



INTERNET ARTICLE

Young water scientist to represent Free State at SAYWP Competitions

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What started as a passion for innovation led young Sphamandla Jaza to the national South African Youth Water Prize competition. Sphamandla is a 16 year-old Grade Eleven learner from HTS Louis Botha High School, in Bloemfontein. He scooped 1st position in the Free State Provincial South African Youth Water (SAYWP) awards competitions held in Bloemfontein.

The competitions begin at Provincial level followed by finals at National. Winners of the national leg of the competition get to compete internationally at the Stockholm Junior Water Prize competitions in Sweden. Full bursary/ies to study towards a career in the water sector at a university of the winner's choice around the country is/are availed.

Sphamandla Jaza's project is called "Quench your Thirst", an innovation to help distil surface, ground and sea water. The method uses recycled material that can be afforded by low income earning people. In the process this will contribute positively to avail potable water which is lacking currently due to pollution and natural phenomena.

Speaking after he was declared Provincial winner "Sphamandla said that it was an overwhelming experience presenting to a team of judges analysing each and every process, with questions relevant to the project. "I am grateful for the opportunity presented by the Department of Water and Sanitation, and I am ready to represent Free State Province at the national stage followed by international competition at the Stockholm Junior Water Prize", he said.

Sphamandla has always been a child who liked to innovate using old material to come up with different models of his own using science in the process. As a parent I am happy to see him following what he likes most by mixing both mathematics' and science experimentation. To the Department of Water and Sanitation thank you for the opportunity that allowed my child to secure a bursary. I am humbled", said Mrs Bukeka Jaza, mother to Sphamandla.

The bursaries are in line with the department's 2020 Vision for Water and Sanitation programme aimed at teaching learners about the importance of water use efficiency and protection of water sources.

The programme attracts a number of schools participating across the country studying mathematics and science from Grade 9-11. Learners are encouraged to identify problems related to water and sanitation in their community and schools, conduct studies and come up with innovative solutions to the problem.

By Marcus Monyakeni