

## **Speech by the City's Executive Mayor, Patricia de Lille, at the Mayoral Apprenticeship Programme awards ceremony**

**Note to editors:** Mayor De Lille delivered this keynote address at the graduation ceremony for the first Mayoral Apprenticeship Programme, today 3 September 2014. In 2011, the City selected 90 Capetonians from disadvantaged areas to be part of this programme, and they have since received formal training in scarce skills, as well as work experience with the City.

Good morning, goeie môre, molweni, as-salaam alaikum, shalom.

Today we are together to celebrate the success of the apprentices who are graduating from the 2012 Mayoral Apprenticeship Programme.

I remember when we launched this programme in December 2011 and I urged each one of you to make use of the opportunity. Today I am proud to see that you have done just that.

We are building an opportunity city. The focus of the opportunity city is to create the necessary environment in which investment can grow. This means more companies doing business in the city so that jobs can be created.

One of the most important ways to attract investment is by having the skills necessary to grow the economy. One of the ways in which the City encourages investment is by investing in infrastructure.

As an opportunity city with the necessary foresight, we quickly realised that we could create opportunities and simultaneously become leaders in service delivery. We saw an opportunity to invest in our residents and simultaneously remedy the skills shortage, while increasing our service delivery capacity.

Through this initiative, we are therefore tackling both economic and social issues. The Mayoral Apprenticeship Programme has been providing scarce skills and on-the-job training opportunities.

Besides extensive advertising in news, the City contacted high schools in disadvantaged areas to spread the word about this opportunity. We received over 4 000 applications.

The City has invested R21,1 million in these apprentices. This covered the cost of the salaries they have earned for the duration of the programme. It also included the Personal Protective Equipment, all their tools, and the

theoretical training that they received from Northlink College and False Bay College.

The Utility Services Directorate spends an additional R21,5 million on internal and external bursaries, developmental training, learnerships and apprenticeships. Therefore, in total, R42,6 million is spent on internal and external bursaries, developmental training, learnerships and apprenticeship training of students in this directorate.

Opportunities lift people out of poverty and in turn provide them with dignity. The graduates we acknowledge here today come from Ocean View, Samora Machel, Lotus River, Philippi, Mitchells Plain, Bonteheuwel and Khayelitsha. The decision to focus on these areas stems from our strong commitment to redress the legacy of the past, and to give the people of our city a chance to determine their own futures.

In late 2011, you stood before us as youth with a vision, and today you stand before us as the city's newest diesel mechanics, fitters, boiler-makers, auto-electricians, plumbers, carpenters and bricklayers. We know that for many of you, the road to today was not easy.

I am also pleased that many women took up the opportunities and some of them graduated as bricklayers.

I have also been told about a student who is a rehabilitated drug user. He faced many challenges to rebuild his life. Today he is not only a recovering drug addict, but he also passed his trade test as a painter.

We are elated to be retaining most of the scarce skills, and 74 of the apprentices will be employed in the City. These qualified artisans will now be employed in the Utility Services Directorate. For those who have not been absorbed by the City, the nature of this programme is also such that the skills they have now acquired are needed in the market place. They can now approach the private sector with the necessary confidence and the City of Cape Town will be assisting them in this regard.

It is with great pride that I can announce that the Mayoral Apprenticeship Programme will be implemented again next year. This means that more Capetonians will be given the opportunity to gain scarce skills, and use them to make progress possible in the city.

In closing, I would like to thank each and every apprentice.

Thank you for using this opportunity. Thank you for illustrating just how we can make progress possible, together.