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Altron Nexus helps build computing talent in under-privileged areas

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Altron Nexus, in partnership with the Gauteng Department of e-Governance and Mogale City, today began construction work on a new community information and communications technology laboratory.

The development of the laboratory, located in the community of Orient Hills, was marked with an official sod-turning ceremony that was attended by representatives from government and Altron.

Featuring a computer room with fifteen stations, in a customised container, the idea behind the lab is that skills will be taught to young people and those with their own business in this under-privileged area. At the end of 12 months, which will include mentoring and assistance, the lab will be handed over to the community on a everyone-teach-one basis.

The lab forms parts of MEC Mzikayifani (Mzi) Khumalo's input into the Gauteng Government's 100-day plan to uplift communities in the province, including areas such as Soshanguve in Tshwane, as well as Sedibeng, on Gauteng's

southern tip. Khumalo is MEC in charge of e-government, cooperative governance and traditional affairs, as well as research and development.

To start off with, training will be provided by Kasi Enterprise Lab, which has experience delivering educational programmes in informal settlements. The skills that will be imparted include advanced computing, as well as business development and leadership workshops. Altron, which will provide the lab, will continue to support, and fund the lab for two years. “This relationship must not end,” says Khumalo at the sod-turning ceremony.

This project, a follow on from Altron Nexus’ Mandela Day initiative in 2022 to equip a daycare with necessary items, will also make use of local residents as far as possible to erect the structure.

Nurturing skills

Altron Nexus Managing Director, Kennedy Chinganya, who noted that the lab will take advantage of the Gauteng Broadband Network, said “Altron Nexus is committed to helping develop young people and communities, allowing them to either find jobs, get into tertiary education, or start their own business.

“It is our mission to work towards bridging the digital divide in South Africa by providing accessibility to government services. Our values are aligned with the Gauteng Provincial Government’s smart provincial initiatives and plans to facilitate projects such as e-learning, e-government, and e-health, among others.”

Mogale City has provided land and it is likely to extend this commitment to provide more space for additional community

projects, such as a library. Executive Mayor Tyrone Gray said, “after the lab, we will determine what else is feasible to uplift this community”.

“It is our hope that the lab, which will open its doors this year, will provide a great service to the community of Orient Hills as it becomes self-sustaining,” Chinganya said. 🇷🇺

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