

UFS student wins SAICA Student Leadership Summit essay competition

Tshireletso Bogastu, a 19-year-old student from the University of the Free State (UFS), took first place in the SAICA Student Leadership Summit competition for her insightful and solution-driven essay which revealed how, as a budding future chartered accountant, she plans to use her acquired academic and leadership skills to help close South Africa's wide wealth gap.



From L-R: Dr Terence Norrberbe (SAICA CEO), Bukani Mutho (second runner-up), Tshireletso Bogastu (winner), Deputy Auditor-General Tsakani Ratsela, Duane Rensburg (first runner-up), Professor Wiseman Nkuhlu (SA's first black chartered accountant)

According to the judging panel who selected the top 30 university students who attended the recent South African Institute of Chartered Accountants' annual Student Leadership Summit (SLS), responsible leaders need to have the perfect mix of insight, foresight, research and innovation to create solutions that will make a real and positive impact on society.

One SAICA's sole objectives is that of "responsible leadership". This is a responsibility that, SAICA believes, does not only begin when someone holds a high position, but lies within each and every citizen of this country

Aspiring CAs(SA)'s innovative solutions

Invited to attend a prestigious leadership summit (held from 5 to 7 October), the top 30 students first agenda item was to network, interact and engage with some of SA's top business leaders at an exclusive SLS business leader networking function and prize-giving, sponsored by MMI. It was here that the three winners of SLS 2017 were announced with Bogastu taking the top spot.

“As in previous years, the calibre of entry for the 2017 SLS essay competition was of a very high standard,” says Teboho Moephudi, competition judge and project director for SAICA’s university projects including SLS. “As judges, we struggled to select which of the hundreds of entries received would win their spot in the top 30. However, when it came to the winner, our pick was unanimous. Tshireletso’s thought leadership piece was so solution driven and well-thought out that we all knew we’d found our winner upon reading her essay.”

“Similarly, the competition’s two runners-up – Duane Rensburg (Nelson Mandela University) and Bukani Mbutho (University of Cape Town) – tackled the topics of SA’s junk status and the future relevancy of the CA(SA) profession with a high level of foresight, research and innovation.”

While the winners walked away with a mix of cash prizes, iPads and Mac Books as well as an excel course sponsored by Excel Academy, all who attended agree that these prizes paled in comparison with the invaluable and intensive soft-skills training and cognitive leadership sessions (sponsored by Deloitte) that the top 30 were exposed to during course of the three-day summit.

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