

issue 7 march 2010

# Achieve

*LEADERS IN CLOSING THE SKILLS GAP*



merSETA -  
reinforcing  
rural development

NMMU & merSETA  
sign multi-million rand deal



**merSETA**  
MANUFACTURING, ENGINEERING  
AND RELATED SERVICES SETA  
ISO 9001:2008



# Achieve



**merSETA**

MANUFACTURING, ENGINEERING  
AND RELATED SERVICES SETA

## *VISION*

leaders in closing the skills gap.

## *MISSION*

to facilitate sustainable development of skills,  
transformation and accelerate growth in  
manufacturing, engineering and related services.

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### on the front cover:

Musa Mtshali, Client Relations Manager (KwaZulu-Natal) & Zwelethemba Ngayeka, Client Relations Manager (Eastern Cape)

**publisher**  
merSETA

**editor**  
sibongiseni ziinjiva ka-mnguni

**design, photography & printing**  
tenaka's tribe ( [www.tenaka.co.za](http://www.tenaka.co.za) )

**contributors**  
dr raymond patel  
yogi pillay  
christo basson  
romiela pillay  
musa mtshali  
zwele ngayeka  
sheryl pretorius  
stanmar  
scania  
sheetech SA  
barloworld

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# talkingnotes

*As the National Skills Development Strategy II (NSDS II) comes to an end, it is proper for us to look back and celebrate our achievements and successes. We showed zeal, tenacity and plenty of hybrid energy in driving skills development over the years.*

**U**ntil we wake up to the reality that SA's economic weakness is not the interest rate or the exchange rate but a fundamental lack of skills needed to grow the economy, we are just diagnosing the illness, not the causes of the illness (skills shortage).

Our concerted interventions in up-skilling our workforce continues to pay dividends, we have committed resources in ensuring that training and skills development is accessible and attainable by all. In our quest to close the skills gap, we continue to play a significant role in championing youth development and the empowerment of women. As Madiba said: "Freedom cannot be achieved unless women have been emancipated from all forms of oppression."

Speaking of achievements, I would like to congratulate our CEO, Dr Raymond Patel, for winning the Black Business Quarterly (BBQ) award in December last year. The staff and stakeholders at merSETA are humbled by this honour. We have no silver, no gold but only appreciation.

Our sizzling bumper to bumper edition of Achieve Newsletter is packed with interesting reads for your pleasure. When everybody seem to be battling in trying to find a solution around the poor matric results, Science, Engineering and Technology (SET) seems to have found a winning formula. We touch on Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) in bringing you up to speed with progress and milestones reached on this project.

The KwaZulu-Natal and Eastern Cape areas are mobilising resources to reinforce rural development in a move aimed to alleviate poverty and tackle the skills shortage in rural areas.

Our success stories feature four female diesel mechanic apprentices from Scania - read more about these ladies

and this career as a trade. We also had a heart-to-heart with one of our bursary holders, Modiamme Moloi. She takes us through her achievements, challenges, dreams and aspirations as a young South African. We also cover the Barloworld, East London Industrial Development Zone (IDZ) and Stanmar graduation ceremonies respectively.

On a sad note, we lost one of our soldiers in the skills development fraternity. Anna Tsetso Mokorotloane worked in our Mpumalanga/Limpopo Regional Office as a Client Liaison Officer. Achieve Newsletter and merSETA family pay tribute to this stalwart who passed away in December last year

In closing, never cease to write, phone or fax us. Our contact details are at the back of the magazine.

*Be Blessed*



**Sibongiseni  
Ziinjiva Ka-Mnguni**  
Editor





# A VIEW FROM THE TOP

*It's that time of the year when merSETA ups the ante on grants for further education and training.*

**O**ur mandatory grant applications opened on February 1 this year – and the system has been upgraded to ensure you, our levy-paying stakeholders, have an efficient and effective way of applying for the grants.

As we promised, the Datanet system is now more exciting and user-friendly, having taken all your suggestions and requests for a better management information system for these grants.

Among the new features are more user-friendly OFO Codes, the capacity to import information from last year into this year's application and the ability to move between applications and select which one you prefer or gather information from one to incorporate in the other. Our stakeholders need to factor in critical plans for training NOW as there are clear signs the economy is picking up.

According to the latest data from Statistics SA, factory output was up 3,3% in the three months to December last year compared with the previous three months, on a seasonally-adjusted basis. Manufacturing production in December 2009 was a further 3, 2% higher than the previous December.

Coming on top of this data is a report by a leading auto financier which found that confidence levels among vehicle dealers have risen the highest in the two years.

According to the WesBank vehicle sales confidence indicator, which was launched in 2007, on a scale of 10, the index rose to 5, 5 last month compared to 4, 7 in October last year. About 30% of dealers surveyed described the market as active or highly active – which means a higher need for skilled artisans in the after-sales market.

merSETA cannot stress enough the training opportunities that need to be taken up so that when the economy

is once again in full swing, specialist skills are readily available.

In his State of the Nation Address, President Jacob Zuma made it clear that skills training and development were key developers of our economic growth – and government expected more than 175 000 students at tertiary institutions by 2014.

On May 6th and 7th this year, we will be holding our national conference in Johannesburg.

The Minister of Higher Education and Training, Dr B Nzimande, will open the conference – and delegates will be able to glean clearer insights into government's further education and training landscape.

The SETA landscape is bound to change this coming year, possibly with further realignment and consolidation, but it is clear the focus will always be skills development.

So, please start capturing your information on our Datanet to alleviate a rush before the deadline of 30 June for mandatory grants. And please register for our national conference once registration begins.

Sincerely,

**Dr Raymond Patel**  
CEO merSETA



From left: Dr Raymond Patel and dignitaries at Mercedes Benz SA - merSETA pilot project.

# Mercedes Benz & merSETA

*East London, Dec 14: Mercedes Benz SA, merSETA and the Eastern Cape Department of Education launch a pilot project to upgrade skills in the crucial after-sales maintenance sector.*

**A**imed at **boosting** the number of qualified mechanics, mechatronics, autotronics and auto-electricians, the scheme will see the creation of a specialist training unit at the Buffalo City Further Education and Training College in East London.

“After finishing their college degree in the four fields, the students will be selected to complete another year of intensive training in the training unit,” says Dr Claudia Beck-Reinhardt, programme manager at JIPSA in the Eastern Cape.

Dr Beck-Reinhardt coordinated the programme, which will select students from eight FET colleges in the Eastern Cape for the intensive training.

Once the intensive training was completed, students would be linked to various opportunities across the auto sector.

“Daimler AG Germany launched the first such project in India two years ago after identifying after-sales maintenance as a key thrust of its processes. It has been a huge success. The project has now been duplicated here with the Eastern Cape – the hub of South Africa’s motor industry – being selected for the project,” she adds.

merSETA will ensure training standards and quality is maintained in line with vocational certification.

merSETA will further provide bursaries to deserving students in the four disciplines.

“We are excited by this project as it will increase the value-add of students trained in the auto sector,” says merSETA CEO Dr Raymond Patel.

“We congratulate industry captains such as Mercedes Benz SA for putting the training of students in scarce skills at the top of their training agenda,” Dr Patel adds.

*For further details, please contact:*

Dr Claudia Beck-Reinhardt  
**Program Manager JIPSA EC**  
 Eastern Cape Socio Economic  
 Consultative Council  
 043 701 3400 (switch board)  
 043 701 3433 (direct)  
 043 701 3415  
 076 228 8501  
 Claudia@ecsecc.org

# Help us make **Achieve** magazine even better

*In order to make Achieve magazine even better, we want our readers to give us feedback on its content and design. Please supply your details as follows:*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Surname: \_\_\_\_\_

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Do you receive the Achieve Newsletter? If so, how do you receive it? \_\_\_\_\_

**What sort of articles would you like to see more of?**

*(You can tick more than one)*

- Success stories.
- Details of programmes offered by merSETA.
- Stories about South African business.
- Interviews with merSETA management.
- Opinion pieces.
- Short news items.
- Feature stories.
- 'How to' stories

**I currently find \_\_\_\_\_ of the articles relevant to my interests.**

- 0%
- Between 1% and 20%
- Between 20% and 40%
- Between 40% and 60%
- Between 60% and 80%
- More than 80%

**Which is your favourite section of the publication?**

- SETA News.
- Features.
- Projects.
- Success stories.
- Events.

**Do you find the writing in Achieve magazine:**

- Much too technical.
- A little complicated.
- Just about right.
- A little simplistic.
- Much too simplistic.

**What sort of visual material would you like to see in Achieve magazine?**

- Photographs of functions and events.
- Photographs of successful people.
- Photographs of projects.
- A cartoon?
- Reader submissions.

**Any comments/suggestions:**

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## WIN an iPod Nano!

Stand a chance to win an iPod Nano by simply completing and faxing this form to 086 673 0004, emailing it to [achieve@merseta.org.za](mailto:achieve@merseta.org.za) or posting it to: Marketing & Communications Department, PO Box 61826, Marshalltown, 2107. **CLOSING DATE FOR ENTRIES into the draw is 25 April 2010.**

**Terms & Conditions:**

The judges decision is final. No correspondence may be entered into. Only one entry per person. The prize is not transferable for cash. The competition is not open to employees of merSETA, their immediate families or of Tenaka's Tribe Productions. Achieve reserves the right to publish the name and photograph of the winner. The prize is open to South African residents only. The first name will be selected at random, by an independent body, after 25 April 2010. The winner will be notified telephonically. Allow 14 days for delivery of prize.





## KwaZulu-Natal

By Sibongiseni Ziinjiva Ka-Mnguni

# in the driving seat

*Like the latest offering “umlilo” (fire) of the Durban kwaito group Big Nuz, the merSETA KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) Regional Office is on fire. This became evident at last year’s merSETA year-end function, where they scooped the best region of the year award, sending a strong message that Durban rocks. The glittering function took place in Limpopo to honour all top performers.*

**S**peaking to Achieve after the honour, KZN Client Liaison Relations Manager Mr Musa Mtshali says the award came as a morale booster. “However, it should be seen in the broader context of the merSETA’s quest to be a SETA of choice and a thought leader in closing the skills gap.”

Amongst the notable successes includes the increase in the number of member companies claiming mandatory grants compared to previous years. The region has also built solid and mutual beneficial partnerships with the majority of stakeholders. In trying to increase this synergy, the region holds regional committee meetings with stakeholders to promote the skills development agenda. It also has numerous partnerships with provincial and local government structures.

The office has further made strides in taking skills development to Further Education and Training Colleges (FET).

“We have established good relations with two University of Technologies in facilitating placements of experiential learners within our industries. We also hold training providers capacity-building sessions to bring them up to speed with new developments within the merSETA. A series of Skills Development Forums (SDFs) and cluster meetings in strategic areas to promote mandatory grants and share best practices in the implementation of skills development are held regularly,” says Musa.

Asked about the quality and quantity of artisans produced in South Africa, Musa says merSETA member companies have expressed satisfaction with the quality of artisans produced by the Artisan Accelerated Training Programme (AATP). He is adamant that merSETA will meet targets set out by JIPSA to produce more artisans and engineers.

He further thanked his staff, saying a process of developing a formidable and dynamic team was a collective effort which required individual commitment, consistency and continuous reviews.

The Coastal Manager, Ms Sheryl Pretorius, who is responsible for the KwaZulu-Natal, Eastern Cape and Western Cape Regional offices says the KZN Regional Office has a dynamic and well-educated staff with a lot of potential. “The region had a dynamic economy which screamed potential for quality skills development training. Mr Mtshali comes from a strong background in fighting for skills development improvements within the region, so the passion was there. So why was it not working before,” she asks.

“The first lesson we learnt was that processes and procedures within the merSETA needed to be streamlined, whereby there’s synergy in everything. However, the needs in different regions were vastly different and the economic theory put on paper to implement and the requirement in KZN did not tie up. Taking this into consideration, the team had to make decisions within a mandated framework.”

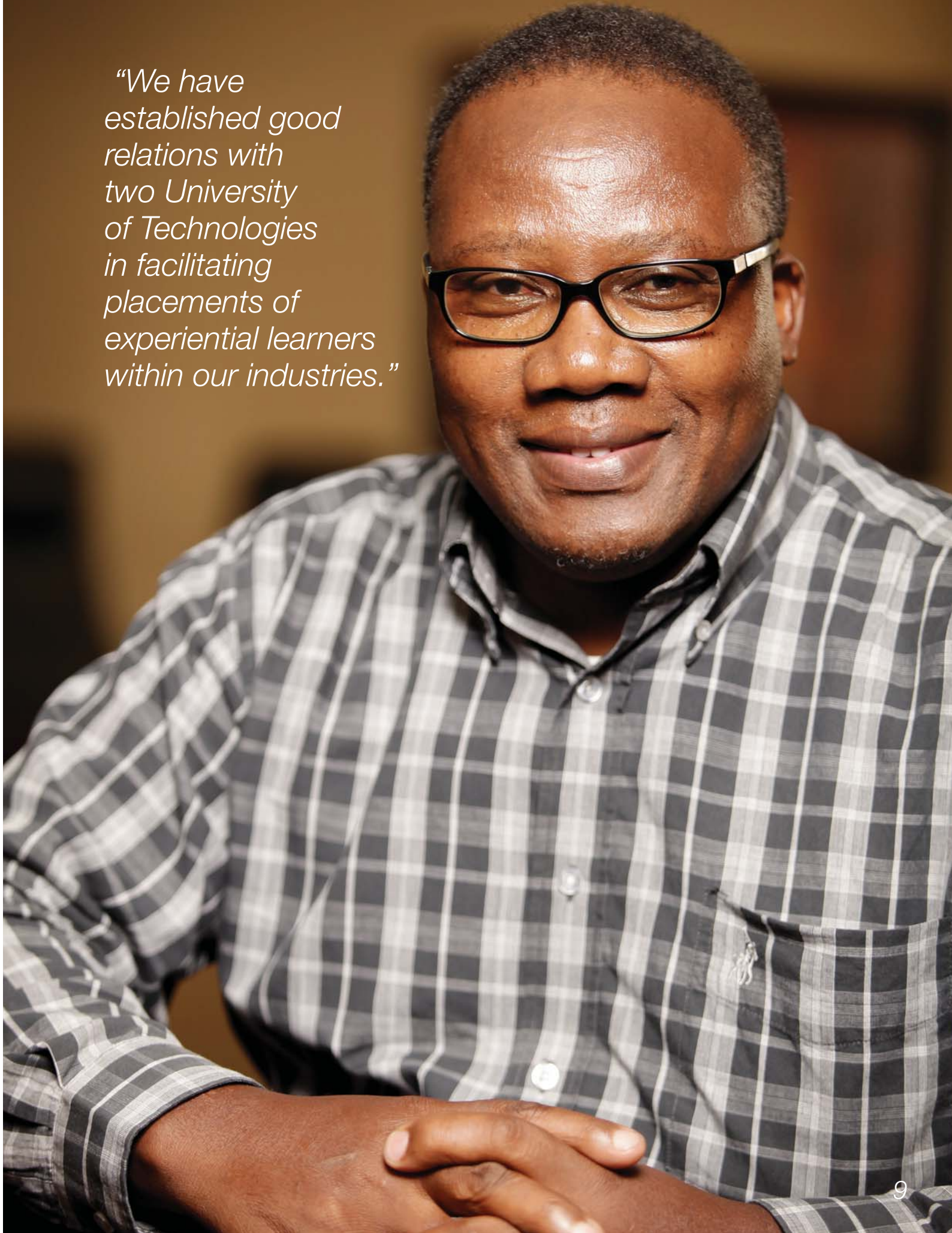
Sheryl feels the regional office is yet to reach its full potential -- it still has a number of areas that need to be developed. However, the region that was ranked near the bottom on service delivery has scaled new heights and won the best region of the year award. Sheryl attributes this turnaround to management leadership and the staff.

It has never been smooth sailing in getting the best out of the office.

“Like every other office, we have challenges we strive to overcome at all times. Reaching out to as many



*“We have established good relations with two University of Technologies in facilitating placements of experiential learners within our industries.”*







From left to right (Standing): Nozipho Mhlongo (Client Liaison Coordinator) Akhona Ndzululeka (Client Liaison Coordinator) Zinhle Dlamini (Client Liaison Officer) Royston Langton (Client Liaison Officer) Christian Buthelezi (Client Liaison Officer) Thabile Mjwara (Client Liaison Coordinator) and Bongwiwe Magwaza (Receptionist); From left to right (Seated): Mark Anderson (Client Liaison Officer) Yogi Pillay (Snr Client Liaison Coordinator) Nomusa Mhlongo (Client Liaison Officer) Musa Mtshali (Client Relations Manager) and Ritesh Raghunath (Client Liaison Officer).

companies as possible is always a challenge, Trying to keep public and private training providers together has not been an easy task, but through regular information sessions we have managed to overcome this peculiar challenge. Closing down by companies due to the economic downturn and scaling down on training didn't help us at all," Musa points out.

Stakeholders in the region have shown confidence in the regional office.

The regional office is also playing a leading role at Coastal KZN FET College and the merSETA-accredited Institute for Sectoral and Occupational Excellence (ISOE) for toolmakers. Musa says they encourage tool making companies to make use of this centre by sending their apprentices and learners for training.

On the future, Musa feels that the new SETA landscape will help inject a new lease of life on the skills development agenda by being more practical.

"This should help address the challenges confronted by millions of South Africans when it comes to skills development issues."

From left: Zwelethemba Ngayeka (Eastern Cape Client Relations Manager), Sheryl Pretorius (Coastal Manager) and Musa Mtshali (KwaZulu-Natal Client Relations Manager).

Asked about rural development, Musa says this is a decisive new direction as SETAs do not exit in isolation of the realities of our country.

"Skills development should be used to unlock the shackles of poverty, under development and promote socio-economic justice for all as part of our social responsibility," says Musa.

Passionate about skills development, he says it is paramount to work together to bring about lasting change and perform at the highest level as merSETA gears for the National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS) III.



# NMMU and merSETA sign multi-million rand agreement

By Neil Lewis

*In a ground-breaking move, Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University has signed a multi-million rand agreement with the Manufacturing, Engineering and Related Services SETA (merSETA) for skills upgrading in the Eastern Cape.*

**N**MMU Vice-Chancellor, Professor Derrick Swartz has hailed the agreement as groundbreaking in forging an alliance between the University and industry, facilitated by merSETA, to ensure we produce cutting edge skills and knowledge, particularly in mechatronics, to provide a competitive edge to our industries in the region and beyond. "In coming years, we are going to build a formidable reputation as the leading Mechatronics centre of excellence in South Africa."

The agreement covers merSETA bursaries in mechatronics, the placement of engineering students in industry, the promotion of women in engineering, strengthening links between NMMU and FET colleges and increasing the capacity of educators at technical high schools. "We are extremely excited by this agreement," says merSETA CEO Dr Raymond Patel, adding that the Eastern Cape would benefit "tremendously" from "targeted skills upgrading".

Dean of the NMMU Faculty of Engineering, the Built Environment Prof Henk de Jager agreed, saying the foundation has been laid for sustained growth of industrial specialists in the Eastern Cape. In terms of the agreement, bursaries will be awarded to qualifying candidates for the university's BEng: Mechatronics programme.

With assistance from merSETA, the university will strengthen links with Eastern Cape FET colleges, which includes training scores of engineering lecturing staff, assisting in quality assurance and articulation possibilities. The colleges targeted are PE College, Buffalo City and Eastern Cape Midlands College.

merSETA and NMMU also aim to train and develop teachers at technical high schools in the Eastern Cape, the project focus being technical subjects. merSETA will support engineering students placed in industry and who need further experiential training at the university,



From left: NMMU representatives with merSETA Chairperson Jeanne Esterhuizen and Deputy Chairperson Xolani Tshayana.

while the university will also place students in local industry. Both parties have also agreed to greatly increase female students in science, engineering and technology.

"Women's empowerment in these three fields is crucial to the sustainability of our economy," says Dr Patel. "Economic and employment equity are not only legislative requirements but also vital for the transformation of the Eastern Cape's industry," he adds.

This project will accelerate the numbers of women in the three fields, grow women academia through an increase in post-graduate female students and offer further study opportunities for mature women learners through recognition of prior learning. merSETA will also investigate ways of enhancing the VWSA-DAAD Chair in Automotive Engineering as well as the GMSA Chair in Mechatronics at the university. "As we head out of the recession, this agreement will see a significant boost to industry which will need more highly skilled people in the Eastern Cape," Dr Patel concluded.



# Eastern Cape Regional office in a class of its own

By Sibongiseni Ziinjiva Ka-Mnguni

*Achieve caught up with the Eastern Cape Client Relations Manager, Mr Zwelethemba Ngayeka, to find out about progress by the region known as the “Detroit of Africa”.*

## ***NSDS II has come to end -- what lessons has the merSETA Eastern Cape regional office learnt?***

The first lesson is that merSETA needed more staff in the province to assist clients effectively. The second lesson is that merSETA's SSP should always identify skill areas over and above scarce and critical skills identified by its members. It must also develop and register them for training and skills development in support of provincial economic growth and development strategies. The third lesson is for skills development facilitators (SDFs) to have a clear understanding of the National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS). The fourth and final lesson is the significance of our office in promoting rural development and to be accessible.

## ***The skills shortage in our country remains a major issue. What inroads have you made in dealing with this concern?***

Through the incredible support we consistently got from our governing board, we were able to supply skills as demanded by provincial strategic projects such as:

- Coega;
- East London – IDZ;
- NSF provincial strategic skills; and
- The National Youth Development Agency.

The focus was placed on areas such as automotive components manufacturing and assembly NQF Level 2, welding application and practice NQF L2 and Fitting and Machining NQF L2 etc. merSETA did not just make

qualifications available for training and skills development of unemployed people in these projects, but also played a leading role in securing member companies to host these learners.

The project yielded fruits when 19 out of 33 unemployed learners in Queenstown qualified on a national certificate “servicing vehicles” NQF Level 2 and found employment in motor retail businesses across the Eastern Cape area.

## ***What interventions have you put in place to accelerate training and skills development in the manufacturing and engineering sector?***

We have developed a cordial relationship with the Projects division in marketing the strategic Accelerated Artisan Training Programme (AATP). As a result Volkswagen South Africa (VWSA) registered 13 apprentices on both time and competency-based modular systems. We support units based at our head office such as the bursary unit, the Projects unit to mention but a few, and placement of in-service and intern learners at our member companies

## ***What partnerships do you have with stakeholders in the region?***

The merSETA and Coega partnership qualified more than 300 unemployed youth in preparing for Coega investor skills needs. In East London, more than 50 out of 72 unemployed youth were trained and placed in jobs as a result of the merSETA, Office of the Premier (HRD unit) and Buffalo City FET college partnership.

Eastern Cape Client Relations Manager,  
Zwelethemba Ngayeka







The merSETA and East Cape Midlands FET college partnership brought about the welding Institute of Sectoral or Occupational Excellence (ISOE) which produced the 2009 national welder of the year, Mr Louis Steynberg, who represented South Africa in the World Skills Competition in Canada last year.

***The Eastern Cape is known as the Detroit of Africa – it is where the automotive industry is highly concentrated, and this is one of the sectors that has been hard hit by the economic meltdown. How have you responded to this particular challenge?***

Three out of four auto companies in the Eastern Cape signed MoAs with merSETA to improve their workforce skills and that of unemployed youth. The MoAs contributed positively in minimising training costs during recession as budgets were focused on the core business activities of these companies. The merSETA's Retrenchee Assistance Plan (RAP) came

at an opportune time. Towards the end of last year, 11 companies adversely affected by the recession had either been approved for funding or had been paid their first tranche for registering their affected employees on training programmes funded by RAP. Companies like State Line Press Metal and Fabkomp in Queenstown and King William's Town respectively are some of the beneficiaries of the plan.

***Dr Patel said rural development is one of merSETA's main objectives in the next life span of SETAs -- what is your view on this?***

In his first year as the CEO of merSETA, Dr Patel took a hands-on approach in assisting us to increase the levy-paying base. Dr Patel has just announced that Eastern Cape, Mpumalanga and Limpopo, Free State and Northern Cape and Gauteng North and North West will have satellite offices in a move to try assist our member companies that reside in the deeper rural areas.



From left to right (Standing): Yusree Petersen (Client Liaison Officer), Nwabisa Xatasi (Client Liaison Coordinator), Marie Rudman (Snr Client Liaison Coordinator), Mandisa Nkayi (Client Liaison Coordinator), Orlrike Pettit (Client Liaison Officer) and Patrick Mnyanda (Client Liaison Officer); From left to right (Seated): Monde Skepe (Client Liaison Officer), Flora Nogwaza (Receptionist), Zwelethemba Ngayeka (Client Relations Manager), Rosemary Mlungwana (General Office Worker) and Saliem Dolley (LETQA Quality Assurer).

*“Through the recent senior leadership road shows and the regional AGM, stakeholders and clients have generally expressed satisfaction on the visibility and service delivery of merSETA in the region. “*

The rural development agenda is not only a priority of government, but it is an agenda for all. Our office will target rural areas identified by government such as Ukhahlamba district municipality in Barkly East, Alfred Nzo district municipality in Mount Ayliff and OR Tambo district municipality in Mthatha, and build partnerships with universities of technology and relevant FET colleges to enhance employment opportunities.

***Some of the challenges of the NSDS II was the lack of synergy between the industry, SETAs and tertiary institutions. Do you think NSDS III will address this challenge and how?***

Fortunately, merSETA has been minimally affected by such a challenge. We have always assisted non-member companies to register and train apprentices across the economic sectors, including the forestry, chemical, food and beverage, clothing and footwear spheres.

The recently signed agreement between Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University and merSETA indicates the kind of synergy that exists between merSETA and these institutions. SETAs have to work together on the agreed programmes and make the public at large aware of such. It is paramount that SETAs complement each other. It is important for SETAs to forge such good synergies which are historic as well.

***What are some of the challenges you have to deal with?***

The lack of accredited decentralised trade test and assessment centres in the region for key trades, such as panel beating and spray painting, remain a challenge.

The other challenges are the call for increased production of artisans whilst phasing out N-Courses as well as the shortage of resources to spread our service geographically whilst keeping costs low.

***What has been the response of member companies and stakeholders in terms of your visibility and service delivery in the region?***

Through the recent senior leadership road shows and the regional AGM, stakeholders and clients have generally expressed satisfaction on the visibility and service delivery of merSETA in the region.

***SETAs landscape is changing as we are awaiting a pronouncement from the Minister of Higher Education and Training. What is your view on the SETA landscape?***

The envisaged Seta landscape has to deliver training and skills development needs of their member base and equally important in support of government's five priorities such as rural development and cooperatives, support for institutions of higher learning - just to name a few.

***How is your relationship with other stakeholders in the region? Any forums that you attend and how important are these?***

Government departments such as the Department of Labour (DoL) and Department of Education (DoE) have voted merSETA onto their training and skills development structures. merSETA CEO Dr Raymond Patel sits on the Provincial JIPSA council. We are a member of the legislated Provincial Skills Development Forum (PSDF), member of the provincial National Skills Fund (NSF) strategic skills committee and a member of the advisory board for the Walter Sisulu University of Technology's Department of Mechanical Engineering. We are establishing relations with relevant bodies in the province such as RMI, Naacam and broad-based business associations such as the Border Kei Chamber of Business (BKCOB) and the Port Elizabeth Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Perccci).

# What is new in the LETQA Division of

By Own Correspondent

*LETQA, as with the whole of merSETA, intends to move with the times and ensure the division is up to date and can deliver the best possible service to our stakeholders.*

**D**uring this process several projects have been completed and we have embarked on some new and exciting ventures:

- merSETA evaluated the theory parts of the NATED (or “N-course” as they were popularly known) that was offered at FET colleges in the past. We then mapped this theory content to certain theoretical outcomes of unit standards from qualifications that form part of the merSETA scope of coverage. This was done for Trade Theories, Mathematics and Technical Drawings. The next step was to bench-mark our study with that of other SETAs. At the Functional Standing Committee meeting of merSETA in November last year, this project was approved. Skills Programmes representing all these unit standards were registered. These skills programmes are now available to providers who wish to offer these programmes as an alternative to the “N-courses”.
- merSETA further engaged with the Department of Higher Education and Training, and we are glad to report that certain public FET colleges will be given extensions to offer the “N1 – N3 Courses” in 2010. Based on specific needs within certain regions, we have requested the Department to also offer extensions to additional colleges as identified by merSETA to ensure our stakeholder needs are met. We are encouraging industry to approach merSETA in the regions to assist as facilitators in ensuring financially viable groups of learners are enrolled with these nominated FET Colleges. Our stakeholders therefore have two options in ensuring that apprentices continue to be offered opportunities, and ensuring that we meet South Africa’s skills demands.
- LETQA is involved in pilot projects in the design of new Occupational Qualifications that are developed according to the proposed new Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO) model. Projects completed include a suite of qualifications designed for the Foundries Industry. merSETA has applied for the quality assurance role for these qualifications.
- In the spirit of supporting the four different routes of becoming an artisan, merSETA has recently approved a proposal by LETQA that a learner who completes Learnership Agreements on Levels 2-4 may attempt a trade test under Section 28 without any further requirements. As part of the same decision, a career path has been developed for learners who complete the National Certificate Vocational (NC (V)) and, with the appropriate additional workplace experience, they may now also attempt a trade test. Lastly, our MIS system will also shortly accommodate the capturing of learners who have followed the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) route to become an artisan.
- As reported earlier, another project focuses on the development of courseware for 44 of merSETA’s current qualifications; specifically those that are in demand with substantial learner enrollment. Courseware for registered qualifications is designed with an emphasis on curriculum, inclusive of formative and summative assessment exemplars related to outcomes and assessment criteria. This project is nearing conclusion and courseware manuals will become available in April 2010.
- Members to the QCTO Board have been nominated and appointments will follow early in 2010. This will pave the way towards evaluating and finally

# merSETA?

approving proposed regulations that would give effect to earlier approved legislation. merSETA's national road shows in all regions and workshops with our stakeholders on the regulations will finally bear fruit when the following regulations are approved:

- Proposed new Regulations for Artisans;
  - Proposed new Regulations for Qualification Development and Quality Assurance under the QCTO; and
  - Proposed Regulations for a National Artisan Moderating Body.
- As part of the five Ministerial priorities for SETAs in the next year, merSETA is developing a strategy and will be engaging intensely with public FET institutions. It is LETQA's intention to develop partnerships between FET Colleges and industry, focusing on the matching of industry needs and college's niche markets. Exposure of FET staff to industry and sharing of best practices could form part of intended initiatives.
  - To ensure improvement of our service to our stakeholders, LETQA commissioned an independent Customer Satisfaction Survey of our LETQA services. The survey was completed and valuable lessons were learnt. Trends and areas in our service that need improvement to make our LETQA services more effective, efficient and economically viable will be pursued with new vigor early in 2010.

*LETQA would like to make use of this opportunity to thank all our stakeholders for the continued support we receive from them, and we pledge to increase the level of our services.*



*“As part of the five Ministerial priorities for SETAs in the next year, merSETA is developing a strategy and will be engaging intensely with public FET institutions.”*



# merSETA accredited motorcycle and scooter trade tests now available in Durban

By Own Correspondent

*Aspirant motorcycle technicians now have the opportunity to complete a merSETA-accredited trade test after their years of grueling apprenticeship.*

**U**nder the supervision of Dave Harris and merSETA representatives Royston Langston (LETQA-Quality Assuror KZN) and Ritesh Raghunath (Client Liaison Officer KZN), the trade tests are a first in Durban.

Dave, an ex-racer and technician himself, is the resident technical expert at Yamaha Distributors, with years of experience and formal accreditation. He manages and runs the Yamaha Technical Academy (YTA), which trains and qualifies Yamaha technicians throughout the country.

Dave has been working for years on developing the skills and knowledge of motorcycle and related product enthusiasts and has more recently concentrated on improving the very tedious process of the industry trade test itself.

Apart from Dave being intricately involved in drafting and amending the previous trade test, merSETA recently endorsed him as an examiner/facilitator of the trade test in Durban.

This is a huge step forward as the only way to write a trade test in the disciplines in the past was by travelling all the way to Olifantsfontein - the only authorised examination venue available.

“This new development opens up a world of possibilities to hopeful motorcycle technicians by

facilitating greater accessibility to the examining body and structure,” says Dave.

“The cost, hassle and intimidation of travelling halfway across the country were the key limiting factors for most aspirant technicians wanting to complete their qualification in the past.”

Thanks to the hard work and efforts of merSETA representatives and Dave, this hurdle has been overcome with the prospect of further progress.

In September last year, two technical interns from the motorcycle shop, Cycle Craft in Durban, completed their merSETA-approved trade test at the offices of Yamaha Distributors in Pinetown, KZN – the first time ever.

Thomas-Norbert Wilhelm and Jacobus Van Biljon were awarded their certificate of competence in motorcycle and scooter mechanics. The young lads were overjoyed about their hard-earned achievements and now look to the future with great enthusiasm.

In passionately continuing their efforts, Dave and team merSETA's conviction is that there is huge scope in the industry and young people should be free to pursue this avenue without hindrance.



*“This new development  
opens up a world of  
possibilities to hopeful  
motorcycle technicians...”*



# ABET Committed to Eradicate Illiteracy Rate

By Sibongiseni Zinjiva Ka-Mnguni

*Scores of workers in the manufacturing, engineering and related services sector lack the required basic education to access further learning and development. Workplace basic education and training provision and delivery in the sector is thus imperative to increase the development of skills.*

**R**omiela Pillay, the ABET Project manager, points out that a merSETA-commissioned study highlighted the need to develop and communicate links between ABET training and productivity so that the positive impacts of ABET are well understood.

“Through the use of a set of measures which will link productivity indicators within companies to improve numeracy and literacy, and the provision of this instrument to merSETA companies to use internally, we will improve ABET outcomes,” says Romiela.

Stakeholders also expressed the need for more relevance, flexibility and functionality in the ABET course content and structure.

“The overriding objective of the ABET project is to provide centrally-funded and managed support for learners in need of ABET so that they are able to access further education and training opportunities, lifelong learning and enhanced career opportunities,” says Romiela.

To this end, the merSETA has identified three modalities of ABET Training provision. They are:

**Accelerated ABET** – which is an approach that produces fast and effective learning. The training acknowledges that learners have a solid foundation without too many

gaps to fill. These learners have high potential, are self-motivated and can perceive the real benefit of learning. Training is conducted in an intensive manner within a shorter period, without doing an injustice to the learning experience.

**Business ABET** – which is an approach that relates and links ABET skills to the world of work. It is an expanded programme of skill sets that provides practical business knowledge and skills, allowing learners functionality at the workplace or in their own business to be more effective. Learning areas include Communication & Mathematics, Business, Personal or Life Skills, Entrepreneurship, Computer Technology and Cognition.

**Occupational ABET** – which is an approach whereby the learning content is informed by the needs of the learners and industries in which they work. Focus is on the skills required to do a job better in order to build a closer fit between ABET and the occupational needs.

The target is 5000 learners, which includes employed and unemployed learners. The breakdown within the three modalities is:

- a) Accelerated ABET = 2 500 learners at levels 2 and 3
- b) Business ABET = 1 000 learners at NQF level 1
- c) Occupational ABET = 1 500 learners at levels 2, 3 and 4



ABET Service Providers.

“The agreements entered with the appointed training providers are performance-based, focusing on quality training and successful assessments that ensure learners are not only entering training but also exit it successfully. Thus far, this approach has been very effective,” says Romiela.

Asked about the criterion for selection, Romiela says any learner interested in ABET training undergoes a pre-assessment to determine suitability and their level of placement. She emphasised commitment as essential from both the company and the learner and says the future outlook of the project is positive.

Some challenges have been experienced with companies not making a commitment quickly and allowing learner’s time for training, which results in a delay in achieving the project’s milestones.

Romiela says the developmental achievements through this project have been rewarding and encouraging.

“The contribution made in uplifting and changing an individual’s life is the best return on investment that the merSETA could achieve.”

*For more details on the project, contact: Romiela Pillay on (011) 552 5200*

**Statistics on learner enrolment is as follows:**

REGION	ACCELERATED		BUSINESS		OCCUPATIONAL		TOTAL
	18.1	18.2	18.1	18.2	18.1	18.2	
Eastern & Southern Cape	41	170	0	0	69	29	309
Free State	20	0	0	0	8	0	28
Gauteng	387	1448	135	64	20	0	2054
KZN	105	0	0	218	52	260	635
Limpopo	0	0	0	0	279	113	392
Mpumalanga	14	0	0	144	77	0	235
North West	0	265	0	310	145	0	720
Northern Cape	0	0	0	0	23	14	37
Western Cape	127	0	0	245	77	90	539
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>694</b>	<b>1883</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>981</b>	<b>750</b>	<b>506</b>	<b>4951</b>

Achievement to target of 5000 = 99%



ABET Project Manager Romiela Pillay.

*“Through the use of a set of measures which will link productivity indicators within companies to improved numeracy and literacy, and the provision of this instrument to merSETA companies to use internally, we will improve ABET outcomes.”*



# SET - the Benchmark of Success

By Sibongiseni Ziinjiva Ka-Mnguni

*The Council of Education Ministers (CEM) has expressed concern at the declining national pass rate in the National Senior Certificate examinations for 2009.*

**D**espite the decline in the pass rate, the Science, Engineering and Technology (SET) project played a major role in the 60,7% matric pass rate result achieved last year.

Of more than 300 learners registered with the project, 296 learners passed and 106 received distinctions.

Maths registered 62 distinctions, whilst Science registered six distinctions.

SET Project Manager Mr Azwifaneli Tshisikamulilo says the project has been a major success and credit should go to all learners, educators and partners.

“It is such commitment and devotion that encourages merSETA to take the project to another level. We are pleased that we have managed to achieve our objective of creating a pool of learners who are willing to take up maths and science,” says Azwifaneli.

The Project aims at developing a strategy for Science, Engineering and Technology capacity-building amongst schools in the FET sector.

Feziwe Mthembu is one of the brightest, smartest and best minds that came through the project.

She matriculated at Dlangezwa High School in Esikhawini near Richards Bay in KwaZulu Natal.

Feziwe received seven distinctions; she has enrolled for Mechanical Engineering at Wits University. “I hope

to do well in my first year and I would like to thank the merSETA and Star School for having played a significant role in my studies,” says Feziwe.

Wits Education School, South African Women in Engineering and Star Schools are the institutions that have partnered merSETA in ensuring this project becomes a success.



SET learners

# TAKING SKILLS DEVELOPMENT TO GROOTVLEI PRISON

By Own Correspondent

*It is not only the sins they commit, but also the lack of skills required in enabling inmates to enter the labour market that holds them captive.*

**I**n a move to equip inmates with sought-after skills, the merSETA and the Grootvlei Correctional Services have teamed up to make skills development a reality.

The pilot project is the first of its kind.

The merSETA has put aside more than R1,7-million and will quality assure the project. Inmates will be trained in welding – one of merSETA's critical and scarce skills. The project is the brainchild of merSETA CEO Dr Raymond Patel, merSETA COO Mr Wayne Adams and merSETA Chairperson Ms Jeanne Esterhuizen.

Free State and Northern Cape Client Relations Manager Mr Gerhard Slabbert says inmates will be trained according to the National Certificate in Welding NQF Level 2. Welding offers relatively easy access to the labour market once inmates are released from prison.

The objective is to prevent released inmates from returning to their former criminal ways through gainful employment.

Asked about the future outlook of the project, Correctional Services indicated they wished to expand the project to other prisons should the pilot yield desired outcomes.

"There's a huge demand for this training as many inmates understand its value," says Mr Willie Kruger, of the Management Board of Central Refinish Training Centre, which is the Provider and Project Manager of this challenging but exciting project.

*"There's a huge demand for this training as many inmates understand its value."*





# Modiamme, engineering her way to the top

By Sibongiseni Ziinjiva Ka-Mnguni

*A noted motivational speaker once said that most of the important things in the world have been accomplished by people who have kept on trying when there seemed to be no hope. Amidst life's adversities, Modiamme Moloï never thought of quitting -- and today stands as a beacon of hope and perseverance.*

**B**orn in Phomolong Township in the Free State, Modiamme is a go-getter. Instead of whining and wondering about life, she opted to pursue her studies.

"After matriculating, I applied at a university but I was turned down. I then enrolled for the National Diploma in Electrical Engineering at Doornfontein Campus. At the time, my fees were financed by the Thabo Mbeki Education Trust (TMET) before I received a bursary from merSETA."

At high school, Modiamme was awarded numerous accolades for outstanding performance in Mathematics and Science. She did not only excel academically, but

application, electronics and electro-magnetism.

"Everything around electricity involves logical thinking and technical applications; these include circuits design; implementation and software simulations that require technical strategies," she says proudly.

Electrical engineering is a critical and scarce skill in terms of merSETA's Sector Skills Plan. Electrical engineering deals with problems associated with large-scale electrical systems such as power transmission and motor control, whereas electronic engineering deals with the study of small-scale electronic systems including computers and integrated circuits. Alternatively, electrical engineers are usually concerned with using electricity to transmit

*"First of all, I am driven by passion and the will to know how things work around me."*

also showed leadership qualities. She served as the secretary of the Learners Representative Council (LRC).

She matriculated at Kheleng Secondary school in 2005. Her dream was to become an engineer, but was not sure of which engineering discipline was most suitable. She finally decided to study electrical engineering, which focuses on the study of electricity, its origins, its

energy, while electronic engineers are concerned with using electricity to transmit information.

History tells us that the first electrical engineer was probably William Gilbert who designed the versorium: a device that detected the presence of statically charged objects. He is also credited with establishing the term electricity. Electrical engineers typically possess an



*“Finding time to do all the work remains a challenge, but I make sure that I prioritise - this is a life long investment in realising my future aspirations.”*

academic degree with a major in electrical engineering. The length of study for such a degree is usually four or five years. Out of 20 students in her class, only seven are females. Modiamme’s passion is evident.

“First of all, I am driven by passion and the will to know how things work around me. At a young age, I was exposed to situations that opened my eyes, for example seeing Telkom and Eskom technicians lining out infrastructure in my township motivated my decision to choose electrical engineering as my field of study.

“I also wanted to make a contribution towards the growth of technology and telecommunications in our country, thus simplifying the lifestyle of all South Africans,” she adds. She describes her journey as being both easy and difficult. It has been a combination of hard work and passion that saw her rise to stardom, notwithstanding a great deal of responsibility. Modiamme is an outspoken person with a big heart, and is determined to win the fight in a male-dominated environment. She works at night and attends classes during the day.

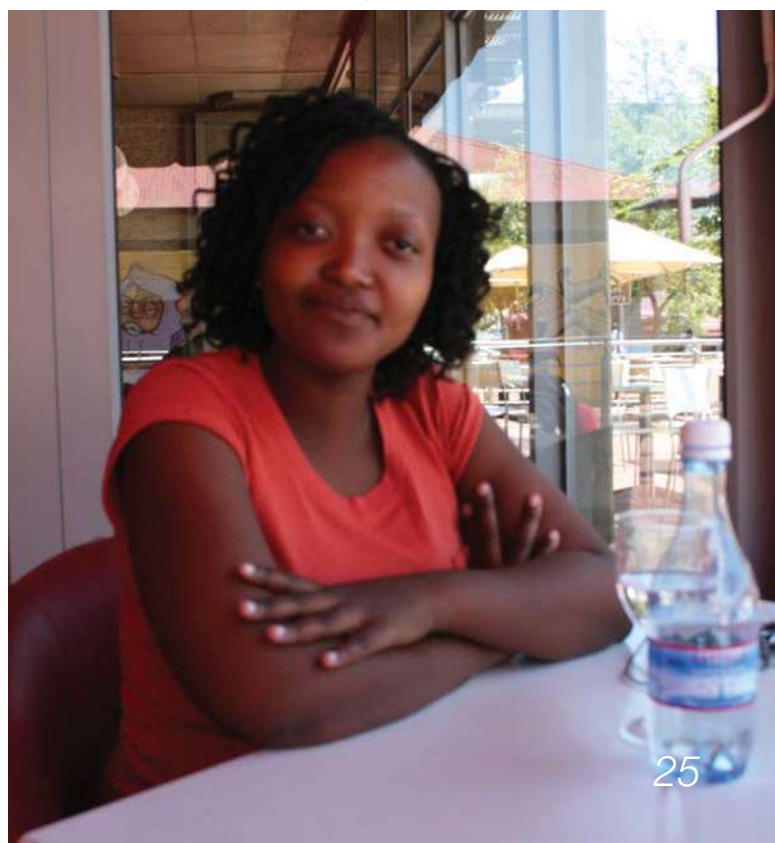
“Finding time to do all the work remains a challenge, but I make sure that I prioritise -- this is a life-long investment in realising my future aspirations,” she says.

She plans to become a senior engineer in radio planning and optimisation of telecommunications networks, thus helping to eradicate the skills shortage in her field. She would also like to pursue an MTech (Electrical Engineering) and says an MBA will be the cherry on top.

Some of the issues close to her heart include rural development and greater skills acquisition through organisations such as the National Skills Fund and merSETA.

“These organisations have contributed to addressing the skills shortage, but more still needs to be done, especially for people in the rural areas,” she concludes.

Above & below: merSETA Bursary holder, Modiamme Moloji





# Scania breaks with tradition

By Own Correspondent

*If ever there was a manly occupation, it would be working as a diesel mechanic. Grease covered hands, lifting heavy objects and using power tools are all just part of the daily routine. This is not an environment where you would expect to find women, except for perhaps serving the tea.*

**W**ell, there are four extremely ladylike young women who are breaking with tradition at Scania, the manufacturers of heavy commercial vehicles.

The four apprentices, Precious Ginida, Selogadi Mokonyama, Ingrid Moagi and Philadelphia Kaula have taken their first step towards life as diesel mechanics. Selogadi, Ingrid and Philadelphia have now completed their apprenticeships and Precious will complete hers shortly.

When asked what motivated them to start a career as a diesel mechanic, each had a different perspective. However, one thing shone through clearly, each of them has no regrets about their decision to enter a traditionally male-dominated field and all enjoy the daily challenges of their chosen field.

When asked about the challenges of the male-dominated diesel engineering field, the young go-getters had a comment to make. Philadelphia Kaula says it took time for male diesel mechanics to get used to the idea of working alongside women. Ingrid Moagi laughingly commented that it took some time for the men to change the “special language” that they use in the workshop.

Precious Ginida questions why diesel engineering has traditionally been a man’s world: “There are no challenges that women can’t overcome when they put their minds to it,” she says.

Selogadi Mokonyama maintains that although she was “a bit scared” at the beginning of her apprenticeship, she feels she can do anything she wants. She says that her ambition is to be a mechanical engineer in five years time and has dedicated herself to further study.

The pride that these young women have in their work shines through in every comment that they make.

They praise Scania for the opportunity afforded them and explain that the unexpected call from the Swedish industrial automotive manufacturer to undergo aptitude testing once they had finished their N4 was the start of an incredible journey that none could have imagined. The journey began with 100 applicants and at the conclusion

*“Where I am at the moment I owe to Scania and merSETA, they made my career possible.”*

of the selection process there were 12 apprentices, eight men and the four ladies.

“When the call came from Scania, all I knew about the company was that they made buses, that’s all we ever saw in Mpumalanga while I was growing up,” says Ingrid Moagi.



Ntsotiseng Matsoso (Scania SDF), Philadelphia Kaula, Precious Ginida, Selogadi Mokonyama and Ingrid Moagi.

The ladies soon learned differently as they threw themselves heart and soul into their Scania apprenticeships and were exposed to the many different types of vehicles manufactured at Scania, from heavy duty commercial trucks, to buses which are being manufactured specifically to suit South African conditions to the demands of the upcoming Bus Rapid Transit project.

Ntsotiseng Matsoso, Skills Development Facilitator at Scania, beams with pride when she speaks of these four outstanding young South Africans: "These ladies are a fantastic example of what young people, regardless of gender, can accomplish if they put their minds to it. Their future is looking extremely bright and really the sky is the limit for each of them. The people of Scania

are immensely proud that we could play a part in both helping them reach for their dreams and in growing the skills base in South Africa."

The final words came from Selogadi Mokonyama when she summed up her experiences to date and had some words of encouragement for South Africa's youth.

"Where I am at the moment I owe to Scania and merSETA, they made my career possible. Nothing in this world is easy, perseverance is everything. There's no easy path, it just becomes easier with time. To all the ladies out there I'd like them to consider jobs like diesel mechanics, you get to experience something that not many women see and as a bonus I don't have to go to gym, my job keeps me fit."

# Sheetech SA and merSETA up-skill the deaf

By Sibongiseni Ziinjiva Ka-Mnguni

*The partnership between merSETA and Sheetech SA is a case study for SETAs and employers. This partnership has resulted in Sheetech SA funding a workshop to be used for training purposes. The workshop contains all necessary equipment and machinery for the learners to participate in programmes in welding and fabrication.*

**T**he idea was inspired by Michael J Alexander, a deaf employee at Sheetech S.A.

“Through this employee, we identified a need to equip the deaf with skills in order to compete in the job market,” elaborated Jithern Singh, Principal of Sheetech SA Education and Training Division.

merSETA CEO Dr Raymond Patel conducted the official opening of the training centre at the V N Naik School for the Deaf. The deaf schools that attended were the Durban School for the Hearing Impaired and the Fulton and V N Naik School for the deaf. The aim of the open day was to share information with these various deaf schools on skills training and the ways that Sheetech SA, as an employer and training provider, could assist them.

In 2008, Sheetech SA took on eight learners from the V N Naik School to participate in the skills programme: Shielded Metal Arc welding on NQF Level 2.

“This provided many challenges as we needed to make the learning material learner-friendly for the deaf. This is when we decided to develop a DVD on shielded metal arc welding to assist as a teaching aid,” says Mr Singh.

Through the dedication of staff and learners from the school and Sheetech SA management, the programme was successfully completed. The eight learners were deemed competent.

Moving forward, Sheetech SA is currently busy with two projects at the V N Naik school. One includes 13 learners participating in an NQF level one learnership funded by Sheetech SA and the other has eight learners participating in an NQF level 2 learnership funded by the merSETA.

Sheetech SA and merSETA believe that closing the skills gap means going the extra mile in ensuring that all participate in skills development.







From left to right: Andi Cairms, Sheryl Pretorius, Sonja Steynberg, Luzette Joseph, Estelle Vermooten and Morne Small.

# S P Metal Forgings Sets the Tone

by being the first company to submit its application for a mandatory grant for the year 2010

By Sibongiseni Ziinjiva Ka-Mnguni

**E**stablished in 1980, the company specialises in smaller precision forgings and exports products as far as Europe and Great Britain. It has a staff of 85 employees – and among their prominent clients are BMW Germany, Peugeot and Renault in France, as well as many after market and non-automotive concerns throughout Europe.

Asked about the application, S P Metal Skills Development Facilitator (SDF) Ms Estelle Vermooten says the newly upgraded Datanet system is user friendly and more effective.

“We submitted our mandatory grants application in May last year and this year we submitted as early as February; the most interesting element of the system is the fact that you are able to import information from last year into this year’s application, unlike starting from scratch,” she says.

The response of the system is also faster and better than the previous year, with search engine functionality being more effective, adds Estelle.

Estelle couldn’t stop singing the praises of merSETA’s Client Liaison Officers, Mr Winston Adams and Mr Kgotso Monaisa, for their assistance. She further went

on to thank her Managing Director Mr Ken Manners for providing strategic leadership in taking the company forward.

#### ***New features on the Datanet system include:***

- OFO codes have been simplified and are now more user friendly; and
- Applications are more flexible and you are able to move between them and select which one you want to complete or gather information from one to incorporate in the other.

“Our open-line communication and the healthy relationship between S P Metal and merSETA is absolutely amazing, hence our early submission,” concluded Estelle.

merSETA member companies are advised to submit their mandatory grants application as soon as possible to avoid the delays and missing out on the deadline of 30th June 2010.

The relationship between merSETA and S P Metal started in 2008 and it’s growing by leaps and bounds. It is no surprise that they were the first to apply for the mandatory grant.

# ABET Graduates break new ground

By Sibongiseni Ziinjiva Ka-Mnguni

*In a glittering graduation ceremony at Isando, East of Johannesburg, 12 learners from Barloworld Equipment SA graduated in Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) through the intervention of the company and the Manufacturing, Engineering and Related Services SETA (merSETA).*

**T**here are currently 4, 7 million adults in South Africa who have not attended school and are illiterate. A further 4, 9 million adults are functionally illiterate as they left school before grade 7.

Acquiring literacy and numeracy skills goes a long way towards addressing the inequalities of the past, as adults with these skills are able to take control of their lives through activities like banking, filling in forms, reading work instructions and other everyday activities.

ABET gives adults the ability to read and write and understand basic mathematical skills. The ABET programme is one of many educational opportunities offered by Barloworld Equipment to its employees.

ABET consists of four levels. The fourth and final level is equivalent to grade nine and graduates obtain nationally recognised certificates. The training is not restricted to certain periods and can be completed at the learner's own pace. Barloworld Equipment's ABET classes are currently conducted at Isando, Middelburg and Durban with a total of 124 learners in the programme.

One of the graduates, Mr Justice Maphosa, said Barloworld had opened doors for them. The programme has given them an opportunity to improve their lives

and allows them the opportunity to further their careers through university study.

Barloworld Equipment CEO Mr Dominic Sewela thanked managers for their guidance and encouragement of staff to participate on the programme. "Once the potential is unlocked, we can achieve so much more. This is a major milestone. But it is not the end, it is only the beginning. Your future is in your hands, you owe it to yourselves to take charge of it. Your history does not have to determine your future," Mr Sewela added.

*"Your future is in your hands, you owe it to yourselves to take charge of it. Your history does not have to determine your future."*

The ABET programme will expand in 2010 to include a number of learners from Power.

If you would like to join or have a colleague who would benefit from ABET, please contact Mr Paul Sethusa at the Leadership Development Centre (LDC) at (011) 301 4000.

*“Once the potential is unlocked, we can achieve so much more. This is a major milestone. But it is not the end, it is only the beginning.”*



ABET Graduates with their certificates.



# merSETA & Stanmar Motors Closing the Skills Gap

By Own Correspondent

*The partnership between merSETA and Stanmar Motors yielded results when 26 learners successfully passed their National Certificate in Automotive repair and maintenance NQF Level 2, 10 learners passed their National Certificate in Automotive repair and maintenance NQF Level 3 and 14 learners passed their Education and Training in Automotive repair and maintenance NQF Level 4.*

**T**he graduation ceremony took place in George in the southern Cape.

Stanmar has embraced the National Skills Development Strategy to its fullest extent and utilised the grants and rebates available to up-skill unemployed people, of whom a large number come from the previously disadvantaged community.

merSETA and Stanmar have committed themselves to the process of up-skilling the workforce and leading the way in skills development.

Mr Orson Samuel, from Stanmar Motors, says the relationship between merSETA and Stanmar started with the initial Learnership programme in 2006 and since then “they have never looked back”.

Delivering the keynote address, the Mayor of George, Mr Phillip de Swardt encouraged graduates to take the bull by the horns and continue with the course.

“One thing nobody here can do for you is to make a success of your future. Only you can do it, not everybody will give you an opportunity either”.

merSETA CEO Dr Raymond Patel and merSETA Coastal Manager Ms Sheryl Pretorius were among the dignitaries who graced the occasion.



From left to right: Sheryl Pretorius (merSETA Coastal Manager), Phillip De Swardt (Mayor), Frik Von Mollendorf (Directing Manager – Belcomec Training George) and Dr Raymond Patel (merSETA CEO).

*“One thing nobody here can do for you is to make a success of your future. Only you can do it, not everybody will give you an opportunity either.”*

# Skills Development a Living Reality

*The Eastern Cape strategic skills project has yielded fruits, writes Sibongiseni Ziinjiva Ka-Mnguni.*

**F**unded by the National Skills Fund and Premier's Office, 25 automotive component manufacturing and assembly NQF level 2, 15 Fitting and machining NQF level 2 and 15 Welding application and practice NQF level 2 learners graduated in East London recently.

The aim of the project, which falls under the Eastern Cape's Provincial Growth and Development Plan (PGDP), is to develop critical and scarce skills among the youth by providing work-based training and learning in local business.

Praising the graduates, Mr Mzimkhulu Machemba of the Office of the Premier lauded the initiative for its contribution to building the skills base in the East London and the entire province.

East London Industrial Development Zone (IDZ) Chief Executive Officer Mr Simphiwe Kondlo applauded the merSETA for ensuring quality in developing qualifications.

"Government can only go so far in terms of policies, and as agents of skills development, we will continue to support such initiatives in fighting the skills shortage," concluded Mr Kondlo.

One of the graduates, Ms Nondumiso Ntlongweni, who completed fitting and machining NQF Level 2, said being the only female in a class of nine and being disabled didn't make things easier for her.

"It starts by having a goal in life, and if someone can do it, so can you. You don't have to allow someone to tell you what you can do and what you cannot do," said Ms Ntlongweni.



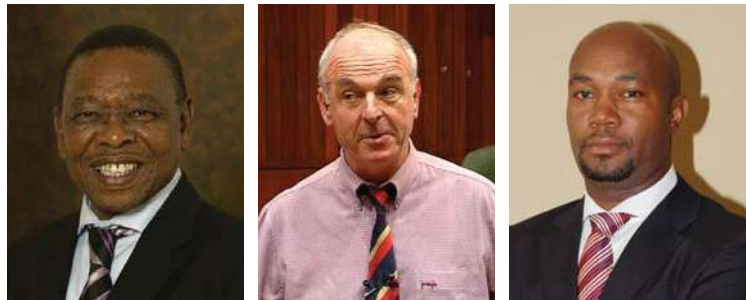
IDZ Graduates.

merSETA Eastern Cape Client Relations Manager Mr Zwelethemba Ngayeka said merSETA had played a leading role in securing member companies to host these learners.

Asked about the sustainability of the project, Mr Machemba said a proposal for phase two of the project was submitted to the NSF in April 2009. However, the process of awarding new contracts had been put on hold as the NSF was moving to the Department of Higher Education and Training.

It is such strategic projects that bring hope and desire to young people to acquire sought after skills -- skills that are in high demand in the manufacturing and engineering sector.

# merSETA NATIONAL CONFERENCE



From left to right: Dr Blade Nzimande, Dr Clem Sunter and Dr Raymond Patel.



**merSETA** will hold its national conference on 6th & 7th May 2010 at Emperor's Palace in Johannesburg. The theme is "**Forging the Future**" and the conference will feature the Minister of Higher Education and Training Dr Blade Nzimande and renowned scenario-planner Dr Clem Sunter.

Celebrate 10 years of skills development with merSETA by registering for the conference on our website in March.

The conference will review our achievements in the past 10 years as well as examine closer merSETA collaboration with tertiary institutions.

**Date:** 6th -7th May 2010  
**Venue:** Emperors Palace, Johannesburg  
**Time:** 08H00 - 16H00

*For more information and registration visit [www.merseta.org.za](http://www.merseta.org.za)*




**merSETA**  
MANUFACTURING, ENGINEERING  
AND RELATED SERVICES SETA  
ISO 9001:2008



# merSETA Achievements



Clockwise from top left: Dr Patel, Juanita & Debbie Thompson from Damelin Saldanha and merSETA Chairperson Jeanne Esterhuizen; merSETA graduates; Zwele Ngayeka and dignitaries at IDZ graduation; Certificate of Appreciation; Dr Patel at BBQ Awards; merSETA learners; Louis Steynberg 2009 Welder of the Year.



# leaders in closing the skills gap.

The merSETA is one of the 23 Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) established to promote skills development in terms of the Skills Development Act of 1998. The 23 SETAs broadly reflect different sectors of the South African economy. The merSETA encompasses Manufacturing, Engineering and Related Services.

The various industry sectors are covered by five chambers within the merSETA: Metal and engineering, Auto Manufacturing, Motor Retail and Components, New Tyre and Plastic.



**merSETA**

MANUFACTURING, ENGINEERING  
AND RELATED SERVICES SETA

ISO 9001:2008

*facilitating sustainable  
development of skills,  
transformation and  
accelerating growth in  
manufacturing, engineering  
and related services.*



[www.merseta.org.za](http://www.merseta.org.za)

#### HEAD OFFICE

3rd Floor, Block B,  
Metropolitan Park,  
8 Hillside Road,  
Parktown 2001  
Tel: 011 551 5202  
Fax: 086 673 0017

#### EASTERN CAPE

Pickering Park Office  
Suites,  
14-20 Pickering Street  
Newton Park,  
Port Elizabeth, 6045  
Tel: 0861 637 734  
Fax: 041 363 0144  
Client Relations Manager:  
Zwelethemba Ngayeka

#### GAUTENG SOUTH

1st Floor, Metropolitan  
Park, 8 Hillside Road  
Parktown, 2107  
Tel: 011 551 5200  
Fax: 011 484 5499  
Client Relations Manager:  
Takalani Murathi

#### GAUTENG NORTH & NORTH WEST

Automotive Supplier Park  
30 Helium Road  
Rosslyn Ext. 2  
Tel: 0861 637 731  
Client Relations Manager:  
Harry Geldenhuys

#### FREE STATE & NORTHERN CAPE

52 Krause Street,  
Oranjesig,  
Bloemfontein, 9301  
Tel: 0861 637 733  
Fax: 051 447 8873  
Client Relations Manager:  
Gerhard Slabbert

#### KWAZULU NATAL

3rd Floor, Fassifern  
Old Mutual Building,  
35 Ridge Road, Berea  
Tel: 0861 637 736  
Fax: 031 208 4626  
Client Relations Manager:  
Musa Mtshali

#### LIMPOPO & MPUMALANGA

Section 1 No.8 Corridor  
Crescent Route N4  
Business Park  
Ben Fleur Ext 11, Witbank  
Tel: 0861 637 735  
Fax: 013 656 4629  
Client Relations Manager:  
Sabelo Buthelezi

#### WESTERN CAPE

5th floor, Catnia Building  
Bella Rosa Office  
Development  
Bella Rosa Road,  
Tygervalley  
Tel: 0861 637 732  
Fax: 021 914 8131  
Client Relations Manager:  
Bronwin Abrahams