

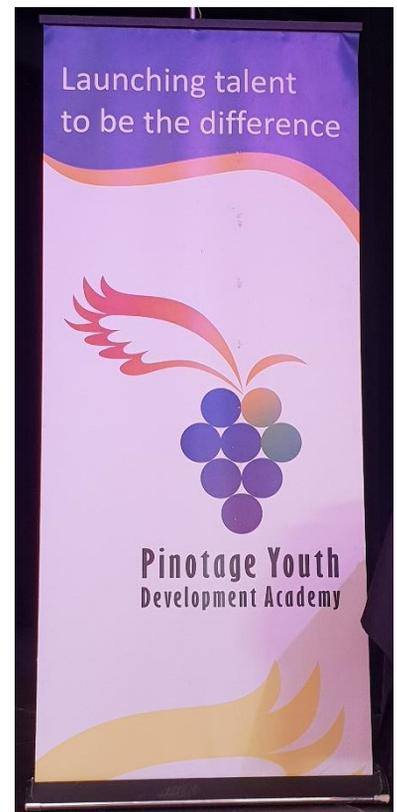
# PYDA – Launching Talent To Be The Difference

I was privileged to spend some time with a few PYDA students enrolled in the wine and tourism programme. The Pinotage Youth Development Academy, or PYDA as it is better known, is an academy that offers a one year work readiness programme specialising in wine and tourism or fruit. The programme offers students the opportunity to earn an industry-endorsed qualification whilst also preparing and training them to be work ready when they graduate from the programme.

*“We believe enormous talent exists amongst the youth of South Africa, but they experience many barriers to growth and development. As a result, their talent often remains unrealized. Our goal is to attract those who are ready to bring change to their lives, work with them for one year, and “launch” them to a successful future.”*

[www.pyda.co.za](http://www.pyda.co.za)

When I asked the students why they joined PYDA, the two words that came up the most were passion and curiosity. Passion for wine, passion for people, and the curiosity of broadening their knowledge and education in the wine and tourism industries. The students had just completed the first of their one month placement programmes. The placement programme places them in a tasting room allowing them to practically apply the theory they had learnt. Personal growth was identified as the greatest take away from their practical experience, with one of the students stating that it is great to enjoy what you learn!



*The PYDA team*

Of course I was curious to know what has been their favourite part of the course thus far and any highlights. Viticulture, sensory evaluation and microbiology were some of the answers that were given from a course perspective. From a course perspective, why do I state that you might wonder? PYDA is not just providing these young adults with the knowledge and tools to go into the workforce, but they prepare them for life! Personal development and people skills learnt were some of their highlights of the programme. Being able to take home everyday skills and teach them to someone else in their community was something they were proud of and thankful for.



After months of hard work and dedication their big day had arrived – Graduation Day! The pride beaming from both the students and their parents lit up the room. Attending a PYDA graduation is an experience, and one that I will forever treasure! One of their graduation traditions is getting a parent from the class to say a few words at graduation, this emotional moment was definitely one of my highlights of the day.



The sparkle in the student's eyes and the enthusiasm displayed when they speak about PYDA affirms the amazing job that Nikki Munro and her team are doing in educating and inspiring these young adults to go out there and be great! They truly are launching talent to be the difference.

Melissa Bailey



*Nikki delivers a personal message to each graduate*