

Despite economic conditions WC construction activity continues

The Master Builders Association of the Western Cape (MBAWC) recently held its annual general meeting at which John Matthews, president of the organisation, discussed construction activity and projects within the province. Two of its apprentices were also awarded at the AGM.

“It would appear that much of the world’s economy, including South Africa, has taken on a holding pattern and this is further portrayed in the country’s GDP growth figures. However, Cape Town seems to have escaped the downturn and construction activity here continues to boost the local economy,” said Matthews.

He elaborated on the state of the building industry in the province, saying: “We continue to see high levels of activity in and around the Cape Town CBD, the V&A Waterfront as well as the Atlantic Seaboard. These activities certainly indicate the level of confidence that investors still have in the future of our city.”

He added that both the Western Cape Government and the City of Cape Town have continued to award significant numbers of projects in the areas of health, education and housing. “We are fortunate to have these two spheres of government that operate in a relatively efficient manner and also abide by the principles of good corporate governance, thus making a significant contribution to our local construction industry. I trust that this will continue now that the local government elections are done and the status quo in Cape Town, with regards to political leadership, has been re-affirmed.”

Matthews concluded by saying: “Although most of our members and the contracting fraternity at large seem to have reasonable order books and sufficient projects on hand, this remains a very competitive industry with tight tendering and low margins remaining the order of the day. Our industry seems to be fixed in a low margin mind-set and one wonders what sort of volumes of work would be required to raise profit margins to a level that would adequately compensate contractors and subcontractors for the risks that they expose themselves to in their daily business operations.”

Apprentices awarded



At the AGM, awards were bestowed upon two apprentices who have shown particular promise as future master builders in the organisation’s apprenticeship programme. Abduragmaan Lamara from Mitchells Plain was awarded the Buckland

Apprentice of the Year Award, while the Rob Johnson Award for Young Apprentice Carpenter of the Year went to Queyam Daniels from Kensington.

Lamara, who joined the MBAWC's apprenticeship programme in 2014, has completed all of his theoretical and practical training whilst doing his in-service site training with GVK-Siya Zama. His supervisors have praised his eagerness to learn and his sharp focus on the task at hand. His positivity in the workplace and can-do attitude when faced with difficulties were also highlighted. The youngster is currently awaiting his trade test.



Daniels, who also joined the programme in 2014, completed his in-house training at GVK-Siya Zama too. His good work ethic and willingness to make himself available as a source of support to all on the job site have set him aside as a young hopeful to watch. He too is awaiting his trade test.

This year marked the second year that the Rob Johnson Award has been given and the 11th for the Buckland Award.

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