

East London reigns supreme in NATIONAL WATER COMPETITION

Regional finalists from all over the country again converged on the Sci Bono Discovery Centre in Johannesburg to participate in the Aqualibrium Schools Water Competition.

The competition, hosted every year by the South African Institution of Civil Engineering, was sponsored this year by TCTA. Khudu Mbeba, Senior Manager: Transformation and Sustainability at TCTA expressed the organisation's delight to be involved in such an event. He said it gave learners a platform to experience real-life issues regarding water supply and the challenges water engineers had to grapple with every day. In addition to sponsoring the competition, TCTA also offers bursaries to prospective engineering students.

The competition was originally devised by Prof Kobus van Zyl (currently at the University of Cape Town) and his engineering students at the University of Johannesburg. This year's regional winners came from as far afield as Cape Town, East London, Pietermaritzburg, Richards Bay, Middelburg (Mpumalanga) and Port Elizabeth to battle for top honours. For many of the students it was their first trip to Johannesburg.

Water distribution systems supply safe and clean drinking water to people and are therefore of utmost importance. The teams taking part in the competition are tasked to design a model water distribution network to distribute three litres of water equally between three points on a grid, using two different diameter pipes and connection pieces. The learners are judged on how well

they execute the task, working on a penalty point system.

This year's competition varied slightly from previous years. Instead of being allowed only three tries in an hour the learners were allowed to try as many different network designs as they wanted within their allotted 60 minutes. Once their time was up and the teams had their final design, water was run through their systems and their networks adjudicated.

This year's champions were the learners from Stirling High School in East London. Team members Danielle Botha, Richard Goosen and Michael Harvey managed a win with 148 penalty points. In second place was the team from Domino Servite Secondary School in Pietermaritzburg, with Tembisa West Secondary School in



Standing left to right: Manglin Pillay, CEO of SAICE, Danielle Botha from Stirling High School in East London, Mbangiseni Nephumbada, Acting Deputy Director General of the Department of Water Affairs, Ilse Kemp from Stirling High School and Khudu Mbeba, Senior Manager: Transformation and Sustainability at TCTA
Kneeling: Richard Goosen and Michael Harvey from Stirling High School in East London.

NEW WEBSITE FOR ASPIRING ENGINEERS

A new website has been developed for young aspiring engineers wanting to learn more about the subject.

The site, www.ingenius.org.za, takes visitors on an exciting ride through the world of engineering, with the aim of showcasing the profession as a potential career choice. Ingenius was originally established by the Engineering Council of South Africa in partnership with others to advance the engineering profession.

Browse through different sections to see how the engineering sector has shaped South Africa or learn about current, real-life engineering projects on the go in the country. The website also features a calendar of events and a list of fun activities. In addition, the site offers study and career advice for those wanting to study engineering.

For those who want to stay in touch with competitions etc, a free SMS-service is offered.

third place. The learners won cash prizes for themselves and their schools.

According to SAICE, the competition plays an important role in creating awareness of the importance of engineering – particularly water engineering – to society and encourages young people to take mathematics and science at school. “Engineers are MAD – they Make A Difference. No other career can change the lives of thousands of people so dramatically through, for example, a water supply scheme, as can engineering,” said SAICE’s Marie Ashpole, the lead organiser of the event. As a direct result of the competition four students are currently studying civil engineering – all from previously disadvantaged backgrounds.

For more information on the competition, contact Marie Ashpole at Tel: (011) 805-5947; or Email: marie@saice.org.za

Learners from the Khombindlela High School in KwaZulu-Natal debate the design of their water network.



Lani van Vuuren

The learners from Hoërskool Akasia watch their network closely during adjudication.



Lani van Vuuren

Prof Kobus van Zyl of the University of Cape Town explaining the rules of the competition.



Lani van Vuuren

Adrienne-Louise Engelbrecht, Shannon du Preez and Caren Hermanus of the Cape Academy for Maths Science & Technology hard at work on their water network. The network model has a possible 20 billion combinations.



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