

## **MRYE TAKES CAREER GUIDANCE AND MOTIVATION TO LEARNERS IN THREE PROVINCES**

Because of continued support and funding by the DST-NRF Centre of Excellence in Tree Health Biotechnology (CTHB), 2018 was a fruitful year for Mpepu Rural Youth Encouragement (MRYE). Teams travelled to three provinces, speaking at nearly 30 schools.

A team of eight travelled to Newcastle in KwaZulu-Natal on 21 September and visited four schools. They addressed the learners' concerns about getting bursaries to study after finishing Grade 12 and getting residential accommodation. The team was encouraged when Life Orientation teachers also showed interest in their presentations. They hoped that this type of career guidance would also filter down to learners in grades 8 and 9 so that they too could "work towards their chosen careers from an early age." The team still had prospectuses and JuniorTukkie material left over after their presentations, which they left at the Newcastle Library.



MRYE members went to the Eastern Cape at the end of January, presenting at 15 schools in the East London and King Williamstown areas. They were confident that they had reached a "large and needy audience". They found that the learners were "discouraged" from applying to tertiary institutions because of the high tuition fees. "They relaxed when we told them about other options such as study funds," a member wrote. She felt strongly that they should "go back for a follow-up and more assistance".



A member said their visit to nine schools in Gauteng was an “eye opener”. The team visited schools in Soweto, Mamelodi and the East Rand over three days in January. She was surprised that learners in Mamelodi, which houses one of the campuses of the University of Pretoria, “don’t know what courses are offered by the university”. She wished that MRYE could “sponsor” learners in

“surrounding areas” to attend “career open days so that they gain more knowledge and get to see the university and how it operates”. Their visit, she said, showed the despondent learners that it was “possible to get to varsity” because the team had done so despite challenges.

Members thanked the CTHB and JuniorTukkie for making it possible for them to do their work.