

# Career day gets the thumbs up

KHAYA SENGANI

LAMONTVILLE matric pupils are invited to attend a careers exhibition hosted by their local library next week.

The University of KwaZulu Natal, Durban University of Technology, Unisa, Coastal KZN FET College, Damelin and ICESA will showcase their courses, offer advice, and answer questions on career options at the Lamontville Community Hall, on 20 March.

Pupils will also get advice on the National Students' Financial Aid Scheme.

One of the objectives of the day is to discourage pupils from enrolling with fly-by-night institutions offering worthless, unrecognised courses.

Mthoko Gumbi, Library Assistant at the Lamontville Library, said: "We want to motivate matrics to step up their exam preparations now and to bring to their attention the institutions which are registered and accredited, since there are many colleges which are not registered."

"It is depressing for parents and students to discover they have enrolled with a bogus institution," Gumbi said.

The day also aims to guide pupils to choose careers that are marketable.

"Pupils will be given an opportunity to ask questions and get answers. The day seeks to eliminate a situation where young people find

themselves unable to identify a course suitable for them," Gumbi said.

Zanele Malatsi, a Grade 12 pupil from Burnwood Secondary, said: "I have been to the library to look for information on Sports Management. But if I could attend a career exhibition I would be able to tell the difference between the diplomas and degrees offered and the advantages and disadvantages of each."

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Mthoko Gumbi,  
Library Assistant

"Knowing the minimum requirements and the duration of the courses is important so that a wise decision can be made."

"Staging a careers exhibition in the township and exposing pupils to the various courses could have a positive impact," said Malatsi.

Queen Mdingi, a Learner Support Services Manager at Coastal KZN FET College, Central Campus, said: "Exposing pupils to careers exhibitions is vital, especially for those who come from schools where career guidance is not offered or where little attention is given to this area of pupil development."

"The information and advice they get from exhibitors and advisers helps shape their future."

"I often hear students say, 'I want to do any course that is available'. This is very sad," said Mdingi.

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## Achieving equality and dignity

AS WE PREPARE to commemorate Human Rights Day on 21 March, it is important to reflect on how far we have come towards making human rights a reality for all South Africans.

Our Bill of Rights is the cornerstone of democracy. It enshrines the rights of all people and affirms the values of human dignity, equality and freedom.

In the years since the 1994 elections, Parliament has passed laws that support the principles enshrined in the Bill of Rights.

But some have observed that the enjoyment of these rights has not filtered down to all sectors of our community.

Poverty is one factor that limits access to human rights. The flipside of this coin is that the achievement of human rights, especially socio-economic rights, can go a long way to eradicating poverty.

A human rights approach must be adopted in the fight against poverty, writes **Emmanuel Kleinbooi**

So, the fight against poverty should adopt a human rights approach.

For government, this means poverty alleviation can no longer be treated as charity. It needs to be approached as part of the government's obligation to respect, protect, promote and fulfill the rights enshrined in the Constitution.

This year we celebrate Human Rights Day at a time when economies world-wide are buckling in a way unprecedented since the 1930s. And individuals and families face having to do without some of the basic necessities.

This could hamstring the government's quest to ensure

that every citizen has access to his or her rights. It means we need to redouble our efforts. The Municipality has shown its commitment to fostering a human rights culture.

### Proof

Proof of this at the political level is the existence of the Masakhane, Grants-in-Aid, Non-Racism, Non-Sexism and Non-Discrimination Committee, dedicated to poverty alleviation, the achievement of equality and eliminating discrimination.

At the administrative level, units such as Community Participation and Action Support ensure communities participate in efforts to

create a better life for themselves.

The Office of the Ombudsperson and Head of Investigations has been established to promote human rights and to ensure violations of those rights are investigated and remedial action is taken.

This office has a responsibility to educate the public on just administrative action, access to information, equality and anti-corruption measures. This is critical to ensuring citizens are informed and empowered to participate in the affairs of their City.

In a participatory democracy such as ours, the government cannot do it alone – everyone has a role to play. Citizens, non-governmental organisations, labour and business, among others, must contribute in the fight against anything that limits human rights.

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KEN MCHUNU

ABOUT 12 000 pupils from previously disadvantaged schools in northern eThekweni attended a two-day Maths, Science and Technology symposium at the Tongaat Indoor Sports Centre early this month.

## Young maths, science boffs meet

It was part of the series of symposia that started in 2005 to tackle the acute maths and science skills shortage and spark an early interest in the subjects.

Similar symposia were held at KwaXimba, KwaMashu and Umlazi last year.

Deputy Mayor Logie Naidoo said: "There is an extensive skills shortage, particu-

larly in engineering, because pupils avoid taking maths and science at school".

Ronel Mitchel, of the City's Special Projects Unit said most schools who took part

in past symposia scored 100% matric pass rates.

The latest symposium included scientific experiments, quizzes and brain-teasers.

Chairman of the Association for Maths Education of South Africa, Vishnu Naidoo, said the live demonstrations aimed to encourage curiosity. "The mind only works to maximum capacity when an element of curiosity has been sparked," he said.

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## Big cash boost for school greening projects

METRO REPORTERS

A PARTNERSHIP of four deserving schools has been awarded R70 000 by sustainable living initiative, Imagine Durban to implement a Green Campus Project.

KwaThintwa School for the Deaf, Ndlokolo Primary, Highbury Preparatory School and St Mary's Primary School will use the money on a range of projects.

Power hungry incandescent light bulbs will be replaced with energy saving bulbs, geysers will be wrapped in insulating blankets to make them more energy efficient and organic food gardens will be established.

The grant will also fund teaching material



on ecological impacts, or "footprints" and transport for pupils to travel between the schools for discussions and shared lessons on the subject.

One of the schools will conduct a pilot solar power project and KwaThintwa and Ndlokolo schools will hold a sustainability market day.

The schools, based in eThekweni's Outer West, range from urban and peri-urban to rural locations.

Although their pupils come from diverse backgrounds, the schools have well established links.

Highbury has an existing partnership with KwaThintwa and Ndlokolo.

St Mary's works with Highbury on a wide range of projects and school activities. Highbury, Ndlokolo and Mablins Lane Primary School in Manchester, UK, are part

of a global partnership known as Afritwin, where schools from the developed world support disadvantaged schools in Africa.

The schools were already involved in sustainability projects when they got the green light for the Green Campus initiative and are being supported by the Centre for Environmental Management at the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

The centre believes that school children can become good ambassadors for sustainability projects and that schools are ideally placed to influence knowledge, activities and behaviour that can promote more sustainable lifestyles.

Visit [www.ImagineDurban.org](http://www.ImagineDurban.org).