The Citrus Academy currently supports thirty-five students at academic institutions all over the country in a range of courses from secondary education to doctorates and master’s degrees. The objectives of the bursary fund are to support previously disadvantaged learners as well as learners in fields of study that are related to scarce skills in the citrus industry, thereby promoting the industry as an exciting career choice.

From the onset, the aim of the Citrus Academy with regard to the bursary fund was to transcend a mere administrative function. Far more important than fulfilling statutory requirements and quotas, is the pressing need in South Africa to contribute to the future by providing the youth with the best possible opportunity to successfully gain an education and to become productive members of society. The bursary fund provides an excellent tool to achieve this, whilst at the same time retaining the talent for the citrus industry, thus benefiting the supporters of the fund as well.

The Bursary Fund Policy therefore not only focuses on the allocation of funds and performance standards of students, but also presents a long-term strategy to ensure that resources spent adds genuine value to both the students and their beneficiaries. A two-pronged approach is followed to achieve this:
- Continued monitoring of academic progress.
- Providing students with practical experience by obligating them to do vacation work and to work time back in the citrus industry after completion of studies.

Students are also assisted in completing their practical course requirements by finding suitable employment for them in the citrus industry as and when needed.

Undergraduate students are placed in citrus related companies during vacation periods, where they gain invaluable practical experience with regard to day-to-day operations. The aims of this programme are to:
- Assist learners with their studies by providing them with the practical experience needed to enhance understanding of theoretical knowledge.
- Develop students’ marketable skills, thereby increasing their chances of finding permanent employment in the citrus industry after completion of studies.
- Help students to develop a career path by providing exposure to the industry and building a network of contacts.
- Engage citrus growers in transformation and the welfare of the industry as a whole, by nurturing a qualified, competent emerging workforce.
- Provide employers with the opportunity to scout possible candidates for employment.

In order for the programme to achieve these goals, it is imperative that the students are matched to suitable positions that provide them with experience relevant to their particular course of study and academic needs. Vacation work was arranged for 16 students during the June / July 2006 holiday period. Students were placed at citrus related companies such as nurseries, pack houses, farms, the fresh fruit terminals, and even at the CGA head office in Hillcrest. The positive feedback received from both students and employers was overwhelming. Selected comments were:
- “Students get to understand at an earlier stage of their study applications of theoretical lessons learned in classrooms.”
- “The learner was a pleasure to have around, keen and willing to learn.”
- “Employers are given an opportunity to train for the continuity of the industry and at the same time scout for prospective personnel.”
- “The student’s probing questions and inquisitive nature inadvertently led to the skills development of the entire permanent staff complement.”

Employers’ involvement in the programme was voluntary and a great debt of gratitude is owed to the individuals and companies who participated, as well as the Citrus Transformation Committee, who were willing to sacrifice their time and money to be of service.

Specifically, we would like to thank: Justin Chadwick and Paul Hardman (CGA), Harry Gxothiwe (CTC), Abraham van Rooyen and Bryan Offer (Du Roi Nursery), Denny Reddy (Fresh Produce Terminal Durban), Pieter Benade (Golden Frontier Products), Jock Danckwerts and Claire Wadell (Kat River Citrus Cooperative), Johan van der Westhuizen (Letsitele Cooperative), Shane Dellis (Nkwalini), Llew Roberts (Riverside Enterprises) and John Perold (Sunday’s River Citrus Company).

Secondary Education Support
- Winterberg Agricultural High School: Dalen Alberts, Stephan Bester, Danie de Klerk, Willie de Klerk, Marten Douw, Lwando Jibo, Athatidile Shoba, Gerhard Strydom, Gideon van Zyl

Tertiary Education Support
- Mpumalanga:
  - Ten students at Lowveld College of Agriculture, studying towards a Higher Certificate in Agriculture (Plant Production)
  - First year: Kate Hlongo, Clement Mavele, Tsakani Mogale, Velly Ngobeni, Jan Nkwasu, Maxwell Qomonde. See photo
  - Second year: Lindile Masina, Nomthandazo Mhlongo, Ntombi Mkla, Nhlanhla Nkuna. See photo
- KwaZulu-Natal:
  - University of KwaZulu-Natal: Siphe Ndawonde - B.Sc Agric Econ, 2nd year See photo
  - University of Zululand: Siyabonga Mxhalewa - Hydro science with Computer Science, 2nd year
- Eastern Cape:
  - University of Fort Hare: Daniel Maki - B. Agric Econ, 2nd year
Lowveld College of Agriculture Front left to right: Tsakani Mogale (1st year), Clement Mavele (1st year), Desiree Schonken (Citrus Academy), Nthandawo Mhlongo (2nd year), Lindiwe Masina (2nd year), Nkuna Nkuna (2nd year), Jan Nkwashu (1st year), Maxwell Qomonde (1st year), Kate Hlongo (1st year), Velly Ngobeni (1st year). Absent: Ntombi Mkila (2nd year).

Vacation Work: Du Roi Nursery, Letsitele Cooperative (Letsitele), Golden Frontiers Products (Malelane) and the Fresh Produce Terminal (Durban).

Above: Shadrack Phophi (left) and Gerda Britz (right)

Shadrack Phophi: PhD (Plant Pathology) at University of Pretoria
Gerda Britz: MSc Microbiology at University of Pretoria.

Vacation Work: Riverside Enterprises.

CITRUS ACADEMY BURSARY FUND STUDENTS

Scarce Skills Education Support

Gauteng:
- University of Pretoria: Gerda Britz - M.Sc (Microbiology); Shadrack Phophi - PhD (Plant Pathology) See photo

North West Province:
- University of North West (Potchefstroom): Ester Kriek – B.Sc (Hons) Plant Parasitology

KwaZulu-Natal:
- Durban Institute of Technology: Sandiso Mgadi – National Diploma in Mechanical Engineering, 2nd year
- Eastern Cape:
  - Fort Cox Agricultural College: Vuyo Keke - National Diploma in Agricultural Business, 2nd year; Tsepo Motsilili - Higher Certificate in Agriculture (Plant Production), 2nd year See photo
  - Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University: Hombisa Manakaza - Diploma in Industrial Engineering, 2nd year See photo
  - Rhodes University: Kierryn Gendall – M.Sc

Western Cape:
- University of Stellenbosch: Smit Le Roux - M.Sc Agric (Horticulture); Greg Maggs - B.Sc Agric

UNISA:
- Kim Stoitz - B. Tech Horticulture

Further information and application forms can be found on our website at

www.citrusacademy.co.za

Should you be interested in participating as an employer in the vacation work programme, or if you want to find out more about one of our students, please contact Jacomien or Desiree on (031) 208-8960.
Alternatively, please e-mail us on

jacomien@cga.co.za or desiree@citrusacademy.co.za