

GOVT COMMITTED TO YOUTH SKILLS DEVELOPMENT – ROCKMAN

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Promoting skills development ... Free State MEC for finance, Elzabe Rockman addressed a career exhibition in Koffiefontein

The Free State MEC for finance, Elzabe Rockman, has assured the community of Koffiefontein in the Letsemeng Local Municipality that the provincial government is committed to addressing the skills shortage challenge facing the youth of the province.

Rockman was speaking at a career exhibition which was held in a remote town over the weekend. The MEC said the provincial government will respond appropriately to the unemployment and poverty challenges facing the youth of the province.

“It has been recognised that the challenge of job creation is not necessarily the lack of jobs but a lack of requisite skills to fill the available job opportunities, both in the public and private sector. Today, young people from around this municipality will have the opportunity to learn more about careers that can be pursued and the skills or knowledge required to follow those careers.

“We had to acknowledge that we need to do more to create awareness of and access to career opportunities for the youth in this area. But we also recognised that we cannot achieve success when we work in isolation,” added Rockman.

She said the provincial and local government have joined hands with the private sector as well as national and provincial departments and public entities to facilitate the exhibition.

“The exhibition therefore brings together a multitude of opportunities available to the youth. It must serve as a rallying point and a further motivating force to young people in general and learners in particular to take up the opportunities of education and skills development in various fields of study. It should also create awareness of opportunities both in and outside government that can be accessed by everyone.”

The career exhibition will also provide an opportunity for young people to access other relevant and essential government services such as identity documents, social grant applications and voter registration.

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However, Rockman warned the local youth against the abuse of drugs and getting involved in crime. “Drug and alcohol abuse, rape, teenage pregnancies, gangsterism and illegal gambling are all characteristics of an idle youth not actively preparing and participating in creating a better future not only for themselves, but also for their families and communities.

“We must therefore ensure that we consciously put in place the programmes that respond appropriately to these challenges. Indeed, we will all do well to be reminded that “It is not only what we do, but also what we do not do, for which we are accountable.

“Collectively, as the broader public and private sector and communities, we must accept the responsibility to ensure that we play the role as the facilitators and enablers of the unlimited potential of our youth. We will gain from this investment in our youth through the production of socially responsible and active citizens that play a meaningful role in the development of their own communities,” she said.

Letsemeng Local Municipality executive mayor, Thandi Reachable, pleaded with the community of Koffiefontein to ensure that as many young people as possible participates in the exhibition.

“I believe that this is a good step in shaping the future of our young people and ensuring that education becomes a priority for the youth of this area.”

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