

February 2022

Members Good News *Business Chamber*



Business forum signs historic agreement to rejuvenate Perseverance.



Mpho Jonas (Director of Trade and Investment - Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality), Siyolo Dick (Chairman of the Perseverance Business Association) and Denise van Huyssteen (Chief Executive Officer - Nelson Mandela Bay Business Chamber).

This week represented a historical milestone for the Perseverance area with the signing of an agreement which will result in the establishment of the Perseverance Business Association. This will see various business owners mobilising their joint efforts to drive for an enabling environment to be in place so as retain and attract investment in the area.

“Over the years, Perseverance has gradually deteriorated due to the lack of maintenance of key infrastructure and related facilities,” says Siyolo Dick, the Chairman of the Perseverance Business Association. “To this end, a number of businesses have committed to taking the appropriate actions to secure and facilitate the sustainable upgrading and maintenance of this precinct with the assistance of local and national government authorities.”



“With the overarching goal of rejuvenating the area, the Perseverance Business Association, will operate as a voluntary forum to represent the needs, interests and views of the participating industries and businesses in the area.

Nelson Mandela Bay Business Chamber CEO Denise Van Huyssteen says the Chamber stands firmly behind this initiative as it perfectly aligns with the business organisation’s strategy of resurging the city’s economy through an action orientated approach. “We are actively involved in initiating and supporting clusters which are either geographical or sectoral based as we believe that given the dysfunctional state of the operating environment, approaching issues as a collective is more impactful.”

“The Perseverance Business Association is a trailblazer in terms of this approach and are likely to serve as a benchmark for other similar clusters going forward,” she says. “It is vital that businesses, as the key drivers of economic activity and jobs, establish the appropriate platforms to collaborate with the relevant stakeholders to get the basics working again.”

The Perseverance area is an important contributor to the local economy and as such is home to 46 businesses, ranging from multinationals to local SMMEs who combined employ over 10 000 employees.

The Founding Members of the Association include Borbet SA, Coca Cola Beverages South Africa, SPAR Eastern Cape Distribution Centre, Welfit Oddy, and property owners Strydom Basson and Tait, while discussions are underway with other businesses in the area to join the association. The Nelson Mandela Bay Business Chamber has been coopted as an honorary member of the association and will also be represented on its Management Committee. Additionally, Japie Strydom from Strydom Basson and Tait, has been appointed as the Chair of the Perseverance Property Owner’s Association.

Dick says that the team has already developed key focus areas for the association among which include:

- Promoting sustainable regional business development in Nelson Mandela Bay, mainly in Perseverance, within the context of local governmental strategies and through cooperation with the local community and local organisations to embrace common aims and objectives.
- Minimising and eradicating the common challenges relating to electricity supply, water shortages, safety and security, illegal dumping and road maintenance to the extent that such challenges impact adversely on the properties or its occupants.
- Maintaining the stability of the existing Perseverance infrastructure and also to ensure a stable platform for further infrastructure enhancement, development and maintenance.
- To adopt a common vision for the association and its members.

Van Huyssteen says that the level of support and positive feedback from some key local government stakeholders was encouraging. “Ultimately we all share the same goal of growing the local economy so that much needed jobs can be retained and created.”

Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality’s Economic Development, Tourism and Agriculture (EDTA): Executive Director Anele Qaba says that “the revitalisation of industrial areas in and around Nelson Mandela Bay Municipal area is key to building a sustainable economy that is able to attract and retain investments (both foreign direct and domestic direct investments) as well as create the much-needed jobs. Therefore, these efforts of formalising and rejuvenating the Perseverance cluster must be applauded, noting the contribution of the Perseverance Industrial Area to the economy of the Nelson Mandela Bay”.

Qaba says that this initiative is reinforcing the commitment made by EDTA of supporting and developing clusters in the Metro. Thus, the initiative is consistent with the Municipality’s economic recovery plan whose outcomes are amongst others:



- to support the ongoing survival of existing businesses in NMBM;
- Create an enabling environment for businesses and investors to generate meaningful and sustainable profits that contribute to enhanced economic performance; and
- Provide support and grow key economic sectors.

“The Municipality through EDTA will continue to support this Business Forum and its attempts of accessing funding such as critical infrastructure funding from Department of Trade, Industry and Competition, and any other funding offered by Provincial government or National government”, says Qaba.

Bay needs accelerated solutions to resurge the economy



Loyiso Dotwana, President of the Nelson Mandela Bay Business Chamber

Nelson Mandela Bay’s economy can begin to resurge through the urgent adoption of an accelerated solutions-driven multi-stakeholder approach, said Loyiso Dotwana, President of the Nelson Mandela Bay Business Chamber during the launch of the organisation’s new strategic plan on Thursday.

He emphasised the importance of unlocking the Bay’s potential through targeted actions such as capitalising on quick wins, the formation of public-private partnerships, retention of investments, diversification of the economy, and driving positive change through an innovative and solutions orientated approach.

Dotwana said this could unlock high impact investment inflows for the Metro and create new job opportunities especially if the city pursued some of the Chamber’s identified quick wins among which include:

- Accelerating the process to approve rezonings, thereby enabling much needed investment to happen;
- Approving the sale of land to the Port Elizabeth Golf Club to develop a golf estate which will initially support around 1000 jobs;
- Implementing the Baakens Valley project, which will create over 700 jobs;
- Supporting Climate Change initiatives which will help create jobs in the green economy; and
- Where ever possible procuring products and services from local businesses.

Presenting the Chamber's economic outlook for 2022, he also touched on some key concerns such as the rising cost of doing business in the Metro, political instability and its impact on the local economy, and ongoing vaccine hesitancy which was restricting a turn-around of the economy.

"With around 700 member businesses and over 155 years of rich heritage, the Chamber remains one of the most trusted, respected and authoritative voices on matters relating to local business and the economy. The environment we operate in is changing rapidly and requires ongoing agility to ensure that we robustly respond to issues that impact the sustainability of local businesses, the functionality of the operating environment, leveraging economic growth opportunities, while simultaneously providing value adding services to our members. For this reason, we have implemented a strategic plan where we have adopted a more activist, collaborative and action orientated approach in pursuing our vision of being the leading catalyst for Nelson Mandela Bay to retain and attract business. Thus is ultimately directed at initiating a resurgence of the city," Dotwana said.

He highlighted the importance of all stakeholders pulling together around the common goal of getting the city back on track. "We cannot allow this decay to continue and must initiate a resurgence. Already our unemployment stands at an unsustainable level of 40%, indicative of the contraction of our local economy as well as the reluctance of businesses to invest here," he said.

He pointed out that the city was at a tipping point and it was vital that business as well as all civil society stakeholders use their collective reach, resources and skills to change the trajectory of the city going forward. "We have had to endure an unstable political environment for a number of years, and this needs to end now in order to retain and attract much needed investment and jobs. We appeal to all the stakeholders to put their own interests aside and focus on what's in the best interests of the city of a whole."

"We have therefore, over the past few weeks, scheduled meetings with all 13 political parties who are represented in Council. The purpose of these engagements have been to communicate our concerns as business in terms of the dysfunctionality of the current environment and how this is impacting upon the local economy and causing disinvestment and job losses. We appealed to them to - acknowledge the issues and start working on solutions to address these and to adopt a common vision for the city.

He emphasised the need for urgent political stability and for the publically elected officials to take accountability for ensuring services are delivered to the people. "Key to this is the implementation of transparent measures for performance. It is only when the basics are working again, that business can get on with the business of saving and creating much needed jobs."

Covid-19 has not gone away and it is therefore vital that vaccinations continue to be prioritised to enable economic activity to properly resume. "As such, we continue to strongly advocate for the acceleration of vaccinations to save lives and jobs – particularly considering that only 41% of people in our city are currently vaccinated. It is now also likely, as more specific data becomes available and informs us the way forward, that annual boosters will be required. The fifth wave may or may not be less severe and as the World Health Organisation has indicated, if we do not vaccinate people, then new variants will continue to emerge."

On the broader economic front, he said predictions are that South Africa's Gross Domestic Products will only grow by around 2% while inflation is set to increase between 4-5%. It is also likely that there will be a number of interest rate hikes this year. "This makes for a difficult operating environment where unemployment and poverty have already reached unacceptable and disturbing levels."



Dotwana said that based on the number of certificates of origin which the Chamber had issued last year (around 14 000) indications are that local businesses increased exports of wool and mohair as well as perishable products, while automotive declined. “We anticipate that automotive exports in particular, will continue to be under pressure due to global supply chain issues and economic downturns. The tourism and hospitality sectors have borne the brunt of the impact which covid-19 has had on our economy and going forward we should see domestic tourism recovering and hopefully international tourism starting to return.”

In the coming months, the Chamber will be proactively advocating and lobbying all the stakeholders across civil society - to collaborate and do what is within their control to initiate a resurgence of Nelson Mandela Bay.

Published in The Herald (Business In Action)

Chamber to push for action in the Metro



Chamber President Loyiso Dotwana (left) being interviewed by a SABC journalist Lwando Nomoyi after the launch.

Nelson Mandela Bay needs an action orientated approach which is backed by strong leadership across different societal formations to help implement solutions which will positively impact the Metro, said Denise Van Huyssteen, the CEO of the Nelson Mandela Bay Business Chamber.

She was delivering her speech at the launch of the Chamber’s new strategic plan which the Board of Directors developed and have now adopted for implementation. The strategy is based on the premise that the external environment is going to be subjected to ongoing changes and as such, the organisation needs to be agile in responding to this.

“During the course of our strategic planning discussions, it was agreed that the Chamber needs to be more activist and action orientated as we seek to collaborate with key role players to find and implement solutions which will enable investment to be retained and attracted in our city,” Van Huyssteen said.

The new strategic plan covers six priority areas anchored on:

- Resurging the economy which will cover, among many, the Chamber’s advocacy and lobbying initiatives which are tackling on various fronts such as electricity tariff methodology through to the critical work pursued by our Task Teams to advocate for an enabling environment in which business can operate. This will also extend to the initiation of a resurgence campaign where the Chamber will be encouraging multi-stakeholder partnerships targeted at driving hope and action to get the city working.
- Leading to retain current investment in tandem with considering how trade and investment strategies need to be taken forward.
- Connecting businesses to other businesses and key stakeholders by stepping up our levels of engagement to provide opportunities encompassing both virtual and to face-to-face.
- Growing our membership by ensuring that we provide value adding services, while at the same time further strengthening our critical mass in terms of the Chamber’s advocacy and lobbying initiatives.

- Empowering small businesses and entrepreneurs by creating an environment where it is easy for them to establish themselves and to receive the necessary support to succeed.
- Sustenance of our green economy through a progressive approach in dealing with issues relating to the environment in relation to preserving and harnessing our natural assets and mitigating the impact of climate change.

Through collaboration with all relevant stakeholders, the Chamber hopes this will culminate in a more action driven approach to change the trajectory of the city crisis. “It is not too late to rein in the decline so that the city can become functional again,” she emphasised.

“For example, for the past few years, the Metro has been losing out on potential investments due to a backlog on rezoning applications. Furthermore the lack of maintenance of infrastructure impacts upon on a wide range of issues such as water supply, where an estimated 35% of water is lost to water leaks. The city’s electricity is becoming more expensive and unreliable due to huge electricity losses caused by inefficiencies and in particular the scourge cable theft which is disrupting electricity supply.”

“It is clear that our local economy is at a tipping point. We are either at the cusp of a fast descent to the bottom or at the beginning of a new way forward – where decisive actions are taken to fix what is broken so that we can start to unlock new opportunities and get on with the business of preserving and creating new jobs,” Van Huyssteen said.

Chamber hosts Bay’s Executive Mayor on tour of Deal Party



Chamber CEO Denise Huyssteen, Executive Mayor Eugene Johnson, Deputy Executive Mayor Buyelwa Mafana, MMC for Economic Development, Tourism and Agriculture Khusta Jack and Councillor Majola of ward 16.

As part of leading the city’s resurgence efforts, the Nelson Mandela Bay Business Chamber recently hosted a tour of Deal Party in conjunction with businesses in the area and was joined by the Bay’s Executive Mayor Eugene Johnson.

This follows the establishment of the Deal Party Forum which is focused on addressing common issues which impact upon the ease of doing business in the precinct. Due to a lack of general maintenance of key infrastructure in the last few years, the area has fallen into a state of disrepair.

Business Chamber CEO Denise Van Huyssteen, who also serves as the Forum’s chairperson, says that organised business is concerned about service delivery levels and how this directly impacts upon the retention and attraction of investment to Nelson Mandela Bay. “Business needs an enabling environment in which to operate, and it is only when the basics work that we can get on with the business of creating jobs.”

To this end, Van Huyssteen says the Chamber is elevating concerns about the state of Deal Party and is calling for a collaborative approach to address some of the challenges facing businesses in the area.

“As such, we have endeavoured to collaborate with the Municipality and other key stakeholders to find solutions to some of these various serious problems, with the ultimate objective of securing investment in our economy and creating much needed jobs. There needs to be an openness and commitment to establishing public-private partnerships which will help resurge our economy, thus serving the best interests of the city and its stakeholders as a whole.

“As we look ahead, it has become clear to us that an innovative way of approaching many of the challenges facing businesses operating in the Metro is to tackle these on a cluster basis, either by geography or sector. This provides a collective and united voice to working in a constructive manner to address the issues impacting upon businesses,” says Van Huyssteen.

To kick-start this process, the Forum has invited the Mayor and various Municipal representatives to join the tour of the area to gain an understanding of the challenges on the ground and to start engaging on potential solutions.

She says some of the businesses have indicated that they are expecting international parent delegations to once again start visiting their operations from early 2022, and they are concerned about how the current state of the area will reflect on future investment decisions.

As such, the visit would inform the delegation about what needs to be prioritised in order to drive for an enabling environment and promote growth in the city, as well as sustain businesses in the area.

Mayor Johnson says the Municipality is encouraged by the activism and commitment displayed by the Business Chamber.

“The constant honest engagements on critical issues that are the backbone of our economy can only mean the future of the City's economy is in good hands. We are aware of the current infrastructural challenges that have a potential to slow down our economic growth, we are working hard to improve our infrastructure. We have also created partnerships with institutions of higher learning to tap into the existing expertise. The Business Chamber has also shown a serious commitment in this regard,” she says

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Chamber kicks off mentorship programme with meet and greet session



Nwabisa Funde, Zena King, Mamolaoli Tolwana , Candice Parker and Denise Van Huyssteen

The Nelson Mandela Bay Business Chamber kick-started its Mentoring programme this month with a meet and greet session for mentors and mentees at the Beach Hotel.

As part of a value-add to its member companies, the Chamber recently launched the programme which is aligned to its goals of empowering Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises and also helping to develop strong and resilient leaders across various business sectors in the city.

The first cohort consists of 20 mentees who were accepted from a pool of applicants from Chamber member businesses across Nelson Mandela Bay. With a database of 40 mentors representing business leaders from different economic sector backgrounds across the Metro, the mentoring will run for three months with the key focus on providing tailored one-on-one sessions with mentees. The larger mentor pool availability will allow for matching correctly based on the mentees requirements.

One of the mentees, Mamolaoli Tolwana an Accounts Manager at Metrofile, says that she feels honoured to be part of the pilot group of the programme. “This comes at a time where we have seen our country painfully bleed due to the fight against Covid in every way you could imagine. One thing I have learned from the pandemic is to strive to be the best version of myself and live while I still have the time.

“In such a time of uncertainty, I am sure my fellow mentees would agree that this has to be one of our silver linings. I trust that this process brings me wisdom, growth and prosperity so that I am able to do my part and open those doors for the many Mamolaoli’s that follow behind me,” Tolwana says.

Headed up by Nashua’s Sales Director Candice Parker, who has a demonstrated background in establishing and executing mentorship programmes, the mentorship is offered only to Business Chamber member businesses and their employees to empower and offer support to high potential individuals. Companies who are interested in the programme but are not Chamber members are encouraged to join as members.

The mentors will be offering guidance and motivation to individuals looking to establish themselves within the business fraternity or their small businesses. “We strongly believe in the power of mentorship and as such, 40 mentors will be offering guidance and motivation to individuals looking to establish themselves within the business fraternity or their small businesses. The mentees set to gain access to proven leaders who care about the development and advancement of others, including confidential inputs and guidance which is geared at empowering them and laying the foundation for success.”

Parker has the support of some of the Bay’s leading businesswomen such as Michelle Brown, the Founder and Managing Director of Brown’s PR, Bev Gaia the Founder and Owner of Gaia Marketing, Heather Dutton, Short Term Broker at Profin Financial Services, and Lucia Mtshake, a Residence Manager at Nelson Mandela University.

Chamber CEO Denise Van Huyssteen says in line with the radical changes in the business environment, the Chamber is going through the most change it has been through in its more than 150 years of operation. “We need to be a much more agile, resilient and innovative organisation – and as such, we have developed a fluid strategic plan which adopts ongoing change as the new norm. Change is not easy and requires strong and courageous leadership. As such, the Chamber recognises the role we need to play in helping to develop strong leaders for now and the future.”

“The mentorship programme provides an ideal vehicle for experienced business leaders – representing a wide range of sectors – to provide guidance and insights to those who are wanting to take their careers to the next level or to entrepreneurs who want to grow their businesses,” she says.

The second phase of the programme will kick off in July until September 2022.

SAIMI to host Youth Dialogue on youth unemployment

SAIMI is hosting the second Youth Dialogue on the 24th February 2022. Join them as they discuss youth unemployment and the maritime sector, focusing on three sub-sectors namely maritime law and ocean governance, seafaring, and marine manufacturing.

SAIMI is dedicated to providing an advocacy platform for all people vested in the maritime sector. It hopes to achieve this through aspects of strategic engagements that create awareness and needed support to achieve South Africa’s National Development Goals and aspirations of Operation Phakisa’s job creation within the maritime space.

The Youth dialogue is a platform that enables collaboration and engagement to support employment endeavour with the following objectives:

- Share on possible avenues others may find employment opportunities;
- Enable identification of both enablers and hindrances to finding employment opportunities in the maritime sector;
- To outline required support desired for better employment prospects within the maritime sector

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Volkswagen plant in Kariega manufactures 100 000th Polo Vivo



Starting 2022 off on a strong note, Volkswagen Group South Africa celebrated a production milestone this week, with the 100 000th unit of the current Polo Vivo rolling off the production line at the plant in Kariega (formerly Uitenhage).

This milestone, which was achieved on Tuesday 25 January, comes in just over four years after the plant began manufacturing the current Vivo model in 2018. Before this, VWSA built the first generation Vivo from 2010 to 2017, with a total of 254 683 units built in this generation. This means the plant has built just over 354 000 Vivos to date.

The Vivo is built exclusively in Kariega for the South African market. In turn, South African consumers have shown their appreciation consistently for this uniquely South African vehicle: the Vivo has been the best-selling vehicle in the passenger car market every year since its introduction in 2010. A total of 350 289 Vivos have been sold between 2010 and 2021, of which 251 726 were during the first generation and 98 563 of the current model (up until December 2021).

The best annual sales performance for the current Vivo model was recorded in 2019 when VWSA sold a total of 29 618 Vivos in one year. In terms of monthly performance, the Vivo proved most popular in October 2018, when 3 009 Vivos were sold in a single month.

The Vivo is one of two vehicles currently being built at the Kariega plant, the other being the Volkswagen Polo. The Polos built in Kariega are exported to all right-hand-drive markets worldwide, while VWSA also supplements production for left-hand-drive markets.

“This milestone means a lot to our team, both in Production and in the rest of the company,” said Ulrich Schwabe, Production Director at VWSA. “Given the challenges of our industry and of the Covid-19 pandemic, this achievement is a proud moment that sets the tone for a successful year ahead. I am grateful to every VWSA employee for their dedication, and the part they played in making this milestone a reality.”

FAW TRUCKS SA ASSEMBLES 8 000th UNIT AT COEGA PLANT



FAW Trucks recently celebrated another major milestone in its local history as the 8 000th locally assembled unit rolled out of its Coega manufacturing plant, just short of eight years after the production trial period commenced in May 2014.

The very first unit off the line in 2014 was a 15.180FL, but the 2022 honour befell the newly introduced JH6 28.500FT, the flagship in the current local line-up.

Says Yongjun Li, CEO of FAW Trucks SA: "The assembly of our 8 000th unit is an understandably proud moment for us, especially as it comes on the back of the introduction of yet another new model derivative.

"Since first entering the South African market 28 years ago, we have gone from strength to strength, providing local buyers with products of high quality that are not only well suited to local conditions, but also boast high levels of safety, convenience and comfort. We have managed to combine this with competitive pricing, low running costs and continuously improving aftersales service."

FAW Trucks took the top spot in the Heavy Commercial Vehicle (HCV) segment of the local market for the first time in the first quarter of 2021 and continues to maintain its strong sales performance in a highly competitive environment. This success can largely be attributed to a dedicated and strategically located dealer network, a reliable and consistent parts supply, and a continuing expansion of product offerings.

Funded by the China FAW Group Corporation and the China-Africa Development Fund, the Coega facility was built at a cost of R600 million and spans some 30 000m². Under the watchful eye of plant manager, Peng Lei, 148 people are employed in the Production, Technical & Quality, Operations & Supply Chain, Finance, and Human Resources Departments.

"With a production capacity of 3 000 units per annum, scalable to 5 000 as demand grows, we produced 1 539 units at the plant in 2021," says Lei. "This will be ramped up to an average of around 200 units per month in 2022, covering six to seven different models.

"If all goes according to plan, we are confident that we will assemble the 10 000th unit in December this year," he explains. All units arrive in South Africa in completely knocked-down form and are then assembled at Coega.

“The reason for our continued growth in South Africa is the fact that we cater to virtually every need,” explains Li. “Our line-up includes freight carriers, truck tractors, tippers and mixers, all assembled to exacting standards to be able to withstand the harsh conditions of the African continent. “All current models in the local FAW Trucks range represent the strength, reliability, affordability and ease of operation that the brand and its products are renowned for. This means that every unit that leaves the Coega facility truly is ‘Built in South Africa, for Africa’,” Li concludes.

Coega appointed to assess fire damage to Parliamentary buildings affected by January fire



Coega IDZ CEO Khwezi Tiya

The Coega Development Corporation (CDC) notes the confirmation by the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure that it has been appointed to assess fire damage to Parliamentary buildings affected by the January 2022 fire.

In a statement issued by the Department this month, DPWI’s Bid Evaluation Committee recommended COEGA be appointed for the independent assessment. In close consultation with National Treasury, on Friday 11 February 2022, DPWI appointed the Coega Development Corporation to perform assessments of the fire damaged buildings at Parliament.

“We are humbled by the confidence placed on the CDC on such an important symbol of our constitutional democracy. We accept the responsibility with the greatest of humility and recognise the hard work that lies ahead of us. We will certainly execute our responsibility with utmost professionalism and diligence working together with all relevant stakeholders,” says Khwezi Tiya, Coega Development Corporation CEO.

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Coega Maths and Science Programme: celebrating the 2021 academic achievers



Back row (left to right) Abongile Breakfast CDC Corporate Services, Craig Luckman CDC Acting Executive Manager Corporate Services, Eldon September CDC Physical Science Facilitator, Tarryn Higgins, Sanelisiwe Majambe, Axolile Sityoshwana, Siphesihle Kosi, Lionel Billings CDC Chief Financial Officer. Front row (left to right) Philiswa Dike CDC HR Administrator, Washington Mushwana CDC Maths and Physical Science Facilitator, Zola Ngoma CDC Unit Head Human Resources, Chulumanco Mapuma, Hlompho Lengoasa, Lesley-Ann Witbooi, Zintle Jumbe, Ntombozuko Mbuzwana CDC Performance Monitoring Officer, Nondyebo Ntshobodi CDC Human Capital Solutions Administrator.

The Coega Maths and Science Programme (MSP), a Corporate Social Investment (CSI) initiative by the Coega Development Corporation (CDC) to assist matriculants to improve their Mathematics and Physical Science results, has recorded some of its most impactful marks since inception in 2013. A celebratory luncheon was held at the Bluewater Bay Sunrise Hotel to honour the momentous achievements by the top learners from the class of 2021.

MSP forms part of the CDC's Corporate Social Responsibility programme. The Programme is aligned to the organisation's objectives and contributes to the vision of being a leading catalyst for the championing of the socio-economic development. It is also guided by ISO 26 000 and Principle 3 of the King IV on Corporate Governance which speaks to responsible corporate citizenship. The CDC CSI Strategy and Policy identified six focus areas that are aligned to the National Government Priorities as outlined in the National Development Plan 2030, namely education and skills development, job creation, health, crime prevention, rural development, and sport and recreation. "Through its CSI strategy and the MSP, the CDC commits to the empowerment and upliftment of women, youth, and persons with disabilities," says Zola Ngoma, CDC Unit Head of Human Resources.

In her welcoming statement, Ngoma acknowledged that the need for a programme like the MSP has been reaffirmed based on the astounding response from learners looking to improve their results in Mathematics and Physical Science. "Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) are the way of the future," she stated.

The class of 2021 produced four distinctions in Mathematics and seven in Physical Science, which is a landmark achievement for the MSP, notwithstanding challenging circumstances amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. “The 2021 MSP overall pass rate was 97%,” says an excited Eldon September, CDC Physical Science Facilitator. Congratulations to the top three learners: Sisipho Ndika, Khayaletu Mtetwa and Tarryn Higgins.

Sisipho Ndika, Lesley-Ann Witbooi, Hlompho Lengoasa and Tarryn Higgins are among other learners from the 2021 cohort who have shown immense potential in terms of their growth during the course.

Hlompho shared her transformational journey from matric to graduating from the MSP: “Last year, our hearts were shattered about our matric results, but when MSP classes started, my entire perspective changed. Fifty percent was no longer my target.” Hlompho achieved 75% and 84% for Maths and Science, respectively. Lesley-Ann, who has been accepted to study psychology at Rhodes University this year, was able to improve her marks by nearly 50% in both Mathematics and Physical Science through the MSP, obtaining 77% in Mathematics and 68% in Physical Science. Tarryn, who achieved above 80% in both subjects, has been accepted at Rhodes University to pursue her dream career in Pharmacy. Top learner, Sisipho Ndika achieved 87% in Mathematics and 90% in Physical Science.

Former MSP learner and 2nd year B.Sc. Microbiology and Biochemistry student, Chelsea Barnard, shared some heartfelt advice since exiting the programme in 2020. “University is about working hard and working smart. Stay focused, make wise choices, and heed good advice.”

“Since inception nine years back, the MSP has benefitted over 1000 learners. The programme teachers, administrators and learners have shown incredible grit and resilience and should be commended for it. Every dark cloud has a silver lining, and with COVID-19 pandemic being that dark cloud, it has made us realise that this programme can be rolled out virtually. We will work towards this reality,” shared Craig Luckman, CDC Corporate Services Executive Manager (Acting).

Isuzu says YES to Youth skills development



The New Youth Employment Service (YES) 2022 intake.

Isuzu Motors South Africa welcomes 66 Youth Employment Service (YES) candidates while continuing to say YES in investing in the future of the South African Youth.

The YES initiative is a government-led collaboration with business to create work exposure opportunities for unemployed South Africans between the ages of 18 and 35. Through the Isuzu partnership program candidates will be placed across Isuzu operations as well as KANU, a subsidiary to Isuzu.

Due to expanding operations, Isuzu was able to employ 15% from the previous intake, primarily in the Information Technology and Manufacturing departments. Isuzu remains committed to investing in skills development and education as a strategic business imperative.

Wayne Osborne, Senior Manager Training & Organizational Development says; “This is our third intake of Isuzu YES candidates and I am pleased to say our partnership with Harambee and Engeli Youth Empowerment, who perform recruitment screening and pre-employment training, has been very successful. The program mainly allows for the youth to gain experience and prepare themselves for the working world. What we have observed at Isuzu is that we are also able to use the program as a talent pool from which we search for specific skills sets.”

The harsh reality is that the youth continue to be hard hit by unemployment, the latest official data shows that two out of every three people under the age of 35 is unemployed. Thus, a program such as this one continues to be of great importance, by affording these youth candidates an opportunity to gain skills, develop their career and earn an income.

Isuzu embraces true transformation, Billy Tom, President and CEO of Isuzu, says: “By affording the youth, whom are struggling to secure jobs, an opportunity to gain skills and earn an income - this, for us, is true transformation, not only in the working world, but also that of the economy. By participating

in the program, we are also making sure that as a corporate we don't leave any generation behind. The youth have a huge role to play. In the workspace, youth have the opportunity to not only develop their skills set, but also add value by developing innovative solutions. As corporates, we have the responsibility to create environments conducive to this; we can only have the youth take the world forward by affording them opportunities.”

Isuzu is proud to be part of the 1825 businesses in South Africa offering job opportunities to the youth. The 2022 intake of YES candidates have signed a 12-month contract with the manufacturer

Minister Stella Ndabeni-Abrahams Urges Entrepreneurs to Focus on Energy



(Centre) Minister of small business development Stella Ndabeni-Abrahams flanked by the Bay's Executive Mayor Eugene Johnson (left) and Sdumo Dlamini, Deputy Minister of small business development and other dignitaries during the official launch.

Young entrepreneurs should explore opportunities in energy in order to help South Africa to provide sufficient electricity to power the economy says the minister of small business development, Stella Ndabeni-Abrahams. Speaking at the official launch of the Township ICT and Digital Technology Incubator in the Neave industrial area of Gqeberha, the minister said the country needed a stable electrical power supply.

“The challenge is for SMMEs to come up with innovative solutions. Every crisis brings opportunity,” she said. Power should be seen as part of the business ecosystem, which includes water and logistics.

“There are opportunities in the entire ecosystem,” she said.

Propella Business Incubator is a partnership between the Nelson Mandela University (49%) and Engeli Enterprise Development.

The township hub is a partnership between Department of Small Business Development (DSBD), the Small Enterprise Development Agency (SEDA) and Propella Business Incubator (PBI).

It aims to bridge the gap between township and technology for grassroots, rural and township entrepreneurs.

Through onsite or virtual ICT support services and a development platform, the incubator offers young entrepreneurs with viable digital or technology concepts the opportunity to transform their ideas into viable businesses.

Nelson Mandela Bay executive mayor Eugene Johnson described the incubator as a good example of the success that can be achieved through co-operative partnerships that include the city, SEDA, academia and business.

“For us it is important that both the formal and informal economy is revived in Nelson Mandela Bay.

“The city is keen to assist any incubator programme that helps young people to realise their potential,” she added.

Speaking after a tour of the facility and meeting the entrepreneurs SEDA chairperson Dr Joy Ndlovu said it was very encouraging to see young people wanting to be part of the solution, rather than complaining about what is wrong.

The youth are doing things for the benefit of the community. They are finding solutions to the problems we face as a society,” she said.

“The choice of the location of the incubator is strategic because it creates a link between the township and the industrial zones of the municipality. The two economies need to merge,” said Township incubator manager Nafeesa Dinie.

VWSA welcomes new non-executive director



Marubini Raphulu

Volkswagen Group South Africa (VWSA) has welcomed Marubini Raphulu to their Board of Management. Raphulu, who serves as a non-executive Director, joined the Board effective 1 December 2021.

He is an entrepreneur with extensive experience across various industries, including the energy sector. His most recent role was as the Chief Executive Officer of Hulisani, a company he also co-founded.

In addition to this, Raphulu is an admitted attorney. He holds a B.Proc. and LLB degree, as well as an LLM degree in Tax.

Raphulu is one of two non-executive Directors currently serving on the VWSA Board of Management. The Board also welcomed Reverend Nomgando Matyumza as non-executive Board member in March 2020.

"We are proud to welcome Mr Raphulu to our Board of Management, and we firmly believe our business will benefit greatly from his input," said VWSA Chairman and Managing Director Robert Cisek.

NEW TNPA EXECUTIVE APPOINTMENTS

In line with Transnet National Ports Authority's (TNPA) Re-imagined Operating Model, it has announced the appointments of two new TNPA Executives, effective 01 March 2022.

Pamela Yoyo joins TNPA as Port Manager: Nelson Mandela Bay Ports, a role that will see her manage the Port of Ngqura and Port Elizabeth as a single port complex with centralised business support services. The establishment of a single port complex gives effect to the demands of lowering the cost of doing business, satisfying customer needs and improving port efficiency. These ports are treated as two port precincts functioning on a complimentary basis. Pamela boasts over 15 years of extensive experience in Port Terminal Operations and Human Resources where she has previously served at both senior and executive management level, most recently at Transnet Port Terminals.

Basil Ngcobo is appointed as TNPA Chief Engineer, a role in which he will be responsible for the Engineering Portfolio at TNPA. Prior to his appointment, he served as acting Deputy Chief Engineer at the Eastern Region (Durban and Richards Bay) preceded by his role as the Port Engineer at the Port of Ports Elizabeth and Richard Bay. Basil's engineering career spans over 20 years, having had extensive involvement in projects such as the Richards Bay Port Expansion, Manganese Expansion, Port Nolloth Development and Durban Logistics Hub.

Local athletes looking for glory at Nedbank Runified Breaking Barriers 50km



Ntombifuthi Mfunzi

The 2nd edition of the Nedbank Runified Breaking Barriers 50km is set to take place on 6 March along the scenic beachfront of Gqeberha and with the event attracting some of the world's best athletes, local athletes will be looking for glory in a race which will be broadcast live through SuperSport on the day.

"I am so excited to announce that our Nedbank Breaking Barriers 50km in only its 2nd year is now ranked by World Athletics as an elite label event and it now puts us on par with many of the World's biggest city marathons," said an elated race director Nick Bester.

"Not only that, but we are the first and only ultra-marathon in the world to achieve this recognition."

With the support of the Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality to host a world class event, Bester is happy that the event has found itself a stable home for the next 3 years. "NB Sport Promotions are proud to say that we have signed a 3-year deal together with the Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality to keep the event in Gqeberha from 2022 to 2024."

The Eastern Cape has unearthed many exceptional running talents in the past and a few Nelson Mandela Bay based athletes will be looking to make a name for themselves and achieve a world best in their age category.

George Ntshiliza from the Nedbank running club already has a rich pedigree, having won the iconic Two Oceans Marathon back in 2008. At 42, Ntshiliza will be aiming at finishing high up in the veteran category.

The local favourite is, without a doubt, Melikhaya Frans. Having run a 2:11 marathon last year in Cape Town, Frans will be in action in the World Championships later in the year, but coach Michael Mbambani says that viewers must not expect to see him finish the 50km. "Frans will be an official pacemaker in the event tasked at running world record pace through to 35km and will then stop," said Mbambani.

Luyanda Tshangana, from Ikhamva running club and training partner of Frans, is set for a big result and the Nedbank Runified Breaking Barriers 50km may just be the event that elevates Tshangana to the next level. Winning the Bay Ultra 50km back in 2019 in a time of 2:54, Tshangana is in great shape and is also coached by Mbambani. "I feel that Luyanda will pull off a big result next month as the training has gone well and he is focussed."

In the women's race, the Nedbank running club duo of Ntombesintu Mfunzi and Kelly van Vliet will be ones to watch with top 10 finishes not being ruled out. Van Vliet finished 10th last year in what was her ultra-debut, with Mfunzi having to pull out due to an injury which the star runner said was the worst of her career.

"I will never forget that injury because it came out of nowhere and I always finish what I start, but it didn't even allow me to jog to the finish," recalls Mfunzi. "It was a ligament injury at the back of the knee which controls the backward movement of the leg and it completely locked up."

Mfunzi has a rich pedigree in running, having won countless provincial titles as well as multiple Two Oceans gold medals. "For this year's event the training has gone exceptionally well and together with my new coach Xolani Mabhida, we have worked hard to be ready for race day where the goal will be a top 10 finish as well as a world best record for the 40+ age group."

"To be running a race of this status in my hometown is very exciting and I want to keep that EPA flag flying among the best athletes, added Mfunzi."

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