

Porsche launches educational training project

30/11/2016 Porsche is rolling up its sleeves to help socially disadvantaged young adults in South Africa by opening the new Porsche Training and Recruitment Center in Cape Town.

From mid-2017, a total of 75 young men and women will be given the opportunity to train as service mechatronics at the new Porsche Training and Recruitment Center in South Africa across three academic years. This training will unlock career opportunities for the young adults, not only at Porsche itself, but also with other brands in the VW Group. The programme is specifically designed to cover a wide range of topics, in order to provide trainees with a broad spectrum of opportunities. This project is being organised in association with Don Bosco Mondo e.V. together with its Don Bosco Salesian Institute Youth Projects (SIYP) in Cape Town and the Porsche importer in South Africa, LSM Distributors (Pty.) Ltd.. The three parties have signed an official memorandum of understanding today at the Porsche Centre in Johannesburg.

project

The idea for the project was initiated by Uwe Hück, Chair of the Porsche AG Group Workers Council, in November 2015, when he took part in a charity boxing match against Francois Botha. Both men wanted to give hope to disadvantaged young people. “It is always worth fighting for your opportunities. When you do this, you can achieve anything,” says Hück. Hück and Botha both want to donate the proceeds of the rematch they agreed to back in 2015 – which will take place in spring next year in South Africa – to local social projects.

The educational project in South Africa forms part of an umbrella initiative, through which the sports car manufacturer offers its international vocational training programme for After Sales. The project is spearheaded by the “Porsche Training and Recruitment Center Asia” in Manila, where socially disadvantaged young people have trained as service and bodywork technicians since 2008, to cover the growing need for service employees in the Middle East. In 2015, Volkswagen and Audi came on board as project partners in Manila. In collaboration with Don Bosco Mondo e.V., over 120 young Filipinos now receive training at the centre for an After Sales job at Porsche, Volkswagen or Audi each year.

“Porsche has always been about more than just sales figures and revenue. We are committed to fulfilling our social responsibility in markets throughout the world. Our project in Manila is certainly a good example of this. We gain well trained and highly motivated staff for our growth markets in the Middle East. The graduates, in turn, benefit from long-term career prospects and can use their earnings to support their families. Our resoundingly positive experiences in Manila have encouraged us to expand this successful model to South Africa”, explains Oliver Blume, Chairman of the Executive Board of Porsche AG.

Whereas recruitment for Porsche dealerships was, and continues to be, a key focus at the “Porsche Training and Recruitment Center Asia”, the project in South Africa is also designed to establish a new training programme. To this end, Porsche is developing curricula and examination regulations, training instructors and equipping theoretical and practical lecture areas at the Don Bosco Salesian Institute Youth Projects (SIYP) in Cape Town. Porsche importer LSM Distributors (Pty.) Ltd. is supporting the preparations in a variety of ways, acting as a central interface on site, sending its technical manager to assist with the training of the instructors on a regular basis, and providing placements for some of the trainees at its own Porsche Centres. The aim is for Don Bosco to take over the service mechatronic training programme from 2020 and for the Porsche training project to extend beyond the original three years, earmarked for the project.

Toby Venter, the owner of LSM Distributors, is confident that the approach taken by the training project is a good one: “A well-founded education is the key to success. Sadly, there are still too many people in this country who drop out of their course because they don't see any prospects for them at the end of their training. We want to encourage them and accompany them each step of the way. I am confident that they will emerge from the comprehensive 24-month training programme with a stronger sense of self-confidence that will enable them to seize the opportunities that come their way.”

The German non-governmental organisation Don Bosco Mondo e.V is playing a key role in the project. "Young people have a right to education, training and work", says board member Uwe Bothur. "Vocational training with the 'Made in Germany' seal of approval is valued around the world. And it is not just the young people in emerging and developing nations who benefit from such training programmes – society as a whole and the companies involved also reap rewards. I am delighted that a premium company such as Porsche is giving disadvantaged young people around the world a chance. Together, we can work with young people from difficult social backgrounds and offer them vocational training. This will open opportunities for gaining a good job and give them the chance of leading a dignified life."

Chair of the Porsche AG Group Works Council Uwe Hück is also supporting the project in Cape Town: "Education is something that concerns us all and must not be a privilege. Nobody is too stupid to get an education, but you have to put in the hard work. We have to take on those who – for whatever reason – appear to stand no chance. It is our task to unlock the potential hidden inside every person, regardless of ethnic origin, religion or the colour of their skin. Porsche has always fostered a social corporate culture and it is an important part of our duty to lead by example and show the way rather than to turn a blind eye."

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