

Study before you go job hunting

By ASA SOKOPO

ECONOMISTS have advised matrics looking to enter the job market next year to do so with caution in the wake of high job losses in the province.

Despite this bleak outlook, all is not lost. While there have been 48 000 job losses in the Eastern Cape, Investment Solutions economist Chris Hart said job prospects would increase in the second half of next year.

Hart said matrics and graduates would be going into an environment already shedding jobs, making it difficult for them to gain employment. An estimated 100 000 people are set to lose their jobs by February next year. Hart cautioned matrics not to seek employment straight out of school.

“They should study before attempting to enter the job market. They need to enhance their skills,” he said.

Statistics SA said the Eastern Cape’s unemployment rate increased by 2.6 percentage points in three months.

Between April and June this year, the unemployment rate was at 24.8 percent, while between July and September this year it increased to 27.4 percent.

While the economic situation was dire, Quest Flexible Staffing Solutions’ resource and talent acquisition manager Brenda Perling said many companies with call centres and tele positions were still hiring.



“We would hate for them to feel completely despondent ... We have experienced that (companies) have cut jobs but a lot of jobs have come in,” she said.

Perring said learnerships allowing matriculants to work and study were frequently available, while jobs in the banking field were also still available.

The head of marketing at PAG, Bonnie Currin, encouraged matrics to get work experience “through whatever means and sacrifice with a focus on gaining business acumen, ethics and maturity”.

She said major companies are being cau-

tious in increasing staff and rather look for flexible staffing models which allow employees to acquire a number of diverse skills while providing them with insight into different career opportunities. Currin also encouraged learnerships, internships, apprenticeships and voluntary work.

“If all else fails, then there’s also voluntary work to consider. There is no substitute for experience in the world of work and school leavers who cannot get into a learnership would do well to bide their time doing voluntary work at NGOs and not-for-profit organisations,” she said.

