

# English for Professional Development Certificate Ceremony 2014

By [Gwendolynn De Jager](#), issued by [Wits Language School](#)

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On Friday, 31 October 2014, the English for Professional Development (EPD) unit hosted its annual certificate ceremony. It was a glamorous affair. Students and facilitators dressed up for the occasion. It was clear that people who enjoy studying English also have a good sense of fashion.



Everyone was welcomed by Eugene Mathey, our talented master of ceremonies. Lambrine Pavlou, EPD coordinator, delivered an inspirational speech in which she highlighted that our students and their families are true examples of people who have vision and who commit to support each other in their endeavours. She placed emphasis on the role of the facilitators and what they make: they make their students "wonder, question, criticise, write and read, read, read! They make them understand that if you have the brains, then follow your heart. And if someone ever tries to judge you by what you make in money, you pay them no attention." Last, but most definitely not least, they make a difference.

Lambrine was followed by the director of Wits Language School, Dr Kim Wallmach, who stressed the value of education. "One gains not only knowledge when one studies, but one also gains experience, the ability to overcome challenges and succeed at realising one's goals. Furthermore, one gains confidence in oneself and, most importantly, one gains freedom."

This thought was continued by our very charismatic guest speaker, Greg Maloka, MD at Kaya FM. Greg used the metaphor of a seed that grows into a budding tree to explain this generation's responsibility to pass on their knowledge and expertise to the next generation. He explained that we probably won't see the tree, but we are to plant the seed and water it so that future generations may enjoy its fruit. He also mentioned South Africa's unique language policy and the related challenge of ensuring that one's children learn and maintain their mother tongue and yet develop proficiency in English, which is the accepted language of education and business.

After Greg's thoughtful and humorous address, the moment that had been most anticipated by all arrived: it was time to award our students with their certificates.

Students proudly received their certificates and enjoyed having their photographs taken - we wouldn't have wanted those carefully put together outfits to go un-photographed!

Several students received 'Special Mention Awards' for completing three or more courses and for traveling great distances to be in class every Saturday: Marinda de Villiers, Rudzani Magagane, Day Maluleke, Mduduzi Mashaba, Renias Mutshipisi, Bongi Shibabmbo, Patrick Thomelang and Vuyile Tshabalala. We were also very happy that several of our Pretoria students attended the ceremony.

After all the certificates had been received there really was only one thing left to do: EAT! We all proved that we LOVE good food and good conversation - English conversation, of course!

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