



MINISTRY OF TOURISM REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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Media Statement

08 February 2024

Empowering Chefs through the Recognition of Prior Learning programme

Western Cape – Today, twenty-five chefs from the Western Cape Province are enthusiastically looking forward to exploring new and rewarding work prospects in the culinary field as they graduate from the Department’s Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) programme for Chefs.

The award winning Silwood School of Cookery that trained the chefs provided an apt far-style bistro setting for an intimate graduation ceremony where the students received their Occupation Certificate: Chef NQF Level 5 (ARPL) qualification.

The RPL programme is an intervention of the Tourism Sector Human Resource Strategy that recognises the prior knowledge and skills of chefs who have been working in the sector for many years, and awards them with the relevant occupational qualification and designation. The programme empowers beneficiaries to explore career growth opportunities and improve their trajectory in the workforce.

Chef Olivia van Stavel, who has been working in the Hospitality industry for 16 years, enrolled for the RPL programme to fine-tune her culinary skills to elevate her career. “The RPL programme assisted me to enhance my culinary skillset. I am grateful for the opportunity to participate in the RPL and successfully complete the Trade test. The Trade certificate will give me a competitive edge to confidently explore rewarding work prospects at home and abroad,” said Van Stavel.

The RPL was first implemented in the 2021/22 financial year. Since its inception, the Department has invested R3.1 million in the programme, and the RPL has reached 107 experienced chefs in various provinces who have been trained and awarded the relevant qualifications.

Addressing guests at the ceremony, the Deputy Minister of Tourism, Fish Mahlalela congratulated the chefs, and encouraged them to utilise their newly attained skills and qualifications to create employment opportunities in the sector.

“Government’s development programmes play a critical role in ensuring that the tourism workforce is adequately skilled, and that emerging entrepreneurs are empowered to start sustainable tourism businesses,”

“The skills gained through the RPL programme will not only elevate your career, but will place you in a position to be able to make a meaningful contribution in your community. I encourage you to venture into the sector as entrepreneurs who will create employment opportunities, and open doors for those who seek to enter the culinary field in the future,” stated Deputy Minister Mahlalela.

The Department has over the years collaborated with various stakeholders to implement its skills development programmes to address the sector’s skills needs, and to create an inclusive sector that caters for employment needs of all people irrespective of gender, race and disability. Chef Xen de Jongh, who is a special needs teacher, appreciated how the RPL programme opened his eyes to new methods that he could use when he teaches his learners.

“As a teacher in special needs, I work with students who have learning barriers, as well with industry chefs who train my students in their respective kitchens. This programme has shown me better ways to teach and engage my learners in a fun and informative manner. I am comforted that they will be able to qualify as chefs through the RPL programme,” said Chef De Jongh.

For more information or to apply for the RPL programme, visit www.tourism.gov.za

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