

ADDRES BY THE MAYOR OF MAKHADO MUNICIPALITY- HER WORSHIP Cllr S.M SINYOSI, AT THE GRADUATION CEREMONY OF YOUNG PEOPLE WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE ABSA READY TO WORK PROGRAM

Ward Councillors present,

Mr Hlungwane from ABSA and senior management and staff from ABSA

Representatives from LEDA- Makhado

Representatives from SEDA- Vhembe

Representatives from the IEC – Makhado Office

Our graduates

Good day!

We are gathered to honour our young people who completed a Ready To Work Program that was sponsored by ABSA.

As Makhado Municipality we value private-public partnerships to advance the interests and aspirations of young people in our Municipality.

Youth Month in South Africa is a month to both honour the courage and sacrifice of the youth of 1976 who waged a struggle against the brutal and inhuman system of apartheid.

This month we are all called upon to celebrate and highlight the pivotal role that young people play in human and social development.

Youth are the nucleus of any society and represent the bravery demonstrated by the youth leaders like O.R Tambo, Nelson Mandela, Solomon Mahlangu, Hector Peterson and many others who shaped the course of our history and ushered a new, free and democratic dispensation.

Youth leaders like Solomon Mahlangu gave up their lives so that we can enjoy the freedom we have today. They sacrificed everything, including their own dreams in order to ensure that we can have a democratic and constitutional state.

Young people constitute the majority of our population, especially in Makhado. Sadly, they are the most affected by the high rate of unemployment, poverty, HIV and AIDS, and are also vulnerable to alcohol and drug abuse.

As government, we therefore have a duty to direct all our efforts and resources to address the socio and economic needs of young people.

All national, provincial and local municipalities, including state owned enterprises must develop relevant, youth driven programmes that will holistically address the immediate, medium and long term needs of youth in our country.

The National Youth Development Agency must be at the centre of providing youth specific and sustainable developmental initiatives that will liberate our young people from all forms of social and economic injustices.

As Makhado Municipality, we want to be part of those solutions because, we take pride in our young people and continue to search for an empowerment model that will ensure that young people are prioritised in our IDP and other budget votes.

The ABSA Ready for Work program symbolises the commitment we have made to ensure that unemployed youth are linked to skills training programmes.

In the past year we hosted more than 90 interns and more than 150 young people in learnership programs.

This is a critical part of our determination to equip young graduates with workplace and experiential training opportunities and also to train unemployed youth from rural communities.

We have requested Council during the State of the Municipality address to increase the budget for Bursaries and Youth programmes during the next financial year.

We have enrolled youth as part of the Community Works Program and the Expanded Public Works Program. We must increase the number of young people, especially young women and those living with disabilities, to be given preference in this public works initiatives.

We call upon Sector Departments, the Limpopo Economic Development Agency, Small Enterprises Development Agency, NYDA, the SETA's and other private companies to take active interest in the skilling of young people.

We appreciate the support by ABSA wherein more than 350 young people were trained on various aspects of personal, financial and management literacy.

The young people who completed the one day training workshop have expressed the great desire to be enrolled in formal skills training programmes.

We all have a duty to make sure that they are supported to fulfil their ambitions of becoming valuable citizens and assets of our nation who will contribute to nation building and the advancement of our democratic state.

If we empower youth of today, we shall have nourished the tree of freedom that Solomon Mahlangu spoke about, when he walked in the gallows of the apartheid death row.

We must never fail to recognise the potential that young people have to change their own circumstances for the better. Youth leaders have a duty to promote a culture of critical thinking amongst young people.

We must encourage young people to take part in Ward Committees, youth political formations, Civic Associations, Community Policing Forums, khoroni and other platforms of decision making.

Young people must be encouraged to vote during local and national elections, because the future of our land rests on their shoulders.

Your involvement in branches of your political parties, and other community structures, NGO's and CBO's, SGB's will go a long way to strengthening our people institutions of government and development.

We must make education fashionable. You must take advantage of the funding opportunities in TVET Colleges and Universities to further your studies. Our nation needs Engineers to build quality roads and infra structure, we need electrical engineers and artisans, we need accountants and lawyers, we need town planners and surveyors.

Our Youth Office will develop a database of all young people in Makhado to ensure that we link them with different support agencies based on their specific needs.

We must promote youth entrepreneurship as a tool for job creation and self-reliance and economic empowerment.

Our duty as Makhado Municipality is to continue building more community halls, sports facilities and recreational centres so that young people stay away from alcohol and drug abuse.

We must teach young women to use condoms and be safe from STI's and HIV and AIDS.

Drugs have become a common problem, especially dagga, nyaope and cocaine in towns and rural areas.

We must continue to have public awareness campaigns to raise awareness on social, environmental, other ills like rape, murder, robbery, assault. Housebreaking, kidnapping and human trafficking.

We take this opportunity to wish all our graduates all the best in their future plans. We trust you shall use the knowledge you acquired to set up your own Cooperatives and SMME's.

You must be the ambassadors of change and development. We strongly believe that when you take the baton to participate in the political and economic life of our nation, you would have claimed your place in the history of our liberation struggle.

In that way, the class of 1976, and the spirit of Solomon Mahlangu, O.R Tambo, Nelson Mandela, Hector Peterson, Peter Mokaba and many martyrs of our revolution shall live on.

I therefore, rise on behalf of the citizens of Makhado, to wish you well and trust that you will continue to be a shining example of empowerment and excellence, and dedicated youth cadres of our nation.

We take this opportunity to invite you to other activities that will be announced later on. These activities will take place during the month of June as part of Youth Month Program in Makhado.

Thank you,

Office of the Mayor

Cllr S.M Sinyosi

