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EDUCATION

Engen offers engineering learnerships to needy

NETWORK REPORTER

IN A BID to help address artisan skills shortages in the wider petrochemical industry as well as a high unemployment rate in south Durban, Engen has backed a two-year learnership programme that will provide full funding for 20 students.

The company said the programme, which provides a 100% fee-free college service, would target people from underprivileged backgrounds who have struggled to access mainstream education and training.

Successful applicants will attend satellite classes run by Jirah Academy at Fairvale High School, across the road from Engen's refinery.

Engen said the Jirah Academy was established in 2014 and functioned as a community-based satellite campus catering specifically to previously disadvantaged individuals within South Durban and the greater Durban area.

"The academy is entirely donor and management funded and provides engineering studies to learners who are suited to become artisans and technicians, or who want to pursue careers in engineering," said Unathi Magida, Engen's head of transformation and stakeholder engagement.



ENGINEERING science students at the Jirah Academy.

Courses offered include a bridging course (focusing on maths and science education) and mainstream N1/N2/N3 engineering studies.

The Jirah Academy also provides a second chance to previously disadvantaged individuals who have no access to further education or training to pursue a formal qualification and boost their chances of employment.

Magida said: "We have also partnered with industry in the South Durban area, who have agreed to provide apprenticeships to these learners once they have graduated to help them find employment."

Three graduates from last year's intake currently work at the Engen refinery.