

Toyota donation equips young entrepreneurs

A donation by Toyota South Africa has enabled the Afrikaans Institute of Commerce (AHi) to train approximately 350 students as part of their entrepreneurial development course.



The donation is made to Chambers of Commerce that take a progressive step to identify and train potential entrepreneurs from previously disadvantaged communities. These candidates are then exposed to a more formal business environment, which allows the Chamber to broaden its borders across traditional structures of the past.

"Toyota is proud to be part of this initiative," says Dr Johan van Zyl, president and CEO of Toyota South Africa Motors. "Our company is committed to continuous improvement and thorough training on all levels, including the development of entrepreneurial skills. South Africa is one of the biggest entrepreneurial markets in the world - the best way to fight unemployment. With the proper training and follow-up mentoring support, these young entrepreneurs will become the leaders of tomorrow."

Purpose of courses

The training takes place under the control and supervision of a Chamber of Commerce. To date, the training of aspirant and upcoming entrepreneurs by Chambers of Commerce has been a huge success.

"The primary purpose of the courses is to equip entrepreneurs with the necessary skills and knowledge to develop entrepreneurial skills and potential, and to involve young people from different backgrounds," adds Dr van Zyl.

The course material includes drawing up a business plan, setting up an infrastructure, financing a business, developing a human resources structure, marketing a business, defining a business identity, monitoring a business, managing and leadership, as well as maintaining the sustainability of a business.

The Toyota funding was used for training at Hammanskraal and Eersterust by the Vanderbijl Park Chamber of Commerce, which undertook it with the support of the Vaal Campus of the North West University. The Oudtshoorn Chamber of Commerce presented training in Bridgton and Bongoletu, while facilitating courses were presented at Sterkspruit and

Tsitsikamma.

Individual entrepreneurs

During the past year the second phase of the Toyota funding was used to bring courses to individual entrepreneurs in George, Gansbaai, Robertson/Bonnievale, Khwa Ttu San Training Centre in Malmesbury, and more recently also in Port Elizabeth at the New Horizons Development Agency in Bloemendal. The AHi also presented a one-day course for black women who are in a loose co-operative and run their own small businesses.

"We are delighted with the results of this project thus far and will continue to support the AHi in their efforts to uplift and equip people from previously disadvantaged backgrounds," concludes Dr van Zyl.

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