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Hospitality sector to get a skills boost as hundreds of youth graduate from the National Youth Chefs Training Programme

05 October 2018

Today 116 youth joined a rare academic procession with pride as they graduated from the 2017/18 National Youth Chefs Training Programme. Two graduation ceremonies for 47 and 79 Youth trainees were held in Greyville, KwaZulu-Natal in Port Elizabeth, Eastern Cape respectively

Launched in 2011, the National Youth Chefs Training Programme (NYCTP) forms a part of the broader objectives of the National Tourism Sector Strategy to address skills shortages in the hospitality and tourism sector by capacitating unemployed youth and graduates.

Learners participated in a 10-month training course with the South African Chefs Association that comprised of 30% theory, and 70% work integrated learning (Industry placement). Four hundred and eighty-eight (488) learners from across the country will graduate as Chefs and receive certificates accredited by the City and Guilds. 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.

“It is important for us to acknowledge what government is doing to fight unemployment in our country. This is why our department launched the NYCTP which forms part of our broader objective of our National Tourism Sector Strategy, to address skills shortages in the hospitality and tourism sector by capacitating unemployed youth graduates”, said Deputy Minister Thabethe.

Emphasising government’s initiatives to create employment, the Deputy Minister highlighted the Job Summit, led by President Ramaphosa, that is currently underway in Midrand, Gauteng, which aims to create 275 000 jobs per year. The summit produced a framework agreement with details interventions that will help reboot the economy.

Encouraging the graduates, the Deputy Minister emphasised the importance of chefs in the tourism and hospitality sectors. “You are the face of the country and are among the people that serve our tourists when they visit South Africa, please help us sell our country well”, she highlighted.

In her welcoming remarks, the Deputy Mayor of Ethekwini Municipality Fawza Peer pleaded with the learners not to drop out of programmes that the government puts in place in order to fight poverty.

The partnership that the department has with SACA, without which the Deputy Minister said the implementation of this programme would not be possible was acknowledged.

Also acknowledged were the host employers who offer the learners practical training, which counts for the majority of this programme.

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Issued by Department of Tourism