

Gqeberha learner wins silver medal at Eskom science fair

Mpho Mketo, a 16-year-old student at Ndzondelelo High School in Gqeberha, has been selected as one of 10 learners who will join a 12-month mentorship and incubation programme sponsored by the Durban University of Technology,



The programme is valued at R20,000 per learner and is a significant recognition of Mketo's exceptional potential and the impact of his research project.

His research project, titled *An Antibacterial Elucidation product: using different calyces* was among the standout scientific endeavours showcased at the Eskom Expo International Science Fair (ISF). The fair took place at the Birchwood Hotel and OR Tambo Conference Centre in Boksburg from 3 to 6 October 2023.



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The project demonstrates Mketo's commitment to addressing critical challenges in the field of antibacterial products. His innovative approach, which involves using different calyces (the cup-like structures at the base of a flower), earned him a silver medal and holds the promise of contributing to the development of effective antibacterial solutions.

"I felt proud of myself for winning. I've put a lot of hard work and dedication into my project. It was exciting to receive those awards and represent my school on such a global stage," said Mketi.

"The biggest takeaway for me from the fair was how other pupils think. When I saw their projects at the ISF, I was moved. It was astounding to find that other brilliant minds can come up with such amazing ideas. They made me realise that there's so much I can accomplish myself. I'll never forget the motivation they brought into my life," he added.

Support for young scientists

Eskom Development Foundation provided support to these learners who were not only finding solutions but also emerging as inspirational figures among their peers. The expo strived to ignite a lasting passion for innovation and steer them toward promising careers in these fields.

"At the Eskom Expo, young scientists are given the platform to apply their logical thinking, creativity, and innovation to address pressing problems within their communities," explained Eskom Development Foundation acting CEO Mologadi Motshale.

"The Eskom Expo ISF brings together the brightest minds in our country, as well as the 10 invited countries, to not only compete for amazing awards, but also to allow these young scientists to learn from each other and develop new ideas of their own," added Eskom Expo executive director Parthy Chetty.

"It is only when these bright young minds interact with like-minded learners, will they motivate each other and help our country develop better scientists to solve the problems of the future, which don't yet exist."

Visit exposcience.co.za for the complete list of 2023 Eskom Expo International Science Fair winners.

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