

ALL GIRL TEAM takes top honours at water competition



Manglin Pillay, CEO of SAICE with Domino Servite School's Bianca Coetzee, Dr Heidi Snyman, WRC Director: Water Centred Knowledge with Ntenga Memela in front of her, Zama Nyembe and Dr Martin van Veelen, President of SAICE. The all-girl team won the competition.

It was second time lucky for the all-girl team from Domino Servite School in Pietermaritzburg, KwaZulu-Natal, who took top honours at this year's AQUA-LIBRIUM, the Schools Water Competition hosted by the South African Institution of Civil Engineering (SAICE) and main sponsor the Water Research Commission (WRC).

Last year, the school achieved second place in the finals of this competition, held

at the Sci-Bono Discovery Centre in Newtown. Team members Zama Nyende, Ntenga Memela and Bianca Coetzee, only conceded 160 penalty points to win first place.

In second place was the Steelcrest High School from Middelburg, Mpumalanga, with 180 penalty points. The team members were Hoteb Nkadameng, Trinity Nkosi and Nokphiwa Mokoena. In the third spot was Hoërskool Grens from East London

(Buffalo City) with 315 penalty points achieved by Niel Verwoerd, Justin Vorster and Tommie Terblanche. The teams all shared the prize-money of just over R17 000.

Winners of the regional competitions came to Johannesburg from as far as Bloemfontein, Cape Town, East London, Pietermaritzburg, Richards Bay, Port Elizabeth and Middelburg in Mpumalanga, to battle the local winners for top honours. Learners are flown to Johannesburg and

accommodated in a good hotel – an experience that these young people and some of the educators will never forget. For most this is a first experience of the 'big city'.

In addition to the WRC, sponsors of the competition included Vela VKE, FIBER-PIPE, Marley Pipe Systems, the Water Institute of Southern Africa, SSI Engineers & Environmental Consultants, ILISO Consulting and Rand Water. "It is only with the assistance of private sector



Lani van Vuuren

Dr Heidi Snyman, WRC Director: Water Centred Knowledge, took her task as adjudicator very seriously.



Lani van Vuuren

Prof Kobus van Zyl of the University of Cape Town explains the competition rules to the learners.

companies that SAICE can continue this valuable project through which three students have already been inspired to study civil engineering,” notes main organiser SAICE Outreach Officer, Marie Ashpole.

This is the ninth year the AQUALIBRIUM competition was held. Teams are tasked to design a model water distribution network to distribute three litres of water equally between three points on a provided grid using two different diameter pipes and connection pieces. They are then judged on how well they execute the task – working on a penalty points system.

Teams have a period of about an hour in which to design, construct and operate their network. This competition exposes learners to the practical application of processes that influence their daily lives, which is how water gets to their homes. They are made aware of the intricacies involved in the design of water distribution networks and the actual water delivery to households.

As part of the competition the water cycle is explained to the learners. Issues such as why we have to pay for

water, why we need dams, the distribution of water through water boards to municipalities and then to users, as well as the conservation of our water resources are discussed. In addition, this competition strengthens government initiatives aimed at encouraging learners to take Mathematics and Science at school and to follow a career as a science or civil engineering professional. 



Lani van Vuuren

Second-place winners Steelcrest High School's Trinity Nkosi, Hoteb Nkadameng and Nokphiwa Mokoena building their water network.



Lani van Vuuren

Mondale High School, from Mitchell's Plain in the Western Cape, were represented by Keenan Soules, Ellen Bergman and Robyn Karlstroom.