



Future Leaders with One Heart UPDATES

Issue #3

Cyril Ramaphosa
EDUCATION TRUST



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Cyril Ramaphosa Education Trust (CRET) celebrated teachers on World Teachers Day

In celebration of World Teachers Day, Cyril Ramaphosa Education Trust (CRET) hosted 12 of their graduate teachers.

CRET believes that teachers shape the future and hold the key to the success of the next generation. This event was initiated to honour and celebrate our inspiring teachers and graduates who dedicate their time to making a meaningful difference to our youth.

The Trust extended its heartfelt gratitude to all educators across the country who work tirelessly to equip the next generation with the knowledge, motivation, and love for learning. Their passion and dedication form the backbone of our nation, and on World Teachers Day 2024, we celebrate you.

Thank you for your unwavering commitment to education and our future decision makers.



CRET launches Future at Work Initiative



Cyril Ramaphosa Education Trust (CRET) is thrilled to announce the launch of its Future at Work Initiative, a dynamic programme designed to bridge the gap between education and the workplace by providing undergraduates with real-world corporate experience.

This innovative initiative immerses students in diverse corporate environments, offering them first-hand exposure to business operations across multiple sectors. Participants benefit from structured agendas that include departmental insights, career guidance, motivational talks, and practical learning opportunities designed to prepare them for future employment.

In an exciting first phase of the programme, Bolt hosted an inaugural cohort of 10 students at its Randburg office, providing an immersive look at its operations. Shortly afterward, Growthpoint Properties welcomed another 10 CRET students over two days, with tours of their Sandton head office and Thrive Student Living facilities in Braamfontein.

Amogelang Mocumi, Fund Manager of Growthpoint Student Accommodation Holdings, which operates under the Thrive Student Living brand, expressed the company's commitment: "Experiential learning is key to shaping South Africa's future workforce. By participating in the Future at Work Initiative, we are empowering youth to discover new career possibilities and pursue their ambitions with clarity and purpose."

Grindrod also played a pivotal role, hosting five students in Durban for direct, intimate interactions with key executives, including CEO Xolani Mbambo. Mbambo's inspiring personal story – from gardener to Chartered Accountant and CEO – resonated deeply with students. "Success is not just about talent, but hard work, resilience, and purpose," Mbambo said, adding that he was excited to witness the future career journeys of the group.

Each hosting experience provided students with interactive Q&A sessions, presentations by department heads across Marketing, Finance, Human Resources, and IT, as well as office tours. Students left not only with valuable professional insights but also certificates of participation, recognising their commitment to the initiative.

CRET's sister organisation, the Adopt-a-School Foundation, further extended this hands-on learning by engaging 15 CRET students in its annual fundraising event, hosted by President Cyril Ramaphosa.

Chantelle Oosthuizen, Executive Director of CRET, shared her vision for the initiative: "The Future at Work Initiative reflects our unwavering dedication to nurturing young talent and developing South Africa's future leaders through a holistic approach to support. Our partnerships with top-tier companies are opening doors for undergraduates to thrive in today's competitive job market."

Oosthuizen called on more corporates to get involved: "We encourage businesses across the country to partner with us in hosting students and playing a vital role in youth development. Together, we can build pathways to a brighter, more prosperous future."

With more opportunities planned nationwide, the Future at Work Initiative is set to expand, continuing to build bridges between education and employment while empowering South Africa's next generation of leaders.

Meikana Mculwane, CRET Programme Administrator talks with Radio Islam about psychosocial support

As Grade 12 learners sat for the 2024 National Senior Certificate (NSC) exams, they found themselves under mounting pressure. Many learners experience, amongst other anxieties, the brunt of high expectations placed on their shoulders - which can take a serious toll on their mental health.

CRET Programme Administrator, Meikana Mculwane spoke to Radio Islam about the psychosocial support that matriculants need during this time. Matriculants are facing a range of mental health challenges, from anxiety and self-esteem issues to depression. "Anxiety, often linked to a fear of failure or underperformance, can lead to what we call study paralysis," Mculwane explains.

Listen to Meikana's interview with Radio Islam here: <https://youtu.be/81R4nw8e6Ek>

Dreams Take Flight: CRET Beneficiaries Head to Huawei Headquarters in China



Karabo Phoshoko

Karabo's journey is a testament to his unwavering curiosity and commitment to growth. After completing matric in 2021, He began studying mechanical engineering with support from CRET. However, due to academic challenges, he faced exclusion from the programme in early 2024.

Three remarkable CRET students have embarked on a life-changing journey to Huawei's headquarters in China. Selected by the Southern Labs Institute of Technology in partnership with the Cyril Ramaphosa Education Trust (CRET), Karabo Phoshoko, Anthony Sibambo, and Pelela Mpotulo spent a week at the technology company learning about how they work and innovate.

The trip is not only a stamp in their passports and a mark of success on their CVs but promises to expand their horizons and empower them with the tools and inspiration to contribute meaningfully to their communities.

In 2023, the Cyril Ramaphosa Education Trust (CRET) embarked on a transformative partnership with Southern Labs to provide its beneficiaries with additional, voluntary access to certified upskilling courses in IT and digital specialisation. These courses, designed for online delivery and completed after hours, offer current students and graduates' industry-relevant expertise critical for success in today's rapidly evolving digital landscape.

This collaboration is already making an impact. Two alumni from the inaugural 2023 cohort have secured employment opportunities, highlighting the initiatives effectiveness in bridging the gap between education and the workplace. The initiative reflects CRET's holistic approach to student development, emphasising both academic achievement and practical skill-building.

Refusing to let setbacks define his path, Karabo explored other opportunities, including working at McDonald's through a hospitality learnership. Despite gaining practical experience, he found himself yearning for intellectual stimulation. Karabo reconnected with CRET, where mentors provided guidance and an opportunity to volunteer. Through his time at CRET, he rediscovered his passion for learning and was introduced to the Southern Labs Programming Fundamentals course where he excelled and earned an opportunity to visit Huawei's headquarters in China.

"This opportunity means everything to me," he shares. "I've always been fascinated by how technology can solve real-world problems. Visiting Huawei gave me insights into global innovation and how I can apply it locally to help bridge the digital divide in South Africa."

Karabo credits CRET with shaping his path. "CRET didn't just fund my studies; they taught me how to be a leader and a change-maker. This experience with Huawei is a continuation of their belief in my potential," he says.

His goals for the trip included exploring advancements in artificial intelligence and learning how Huawei integrates smart technology into daily life.



Anthony Sibambo

Anthony is a resilient and ambitious young man from Swaneville township, Mogale, currently in his third year of chemical engineering at the University of the Witwatersrand. His curiosity about molecular sciences and a passion for petrochemical engineering, alongside a growing interest in coding, particularly Python and Java, have guided his path.

Anthony credits CRET for offering more than just financial support but being a second family. He appreciates CRET's holistic support, which includes mentorship, mental health workshops, and skills development, helping him grow academically and personally.

He joined the Southern Labs Academy after expressing interest in their Python programming course, where he excelled. The academy has aligned perfectly with his passion for programming and innovation, paving the way for further learning in Java.

"This trip is proof that perseverance pays off. I was excited to see how Huawei uses engineering to create cutting-edge solutions. I hope to take my learnings to improve South Africa's infrastructure, especially in energy and telecommunications," he shares.

"I want to use what I learned in China to create opportunities for young people in my community. It's not about learning new skills but understanding what it takes to innovate on a world stage," Anthony says.



Pelela Mpotulo

Pelela Mpotulo has always been driven by a desire to lead and inspire. Completing her degree in information systems and economics, Pelela's academic journey is a testament to her resilience and hard work.

Her passion for technology started early and deepened through CRET's holistic support system. "CRET isn't just about funding tuition; it's about equipping us with life skills, leadership qualities, and opportunities like this one with Southern Labs. They believed in me," she says.

Looking ahead, Pelela is eager to share her experience of Huawei's innovative culture and take the knowledge to empower the youth in her community.

"Many students from my hometown don't get opportunities like this. I want to create programmes to teach coding and technology skills, making them more competitive in the job market," she says with passion.

The three students note one thing in common, CRET's holistic approach that provides life opportunities. They share too, in line with CRET's ethos, the goal to use what they learn to make a meaningful impact on South Africa's development.