



Future Leaders with One Heart NEWSLETTER

Issue #2

Cyril Ramaphosa
EDUCATION TRUST

Recognition Awards celebrates outstanding graduates

On 4 July 2024, Cyril Ramaphosa Education Trust (CRET) celebrated the remarkable achievements of its graduates at its annual Recognition Awards ceremony at The Venue in Melrose Arch, Johannesburg.

The event honoured 44 graduates from various universities and TVET colleges who completed their studies in 2022 and 2023 through CRET's comprehensive bursary and youth development programme.



CRET supports students from disadvantaged backgrounds to pursue higher education study and vocational training. The support is based on the potential of candidates and not just on academic performance. This results in the support of students who would ordinarily be overlooked by other bursary programmes that tend to seek out top achievers only. The graduates were recognised also for their outstanding leadership skills and social commitment.

"The CRET Recognition Awards not only celebrates academic excellence but also highlights the transformative impact of our holistic approach to youth development. Our aim is to empower students to become well-rounded individuals who can make meaningful contributions to society," said Chantelle Oosthuizen, Executive Director of CRET.

CRET offers more than just financial assistance for tuition and accommodation. The programme includes mentorship, leadership development, psychosocial support, and holiday work experience programs.

These initiatives help students develop essential soft skills and fosters a supportive community environment.



Dr Sazi Nzama, Chairperson of the CRET Alumni Advisory Board, added: "Our graduates, me included, are living proof that with the right support and opportunities, young people can achieve extraordinary things. "

We are incredibly proud of their accomplishments and excited to see how they will continue to inspire and lead in their communities and beyond."

President Cyril Ramaphosa, who originated the Trust with support for disadvantaged students from speaking fees he earned in the mid-1990s, affirmed the role of education and of CRET in a keynote address.

"Education is the key that unlocks the golden door of freedom," he said.

"We can say with pride that as CRET we were there at freedom's ring in 1994. Now, it is thirty years into democracy, and we will continue to be here for a long time to come.

"Through our work, we will continue to unlock many more doors for the men and women of our country. Doors to self-betterment, progress and prosperity for all with a hunger for learning," he said.

The awards come as Cyril Ramaphosa Foundation, of which CRET is a partner entity, celebrates its 20th anniversary, highlighting a sustained track record to transform lives. CRET has enabled many young people to realise their potential and to break the hold of intergenerational poverty suffered by their families. Since its formalised inception in 2000 the Trust has distributed over 400 bursaries.

The Recognition Awards ceremony was attended by representatives of CRET'S longstanding donor partners, Grindrod, Merafe Resources, Phembani, Huawei and Victor Industries, as well as representatives of various youth-led organisations.

CRET Expands Its Efforts to Promote Life After School

Cyril Ramaphosa Education Trust (CRET) continues to inspire Grade 11 and 12 learners by highlighting the various opportunities and options available to them beyond school.



In partnership with the Nkangala In-Patient Treatment Centre, CRET hosted a Life After Matric session at Phaphamani Secondary School in Delmas in April.

The session was attended by over 300 grades 11 and 12 learners, and touched on the importance of understanding one's strengths, weaknesses and interests; calculating APS scores for university and Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) college entry; and varied options to explore beyond matric, including university and college studies, artisan training, entering the job market, and volunteering.

The session also touched on substance abuse and alerted learners on the dangers of substances and how it hinders them from successfully pursuing their aspirations.

Further sessions took place August at Meriti Secondary School and Boitekong Secondary School in Rustenburg.

These sessions helped equip students with information and tools to make informed decisions about their career paths and post-school options. Learners were granted an opportunity to explore career choices through an integrated approach that incorporated psychometric testing, motivational speaking, and learnings from their school alumni.

CRET HOSTS BI-ANNUAL HOLIDAY PROGRAMME

The Cyril Ramaphosa Education Trust (CRET) hosted its second 2024 biannual holiday programme from 5 – 7 July in Randburg, Johannesburg. Seventy students attended the programme, which was facilitated by the students themselves, and had the chance to engage with one another in a safe and supportive environment.

Students gained valuable insights into important issues and were encouraged to share experiences and tips on these, including gender-based violence, mental health, mentorship, and academic success.



CYRIL RAMAPHOSA EDUCATION TRUST PARTNERS WITH BLUEVER EDUCATION

Cyril Ramaphosa Education Trust (CRET) has partnered with BluLever Education to support four apprentices to qualify as artisans in the electrical and plumbing fields. Supporting artisans in technical and vocational education training is significant to addressing youth unemployment as there is a skills shortage in these fields.



In a recent opinion piece, Prof Francis Petersen, Vice-Chancellor at the University of Free State, said a university degree "is undoubtedly one of the most effective weapons in the higher education arsenal."

"The problem, however," he said "is that a significant part of our student cohorts at South African universities is made up of individuals whose skills, career aspirations and interests make them much better suited for vocational, technical, or artisanal training."



In line with this outlook, CRET supports students embracing alternative work streams that are essential to the South African economy.

CRET is pleased to have partnered with BluLever Education to positively impact the livelihoods of South Africa's youth.

These are four of the apprentices working to qualify as artisans in the electrical and plumbing fields:

Livhuwani Siavhe - Plumbing Apprentice

Initially from Venda, Livhuwani matriculated in 2018 where she then enrolled for a Civil Engineering Higher Certificate at Southwest Gauteng College. During this time, Livhuwani took plumbing as a subject and applied for an apprenticeship. Livhuwani is passionate about uplifting communities and hopes to be a role model for other young females.



Uslet Nkgapele - Electrical Apprentice

Hailing from Limpopo, Uslet matriculated in 2012 before pursuing a Higher Certificate in Electrical Engineering. Since then she has completed an optical fibre learnership, has worked as a general worker, and volunteered in the local garden of her community. She is passionate about bringing about positive change in her community and has taken on a Student Ambassador role at BluLever.

Lebogang Mashego - Electrical Apprentice

After matriculating in 2012, Lebogang worked for a major bank before taking a leap into entrepreneurship by opening a construction company. Quickly realising he did not know enough about the industry, Lebogang enrolled for a Higher Certificate in Civil Engineering where he found his passion for the trades. As he gained knowledge about the industry, so his desire to become an artisan developed.



Simphiwe Tsekeman - Electrical Apprentice

Originally from Lusikisiki in the Eastern Cape, Simphiwe matriculated in 2018 before pursuing a Higher Certificate in Electrical Engineering. He recently moved to Gauteng to pursue an apprenticeship programme in the hopes of becoming an electrician. As a friendly, extroverted, and bubbly individual with a zest for learning, Simphiwe is an unsurprising choice as a Student Ambassador at BluLever.

Youth Excellence: Meet Tshepo Lepote – Owner of Sole of Heritage



Tshepo Lepote is a distinguished young professional with a remarkable career spanning over 12 years in the banking industry.

Born and bred in Orlando West, Soweto, in 1988, Tshepo's memories are of experiences shared with friends, football and music and a host of other practical activities.

"I will forever cherish the memories as they embodied the epoch of physical interaction for kids compared to how impersonal modern life has turned out," he said.

Tshepo joined the Cyril Ramaphosa Education Trust (CRET) family back in 2007, and with its bursary support, enrolled for a BCom Accounting degree at the University of Johannesburg. With CRET's support he managed to also complete his BCom Honours in Accounting and this kick-started a corporate career at ABSA.

He then went on to serve on the CRET Alumni Advisory Board as deputy chairperson from October 2019 to December 2022. In addition to its advisory role, the Board raises funds for alumni to complement CRET's higher education study support for disadvantaged students.

Tshepo describes himself as a dynamic individual who is enthusiastic about our country, entrepreneurship, and business in general.

Fuelled by his entrepreneurial spirit and a desire to achieve more, he established the proudly South African brand, Sole of Heritage.

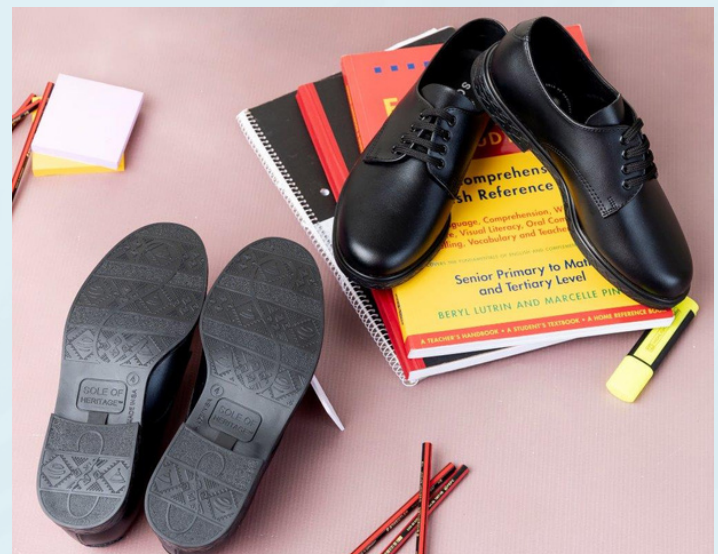
"Sole of Heritage sells unisex synthetic and premium shoes where with each step, it embodies a rainbow of tradition, unity, and pride, drawing inspiration from diverse tribal patterns and iconic symbols from all African cultures," Tshepo says.

The organisation is aims at imparting, celebrating, and creating awareness about culture, heritage, languages, and the historical significance of the African continent in all its diversity.

Tshepo started the business in recognition of the opportunities he was afforded and wants to further assist others who come from disadvantaged communities. He wants Sole of Heritage to be a beacon of hope through the creation of employment opportunities, especially the youth.



Ultimately, it is about the legacy and leaving an indelible mark in society.



Being a young and emerging entrepreneur comes with its challenges, but Tshepo declares that challenges are our everyday experiences. The biggest challenges he and his team have faced thus far include funding, access to market, and grappling with big players within the industry. He says their journey is exciting though as they are striving to disrupt an industry that has existed for over a century, making for a remarkable story of adventure.

"Challenges are a necessary part of life. Without them, we would not grow and become better human beings. Just keep going and something will give one day," he says.