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Government's response to the call for youth development

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In response to the skills required by the tourism sector, the Department of Tourism conducted a skills audit in order to pair the sector demands with skills output. The National Youth Chefs Training Programme (NYCTP), is one of the programmes that the Department invested over R100 million in over three years to address the skills gap.

The programme is implemented by the South African Chefs Association (SA Chefs). Launched in 2011, the NYCTP is a 10-month training course which comprises of 30% theory and 70% work integrated learning.

Addressing chef graduates in Bloemfontein this morning, Deputy Minister Elizabeth Thabethe encouraged the learners to use their skills to market our country.

“It is fulfilling to see young people given a chance to develop their skills and are afforded an opportunity to work anywhere in the world. Despite our current economic status, people still visit South Africa, and we need to maximise on this by marketing the country. You have the ability to be our ambassadors by cooking and serving our tourists well and this will entice them to return”, said the Deputy Minister.

A total of 39 chefs from the Free State (29) and Northern Cape (10), graduated as chefs in Certificates in Food Preparation and Cooking, a Diploma in Food and Cookery, as well as a Diploma in Patisserie (Pastry) in Food Preparation and Cooking.

“We thank the Department of Tourism’s initiative and we commit our support to this programme as it demonstrates the seriousness our government to the triple challenge of poverty, unemployment and inequality”, said the Councillor Jeanine Nothnagel, on behalf of the Executive Mayor of Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality.

“I am honoured to address the Deputy Minister and SA Chefs because you have given our children an opportunity to change their lives. For this, we will forever be indebted to you”, said Ms Schontell Londewyk, a parent to Ansley Gates, one of the chef graduates.

Representing the host employers, Executive Chef at the Protea Hotel at Willow Lake, Sumarie Raunch encouraged establishments to embrace the trainees and expose them to opportunities that the industry has to offer.

“To all the trainers and chefs out there, the way your trainee performs reflects on how you train them, do not discourage them, but embrace them to exceed”, said Chef Raunch.

Her message to the graduates was not to focus on where they received their training, but to cook with their heart, soul and lives.

“To be a chef is an incredible journey, learning more each day, testing your own limits and not giving in when times are tough”, she concluded.

A total of 488 learners from across the country will graduate as chefs and receive certification accredited by the City and Guilds before the end of October 2018. These include a Certificate in Food Preparation and cooking, a Diploma in Food and Cookery, as well as a Diploma in Patisserie (Pastry) in Food Preparation and Cooking.

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