

Hoërskool Eldoraigine wins Smart Young Mindz 2012 competition

Hoërskool Eldoraigine in Pretoria was named as the overall winner in the Smart Young Mindz (SYM) competition out of 6 800 entries at the expo and prize giving on Friday, 16 November. The Grade 8 - 10 learners created a greenhouse out of recycled materials.



Gibson Pillay Learning Academy took second prize for their hydro-toilet using recycled water, while Hoërskool Dr. EG Jansen took third place for their solar cooker.

SYM is Gauteng's leading competition aimed at stimulating interest among learners in the fields of mathematics, science, technology and entrepreneurship. This year's challenge to learners was to build a working model of a low cost structure that is environmentally friendly and of value to the economy. The structure needed to include at least three of the following elements:

- A solar geyser
- Natural ambient heating and cooling methods
- Water conserving methods
- An inexpensive alarm system
- Using eco friendly materials
- Withstand natural disasters or ensure minimal injury during disasters
- Utilising recycled materials
- Energy saving lighting
- Sanitation

SYM 2012 winners walked away with prizes valued at R375 000. In addition to the cash prize, each individual team member in the top three teams took home an I-Pad 2, cash prize for each pupil and a cash prize for the school and a scientific calculator.

Encouraging entrepreneurs

The winners received their prizes from Gauteng MEC for Economic Development Nkosiphendule Kolisile, who emphasised that encouraging emerging entrepreneurs is central to transforming the business sector and tackling poverty. "We need our young people to become job creators rather than job seekers. The opportunity for entries to be selected for business incubation by The Innovation Hub therefore adds an exciting layer to the competition."

Competition entrants will be enrolled in The Innovation Hub's incubator programme action plan, the Yearning, Learning and Earning Incubator Programme. This programme includes training and skills development in entrepreneurship, business plan development and exposure to industry. The Innovation Hub is a subsidiary of the Gauteng Growth and Development Agency.

Chance to attend Saturday School

As a further incentive, Dimension Data will interview five SYM finalists as candidates for their successful Saturday School. Those learners who are accepted into the school could stand a chance of winning a fully funded tertiary education bursary.

In addition to their cash prizes, the category winners will become part of the Smart Young Mindz Alumni Association. The Alumni Association exposes past winners to activities and is a platform to discuss issues and share ideas on current matters, careers and innovations. It also allows the competition partners to keep track of the member's academic performance at school and beyond and it serves to provide mentorship to former winners.

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