

Old Mutual funding helps PYDA bring skilled youth into the WC wine industry

Companies need to play an active role in bringing about transformation in the Western Cape wine industry, including fostering young, previously disadvantaged and female talent. As part of Old Mutual's Responsible Business ethos, the Old Mutual Foundation invested development funding with the registered non-profit company, [Pinotage Youth Development Academy](#) (PYDA) - in support of its work in driving job creation, transformation and inclusion - which saw 23 students graduating from the PYDA class of 2017. Through this funding, the PYDA were able to create job opportunities for 50 youth in the Western Cape wine industry.



Front row, L-R Avuyile Maqolo, Masande Manjeni, Christiaan Abrahams, Siphonathi Kowa, Yolani KasoBack row: Siphokazi Taliwe, Yolanda Ngwevela, Yanga Tshaya (behind Yolanda), Tiffany Andrews, Louise Jones (Old Mutual Foundation), Siphesihle Tshaka, Siyabulela Makedama (behind Siphesihle), Phelisa Ntsokotha, Enihle Ganyaza, Zenande Fuzile, Sinobom Gosa, Porchia Jacobs, Samkelisiwe Magwaza, Simamkele Ncapayi, Nsiphiso Ngcawe, Yonela Zondwayo, Mponsoeng Ramothathaki, Ntombentsha Stuurman

According to Millicent Maroga, head of the Old Mutual Foundation, the academy brings about positive change in the lives of the graduates and contributes to a changing wine landscape in the region.

“We are proud to support the PYDA and the work they do in creating positive change in the lives of young people. At Old Mutual, we believe in not only celebrating outstanding wines, which we do annually as part of the Old Mutual Trophy Wine Show. Skills development is an important element of all our sponsorships and in addition to the PYDA, we also support the development of world-class wine judges through the Wine Judging Academy, run with the University of Cape Town's Graduate School of Business. We are also a long-term partner of the Cape Winemakers Guild Protégé Programme through Nedbank, a member of the Old Mutual group.”

Launching young South African talent into meaningful employment

The PYDA trainees are selected from the Greater Stellenbosch area, Paarl, Wellington and Franschhoek, key wine producing regions in the Western Cape. Trainees are selected through an application process and are required to be between the ages of 18 and 25, unemployed or casually employed with a grade 12 qualification. The programme is a one-year qualification which combines a number of accredited modules with personal development and in programme work placements. It is endorsed by Winetech and is widely supported by wine farms in the region which are also a source of employment for the graduates.

Nikki Munro, programme director at PYDA, says the programme exists to launch young South African talent into meaningful employment as a new generation of professionals in the sector. “Through meaningful work, our graduates are able to bring irrevocable change to their lives, their families, and communities. The partnership with the Old Mutual Foundation is invaluable to us and through our shared commitment to skills development and positive change, we are able to expand our reach to create more work-ready employees for the industry,” Munro added.

Since its inception in 2013, the PYDA has produced 122 graduates with a 90% employment rate. During the year-long course, trainees are exposed to a variety of wine industry environments, from pruning the vines to tasting room work, to marketing in order to produce well-rounded graduates able to contribute to the industry.

Optimistic about the future

“The PYDA has a robust selection process which has resulted in a 94.5% retention rate overall. Old Mutual’s continuing sponsorship of the Old Mutual Trophy Wine Show holds the promise of great reward in the form of a future world-class wine-making industry supported by an increasingly experienced and skilled workforce,” says Maroga.

The graduates are optimistic about their future and that of their industry. According to Ntombentsha Stuurman, a 2017 graduate, “The wine sector is all about discovery, it’s about having faith in myself and to be open minded to what it has to offer. It’s a world full of adventure and challenges at the same time.”

Maroga concludes by saying, “Our support of the PYDA is an investment in the long-term future of this industry, discovering and nurturing young talent, and bringing marginalised people into the mainstream economy. We play an active part to transform the industry to be more reflective of South African society, and the communities in which they operate. As a responsible business, we believe that celebration of fine wine and transformation of the industry go hand-in-hand.”

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