



**MINISTRY OF TOURISM
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

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KwaZulu-Natal young chefs graduate from tourism programme with international accreditation

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“Today is an auspicious and an exciting day as we are witnessing the young people completing the requirements of a course that the Department of Tourism invested in. Today we are reaping the fruits of the hard work and commitment to qualify as chefs.”

Tourism Deputy Minister, Elizabeth Thabethe was speaking at the graduation of 89 learners who participated in the National Youth Chefs Training Programme (NYCTP) Training at Clermont in KwaZulu-Natal today.

“Skills development remains central as South Africa continues to refine its capacity as an industrial country. The various training and development initiatives undertaken by the Department continue to enhance and develop skills among young people and enable them to acquire knowledge which allows them to become productive participants in the economy of the country” said the Deputy Minister.

The National Youth Chefs Training Programme (NYCTP) is an initiative of the Department of Tourism in partnership with the South African Chefs Association (SACA). It is accredited by City and Guilds with the aim to capacitate unemployed youth between the ages of 18 and 35 years with necessary skills and internationally recognised Certificates and Diplomas in Professional Cookery, and advanced Diplomas in Pastry.

Deputy Minister Thabethe emphasised the importance of education coupled with a sense of independence in order to help government create the necessary job in the industry. “The skills you have acquired are not only internationally accredited, but can also be used to capacitate yourselves further in opening up businesses like restaurants. You can also use these skills to come up with innovative initiatives in the hospitality industry to ensure improvement of living standard for yourselves and your communities,” said Deputy Minister Thabethe.

The Department approved the training of 577 learners from all provinces in culinary skills from June 2015 to April 2017. During the training period learners were placed at various hospitality establishments across the country for workplace training.

South African Chefs Association (SACA) Senior Vice President, Allister Esau gave a special word of appreciation to the Department of Tourism for taking an initiative to contribute to the skills development and job creation.

“We now have a total of 1787 qualified Chefs that came through the programme, and it is all thanks to the Department of Tourism.

“We are thrilled to report that the class of 2016/2017 has achieved a 90% pass rate in all levels of study. Out of the 1500 Chefs that graduated from the National Youth Chefs Training Programme between 2011 and 2016, 62% are permanently employed, 20% are continuing with their studies and the rest are being assisted to find employment in their chosen field,” said Esau

One of the highlight of the National Youth Chefs Training Programme (NYCTP) is graduates who received opportunities to work abroad in countries like Dubai, the Seychelles and the United States. The host employers who took part in the programme were presented with certificates of recognition for their efforts in making the programme a success.

The graduation ceremony was followed by an Imbizo, which gave community members an opportunity to learn about the Department's initiatives and educate them about the I DO TOURISM marketing campaign.

Deputy Minister Thabethe was joined by Ethekewini Metro Municipality Executive Mayor Cllr Zandile Gumede and chancellors who engaged community members in addressing broader socio-economic development issues.

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