

GijimaAst, SAP fund learners

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[Johannesburg, 15 May 2008] - JSE-listed GijimaAst and software vendor SAP are teaming up to put 40 students through the IT Business Learnership Programme.

The 18-month course will cost the duo R6.8 million and sees students receive tuition, residency, “necessary” equipment – including laptops – and a monthly stipend. Tuition will be provided at the Tshwane University of Technology.

Speaking at the launch yesterday, GijimaAst HR director Michael Ferreira explained the initiative was not aimed at filling its own vacancies alone.

“We are all aware that this country is going through a **skills** crisis; we must work together to build our country, economy and citizens. Our aim is to provide our industry with the right skills.”

SAP Africa MD Claas Kuehnemann in turn praised GijimaAst for kick-starting the initiative.

“All credit must go to [GijimaAst executive chairman] **Robert Gumede**. We sit on several forums together, where the skills issue is brought to the attention of the highest levels of government. However, eight months ago, he called me and said we needed to do something more. We are launching his efforts today,” he commented.

The nature of this course sees students trained in both IT and soft, or professional, skills. A six-month practical work experience period rounds off the training.

“I have no doubt that those who graduate from this programme will be snapped up by the marketplace,” said Kuehnemann.

