

ESKOM EXPO FOR YOUNG SCIENTISTS

ANNUAL REPORT 2019

STELLENBOSCH REGION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

It is with great gratitude that it can be said that 2019 was an exceptional year for Stellenbosch region! Not only was it the 20th time that the regional Expo was hosted, but it was also the most learners ever who were afforded the opportunity to participate at the regional competition.

A multi-school Science Club called SUNCEP Science Buddies was started at Stellenbosch University. Interested learners who lack basic research and computer skills regularly attended club sessions and were guided to come up with research projects that were entered for Expo. Three Science Buddies science club members represented our region at ISF, and one was chosen to represent South Africa overseas.

Over the past 20 years 4101 projects were exhibited at regional level; of these an average of 37,7 % were male participants and 62,3% were females. In the last 20 years 434 learners represented our region at the national competition, 269 of those projects won medals there, 52 won special prizes and 16 were category winners. Twenty two learners in total represented South Africa abroad.

One such learner, Phoebe Mgxaji, represented our country in Beijing in 2019, where she won a bronze medal and a special award!

SPONSORSHIP AND FINANCIALS

Stellenbosch region wants to thank Eskom, our title sponsor, for their subsidy. We also want to thank each donor who contributed financially to help cover our region's expenses! Without generous organisations who share our vision and passion for science, technology and youth development, regional activities and national participation would definitely suffer.

Our sincere appreciation goes to:

Organisation	Contributed towards ...
Het Jan Marais Nationale fonds	Support in offering workshops and hosting the regional expo, human resources.
Eskom (Nationally)	Regional subsidy, stationery, medal pins, special prizes at regional competition
Eskom (Local)	Backpacks for ISF learners
SUNCEP (Stellenbosch University Centre for Pedagogy)	Human resources, infra structure, special prizes
Stellenbosch University (Faculties of Sciences, Education, Engineering, AgriSciences, Arts and Social Sciences)	Category prizes, judges, venues for workshops
WCED (Western Cape Education Department's Mathematics, Science and Technology directorate)	Infra structure and learner lunch packs at regional competition; excursion for ISF participants, flight tickets, accommodation and meals at ISF.
Toyota South Africa	Support in offering workshops and hosting the regional expo, human resources
Hoër Meisieskool Bloemhof	Venue for regional competition
EMSS (Alphawave Software and Electronics)	Supporting workshops leading up to regional participation.
Department of Water affairs	Special prizes

WORKSHOPS

Several workshops/ training and development sessions were held during the year. Attendance was as follows:

Date	Number of teachers/ mentors	Number of learners
19/1	20	108
2/2	21	146
23/2	14	99
6/4	14	73
11/5	7	161
25/5	10	84
8/6	7	91
13/7	10	89
27/7	10	74
3/8	6	60
10/8	13	71
17/8	8	44

Other workshops included:

Date	Group	Number	Attendees
22/8	Judges	1	25
31/8 and individual dates thereafter	ISF participants	1 generic group workshop and then individual visits	19 learners

REGIONAL / DISTRICT STATISTICS

DESCRIPTION	#	COMMENTS
Projects	360	This is the most in our 20 years of existence
Participants	467	This is the most in our 20 years of existence
Females	287	61,5%
Males	180	38,5%
Primary school participants	35	7,5%
Secondary school participants	432	92,5%
TOTAL NUMBER OF SCHOOLS	36	
Quintile 1, 2 and 3	8	22,2%
Quintile 4 and 5	24	66,7
Independent schools	4	11,1%
TOTAL NUMBER OF DISTRICT/ SCHOOL EXPOS	11	2 district expos with various schools were held, and 9 schools had own separate expos.
Number of schools	19	10 schools participated in two district expos, 9 schools held their own.
Number of projects	1100	
Number of learners	1277	

HIGHLIGHTS

- The region hosted and celebrated its 20 year of existence.
- Many learners were interested and attended the SUNCEP Science Buddies Science club, causing the number of participants to rise.
- New schools that came on board.
- Good support from our Provincial Coordinator.
- A committee that worked great together.
- Sponsors' financial support for the region.
- A matric learner who secured financial support for further studies in the form of bursaries from Eskom and Siemens.

LOWLIGHTS

- Not enough mentors to guide learners at workshops.
- Not enough money allocated for help of mentors for all the hours of input needed.
- No practical support from WCED subject advisors, etc.
- Not sufficient media coverage – limited time to write articles!

INTERNATIONAL SCIENCE FAIR (ISF)

Nineteen learners from 19 schools were selected to represent Stellenbosch region at ISF. All of them did us proud! Stellenbosch participants won one gold medal, eight silver and three bronze medals. In addition to the medals, four special prizes were secured (two full bursaries from Eskom and Siemens, the Royal Society's prize for the best Chemistry project, and a school lab upgrade with an accompanying tablet for the learner). One learner was also appointed as junior category winner.

MARKETING / MEDIA

- The regional website was updated regularly with the latest relevant information.
- Quarterly emails were sent to schools, acting as reminders, highlighting important information, supplying links to relevant websites, etc.
- Articles appeared in the Worcester Standard, AWSUM news, Tygerburger, as well as online on Facebook, Twitter and Stellenbosch University and SUNCEP's websites.

INTERNATIONAL PARTICIPATION

Phoebe Mgxaji from Macassar Secondary School and later Curro Sitari, were selected to represent South Africa in Beijing. Her project was on food labels and how it is neglected, distrusted and misunderstood. Studying the food sold at school tuck-shops, she also suggested a system whereby tuck-shop products are labelled as red (stop, not healthy, stay away), orange (careful, reconsider your choice) and green (go for it, healthy).

She was awarded a bronze medal as well as the Youth Science and Technology Innovation special award which included a cash reward.

CONCLUSION

The region wants to thank every sponsor for their support; without that we would never have succeeded in all our endeavors. A big thank you goes to every school, teacher, mentor and learner who invested time and energy in our learners in order to come up with research projects. Our judges were instrumental in judging and finding the exceptional projects that were worthy of medals and special prizes; thank you for your valuable inputs! A big thank you to the Stellenbosch regional committee who were on board all the way in a roller coaster

year! Last but not least, big appreciation to the national management team who supported and guided us throughout.

Erika Hoffman, Regional Science Fair Director, Stellenbosch region

PHOTOS



Members of SUNCEP Science Buddies science club at a Saturday work session.



Cake to celebrate 20 years!



Specially labelled wine as gifts



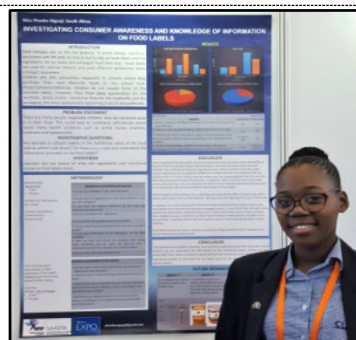
Rector of SU, prof Wim de Villiers cuts the birthday cake!



Entertainment to celebrate the occasion!



Stellenbosch region's ambassadors at ISF 2019



Phoebe Mgxaji with her poster in Beijing.