**PRESS RELEASE**

Melco helps future mechanical engineers realise their full potential

*Melco makes a significant contribution towards improving the standard of living for a number of families, by easing the financial burden of secondary and tertiary education.*

**11 April, 2012:** Internationally-recognised conveyor equipment manufacturer Melco is committed to ensuring that it plays its part in creating measurable and sustainable improvement to the surrounding communities in which the company operates, by committing itself to numerous corporate social responsibility projects.

One aspect of this responsibility is providing vacation work experience to both **Mduduzi Mlilo**, a second year mechanical engineering student at the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits), and to **Peter Mkhonto,** a third year mechanical engineering student, also at Wits University.

Mduduzi is the first recipient of the Mel and Roy Cohen - Melco bursary. This bursary was set up by the Cohen family, as an ideal way to give something back to the bulk materials handling industry in South Africa. Mel and Roy Cohen started Melco Conveyor Equipment (Pty) Ltd in 1970.

 The bursary award has taken a tremendous financial burden off Mduduzi’s shoulders. “I had applied for a bursary through my maths lecturer, and after the Cohens picked up my name, they interviewed me and I was granted the generous bursary that covers all my university fees which I do not need to pay back. This opportunity has opened up so many doors for me, and without this bursary, I don’t know what I would have done to fund my education.”

Although Mduduzi passed matric first time around, he rewrote a few subjects a year later to obtain a better result for acceptance into the engineering faculty at Wits.

Peter highlights the fact that the work experience offered by Melco has been highly beneficial in understanding how the company operates. “The work experience ensures that we are able to obtain first-hand and real-life experience in the industry where we plan to establish our future careers. Another advantage of doing work experience at Melco is the fact that it is a very friendly company, and all employees in the various departments have been welcoming, and have shown a keen interest in helping us to find our feet, which has proven to be invaluable,” he explains.

Looking to the future, Peter notes that he plans to obtain a masters degree in engineering, and hopes that he can be a part of the Melco team once he is qualified. “The way we have been treated at Melco is wonderful. It’s been such a pleasure to us to work here, and I would like to see myself as an established member of the Melco team within the next few years.”

Melco will continue to provide vacation work opportunities to Mduduzi and Peter in 2012 and beyond. In addition to assisting the university students, Melco also sponsors the full cost of high school for six learners from the Dukathole informal settlement, which is adjacent to the company’s premises in Germiston, Gauteng.

Melco pays all school fees from Grade 8 to Grade 12 for these learners, covers all extra mural activities, cost of daily transport to and from school, and supplies all school books and stationery. The learners make use of Melco’s offices and internet facilities for project and study purposes and Melco staff members provide extra tutoring, if necessary.

The learners were selected on merit from the top achievers at Ekurhuleni Primary School, which is situated only a few hundred metres away from Melco. They started attending Germiston High School in 2011, all six learners completed their first year of high school successfully, and were excited to be able to choose their own subjects in Grade 9. Extra mural activities enjoyed by the pupils include; karate, rowing and basketball, and Melco assists in purchasing kit and pays for the learners to attend coaching sessions and tournaments.

“Our goal for these young learners is that we give them every opportunity to fulfil their obvious potential,” says Melco managing director **Gavin Hall**. “We are deeply humbled by how hard they have worked in their young lives to overcome very obvious hardships. The least we can do is help them continue to achieve, by taking away the burden of the cost of schooling for the duration of their high school careers.”

Two of the learners have ambitions to become social workers, two wish to become engineers, one to be a doctor, and one wants to become a teacher. “If these learners achieve their goals, whatever they may be, then Melco will have played a small part in helping our local community and our country” he concludes.

***Ends***

**Notes to the editor**
There are numerous photographs specific to this press release. Please visit [http://media.ngage.co.za](http://media.ngage.co.za/) and click the Melco link.

**About Melco**Melco is one of Africa’s major conveyor equipment manufacturers. Melco has been a proud member of the Rulmeca Group of Companies since 2006. Melco idlers have been successfully utilised in many bulk materials handling applications in over 75 countries throughout the world, and installed on belt widths from 200 mm to 3000 mm. The Melco roll product range is comprehensive, ranging from 89 mm to 215 mm in diameter, with bearing and shaft arrangements from 25 mm to 60 mm diameter.

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