

MEDIA RELEASE - 4 September 2003

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SANParks Receives 2002/2003 Merit Award for Excellence in Co-operative Education

SOUTH African National Parks has received a merit award from Cape Technikon in recognition for the role the organisation has played in placing tourism students for their six months experiential training.

The Cape Technikon introduced the Merit Award for Excellence in Co-operative Education for the first time this year.

SANParks is one of 30 organisations out of 1 600 organisations that received the award. We have also been advised that as from 2004 it will be a National Award presentation and SANParks has already been nominated for next years award.

SANParks Director of Corporate Affairs Aniel Soma said SANParks recognises the important role it has to play in the development of students in order to help create a pool from which tourism and conservation sectors in the country can recruit from.

"Education is the cornerstone of the development of all tourism and conservation efforts in South Africa and SANParks is proud to be an integral part of these initiatives. This award could not have come at a better time for us as we head to Durban for the Vth World Parks Congress.

"South Africa goes to the congress as a shining example of how all sectors of society – public and private – can work together in tourism and in conservation to improve the quality of lives of all people in our country," said Soma.

A National Award Presentation will take place in 2004 and the 30 nominated organizations (including SANParks) will have their names put forward together with new nominees.

The following criteria were used to evaluate the nominees:

- All experiential learning programmes are to be structured according to sound educational principles to provide development experiential learning.
- All experiential learning programmes are to be co-ordinated with the co-operative education programmes of the appropriate academic institution (s), so as to supplement and complement the theoretical components presented by these academic institutions
- All persons directly involved with experiential learning programmes are to be competent
- Students participating in experiential learning programmes are to be adequately supervised.
- The performance and competence of the students participating in experiential learning programmes are to be regularly and adequately assessed, and the results of these assessments are to be recorded in an appropriate format
- The organisation must exhibit a positive commitment to co-operative education through active co-operation with the appropriate educational institutions in the development and assessment of co-operative educational programmes, and through participation in co-operative education forums and seminars, such as SASCE meetings and National Conventions.
- The organisation must have a record of consistent excellence in its practice of co-operative education.

The selection of the new intake for tourism students was done in August and they will start work on October 1.

CAPTION: SANParks staffer Maria van Schalkwyk receives the award from Professor MS Bayat, Dean of the Faculty of Management, Cape Technikon.

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