

# Cape top matrics honoured

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By Michelle Jones

The top achievers of the 2010 matric class all had one thing in common - the belief that maintaining a balance between work and play was key to their excellent results.

Matriculants with top marks were honoured yesterday at the premier's residence, Leeuwenhof, during an awards ceremony by the provincial government.

Herschel Girls School pupil Nicole Lester came in tops in the Western Cape with eight distinctions and an average of 95.5 percent. Minutes after receiving her award, Nicole said she had never expected to receive that honour.

"It's a really weird sort of feeling. I didn't expect to come first," Nicole said. Her results could be attributed to hard work, good teachers, being at a privileged school and good luck - without which anything could have happened, she said.



Top Student Nicole Lester(M) is congratulated by her friends, Emily Van Heerden (L) and Aimee Moris (R) all from Herschelle girl school and all three were in the top 20. *Picture by: Sam Clark*

Nicole said she had completed all her projects on time, studied for all tests and taken every opportunity to learn. But she had not neglected spending time with friends and family. "You can't only study, you would be stir crazy."

She planned to study actuarial science at Stellenbosch University this year. Another top student, Pieter Klue, said he got goosebumps when he was invited to the awards ceremony.

The Boland Landbouskool matriculant had come in top in the province for both physical sciences and accounting and had shared third position overall with another pupil. Pieter said though he had decided he wanted to work hard, he had been shocked he had done as well as he had. "I surprised myself with the physical science and accounting."

He would also join Nicole Lester in the actuarial science course at Stellenbosch.

Honoured with special awards were 20 candidates for their meritorious academic achievements. They went to candidates drawn from schools formerly under previous education departments and new provincial education department schools.

Matriculants from a number of schools were honoured, including the **Cape Academy for Mathematics, Science and Technology**, Masibambane Secondary and Livingstone High.



Tyrone van Balla of South Peninsula High was second on that list and was honoured for receiving distinctions in eight subjects.

"It is just very rewarding to see all the hard work I've put in over the 12 years come to this," Tyrone said.

"It has always been my aim to do things to the best of my ability."

He said although he had been forced to cut down on socialising time, he had maintained a balanced lifestyle. "I made the necessary sacrifices and it has been rewarding," he said.

He said his success showed that despite a pupil's personal circumstances, they could succeed provided they worked hard.

He planned to study electrical engineering and would this week decide whether to attend UCT or Stellenbosch. A number of schools and matriculants were also honoured at the ceremony for their achievements in specific categories.

Paarl Boys' High was honoured for having the highest number of pupils with access to bachelors' degree study. Zola Senior Secondary in Khayelitsha had shown the highest improvement in the number of passes between 2008 and last year.

Schools which made it on to the list but not in 2009 were Bloemhof Girls' High, Wynberg Boys' High and Springfield Convent of the Holy Rosary.

Education MEC Donald Grant made special mention of Bloemhof Girls' for having five candidates in the top 20 and Wynberg Boys' for its consistent academic achievement.

Congratulating matriculants and schools on their performances, Grant said the success of the class of 2010 showed there had been "significant progress" to improving the quality of education. - Cape Times

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