



PROTEC PULSE



NEW PROJECT ALERT

PROTEC and **Dorper Wind Farm** have launched a transformative five year project in the **Eastern Cape**, supporting **5,064 learners** and **171 teachers** across ten schools in **Chris Hani West Education District**. This initiative focuses on the **School Excellence Model**, delivering **Saturday STEM bootcamps**, teacher development workshops, and foundational numeracy support.

To bridge the gap between classrooms and the energy sector, the project introduces cutting-edge resources, including Robotics training, and Coding labs. By integrating academic rigor with the World of Work programme, this partnership ensures that Chris Hani West Education District learners are fully equipped for post-school success and technical careers.

A Vision for a Brighter South Africa

The **PROTEC Annual Donor & Awards Event**, held on 20 March 2026, was more than a formal gathering; for our CEO, it was a profound celebration of the "possibility" that defines the PROTEC mission. Reflecting on the evening, he emphasized that the true strength of South Africa lies in the collective commitment to nurturing untapped talent.

In a powerful opening note address, **Balan Moodley** the **CEO of PROTEC** articulated the deep significance of this partnership:

"Tonight, we gather not simply for a ceremony, but for a celebration of what becomes achievable when vision meets commitment. The future of South Africa is not written in textbooks, it is written in the hearts of the young people sitting among us. To our donors, your generosity is not just funding; it is fuel for ambition, courage, and possibility. You are planting seeds in fields you may never personally walk in, yet your impact will be harvested by generations. To our learners, you are the evidence that excellence is not a privilege it is a potential that thrives when nurtured. We are not here merely to recognize achievement; we are here to ignite futures."

For the CEO, the presence of distinguished guests like **His Majesty, Kgosi Nyalala Pilane** and leaders from **SAICE**, the **NRF-SAASTA** and **Department of Science, Technology and Innovation** reinforced a critical truth: when we unify our resources, we bridge the gap between abstract dreams and tangible careers.

The event served as a heartfelt thank you to the "quiet heroes" the tutors and a reminder that every child lifted is a nation uplifted.



WELCOME TO PROTEC



Welcome Dr. Talifhani Khubana

We are thrilled to introduce **Dr. Talifhani Khubana** as our new **Chief Financial Officer**. Dr. Khubana is a distinguished leader with a PhD in Business Management and extensive financial expertise. Having held CFO and executive roles at the Pan South African Language Board and various SETAs, he brings a wealth of experience in financial governance and strategic resource management. His leadership will be instrumental in ensuring PROTEC's financial sustainability and long-term growth.

Welcome Adele Latchman

We are thrilled to welcome **Adele Latchman** back to PROTEC as our **Acting General Manager of Operations**. Adele previously served as a Senior Project Manager from 2017 to 2019, delivering key successes for the Telkom Foundation. She returns with vast leadership experience, recently serving as CEO of The President's Award for Youth Empowerment. Her expertise in strategic planning and youth development will be vital as she oversees our operations and continues our mission of empowering future STEM professionals.



Welcome Thamsanqa Mphokela

We are excited to introduce **Thamsanqa Mphokela** as our new **Project Manager and Physical Science Specialist**. Thamsanqa has already made a significant impact within the PROTEC family, previously captivating learners with his high-energy science shows and deep technical expertise. In his new role, he will leverage his specialist knowledge to drive project excellence and elevate our STEM delivery. His passion for making complex scientific principles accessible ensures that our learners continue to receive the highest standard of inquiry-based education.



HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE DONOR & LEARNER EXCELLENCE AWARDS EVENT



The evening was professionally guided by our two fantastic **MCs, Vukosi Jubilee Mashele** and **Audrey Baloyi**. Vukosi, a physicist and media personality, brought great energy and inspiration to the stage. He was joined by Audrey, a senior leader from Alexforbes, whose professional warmth and leadership ensured the celebration ran perfectly.



Beyond our internal leadership, the stage was blessed by several prominent figures who shared powerful messages of support. **Tom Mkhwanazi, CEO of W&RSETA**, and **Nokukhanya Mafahla, Acting CEO of ETDP SETA**, highlighted the vital link between education and the labor market.



We were also honored to hear from **Dr. Mamoeletsu Mosia, Managing Director of NRF-SAASTA**, who spoke on the importance of science engagement. A truly special moment was the address by **His Majesty Kgosi Nyalala Pilane**, whose presence and wisdom added great prestige to the night, reinforcing the community's commitment to our learners' success.



HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE DONOR & LEARNER EXCELLENCE AWARDS EVENT

At the **PROTEC Annual Donor & Award Event**, the highlight of the event, celebrating five amazing learners who achieved a combined total of 35 distinctions. Leading the group was **Tania Motimele** from the **Diepsloot AGA Project**, who was named the Overall Top PROTEC Learner and the top learner in **Physical Sciences** and **Mathematics**. In a great show of talent, the Top English Learner award was shared by both **Tania Motimele** and **Zandiswa Makhubu** from the **Inanda Branch** because they were tied for the top spot. Joining them in the spotlight for achieving 7 Distinctions each were **Fanele Mngadi** from the **Mandeni Branch**, **Samuel Mokonyane** from **Diepsloot AGA** project, and **Simphiwe Mahlomaholo** from the **Next Engineers** Project.

Since **Zandiswa** and **Simphiwe** could not attend in person, they sent inspiring video messages that were played for the crowd. Simphiwe's mother and Zandiswa's manager, **Tyson Dyote**, proudly accepted the awards on their behalf. The other winners took to the stage to share stories about their time with PROTEC, giving speeches that encouraged younger learners to work hard and stay focused.

We also honored our Top Tutors for their incredible support: **Zandile Chauke (English)** and **Sandile Muthwa (Math)** from **Diepsloot**, and **Noncedo Mbotshelwa** from **Zutari (Science)** in the **Eastern Cape**. With leaders like **His Majesty Kgosi Nyalala Pilane** handing out awards and shaking hands, it was a proud day that showed how much we can achieve when we work together.



Tania Motimele



Zandiswa Makhubu



Samuel Mokonyane



Fanele Mngadi



Simphiwe Mahlomaholo



Sandile Muthwa



Noncedo Mbotshelwa



Zandile Chauke





HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE DONOR & LEARNER EXCELLENCE AWARDS EVENT



Keynote Address by SAICE CEO

The **keynote address** was delivered by **Sekadi Phayane-Shakhane**, the **CEO of SAICE**, whose presence underscored the deep, historical connection between our organizations. Since SAICE engineers founded PROTEC in 1982, this partnership has been vital for the industry. Her inspiring words highlighted the importance of re-establishing these ties to foster technical excellence and ensure a sustainable pipeline of world-class engineering talent for South Africa's future.

The historic partnership between **PROTEC** and **SAICE** reached a new milestone with the official signing of a renewed MOU. Since SAICE engineers founded PROTEC in 1982, the connection has evolved, and this event served to re-establish and strengthen those foundational ties. The signing was witnessed by high-level leadership, including the SAICE President, PROTEC **Chairman Antony Hlungwane**, and **Board Member Francois Adriaan**. Together, we are committed to re-energizing our shared mission of developing world-class engineering talent for South Africa's future.





Empowering Educators for a Brighter Future



In a powerful collaboration between PROTEC and **Ardagh**, the **Teacher Development Programme (TDP)** successfully hosted two transformative workshops on 31 January and 7 February 2026. These sessions brought together nearly **250 educators** from across multiple districts to refine teaching practices and boost learner outcomes in essential STEM subjects.

The initial workshop saw an incredible turnout of 180 teachers from 51 schools, focusing on Mathematics, English, and Sciences across all grades. Supported by district officials like **Sigcino Tshabalala** and **Sharitha Kalidheen**, the sessions strengthened classroom engagement and subject mastery.

The momentum continued into the second weekend, where 61 educators shifted focus toward the practical side of education, including Natural Science, Physical Science, and World of Work life skills. Through interactive demonstrations and collaborative activities, teachers gained hands-on experience to bring back to their classrooms. We thank all our partners for their commitment to professionalizing education and building stronger academic foundations.



PROTEC visit to the Nigel Plant

On February 4, 2026, the PROTEC team explored the **Ardagh Nigel Plant**, witnessing the fascinating journey of glass manufacturing from raw materials to finished products. Guided by the Production Resources Manager **Sidney Khumalo** who is also a **PROTEC alumni**. The visit showcased real-world STEM applications in **automation** and **engineering**, highlighting diverse career paths available for learners within the large-scale manufacturing industry.



RECAPPING THE EC AND KZN SCIENCE EXPOS



Between January 14 and 15, 2026, PROTEC participated in the **Minister's Back-to-School Campaign** and **Science Career Exhibition** in **Bulwer, KwaZulu-Natal**. Hosted by the Minister of Science, Technology and Innovation **Professor Blade Nzimande**, this event provided a major platform to promote STEM careers in under-resourced schools. **Lucas Ntuli**, the **Tonga Branch Manager**, represented PROTEC with high-quality, interactive exhibits that demonstrated our commitment to educational excellence. His innovative approach even drew the attention of the Minister, who spent time at the stand engaging with our scientific displays.



The quality of our facilitators was on full display during these events. Lucas Ntuli led deep-dive sessions on complex topics like Electromagnetic Induction and Electrical Circuits, while **Daniel Thamsanqa Mphokela** energized the crowds with **science shows** covering everything from Chemical Reactions to the Bernoulli Principle. Their ability to turn difficult Physical Sciences concepts into clear, captivating experiments highlighted the high standard of teaching that PROTEC brings to every community it serves.



These outreach efforts revealed a critical need, as many learners were using scientific equipment for the first time. The enthusiasm they showed reinforces PROTEC's dedication to empowering future innovators. By working with partners like **SAASTA** and the Department of Science, Technology, and Innovation, we continue to provide the interactive, inquiry-based education necessary to prepare the next generation of South African engineers and scientists.

PROTEC TONGAAT ALUMNI PAYING IT FORWARD

In January 2026, the PROTEC Tongaat branch welcomed back alumnus **Njabulo Mazibuko**, an Electrical Engineering student, to inspire current learners as part of the new **PROTEC Ambassador Programme**. Njabulo provided invaluable career guidance to Grade 10, 11, and 12 learners, offering a realistic look at the academic, financial, and social transitions of university life.

By sharing his personal journey, he transformed abstract career goals into tangible possibilities for students sitting in the same seats he once occupied. He emphasized the "discipline" and "fatigue" that accompany high-level STEM studies, providing the authentic perspective necessary for true preparation.

We commend Njabulo for his commitment to "paying it forward" and thank the Tongaat team specifically Lucas Ntuli and Anna-Maria Mkhize for their dedication to fostering these vital alumni connections. These success stories serve as a powerful roadmap, proving that with the right support, our learners can lead the next generation of innovation.



Tongaath Hullet Repaints Tongaat Project building

In February 2026, **Tongaath Hullett Sugar South Africa** generously revitalized the **PROTEC Tongaat** facilities through a vibrant painting project. By refreshing the school's classrooms and offices, they have created a brighter, more welcoming environment that inspires both learners and staff, proving that a fresh perspective begins with a renewed space.



PROTEC TONGAAT ALUMNI PAYING IT FORWARD



PROTEC STEM extends its deepest gratitude to alumnus **Senzekile Bengu** for her extraordinary commitment to the Class of 2025. Senzekile has gone above and beyond by personally sponsoring over **20 university applications** for learners at **Sacred Heart Secondary**, directly removing the financial hurdles that often block the path to higher education.



Her vision for student success further materialized through a strategic proposal to **Mnsini Holdings SOC**, securing a generous donation of Lenovo laptops. These essential tools were officially handed over during a celebratory event at the Tongaat Branch, marking a milestone in digital inclusion for our learners. Supported by fellow alumni who volunteered as mentors, this initiative proves that the PROTEC journey comes full circle through service.

As we look to the future, the success of our mission relies on this spirit of generosity. We need more alumni like **Njabulo Mazibuko** and **Senzekile Bengu** to step forward, share their journeys, and start "paying it forward" to inspire the next generation of STEM leaders.



NEW PROJECTS: INCREASING PROTEC PORTFOLIO

NEW PROJECT WITH ENGIE IN THE EASTERN CAPE



Launched this year, the partnership between **PROTEC** and **ENGIE** at **Golden Valley** represents a bold investment in South Africa's future energy leaders. This comprehensive project is designed to bridge the educational divide by providing intensive support to learners from Grade 9 through Grade 12. The scope is both rigorous and diverse, combining core academic subjects like Mathematics, Physical Sciences, and Accounting with future-focused disciplines including **Robotics, Coding, and Renewable Energy Designs**.

The program utilizes a hybrid instructional model, featuring face-to-face weekly classes, vacation workshops, and over 20 online sessions per grade. To ensure long-term sustainability, the initiative includes "just-in-time" teacher workshops and the appointment of dedicated school-based coordinators. Beyond the classroom, learners benefit from psychosocial support, career assessments, and immersive industry tours. By providing essential tools like science kits and calculators, this project empowers students to innovate and excel in the evolving technological landscape.



NEW PROJECT IN THEMBISA WITH SABINET

Sabinet and **PROTEC** have officially launched an exciting new three year STEM program in **Thembisa**, specifically designed to support 40 selected Grade 10 learners until they reach matric. This project partners with three local schools: **Eqiniseni Secondary, Umqhele Comprehensive, and Allanridge Secondary**.

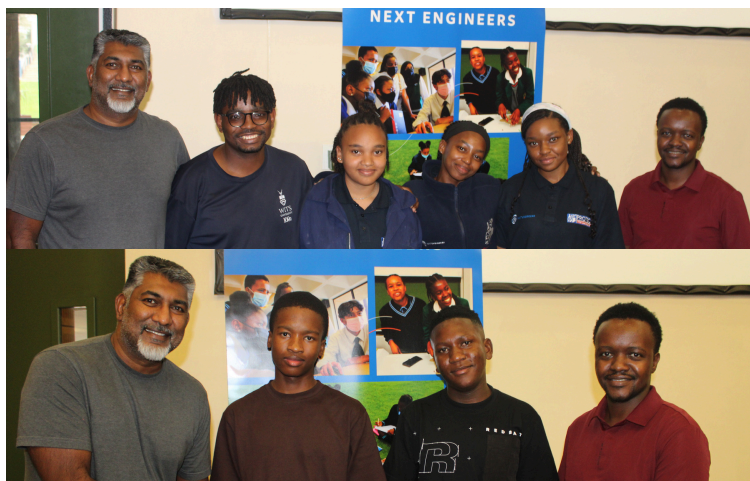
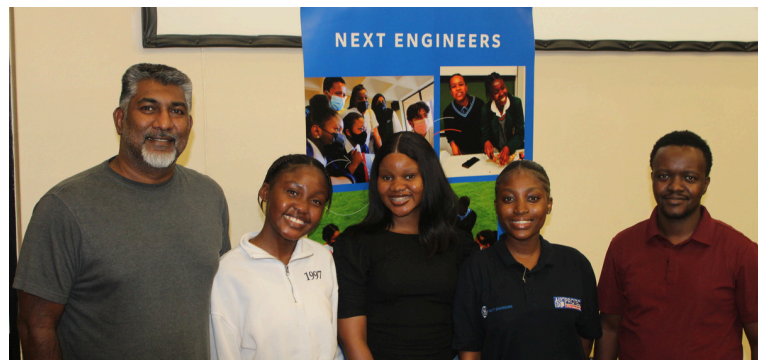
Through this program, students receive targeted academic and developmental support in Mathematics, Physical Sciences, English, and the World of Work. Following their baseline assessments on Saturday, these learners have begun a journey to build the competence and confidence needed for future careers. This partnership highlights our shared commitment to nurturing the next generation of STEM leaders.

SHOWCASING THE 'NEXT ENGINEER' PROJECTS



The **Next Engineers Cohort 3** Final Presentations took place on 28 March 2026, marking a proud milestone for our matric learners. The day was filled with energy as students presented their design processes and innovative projects to parents, **GE volunteers**, and **WITS** representatives.

The pressure was high as learners presented their innovations to a distinguished panel of judges, including **Louis Naidoo** and **Thandezakhe Mkhize**, who evaluated the projects based on technical feasibility, innovation, and community impact. The students rose to the challenge, demonstrating the high-caliber skills PROTEC and its partners have fostered throughout the program's duration.



The competition was tough, but the team Hydrologic Solutions, led by **Azinza Duda** and **Ntshembo Mathe**, took first place. They were followed by Sustainable Housing in second and the Safety Group in third. Each participant showed incredible growth and commitment throughout the programme. We are extremely proud of these emerging engineers and look forward to seeing the great things they will achieve in their future careers. We would like to appreciate **Thapelo Ndlovu** for starting and coordinating this wonderful initiative.



EMPOWERING LEARNERS WITH ALEXFORBES



On March 6th, PROTEC joined forces with **Alexforbes** for a high-impact Career Guidance Event at **Boksburg High School**, reaching nearly **200 Grade 12 learners**. The day focused on equipping matriculants with the practical insights and motivation needed to navigate their post-school futures.

Representing PROTEC, **Thami Daniel Mphokela** joined a distinguished panel of Alexforbes professionals—including **Natasha Zaphiropoulos**, **Khumo Mogamisi**, and **Dolana Congo** where he "dazzled" the crowd with an engaging science demonstration. Following the discussion, **Molepa Molekoa** delivered an insightful career assessment presentation, providing learners with essential tools for self-discovery and career alignment.

The event was a masterclass in collaboration, blending PROTEC's educational expertise with the professional mentorship of the Alexforbes team. By the end of the morning, our Grade 12s left with a clearer vision of their potential, inspired by a partnership dedicated to bridging the gap between the classroom and the world of work.



Alex Forbes Donates Textbooks for PROTEC

On the Alexforbes demonstrated their commitment to education by generously donating 100 pallets of textbooks for a local school library supported by PROTEC. This significant contribution ensures that learners have access to essential academic resources, fostering a culture of reading and excellence. It is a shining example of how strategic partnerships empower the next generation.

TEACHER DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP IN THE EASTERN CAPE

On 26 and 27 March 2026, PROTEC STEM spearheaded a high-impact Teacher Development Workshop at the **Mandla Makuphula Education Leadership Institute** in East London. This two day event brought together over 80 dedicated educators and representatives from key initiatives, including **Zutari, ENGIE, Altron, Dorper Wind Farm, and Avon & Dedisa Peaking Power**. The shared mission was clear: to revolutionize STEM and English instruction through professional excellence and collaboration.

The intitation was lead by **Mothupi Kgopa** and **Adele Latchman**. Supported by Nathaniel Ramps, Nontuthuzelo Ngxakaza, Helene Botes, Zimkhitha Litholi, Stompie Maimela, Thami Mphokela and Zukiswa Jaxa



Teachers from **12 participating schools**, such as **Sipho Camagu High** and **Usenathi Primary**, engaged in interactive sessions focused on modern teaching methodologies, curriculum planning, and effective assessment strategies. A significant highlight was the presence of **Lutho Kota, Director of E-Teaching and Learning**, whose support ensured alignment with the **Eastern Cape Department of Education's** priorities. By exchanging classroom insights and exploring innovative solutions to common challenges, educators left equipped with practical tools and a renewed confidence to drive learner performance and strengthen educational outcomes within their communities.



PROTEC ALUMNI THAT GRADUATED



Mpendulo Mabuza

WITS: BEngSc Digital Arts



Dipthi Bhagirath

UKZN: BSc Genetics & Microbiology



Thandeka Sithole

WITS: BCom Actuarial Science



Silindile Mhaule

UJ: BSc
Environmental Health



Sanchia Mkhize

WITS: BSc Hons
GIS & Remote Sensing



Siphokazi Unathi

UCT: Bsc Sci
Psychology & IO Psychology



Siyamthanda Chill

UKZN: BSc
Education Senior and FET



Anele Mnguni

UKZN: BSc Computer Science



Siphesihle Nsele

Phakamile College: Dip
Chemical Operations



Nhlakanipho Ngidi

WITS: BEngSc
Mechanical Engineering



Khethelo Gumede

BEng Tech Hons
Mechanical Engineering



Andile Zulu

UKZN: Masters Physics



VOICES OF EXCELLENCE: PROTEC BRAND AMBASSADORS PROGRAMME



Dr. Mmboneni Muofhe

We are honored to introduce **Dr. Mmboneni Muofhe, Deputy Director General** at the **Department of Science, Technology and Innovation**, as PROTEC's very first **Brand Ambassador**. A champion of inclusive innovation, Dr. Muofhe's work bridges the gap between research and real-world impact. His leadership embodies the TIPS framework Technology, Innovation, People, and Systems ensuring STEM advancements reach grassroots communities. By aligning with PROTEC, Dr. Muofhe inspires our learners to dream boldly, reminding us that true innovation is about purpose and the courage to build a better future.

Grant Kekana

We are honored to announce **Mamelodi Sundowns** and **Bafana Bafana** star **Grant Kekana** as the official Brand Ambassador for PROTEC STEM. Known for his defensive excellence and leadership on the pitch, Grant understands that success requires discipline, consistency, and teamwork values that are just as vital in the classroom. By partnering with PROTEC, he aims to inspire learners to tackle STEM subjects with the same passion and dedication he brings to every match, shaping South Africa's future innovators.



Shavhani Mutshutshu

We are proud to introduce Shavhani Mutshutshu as a distinguished addition to our leadership network. An accomplished Industrial Operations and Infrastructure Executive, Shavhani brings over two decades of experience in power generation, rail manufacturing, and heavy engineering. With advanced degrees in Engineering and Philosophy, his expertise in operational transformation and technical governance is unparalleled. His commitment to excellence and strategic leadership will be instrumental as PROTEC continues to bridge the gap between education and high-level industrial careers.



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