

## Educators Praised For Digital Teaching At Education Awards

Department of Telecommunications & Postal Services (DTPS) Minister Dr Siyabonga Cwele on Thursday evening (22/09/2016) credited South African educators with introducing digital teaching tools in classrooms. "Learners today don't respond well to blackboards. They want digital content in the classroom and teachers who know how to use it," he said.

He was speaking at the ISPA SuperTeacher™ Awards Gala Dinner which is a highlight of the annual iWeek conference and exhibition.

Acknowledging that learner performance is linked to educator ICT knowledge, Minister Cwele congratulated ISPA SuperTeacher™ 2016, Kedibone Makgato, on being chosen as the teacher who has best imparted her newly-acquired ICT knowledge to her learners, school and community. ISPA SuperTeacher™ finalists must demonstrate to the annual competition's judges exactly how they have best used their new-found knowledge after participating in ICT training partly sponsored by South Africa's Internet Service Providers' Association (ISPA) and its members, and facilitated by CoZa Cares Foundation.

Ms Makgato of Toronto Primary School in Limpopo joined ISPA ChampTeacher™ of the Year 2016, Mokhudu Machaba of Ngwanamago Primary in Limpopo, and ISPA TechTeacher™ of the Year [2016, Erika Esterhuizen of St Andrews College](#) in the Eastern Cape, on stage as delegates attending ISPA's iWeek XV looked on. According to CoZa Cares Foundation CEO, Fiona Wallace, sponsorship from ISPA members has over the years equipped over 5 000 teachers with ICT confidence, skills and leadership. In the last three years alone, some 750 school leaders, educators and district officials have been supported through a variety of professional development courses.

"All credit is due to Kedibone Makgato for working hard to be named as this year's ISPA SuperTeacher™ who is surely set to become the latest ISPA SuperTeacher™ to use this prestigious competition as a springboard to even greater achievements, as so many of her peers have done," said Ms Wallace.

Ms Makgato thanked all those involved for the life-changing experience that is the ISPA SuperTeacher™ of the Year Competition. "ICT is a powerful tool in the hands of properly equipped educators who also have a passion for sharing new technology with their communities. I now have the title to go with my passion," she said.

The judges of the now fully online competition, designed and developed by CoZa Cares, comprised a strongly representative cross-section of the South African education and ICT sphere. They included Sarah-Jane Capazario (ISPA), Dorcas Thabane (ISPA), Jenny King (e-Schools Network), Marcus Lamola (Matthew Goniwe School of Leadership and Governance - MGSLG), Neo Mothobi (Department of Basic Education, Pretoria), Megan Rademeyer (SchoolNet SA) and Clinton Walker (Western Cape Education Department).

South Africa's leading annual Internet industry gathering, iWeek, marked its 15th year by returning to Johannesburg from 19 to 23 September this year. An annual fixture of the closing night gala dinner is the announcement of the ISPA SuperTeacher of the Year from the ten competition finalists.

The three competition winners received several gifts from generous sponsors. The Mighty Pen Education Magazine ([www.themightypen.co.za](http://www.themightypen.co.za)) provided three lifetime gift subscriptions for the three winners, maths teaching resource Matific also sponsored a prize for each of the winners ([www.matific.com](http://www.matific.com)) while Mustek sponsored three Mecer Executive Series tablets for each of the winners. The Matific winners' prizes specially included Matific school subscriptions until the end of 2017.

South Africa's Wireless Application Service Providers' Association (WASPA) sponsored accommodation for the teachers, three tablets for each of the winners, as well as a special professional development training session on assisting learners to navigate the digital space safely. In addition, WASPA member Smartcall Technology Solutions sponsored one gigabyte of data monthly for a year for each of the three winner. Host of last night's Gala Dinner awards evening was Neotel.