

SABC Foundation bails out media students



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South African matriculants willing to study media, telecommunications, engineering, business and health and environment studies, but constrained financially, will from now on be able to do so, bailed out by the SABC Foundation. The foundation, which will provide bursaries to the tune of R650 000, was launched today, Wednesday 5 December 2007, at the SABC headquarters in Auckland Park, Johannesburg.

“This social investment is in line with our broader objectives, which through our mandate of Total Citizen Empowerment, mean that we must empower communities and support democracy,” Dali Mpofu, SABC group CEO, said.

“The SABC Foundation will reach as many people as possible and try to change their living conditions which were deliberately imposed on them during the course of our country's history,” Mpofu added.

Formed partnerships

The SABC Foundation has formed partnerships with Limpopo University and Fort Hare University as two of its universities in the selection of students for the bursaries.

Twenty students will be included every financial year, with a total of 100 bursaries active by 2011.

Already, 18 students – from Limpopo and Eastern Cape – have been identified and provided with funds to study in the next academic year.

“We will spread our help to students from other provinces as time goes by,” spokesman Kaizer Kganyago told Bizcommunity.com.

Backdrop of tough criticism

This initiative comes against the backdrop of a tough criticism facing the South African media industry, which critics accuse of amateurism and useless sensationalism – something experts said is due to the ‘juniorisation’ of newsrooms and lack of proper training.

However, while applauding the SABC initiative, some media practitioners said financial rewards need to be increased to keep experienced and well-trained journalists from being poached by other ‘more-caring’ and ‘well-paying’ sectors.

For more information, email or tel +27 (0)11 714 3258.

ABOUT ISSA SIKITI DA SILVA

Issa Sikiti da Silva is a winner of the 2010 SADC Media Awards (print category). He freelances for various media outlets, local and foreign, and has travelled extensively across Africa. His work has been published both in French and English. He used to contribute to Bizcommunity.com as a senior news writer.

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