

MEDIA RELEASE

O.R. Tambo International Airport sponsors the Ekurhuleni North District Awards as part of its Back to School Campaign program

Johannesburg, 04 February 2016 - O.R. Tambo International Airport, in partnership with the Department of Basic Education, hosted the Ekurhuleni North District School Awards ceremony on Friday, 29th January 2016 at Emperors Palace. The glitzy, but befitting event was attended by more than 540 special guests including principals, teachers and top learners in the province.

This year's awards ceremony was officiated and supported by an esteemed guest, the Honourable Minister of Basic Education, Ms Angie Motshekga. The awards ceremony, held to honour the excellent achievement of Ekurhuleni North District's Class of 2015, formed part of the flagship airport's Back to School campaign.

"As an airport, one of the focus areas of our socio-economic development program is education. Therefore this initiative resonates well with the areas within which we are aiming to make a difference in the lives of those living in communities falling within the jurisdiction of Ekurhuleni," explains Bongiwe Pityi, General Manager of O.R. Tambo International Airport.

The honourable Minister, Ms Angie Motshekga expressed her gratitude to O.R. Tambo International Airport and the contribution the airport makes to education.

"Without education, our children can never really meet the challenges they will face in the real world. So it's very important for us that our children receive an education that they deserve so that they can be equipped to play their role in our country's quest for accelerated economic development. On behalf of the Department of Basic Education and our generous sponsor, O.R. Tambo International Airport, we wish to place on record our sincere gratitude to the educators and learners for your hard work and tenacity. We are here to celebrate your outstanding achievement" said Ms Motshekga.

The learners of Ekurhuleni North District performed exceptionally well in the 2015 academic year, obtaining an **86.81 percent** pass rate. **14** schools achieved a 100 percent pass rate, of the 74 schools within the district. A total of **3 642 (43%)** learners from this district qualified for a bachelor's degree, **3 439 (40.6%)** qualified for a diploma entrance and **2 934** distinctions were obtained. The overall top achiever, eighteen-year old Pheziwe Mkhallane scooped most of the awards of the evening. She achieved an overall 1678 out of a possible 1800 for the best six subjects.

“As we celebrate our top scholars, it is appropriate that we give due recognition to all the educators without whom the scholars would not have made it this far. They are the hard working unsung heroes and heroines who lay the foundation for our children before they go onto institutions of higher learning. It is noble indeed that these awards also acknowledge the educators whose hard work produced the stars that we are commending.” added Pityi.

The Ekurhuleni North District Awards is how O.R. Tambo International Airport kicked off the 2016 Back to School campaign which includes the donation of educational stationary packs, solar homework lights and the provision of free eye tests to learners from schools within the Ekurhuleni precinct. The flagship airport does this as it believes that quality education during early childhood development lays a solid foundation as children progress into higher grades. Students from Ekurhuleni have set the bar very high. O.R Tambo International airport takes pride in being part of acknowledging these great achievers and future leaders of our country.

ENDS