



Future Leaders with One Heart

UPDATES

Issue #5

Cyril Ramaphosa
EDUCATION TRUST 



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CRET Celebrates 25 Years and Honours 2024 Graduates



The Cyril Ramaphosa Education Trust (CRET) celebrated its annual Graduate Awards ceremony on 3 July, at the Gordon Institute of Business Science (GIBS), marking a special milestone as both CRET and GIBS turned 25 in 2025.

This year, 39 graduates from universities and TVET colleges across South Africa were recognised, including 10 women who completed a Basic Plumbing Skills Training Course through CRET's Vocational Skills Development Programme, in partnership with AbafaziPhambili at Ekurhuleni Artisans and Skills Training College.

Unlike many traditional bursary programmes, CRET identifies potential beyond academic performance, offering opportunities to young people who may be overlooked. Since its formal establishment in 2000, CRET has supported 818 young South Africans, 435 in tertiary studies and 383 through skills programmes.

"Twenty-five years ago, our Patron believed that given a chance, just one student can change their world," said Chantelle Oosthuizen, Executive Director of CRET. "We have evolved from tuition support to building a holistic support base that equips youth with skills for the real world."

Beyond financial aid, CRET provides mentorship, leadership development, psychosocial support, and work experience to prepare students for life beyond the classroom.

The evening also featured messages from Dr Sazi Nzama, Chairperson of the CRET Alumni Advisory Board, and President Cyril Ramaphosa, who reaffirmed the transformative power of education: "Education is the key that unlocks the golden door of freedom."

With partners, alumni, and colleagues in attendance, the event reflected 25 years of CRET's mission to unlock potential, uplift communities, and open doors to brighter futures.

Celebrating 25 Years of CRET Through Our Graduates



As CRET marks 25 years of transforming lives, we proudly shine a spotlight on the inspiring journeys of our graduates who embody the vision and impact of our work.

At the recent CRET Graduate Awards, two of our remarkable graduates, Anthony Sibambo (BSc Chemistry) and Nina Krüger (BA Law), shared how CRET's support shaped their paths - from students filled with ambition to graduates ready to make their mark on the world.

Hear their stories of growth, perseverance, and achievement:

Anthony Sibambo: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0FznzSkuecc>

Nina Krüger: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0-3ZZyOxd9c>

Such stories remind us of the power of opportunity, mentorship, and community in unlocking potential.

Supporting Student Growth: CRET Holiday Programme

Cyril Ramaphosa Education Trust (CRET) hosted a three-day holiday programme at the Blackbrick Hotel in Sandton, bringing together 60 students and 8 alumni for a dynamic mix of learning and reflection.

The programme focused on mental health, academic development, and career readiness through sessions on study techniques, time management, financial literacy, and work readiness. Students also benefited from one-on-one check-ins, offering a safe space to share challenges and receive guidance.

A highlight was the mental health and reflection session, where students exchanged advice on overcoming stress and academic pressures. Alumni including Dr Sazi Nzama, Lulama (Engineer-in-Training at Howden), Samkelo (Junior Mechanical Engineer at CKR Consulting Engineers), and Karabo (IT Intern at Atos SA) inspired students with their career journeys and practical tips for success.

Interactive workshops on CV writing, interviews, and financial planning equipped students with valuable skills, while recreational activities like the CRET-created 30 Seconds game fostered connection and camaraderie.

The programme not only strengthened academic and career readiness but also created a supportive environment for students to reflect, learn, and grow with confidence.

Support CRET Through Our Book Drive

The Cyril Ramaphosa Education Trust (CRET) is excited to announce the launch of our Book Drive, an initiative designed to make a lasting impact on young lives.

Partners and stakeholders are encouraged to donate pre-loved books to the Trust in support of youth in their academic journeys. These books are sold via the Bakgat Books online platform, having already grossed sales of nearly R65 000 for our skills programmes.

Stakeholders, parents, and students are further encouraged to purchase books off the platform, thus supporting us in encouraging affordable reading environments.

By purchasing a book, you are not just buying a story, you are opening doors of opportunity. Every contribution makes a meaningful difference.

For book donations and collection arrangements please email Bokang at bmodimogale@cyrilramaphosa.org.

Visit the [CRET Bakgat Bookstore](#) today and be part of the change!



Success Story: CRET Graduate Tackles South Africa's Waste Crisis Through Innovation



For Ryan Govender, making a difference in the world of technology and sustainability is not just a job, but a personal mission. Originally from Chatsworth, Durban, Ryan is now a Senior Software Engineer at SpotmyEnergy, a renewable energy start-up based in Cologne, Germany. He is also the founder of Snack Saver; an app focused on reducing food waste in South Africa. His journey shows how purposeful use of technology can contribute to solving some of the world's most pressing problems.

Waste management remains one of South Africa's most urgent environmental challenges. With over 50 million tonnes of waste generated annually, and only around 10% being recycled, the country is amid a growing crisis.

The strain on refuse sites is growing, leaving informal settlements and disadvantaged communities to bear the consequences of inefficient waste practices. At the heart of this crisis is food waste, which accounts for an estimated 10 million tonnes annually. This happens while millions of South Africans go hungry. It is a problem that calls for sustainable and tech-driven interventions.

Ryan's path was not always clear. He initially had limited exposure to tertiary education opportunities. Ryan grew up in a family where no one had attended university, so pursuing higher education was not something he initially considered. That changed when he found his passion for technology in high school. Despite financial challenges, Ryan pursued a BTech in Information Technology at Durban University of Technology. With support from the Cyril Ramaphosa Education Trust (CRET), he was able to complete his studies.

"CRET did not just support me financially, they cared about our well-being too. That holistic support was something I had never experienced before," he said.

His fondest memories of CRET include attending holiday programmes, which required him to fly to Johannesburg. During the programmes, he was also exposed to an incredible group of culturally diverse young people.

Since graduating, Ryan has worked at several sustainability-driven companies in Germany, including a solar energy firm. In his current role, he contributes to home energy optimisation solutions. It was through this work that he developed a strong interest in the green economy and decided to build a platform aimed at addressing local challenges. "In Germany, I saw how renewable energy and sustainability were deeply integrated into everyday life. That motivated me to bring a similar idea to South Africa," he shared.

Recognising the connection between waste management, energy, and environmental health, Ryan created Snack Saver, a mobile app that helps stores reduce food waste by selling products close to their sell-by dates at discounted prices. The app helps prevent good food from going to waste. This helps reduce pollution and makes sure the food is used in a better way. Although Ryan is currently living abroad, he continues to seek partnerships with South African businesses. Securing store participation has proven to be a challenge, largely due to his remote location, but he remains committed to the concept and confident in its potential to make a meaningful difference.

Despite these challenges, the process has been a valuable learning experience. The skills he is gaining while building this business will also help him achieve his future goal of becoming a Chief Technology Officer. "Even if Snack Saver does not succeed, I have learned so much about building products that are meaningful and user-friendly," Ryan noted. He has also developed a stronger understanding of how to balance technical solutions with business value. The focus was placed not on building the most advanced system, but rather on developing solutions that meet the actual needs of customers.

His current role allows him to contribute to the green economy while continuing to work on Snack Saver in his free time. He usually dedicates time in the mornings or evenings to work on the app. While it is not easy, he believes the effort is worth it.

Looking ahead, Ryan hopes to find a South African-based business partner who can help grow Snack Saver locally. Getting one store to join is his immediate priority. He expects that user engagement will follow once the app is up and running. He is also committed to returning to South Africa in the future. "I cannot live abroad forever. My family is back home, and I want to spend more time with them," he shared.

At its core, his journey is about applying one's abilities to contribute to something greater than personal achievement. His advice to young people considering entrepreneurship is to take the leap. "You need to believe in your idea and be willing to start small. Build a basic version, learn from it, and keep improving," he said.

His work, both in renewable energy and waste reduction, reflects a growing awareness among young entrepreneurs about the importance of environmentally conscious innovation. By tackling food waste, Ryan is addressing a critical aspect of South Africa's waste management problem and contributing to a cleaner, more sustainable future.

As he continues to grow both personally and professionally, Ryan remains committed to contributing to a greener and more sustainable South Africa.