

Tuks Rag Endorses Environmental Preservation

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The streets of Pretoria were buzzing with about 7 000 students who were parading and flaunting their colourful floats during the main RAG procession on Saturday 30 January 2010.

The event also drew lots of community members who were giving out donations to excited students. At the final judging, Erika and Kiaatt residences, both accommodating female and male residents respectively were declared the winners of RAG 2010.

A pre-judging was conducted before the procession and the focus was on Rag is Going Green concept, which is an effort of students taking a conscience look at the environment. Through a series of engagements with the Rag committee and other relevant student groups, the principle was brought across that the first priority before even building a float was to preserve the environment and to ensure that all materials used in building a float were from recycled origin and can also be re-used in the future. This in itself is not only good for the environment but also cost effective.

Professor Derrick de Jongh, Director for Centre for Responsible Leadership, was part of the pre-judging session to ensure that environmental compliance by the students was adhered to when building their floats. The pre-judging constituted 20 per cent of the final mark which the float was assessed on. Although large parts of the floats were made of polysterene and plastic which in itself poses serious environmental challenges, the students were eager to learn more about environmental issues.

“There is an increasing awareness among the students about the environment and they are willing to learn about it. This is very encouraging and we already saw very creative applications of the ‘green’ theme in this year’s float procession. The concept of Going Green will always be inculcated to students in the coming Rag festivities. The plan is to increase the 20 per cent sustainability in future to emphasise the importance of environmental friendliness of TUKS Rag”, says Prof de Jongh.

The procession was resumed by Tshwane Executive Mayor Dr Gwen Ramokgopa, who delivered a short speech to much elated students. She hailed the student’s drive to raise funds with an intention to contribute to the needy and destitute. “I am very proud of the work you are doing, and you are the city’s shining light that will always be a beacon to many”, said Ramokgopa.

The procession moved in the streets of Eastern Pretoria until the Mitsubishi showroom near Brooklyn Mall. As this year’s theme was Proudly African, the floats had to have an African tone into it. A float which impressed the judges was the Erika and Kaait residences one with its colourful and African flair. This float also placed strong emphasis on re-usability of material which gave them added marks in the final judging.

Following the procession, the students converged at the Hatfield square where they partied until the early hours of the morning.

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