

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**29 March 2019**

### **NATIONAL KAIZEN CHAMPIONS CROWNED**

Duys Engineering Group and SJM Flex were named Kaizen Champions at the annual Kaizen Seminar and awards in Port Elizabeth today (28 March 2019).

Hosted by the AIDC, in partnership with Lean Institute Africa, annually, in Gauteng and the Eastern Cape in alternate years, the awards recognise good improvements or Kaizens, made by manufacturers to boost operational performance.

In the Operator Category (Kaizens initiated by operators) Duys Engineering Group, a heavy engineering company with plants across the country won 1st place, with SJM Flex and Continental Contitech in 2nd and 3rd places respectively.

In the Management Category (Kaizens initiated by management or engineer) SJM Flex, a Port Elizabeth-based manufacturer of flexible couplings for the export market claimed first prize, followed by Duys Engineering Group and Auto Industrial Machining.

Natstan Wire and Acoustex received commendations at the awards, which followed the seminar.

AIDC Eastern Cape CEO, Hoosain Mahomed said the seminar, aside from the awards, also enabled industry to learn from peers how organisations are using Kaizens as a core strategy to improve operational excellence.

Mohamed said the seminar was attended by management but that presentations were uniquely made by shopfloor operators of the representing companies because "Kaizens are largely operator driven, with ownership on the shopfloor."

Lean Institute Africa Director Anton Grutter told delegates that the importance of Lean thinking and practice was highlighted by "an increasingly complex business environment with non-linear consequences to decisions - attached to the idea that management decision making is generally imperfect."

He said the use of routines, tools and measures - generally part of the Plan, Do, Check, Act (PDCA) Cycle -- beginning at management level, was essential for effective decision-making, problem solving and sustainment improvement.

Nelson Mandela University Head of Kaizen Department, Karl van der Merwe stressed the importance of organisational culture.

"A Lean culture in an organisation is required to support continuous improvement and Kaizens but this needed to be fostered and deliberately considered by managers," van der Merwe said.

Short-listed award nominees largely emanate from the AIDC's shopfloor improvement interventions at manufacturers across South Africa.

The AIDC is mandated by government to assist the country's manufacturing sector become more globally competitive.

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issued by Deon Engelke