropriate education to diverse communities about the virus, its symptoms, prevention methods, and available healthcare resources.



- ✓ Using the sophisticated South African Risk and Vulnerability Atlas, vulnerable geographic locations were systematically identified for targeted intervention. The rigorous selection criteria for fieldworkers included:



- ✓ A minimum educational qualification of Grade 12 with good communication skills.



- ✓ Age range of 21-30 years to ensure relatability with target audiences.



- ✓ Verified unemployment status to ensure the program benefited those most in need.



- ✓ Completion of relevant studies and immediate availability for the project duration.



- ✓ Confirmed residency in the targeted intervention areas to leverage local knowledge and credibility.



The comprehensive campaign officially launched in June 2020, following an intensive initial training and orientation phase. Within the project structure, 150 participants were specifically designated as data capturers, ensuring accurate information collection and documentation for subsequent analysis. Before full-scale deployment, a carefully monitored pre-launch phase was conducted in five strategic locations: Alexandra (Gauteng), Bloemfontein (Free State), Umlazi (KwaZulu-Natal), Gillwell (Eastern Cape), and Khayelitsha (Western Cape).

Throughout the project implementation, participating learners were equipped with tablets and sufficient data allowances to facilitate their community education work and real-time reporting. By September 2020, the campaign had successfully collected over 4,950 pre-test and 2,432 post-test questionnaires submitted through the digital platform, providing valuable insights into knowledge gaps and intervention effectiveness. The campaign reached more than one million South Africans through direct and indirect engagement channels, with media coverage exceeding R10 million in equivalent advertising value and broadcast exposure to an estimated audience of over 20 million people nationwide. The innovative campaign was also publicly acknowledged by President Cyril Ramaphosa during a televised dialogue with young people commemorating Youth Day on June 16, 2020.

The campaign's dedicated website was developed in multiple indigenous languages to ensure accessibility, and a specialized mobile application was launched in September 2020, accompanied by a free SMS helpline for project-related queries and community assistance. Comprehensive research efforts initiated in May 2020 continued throughout the project's duration to evaluate impact and refine approaches. HWSETA takes immense pride in being an integral part of the impactful 750AMPED campaign, which played a crucial role in educating and empowering vulnerable communities during the unprecedented pandemic crisis.

HWSETA PRIORITISES VETERINARY PROFESSIONS

On May 9, 2022, the Health and Welfare Sector Education and Training Authority (HWSETA) formally announced the launch of its comprehensive Veterinary Career Guidance Awareness Programme. This strategic initiative aims to address both the historical transformation challenges and the critical skills shortage currently affecting South Africa's veterinary sector.

According to international professional standards, a country should ideally have between 200 and 400 trained veterinarians per million population to ensure adequate animal healthcare coverage. However, South Africa falls significantly below this benchmark, with only 60 to 70 veterinarians per million citizens. This substantial shortfall makes HWSETA's targeted initiative both timely and critically necessary for national development. Beyond fully qualified veterinarians, there is also an acute need for para-veterinary professionals across multiple disciplines, including veterinary nurses, animal health technicians, and specialized veterinary technologists.

To systematically address this multifaceted challenge, HWSETA, in strategic partnership with the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), has developed a program to visit schools in underserved rural areas across the Northern Cape, Mpumalanga, Free State, and Limpopo provinces. This comprehensive outreach initiative aims to inspire and educate students about potentially rewarding career opportunities in the veterinary sciences.



During these carefully structured visits, learners will have the valuable opportunity to explore veterinary careers firsthand through interactive demonstrations at a fully equipped mobile veterinary clinic and engage directly with accomplished industry professionals who will serve as guest speakers and role models.

Deputy Minister of DHET, Mr. Buti Manamela, highlighted the foundational issue of insufficient students graduating with strong mathematics and science qualifications, which substantially limits their career options in technical and scientific fields.

He also emphasized the urgent need for demographic transformation within the profession, pointedly asking, "Why is it that learners with strong mathematics and science results, especially black youth, are not entering veterinary sciences? Is this concerning trend due to persistent misconceptions about the nature and scope of the field? Could it reflect inadequate access to accurate career information or perhaps the continued false perception that this prestigious profession is somehow reserved primarily for white students? We must work collaboratively to identify and correct these misconceptions."

HWSETA's comprehensive career guidance programme constitutes a critical component of a larger strategic campaign titled "Breaking Barriers -- Encouraging Black Youth to Take Up Veterinary Professions." Chairperson of HWSETA, Dr. Nomfundo Mnisi, echoed the Deputy Minister's concerns, specifically citing the persistent lack of diversity in veterinary education and training. "To provide a clear illustration of the magnitude of the challenge we face, consider that the University of Pretoria, our country's primary veterinary training institution, produces approximately 160 newly qualified veterinarians annually, but typically only 14 of these graduates are students of colour. This represents less than 9% of the graduating cohort. HWSETA, working in close collaboration with the Department of Higher Education, Science, and Innovation, is firmly committed to addressing this significant disparity," she stated emphatically.

To provide tangible support for aspiring veterinary professionals, HWSETA announced the establishment of comprehensive full-time bursaries for academically deserving students pursuing veterinary sciences at accredited institutions. In a bold commitment to accelerating transformation, the organization further announced that all qualifying students of colour accepted into Veterinary Science and Veterinary Nursing programs at the University of Pretoria by June 30, 2022, would receive guaranteed bursaries covering tuition and essential expenses. Dr. Mnisi particularly emphasized the strategic importance of reaching potential students in rural communities, where awareness about animal health as a professional career path is often limited. "Animal health awareness is particularly underdeveloped in many rural areas where, ironically, livestock often represents a significant economic asset. We need to actively promote the holistic concept of 'One Health,' which recognizes the fundamental interconnection between human health, animal health, and environmental health as an integrated system," she explained to stakeholders.

To further inspire and support promising students from historically underserved rural communities, additional targeted bursaries will be awarded to high school learners from the identified priority provinces who demonstrate academic potential and meet the entry criteria for veterinary sciences programs. HWSETA fully recognizes that effectively addressing the skills shortage in the veterinary sector represents a complex, long-term challenge requiring sustained collaboration across multiple sectors to educate, train, mentor, and raise awareness among the next generation of veterinary professionals.

CLOTHING AND TEXTILE MASTER PLAN BRINGS HOPE TO MSINGA FACTORY

The comprehensive South African Retail-Clothing, Textile, Footwear, and Leather (R-CTFL) Value Chain Master Plan has generated renewed optimism and tangible economic opportunities for the historically disadvantaged rural community of Keates Drift in Msinga, KwaZulu-Natal province. The abrupt closure of the region's major shoe manufacturing facility 26 years ago had devastating economic consequences, leaving approximately 3,000 families without a stable source of income and few alternative employment prospects. However, the revitalized clothing and textile sector is now creating sustainable economic opportunities in this previously marginalized area.

In a determined effort to combat endemic unemployment and alleviate poverty, Ms. Lelly Mntungwa, a 42-year-old local entrepreneur, established the Msinga Clothing Factory in 2016. Her primary mission was to provide practical training, develop marketable skills, and create meaningful employment opportunities for unemployed youth and women from the surrounding community who previously lacked commercially valuable skills and qualifications. In 2019, recognizing the potential of this initiative, HWSETA strategically intervened to support the factory's expansion by providing essential training resources and implementing comprehensive skills development programs tailored to industry requirements.

"HWSETA has strategically aligned its initiatives with the government's R-CTFL Value Chain Master Plan, providing previously excluded rural communities with unprecedented access to specialized skills development programs in clothing and textile manufacturing. We firmly believe that sustainable skill transfer represents the most effective tool for empowering individuals to generate reliable income and become economically self-sufficient in the long term," explained Mntungwa when discussing the partnership's impact.

As part of its sector-wide commitment, HWSETA has identified and engaged with 19 community-based cooperatives involving approximately 800 unemployed youth and women across South Africa

to systematically enhance their technical and business skills in clothing and textile manufacturing.

Concurrently, the national government is actively encouraging major retailers to source more products locally and increase direct investment in the domestic manufacturing sector. Key industry stakeholders have collectively committed to increasing local CTFL retail sales to an ambitious target of R250 billion by 2030, with a specific objective of achieving 65% local procurement within the supply chain.

The Department of Trade, Industry, and Competition (DTIC) facilitated a valuable international training opportunity for Mntungwa, sponsoring her participation in an intensive study program in China, where she acquired advanced knowledge of clothing and textile production techniques, including sophisticated cotton processing methodologies at the prestigious Minjiang University. Today, the Msinga Clothing Factory employs 100 previously unemployed women from the local community and produces high-quality garments for major national retailers including the Foschini Group, Mr. Price, and Ackermans. In recognition of her demonstrated leadership and business acumen, Mntungwa has been specifically nominated by HWSETA to mentor similar rural development projects across South Africa, multiplying the impact of her experience and expertise.

Deputy Minister of Trade, Industry, and Competition, Ms. Nomalungelo Gina, emphasized the fundamental significance of the R-CTFL Master Plan for national economic development. "This comprehensive plan represents a formal commitment from major retailers to prioritize locally manufactured products, thereby supporting domestic manufacturing capacity and creating sustainable job opportunities throughout the value chain. Successfully achieving its ambitious objectives requires genuine collaboration and coordinated effort among all stakeholders, including retailers, manufacturers, organized labour, and various government departments," she stated during a recent factory visit.

HWSETA AND TEREBETH TREE FOUNDATION EMPOWER YOUTH AND WOMEN

HWSETA clearly recognizes the urgent need for innovative approaches in response to rapidly shifting economic conditions, particularly in historically underserved rural areas with limited infrastructure. For generations, many South Africans have been compelled to migrate to urban centres in search of employment opportunities, often leaving behind fragmented family structures. However, the devastating socioeconomic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has significantly exacerbated existing economic hardships, necessitating more localized, community-based solutions to unemployment and skills development.

Through its strategic partnership with the Terebeth Tree Foundation, HWSETA provided comprehensive funding for specialized training programs in Adult Education and practical vocational skills development for 80 carefully selected participants, including 38 residents from the remote Bethesda Village in Matatiele, situated within the Alfred Nzo District Municipality. The multifaceted training program focused on essential personal development areas such as self-awareness and entrepreneurial mindset, practical business management principles, and the technical production of high-demand personal care items including specialized shampoo formulations, hair conditioner, nourishing body cream, and organic body butter products.

Participants received both theoretical instruction and extensive hands-on practical training, equipping them with the comprehensive knowledge and technical skills required to effectively market their products to various customer segments. The forward-thinking initiative deliberately emphasized self-employment and entrepreneurship, explicitly recognizing that traditional formal employment opportunities are becoming increasingly scarce in the current economic climate, particularly in rural areas. "These essential personal care products enjoy consistent demand across diverse markets, from local village shops and educational institutions to established businesses throughout South Africa, creating sustainable income opportunities for trained producers," explained a senior project coordinator.

This carefully designed program also contributes significantly to broader national economic development goals, directly aligning with the priorities outlined in the National Development Plan (NDP) 2030 while practically addressing persistent socio-economic challenges at the community level. By providing accessible, market-relevant skills training, the initiative not only improves immediate economic prospects for participants but also helps mitigate related social challenges such as substance abuse, property crime, and gender-based violence by creating legitimate economic alternatives and strengthening community cohesion. The program offers participants a clear pathway to a more financially secure, personally fulfilling, and socially productive life while contributing to local economic development.



HWSETA Funds Learners for Phlebotomy Training

In strategic response to the rapidly growing demand for qualified phlebotomy professionals throughout South Africa's expanding healthcare system, HWSETA established a productive partnership with Virocare to provide comprehensive funding for deserving students from three historically underserved provinces pursuing specialized phlebotomy training and certification. The meticulously designed program follows an outcomes-based educational approach and includes comprehensive instruction in human anatomy, physiology, medical ethics, laboratory safety protocols, and specialized techniques for specimen collection required for both routine pathology testing and critical blood transfusion procedures.



Since the program's inception in 2020, Virocare has collaborated closely with HWSETA to successfully implement this transformative initiative, strategically focusing on underserved rural communities such as the Vaal region in Gauteng province and Daggakraal in Mpumalanga province. Working in conjunction with established nonprofit community organizations, eligible candidates from economically disadvantaged backgrounds were carefully selected through a rigorous process to participate in this life-changing educational opportunity.



The inaugural cohort of 45 dedicated students commenced their specialized training in January 2020. Despite significant disruptions and unavoidable delays caused by nationwide COVID-19 lockdown restrictions, 38 determined students successfully completed the comprehensive program and subsequently took the professionally administered Phlebotomy Board certification examinations in 2022. The cohort achieved an exceptional 97% pass rate, substantially exceeding national averages, with 12 outstanding students earning prestigious full distinctions for their academic performance. One dedicated student, who narrowly missed the passing threshold by just two percentage points, has been provided with additional support and will retake the examination in 2023 with every expectation of success.



Through this strategically targeted initiative, HWSETA continues to systematically expand educational and professional development opportunities, effectively address documented critical skills shortages within the healthcare sector, and provide meaningful support for sustainable career development pathways in South Africa's vital healthcare infrastructure.

Certification Ceremony Of 99 Post Basic Pharmacy Assistants For The Northern Cape Department Of Health

In their sustained commitment to addressing the critical shortage of qualified pharmacy support personnel in the province, the Northern Cape Department of Health, in productive collaboration with SJ Buys Academy, recently hosted an inspiring graduation celebration honoring ninety-nine (99) newly qualified post basic pharmacy assistants. The prestigious ceremony took place at the Regiment Drill Hall in Kimberley, with HWSETA playing the instrumental role of primary financial sponsor throughout the graduates' academic journey. This comprehensive project provided funding for a total of 96 dedicated learners, with the intensive Post Basic Pharmacy Assistant training program extending over a 12-month period of theoretical and practical instruction.

The stringent selection criteria established for identifying appropriate candidates specified that each prospective learner must have successfully completed their Grade 12 secondary education and additionally have completed the foundational Basic Pharmacy Assistant qualification course as prerequisites. HWSETA's financial commitment extended well beyond covering standard tuition fees; the organization also provided essential monthly living stipends for all participants, professional uniforms required for clinical placements, Council Registration Fees for the 79 supervising tutors, and all mandatory Facility Registration Fees required by regulatory authorities.

The meaningful certification ceremony was honored by the presence of the Northern Cape Health Member of the Executive Council (MEC), Mr. Maruping Lekwene, senior departmental management representatives, and all ninety-nine (99) proud graduates accompanied by their supportive families and community members. These newly qualified healthcare professionals were promptly absorbed into permanent positions within primary healthcare facilities immediately upon successful completion of their studies in July 2022.

This strategic staffing initiative ensures substantially more effective pharmaceutical service delivery across the province, particularly regarding consistent medication availability, appropriate inventory management, and the provision of essential pharmaceutical care in previously underserved healthcare facilities.

The timely appointment of these qualified pharmacy assistants has significantly strengthened both primary health clinics and district hospitals in executing several critical functions, including: ensuring consistent medicine availability throughout the healthcare network; maintaining adequate supplies of essential surgical consumables; implementing proper pharmaceutical stock management systems and accurate record-keeping procedures; and importantly, reducing the administrative workload of nursing staff previously responsible for medicine management in addition to their clinical duties.

"We sincerely hope that today's graduation ceremony provides you with clear acknowledgment that we genuinely appreciate and highly value your contribution to our provincial healthcare system. We also trust this recognition will serve as powerful motivation for you to continue advancing your professional studies and the vitally important work you perform daily in service to our communities. Please know that your dedication is not only recognized but deeply appreciated and applauded by leadership at all levels. We earnestly hope your impressive success will further inspire others to share the responsibility of educating, caring for, and delivering quality healthcare services to our citizens across various service delivery platforms," stated MEC Lekwene in his congratulatory address.

Building on this successful initiative, the Department has proactively secured additional funding allocations to recruit and train 30 new qualified students for the Post Basic Pharmacy Program in the upcoming financial year, further addressing critical skills shortages.

"It is important to acknowledge that currently only three provinces in South Africa have established pharmacy schools, and unfortunately the Northern Cape is not among them. As a forward-looking province committed to healthcare excellence, establishing local pharmaceutical training capacity represents a strategic direction we must diligently work toward. We additionally require additional qualified Tutors who can effectively mentor trainees to enhance program quality and sustainability," MEC Lekwene remarked during his comprehensive address.



HWSETA Siyakhulisa Mentorship Programme



The word “Siyakhulisa” is an IsiZulu phrase that means “we are uplifting / growing”. The latter phrase strongly coincides with the HWSETA values therefore we have launched an exciting mentorship initiative to assist Grade 10-12 learners from rural areas. These scholars are excelling in mathematics, physical science and life science.

The HWSETA exists to develop skills, programmes and initiatives within the health and social development sectors thus mentoring and funding these children through high school and tertiary education builds the future workforce of country within the sector while positively impacting young lives.

The HWSETA identified learners from each province to join the initiative with the assistance of the Department of Basic Education. The programme was launched through a career guidance exhibition, where the HWSETA, along with various other SETAs in different sectors, were present to guide the learners in making informed decisions about choosing the right career paths.

The first area that benefited from the Siyakhulisa Mentorship Programme was Umso High School in Colesberg in the Northern Cape province in 2023. This was followed by Mbekweni High School in Eastern Cape province, also in 2023. In 2024 the Department of Basic Education in Lichtenburg in North West province and Kabokweni in Mpumalanga province benefited from the programme.

HWSETA Hosts Ministerial Roundtable Discussion at the University of Pretoria to Promote a Transformed Veterinary Sector

The transformation of South Africa's veterinary sector remains a key priority for the Health and Welfare Sector Education and Training Authority (HWSETA). In pursuit of this goal, HWSETA, in collaboration with the University of Pretoria's Onderstepoort campus, hosted a ministerial roundtable on October 27, 2023. The discussion focused on increasing black African student participation in veterinary sciences. of Agriculture, Land Reform, The event brought together prominent leaders, including Deputy Minister of Higher Education and Training, Mr. Bhuti Manamela, and Deputy Minister Speaking at the event, Deputy Minister Manamela emphasized the government's commitment to expanding funding for veterinary education.

"The University of Pretoria is the largest beneficiary of this funding. As a department, we are dedicated to broadening this model to help more universities develop veterinary science programs," he stated. And Rural Development, Ms. Zoleka Capa. Also in attendance were HWSETA Board Chairperson, Dr. Nomfundo Mnisi, HWSETA CEO, Ms. Elaine Brass, and key stakeholders in the veterinary sector. The roundtable marked a significant step toward fostering inclusivity and innovation in the veterinary field.

By increasing opportunities for black African students, the initiative aims to build a more diverse and skilled veterinary workforce, ensuring sustainable growth in the sector.



Entrepreneurship Development Programme: A Pathway for Social Work Graduates



In the face of a persistent challenge of unemployment plaguing social work graduates, SAME (Society Activation Management and Empowerment NPO/NPC) has embarked on a transformative endeavour. This article explores the profound impact of SAME's Social Entrepreneurship Programme (SME), generously sponsored by the Health and Welfare Sector Education and Training Authority (HWSETA) in empowering a cohort of 30 unemployed graduates. Renowned for its expertise in delivering tailored solutions that engage diverse stakeholders through innovative infotainment and edutainment strategies, SAME recognized the urgent need to address the economic hardships encountered by unemployed social work graduates. The SME initiative, a collaborative effort between SAME and HWSETA, was conceived to tackle these challenges head-on. The genesis of the SME programme stemmed from the sobering realization that many social work graduates, despite completing internships, grapple with the daunting task of securing sustainable employment.

Often constrained by limited resources and lack of practical experience, these graduates find themselves unable to establish private practices or enterprises. Consequently, SAME assumed the responsibility of equipping 30 unemployed graduates with the tools and mindset needed to thrive as social entrepreneurs. From a pool of 160 applicants, 30 candidates were meticulously selected based on their responsiveness and submission of requisite documents. Hailing from six provinces across South Africa, these graduates represented a rich tapestry of talent and diversity. In addition, the programme enlisted the guidance and mentorship of a seasoned social work veteran, further enriching the learning experience for participants. Crucially, the success of the programme was fortified by strategic partnerships forged with key individuals and organisations. Collaborators like Khensani Shivambu, whose entrepreneurship development programme provided catering services for the training sessions, played an instrumental role in augmenting the programme's efficacy.

Similarly, alliances with local businesses such as Favoured underscored SAME's commitment to a community-driven approach. The SME programme bore fruit, empowering participants with invaluable knowledge and skills essential for navigating the realm of social entrepreneurship. Character development sessions served as a crucible for participants to refine their understanding of ethical practices, critical thinking, and collaborative problem-solving – all fundamental pillars of effective social initiatives. Moreover, the programme served as a catalyst for reigniting participants' sense of hope and passion for social work and community development. The programme's journey commenced with virtual sessions designed to acquaint participants with the curriculum and framework.

Subsequently, an immersive, in-person training took place from the 5th to the 9th of February 2024 in Malamulele, nestled within the Vhembe district, at the idyllic Vakhusi Guest Lodge. This pro-active experience provided participants with invaluable practical insights and fostered a robust network of support and collaboration. SAME's SME programme emerges as a beacon of hope for unemployed social work graduates, offering them a transformative pathway towards entrepreneurship and social impact. Through a judicious blend of strategic partnerships, innovative training methodologies, and an unwavering commitment to community empowerment, SAME and HWSETA have laid the groundwork for a brighter future for South Africa's social service sector. As the programme continues to evolve, its ripple effects are poised to catalyse positive transformations in countless lives and communities across the nation.



Phlebotomy And Medical Technology Graduation

On May 24, 2024, the Health and Welfare Sector Education and Training Authority (HWSETA) had the distinct privilege of witnessing the graduation ceremony for nearly three hundred accomplished phlebotomy and medical technology graduates. These dedicated professionals successfully completed the comprehensive Phlebotomy Technician Learnership conducted by Themba Futhi Ukhule Innovators and the specialized Medical Technology Learnership conducted by AMPATH, both industry-leading training providers.

For those unfamiliar with these vital healthcare disciplines, phlebotomy represents the specialized medical practice of drawing or extracting blood from the cardiovascular system through a precisely executed puncture. This skilled procedure is performed to obtain blood samples for comprehensive laboratory analysis and accurate diagnosis of various medical conditions. Complementary to this field, medical technicians perform the essential function of utilizing advanced technologies to identify diseases or their underlying causes, with the ultimate goal of treating or improving a person's overall health and wellbeing. Their scope of practice encompasses working with both low-risk and high-risk medical devices in controlled laboratory environments.

The prestigious graduation ceremony was hosted at the Louwkop Woord venue in Centurion, providing an appropriate setting for this significant milestone in the graduates' professional journeys. During the ceremony, the new healthcare professionals received valuable insights from Ms. Akhona Vuma, representing the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA). In her address, she emphasized the fundamental importance of medical workers maintaining genuine passion for serving people, noting that Phlebotomists and Medical Technicians fulfil particularly crucial roles within the broader medical sector as they often represent the first point of contact for patients in the diagnostic process.

A poignant moment during the ceremony occurred when attendees observed a respectful moment of silence to honour several students who had tragically passed away during the learnership program—a profound loss that deeply affected the entire cohort and will never be fully recovered. However, those present seized the opportunity to celebrate their significant academic and professional achievements, doing so partly in honour of their departed colleagues. The ceremonial proceedings included the graduates solemnly reciting "The Modern Hippocratic Oath," symbolizing their commitment to ethical practice in their new professional roles.

These transformative learnerships, which first commenced in January 2013, continue to deliver life-changing opportunities for participants. The comprehensive two-year programs are specifically designed to create pathways to permanent employment in the medical sector, where successful candidates receive specialized training in medical laboratory settings and participate in structured workplace and classroom learning experiences. The success of these programs is evidenced by the impressive employment outcomes: all 55 medical technology graduates celebrated on May 24, 2024, have secured positions within various specialized departments at Ampath, while 32 phlebotomy graduates have been appointed to roles in diverse healthcare companies, including Flowpath, Netcare Diagnostics, and Bloodline Laboratories.

The ceremony was attended by distinguished members of the HWSETA Executive team, including Chief Executive Officer Ms. Elaine Brass and the Executive Manager of the Skills Development Planning Division, Mr. Sikhumbuzo Gcabashe. Several Board Members were also present to honour this significant occasion, including Mr. Lungile Duma representing the National Public Workers Union, Ms. Lalita Harie representing Non-Profit Organizations and Mental Health sectors, and Ms. Bongiwe Malope representing People with Disabilities. Their presence underscored the institutional commitment to developing healthcare professionals across diverse specializations.





Recognition of Prior Learning in Child and Youth Care

In a strategic collaboration with the Department of Social Development, the Health and Welfare Sector Education and Training Authority (HWSETA) successfully established accessible pathways to the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) Level 4 Child and Youth Care Work Qualification for professionals working throughout the social sector. This significant achievement was accomplished through the implementation of the comprehensive Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Programme, which provided an alternative qualification route for experienced caregivers who might otherwise face barriers to formal certification.

This innovative approach allowed these dedicated professionals to obtain recognized formal qualifications without the necessity of undertaking traditional, time-intensive educational or training programmes. Instead, the program placed value on their existing professional competencies and substantial knowledge base, accumulated through years of hands-on practical work experience in caregiving roles. These skills and knowledge were methodically assessed and formally validated through a structured evaluation process.

As an integral component of this groundbreaking initiative, participating caregivers underwent a comprehensive and rigorous evaluation process specifically designed to determine their professional competence against all required unit standards for the NQF Level 4 Child and Youth Care Work Qualification. The results were remarkable: of the 305 experienced caregivers who participated in the thorough assessment process, an impressive 302—representing an exceptional 99% success rate—demonstrated full competence and successfully obtained their formal qualification in Child and Youth Care Work.

Following the successful completion of the program, a detailed outcomes evaluation was conducted to comprehensively assess the tangible impact of the RPL Programme on participants' professional lives. The evaluation was specifically designed to determine whether the initiative provided substantial value for money and maximized meaningful benefits for its participants. The comprehensive findings were primarily based on analyzing the subsequent professional pathways taken by program beneficiaries after successfully obtaining their qualification.

According to the detailed results of this evaluation, 32% of participants who maintained employment with the same organization experienced a significant shift in their professional job titles, transitioning from the designation of Caregiver to the more formally recognized role of Child and Youth Care Worker. This change represented not only a titular adjustment but also formal recognition of their professional skills and contributions.

Additionally, 2% of participants leveraged their new qualifications to secure enhanced job opportunities with different employers, while 1% chose to pursue further academic studies to advance their qualifications and expand their career prospects within the sector.

The transformative program also demonstrated substantial positive impact on career progression and financial stability for participants. Among the program beneficiaries, 26% reported receiving meaningful salary increases that improved their economic circumstances, while 20% achieved promotions to higher positions within their organizations, reflecting the tangible value employers placed on their newly recognized qualifications. These comprehensive findings strongly suggest that obtaining the NQF Level 4 qualification contributed significantly to the formal recognition of existing roles within organizational structures, helped promote workplace equity by ensuring fair recognition of skills regardless of formal educational background, and substantially enhanced the employability and career mobility of caregivers throughout the sector.

By providing a structured, accessible, and credible pathway to formal accreditation, the program played a crucial and transformative role in improving job security and creating career advancement opportunities for dedicated professionals who may have previously been limited by a lack of formal educational credentials despite possessing extensive practical expertise.



Ultimately, the RPL Programme has empowered caregivers by effectively bridging the critical gap between practical experience and formal qualification recognition. It has helped rectify historical inequalities in the sector by granting experienced individuals access to recognized educational credentials and professional development opportunities previously beyond their reach. This approach has demonstrably improved their economic prospects while simultaneously fostering sustainable growth and professionalization within the vital social welfare sector.

Inter-SETA Mandela Day Initiative

In a powerful demonstration of collaborative spirit among Sector Education and Training Authorities, a comprehensive joint Inter-SETA Mandela Day initiative was successfully conducted on July 26, 2024, at the Maison Lincoln Special School, strategically located in Umlazi V Section, KwaZulu-Natal province. This exceptional educational institution provides specialized special needs education for more than 400 pupils living with various physical and intellectual disabilities, serving students from grades R through 12 in an inclusive learning environment.

The collaborative initiative began when FASSET (The Finance and Accounting Services Seta) initially identified the school as a worthy beneficiary of support and subsequently reached out to several sister SETAs to expand the impact of the project. The participating organizations included HWSETA, INSETA, MQA, Service SETA, and FoodBev SETA, demonstrating the power of inter-organizational cooperation. Through their combined efforts, these SETAs collectively contributed over six million rand worth of operational resources and coordinated human capital to support the school's mission. Staff members from each SETA's KwaZulu-Natal provincial office enthusiastically participated in various 67-minute activities designed to engage and bring joy to the learners, including interactive face painting sessions, decorating playground equipment by painting recycled tires, and comprehensively renovating the Grade R classroom to create a more stimulating learning environment.

The Health and Welfare Sector Education and Training Authority (HWSETA) made a substantial commitment by pledging 35 interns for a comprehensive 12-month period to support several identified areas of critical need within the school. This intervention was particularly valuable as the school operates under a challenging non-replacement policy for support staff, creating significant operational gaps. The school administration will work closely with HWSETA to identify specific areas where these well-trained interns can provide maximum assistance and support to enhance educational delivery.

In addition to human resources support, the FoodBev Manufacturing Seta made a significant contribution by donating essential kitchen equipment, including a top-of-the-range commercial mixer that will substantially improve the school's food preparation capabilities. The Insurance Seta (INSETA) provided a comprehensive package of educational and accommodation resources, including two specialized braille devices to support visually impaired students, an advanced interactive smartboard to enhance classroom engagement, 20 single beds with quality mattresses to improve the comfort of resident students, 3 durable steel cabinets for secure storage, 25 single desks and 50 chairs to create appropriate learning spaces, and 10 multipurpose tables for various educational activities. INSETA also generously provided materials for refreshing the school's appearance through a comprehensive painting project.

The Finance and Accounting Services Seta (FASSET) made a transformative contribution by donating five essential mobile rooms to expand the school's facilities. Two of these units will serve as additional classrooms to reduce overcrowding, another has been specially designed as a paraplegic-accessible bathroom to enhance inclusivity, one will function as a much-needed staff room to improve teacher working conditions, and one will serve as a multipurpose office space. FASSET has additionally committed to providing ongoing skills development programs to enhance the capabilities of both staff and appropriate students.

The School Principal, Ms. Happiness Morolong, expressed profound gratitude for the coordinated efforts and generous contributions of all participating SETAs.



"We are extraordinarily excited about these developments. We truly appreciate the comprehensive support provided. We wish to extend our deepest and most sincere gratitude for this remarkable act of generosity by all the participating SETAs," she stated with enthusiasm. "These contributions will go a tremendously long way in ensuring that quality education is consistently delivered to all our pupils, regardless of the nature or extent of their disabilities," she emphasized. Furthermore, she noted with pride that the substantial contributions from the SETAs would play a crucial role in maintaining the school's impressive 100% pass rate among graduating students.

The significance of the event was further highlighted by the presence of the Minister in the Presidency responsible for Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities, Ms. Sindisiwe Chikunga, who used the platform to strongly denounce the unacceptable abuse of women and children while reinforcing the critical societal need for their consistent protection. Adding to the forward-looking nature of the event, Ms. Busi Mahlangu, representing the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education as the district director for Umlazi, confirmed exciting future developments. She announced that the school would be relocating to an improved site within Umlazi, with construction scheduled to commence in January 2025. She further indicated that learners could expect to occupy the new, purpose-built premises in early 2026, providing an even more conducive learning environment for these special needs students.



Siyakhulisa Mentorship Camp

Learners from rural communities face numerous challenging obstacles in their daily lives, which is why the Health and Welfare Sector Education and Training Authority (HWSETA) deemed it appropriate to establish the Siyakhulisa Mentorship Camp.

The HWSETA successfully launched its innovative three-day Siyakhulisa Mentorship Camp at the prestigious Birchwood Hotel and Conference Centre in Johannesburg from September 20-23, 2024. This carefully designed program brought together exceptional young minds from across the country.

The primary objective of the camp was to deliver comprehensive tutoring and holistic wellness support to participating students. Ninety (90) high-achieving learners who had been carefully selected for the HWSETA's Siyakhulisa Mentorship Programme attended the camp. These students, representing Grades 10-12 from all nine (9) provinces, demonstrated exceptional aptitude in Mathematics and Physical Sciences. They gathered for an intensive yet engaging educational experience designed to nurture their academic potential and personal development.

The participants had the privilege of hearing from HWSETA Chief Executive Officer, Ms. Elaine Brass, who delivered an inspirational address focusing on the importance of creating effective vision boards to chart one's future success. This strategic session encouraged learners to visualize and plan their educational and career trajectories with clarity and purpose.

For this transformative initiative, HWSETA partnered with Syked, an innovative online wellness platform that connects clients to a comprehensive network of thoroughly vetted and professionally qualified therapists through various communication channels including video calls, text messaging, and telephonic support. Throughout the immersive three-day camp, these learners participated in specialized sessions covering crucial topics such as effective stress management techniques and strategic career planning. These sessions were specifically designed to address and alleviate anxiety and stress commonly experienced during demanding examination periods.

The program included practical skill-building activities where learners honed their presentation techniques and participated in simulated interview scenarios, both designed to significantly boost their confidence and communication abilities. The comprehensive camp curriculum also featured intensive Mathematics and Sciences sessions conducted by experienced expert tutors, each followed by interactive engagement sessions that encouraged critical thinking and collaborative problem-solving.

The multifaceted approach of the camp extended beyond purely academic objectives. While maintaining excellent performance in Mathematics and Sciences remained a central focus through various specialized sessions and workshops, the camp also aimed to expose participants to diverse perspectives by bringing together peers from different regions of the country. This intentional design helped participants develop essential social and interpersonal skills that will prove invaluable in facilitating a smoother transition from secondary education to university life.

To maintain an optimal balance between rigorous academic work and necessary relaxation, the program incorporated energizing dance challenges throughout the day to keep learners physically active and mentally refreshed. Evening activities included a specially curated movie night that provided a relaxing environment for students to unwind and bond with their peers. Through this comprehensive initiative, the HWSETA ensured that these promising young scholars received critical psychological support while simultaneously exposing them to enriching new environments designed to foster the development of crucial interpersonal skills.

Looking toward the future, the HWSETA has committed to launching additional camps in the coming years to ensure that increasing numbers of talented learners have access to career opportunities within our vital sector. We firmly believe that initiatives of this calibre will have significant positive impacts on both the individual lives of these learners and their broader communities, creating ripple effects of educational excellence and professional achievement.



Graduation Ceremony for Laboratory Animal Technologists

The Department of Higher Education and Training, working in close strategic partnership with the Health and Welfare Sector Education and Training Authority (HWSETA), proudly announced the successful completion of the Graduation Ceremony for Laboratory Animal Technologists. This momentous occasion celebrated the significant academic and professional achievements of the newest cohort of graduates who have dedicated themselves to advancing the critical fields of science and medicine through implementing ethical animal research practices that adhere to the highest international standards.

The prestigious ceremony featured an insightful keynote address delivered by the Honorable Deputy Minister of Higher Education and Training, Mr. Buti Manamela. His thoughtful and engaging speech served as a powerful inspiration to the accomplished graduates, their supportive families, and dedicated faculty members in attendance. The Deputy Minister emphasized the vital importance of specialized education and rigorous training in professions that require scarce technical skills, particularly in scientific fields that contribute directly to public health outcomes and medical innovation.

The carefully planned event highlighted the absolutely critical role that laboratory animal technology plays within both the scientific research community and the broader medical establishment. These highly trained Laboratory Animal Technologists fulfill an essential function in ensuring the humane and ethical treatment of animals within controlled research settings. Their specialized work is integral to maintaining both the ethical integrity and scientific validity of groundbreaking studies that contribute significantly to meaningful advancements in both human and animal health outcomes globally.

A particularly noteworthy aspect of the ceremony was the formal recognition of HWSETA's substantial financial and institutional contribution to developing this specialized profession. Through HWSETA's targeted funding initiative, 10 deserving students were able to successfully complete their comprehensive certification program in Laboratory Animal Technology, addressing a critical skills shortage in this specialized field. This strategic investment covered not only their full tuition fees at the University of South Africa but also provided for other associated educational costs, enabling these dedicated students to obtain the specialized qualifications necessary to enter this vital but underrepresented field. Upon successful graduation, these newly qualified professionals became eligible to register as certified laboratory animal technologists with the South African Veterinary Council, ensuring the ongoing development and long-term sustainability of this critical profession within South Africa's scientific infrastructure.

The well-attended ceremony served as a powerful reflection of the Department's unwavering commitment to promoting specialized education and supporting ethical research practices in essential yet historically underrepresented professions within the scientific community. By strategically supporting the development of laboratory animal technology as a professional discipline, South Africa not only reinforces its leadership position in implementing ethical research practices but also makes significant contributions to scientific innovation addressing pressing global health challenges.

The specialized work performed by laboratory animal technologists plays a pivotal role in effectively tackling issues such as emerging communicable diseases and advancing medical innovations that ultimately benefit both human and animal populations worldwide.

This significant event represented not only a celebration of the individual academic accomplishments of each graduate but also served as an acknowledgment of the broader societal impact of their specialized work in advancing the fields of science and medicine. As these newly qualified professionals step into their important roles within research institutions across the country, they will contribute substantially to the continued growth and qualitative improvement of research practices, ensuring that South Africa maintains its position as a continental leader in ethical, innovative, and scientifically rigorous research methodologies.







Health and Welfare Sector
Education and Training Authority
HWSETA

17 Bradford Road,
Bedfordview,
Johannesburg, 2007
Private Bag X15,
Gardenview, 2047
Tel: 011 607 6900

Toll Free Number: 0800 864 478
www.hwseta.org.za



HWSETA_SA



HWSETA



HWSETA



HWSETA_SA