

*South African Institute of Professional Accountants*  
*12 October 2017*

### **Western Cape learner wins SAIPA's 2017 National Accounting Olympiad**

Juanè Cronje from Die Hoërskool DF Malan in the Western Cape secured the number one spot in the Grade 12 division of the South African Institute of Professional Accountants (SAIPA's) 2017 National Accounting Olympiad with a score of 92.5%.

With the differences being very little between the top learners, Adam Melnick from Yeshiva College in Gauteng came in at second place with 92%, followed by Philip Visagè from Huguenot High School in the Western Cape who achieved 90.5% and secured third place. Special mention also has to be made of Lenasia Muslim School in Gauteng's Sara Seleh who scored 90%.

"I want to thank SAIPA for investing in advancing accountancy at school level, we learnt a lot with this competition and really enjoyed it", said Juanè after being announced the top student in this year's competition at a Gala Awards evening in Johannesburg on 10 October.

This year SAIPA opened the competition to Grade 11 pupils for the first time since its inception in 2002, with Deandre De Meyer of Stellenberg High School in the Western Cape, achieving first place with a mark of 96%, followed by Sean Scorer from Amanzimtoti High School in KwaZulu-Natal and Nabeel Fazluddin from King Edward VII School in Gauteng, in a joint second place with 94%. The third place was also shared by Alet Muller from Hoër Meisieskool Bloemhof in the Western Cape and Felicia Makondo of EPP Mhinga Secondary School in Limpopo both with a score of 92%.

Gauteng had the most schools participating in the Olympiad, accounting for 145 of the 390 schools that took part.

There has been a marked increase in the number of schools and learners participating in this year's National Accounting Olympiad due to a growing interest in the Accountancy Profession as well as massive awareness drive initiated by the South African Institute of Professional Accountants (SAIPA), says Zobuzwe Ngobese, Marketing and Business Development Executive at SAIPA.

"The increase from 310 to 390 schools and 3510 to 7069 learners is quite encouraging and is also due to the fact that in 2017 we introduced the Olympiad to grade 11 for the first time.

Next year we want to reach even more schools to make the subject of accounting popular again because our economy needs more accountants in order to grow,” he says.

### ***Performance indicators***

The competition is divided into two rounds and Grade 11 pupils had to achieve a score of 60% or more to advance to the second round and Grade 12 pupils had to score 65% or more to qualify for writing the second paper.

The top performers received, among others, bursaries valued between R10 000 and R35 000 in school/university fees.

“This year the bursary is subject to the recipients pursuing studies in the Accountancy profession. The main aim with the competition is to grow the numbers in the profession,” remarks Ngobese.

### ***Future expansion***

Ngobese notes that part of SAIPA’s future strategy is to open the Olympiad to pupils from Grade 10 to Grade 12. “If we can expose pupils as early as possible to Accountancy as a profession the more likely it is that they will choose it as their career path.”

Accounting is a critical skill and with the threat of Mathematics no longer being compulsory at high school, the numbers may start dwindling, says Ngobese.

**PHOTO CAPTION:** Grade 12 winners - Adam Melnick, Juane Cronje, Sara Seleh and Philip Visagè.

**PHOTO CAPTION:** Grade 11 winners - Deandre De Meyer, Felicia Makondo, Sean Scorer, Alet Muller and Nabeel Fazluddin.

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**MEDIA CONTACT:** Idéle Prinsloo, 082 573 9219, [idele@thatpoint.co.za](mailto:idele@thatpoint.co.za),  
[www.atthatpoint.co.za](http://www.atthatpoint.co.za)

**For more information on SAIPA please visit:**

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