

Bursaries worth N\$900 000 awarded to 22 students

By Confidante Reporter

THE Namibian Chamber of Environment (NCE) awarded bursaries to 22 postgraduate students to further their studies in fields related to the environment and sustainable development during 2019.

These students will receive funds for academic tuition, accommodation, and transport, according to their individual needs. NCE and its partners believe that supporting further education

of young Namibians is a wise investment for people and the environment.

NCE, with funding from B2Gold, partnered with the Woodtiger Fund from the USA to establish their Bursary and Internship fund towards the end of 2017. The first group of 13 students and 9 interns were selected from 45 candidates for the 2018 academic year, during which time N\$688,432 was disbursed from the fund. In 2019 the number of candidates applying for bursaries increased to 108; the

fund was consequently expanded to N\$888,586, which will support the 22 selected students and a number of interns that are still to be selected for this year.

The criteria used to select beneficiaries for the fund are as follows: Namibian citizen, appropriate field of study, academic achievements to date, evidence of commitment and passion for the sector, financial need, leadership potential, and longer-term goals and plans. Each applicant that



demonstrates these qualities in their written application is short-listed for an interview with a selection committee that further refines the selection process. Each successful student is supported according to their specific needs, and agree to report back to NCE on their academic progress during the year.

The selection process for internships will begin soon, whereby suitable students working on environmental projects are provided with financial support (a stipend) and mentorship to gain valuable work experience. This will equip them with the soft skills required as a professional environmental practitioner.

Eighteen of the 22 successful candidates are women, and the students are

aged between 21-31 years old. This group of students represent nine regions of Namibia, although the majority hail from the north-central regions (13 students) and the Khomas region (five students). Sixteen of the students are pursuing two-year Masters Degrees, whilst six are pursuing one-year Honours degrees, or equivalent diplomas at Namibian and South African universities.

The future of Namibia lies in the hands of young people like these students and interns. "NCE and its partners look forward to seeing the academic progress and achievements of these students in the coming year and throughout their future careers."