



Press Release – Tsogo Sun – 27/10/2017

Inspiring Entrepreneurs to Succeed in the Business World

The 2017 Tsogo Sun Entrepreneur of the Year Award was presented to Hezron Louw, owner of Sumting Fresh restaurant and gourmet street food in Gauteng, on 26 October at a gala banquet at Tsogo Sun's hotel in the Jacaranda city, Southern Sun Pretoria (<https://www.tsogosun.com/southern-sun-pretoria>).

Tsogo Sun Entrepreneurs (<https://www.tsogosun.com/citizenship/entrepreneurs>) has been enabling entrepreneurial growth and striving for transformation to a more empowered society for 12 years, encouraging many small business successes, providing practical support through a 12-month development programme, and recognising excellent entrepreneurial performance through the prestigious annual Tsogo Sun Entrepreneur of the Year Awards for the programme's top performers.

Says Candy Tothill, Tsogo Sun's GM of Corporate Affairs, "Our Entrepreneur of the Year Award winners are ambassadors for the programme for the year following their win, and an inspiration to other entrepreneurs. "Congratulations to Hezron, who is a very deserving winner. We have every confidence he will prove to be an excellent role model for small businesses and emerging entrepreneurs in the coming year."

Sumting Fresh is all that its name suggests – funky and fun, creating fabulous fresh food. It's the brainchild of Hezron Louw and his business partner Andrew Leeuw; a gourmet street food company with a food truck ('bus-taurant'), a catering division with a factory in Bramley, and a 'bricks and mortar' restaurant in Norwood.

Prizes for the winner include R50,000 from Tsogo Sun, a bursary valued at R30,000 from Tsheto Leadership Academy, the programme ambassadorship, among other prizes. Sumting Fresh will also be featured for one month on e.tv and eNCA's Enterprise Development initiative, *Forerunners*, which focuses on showcasing small South African businesses and the entrepreneurs behind them.

The 2016 winner of the Tsogo Sun Entrepreneur of the Year Award was Nqobile Nkosi, owner of NQ Jewellery Design Services, based in Soweto.

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The other 2017 finalists were Devina Dawkinun, Gemkids Education and Entertainment Centre, from KwaZulu-Natal; Nicole Msibi, Before Time Indlondlo Events, catering and events equipment and décor hire, Gauteng; Noli Mini, Relax Spas mobile health spa company, Western Cape; and Ronnie Nemukula, Ronem Maintenance Solutions, engineering services in construction, repairs and maintenance, Mpumalanga.

Participation in the Tsogo Sun Entrepreneurs programme is open to all South African businesses with an annual turnover of less than R50 million. The three channels through which businesses can join the programme are Tsogo Sun's national Supplier Showcases, where entrepreneurs with potential for growth exhibit their products and services – some are then identified by Tsogo Sun and invited to join; through membership of the HCI Supplier Club; and through recommendations from the Department of Tourism and tourism agencies who nominate businesses for evaluation by the Entrepreneurs programme. The year starts annually in January with the induction of the new intake of entrepreneurs selected for the programme.

At the start of the 12-month programme, the entrepreneurs are each allocated a business mentor and a leadership coach to analyse their businesses and professional performance and then to create a roadmap to help them close gaps in their businesses and develop as leaders to run their businesses effectively. Contact sessions and business foundation skills training workshops are provided locally through the programme to the entrepreneurs in the provinces where they are situated.

Tsogo Sun delivers the entrepreneurs programme with the support of several strategic partners, which include Carlson Wagonlit Travel, a programme partner for eight years; Colour Accounting, which provides financial management, marketing, sales and other business training; and Queen Ramotsehoa, whose company, Tsheto Leadership Academy, provides coaching and self-mastery services for personal and enterprise development. A recent partner to the programme is Proudly South African.

Says Eustace Mashimbye, CEO of Proudly South African, "The Tsogo Sun Entrepreneurs programme is perfectly aligned with the work of the Proudly South African buy local campaign. In a job market that by 2030 will see 90% of our workforce employed by entrepreneurs, it is critical that we nurture and assist today's SMMEs to be the success stories of tomorrow. In addition to the mentoring and nurturing offered to entrants into the programme, Tsogo Sun is providing access to market to these suppliers and making its own local procurement decisions, demonstrating its true commitment to

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economic growth and job creation in this country. We have been privileged to be exposed to and be part of the programme.”

Tothill says that the programme also gives successful entrepreneurs who have overcome odds against them opportunities to share their growth and development stories. “Entrepreneurs who have persevered and worked very hard impact others who face challenges experienced by small businesses, such as limited capital, bureaucracy, and difficulty identifying and accessing markets.”

Midway through the year, entrepreneurs from previous years and the latest intake are invited to enter the Tsogo Sun Entrepreneur of the Year competition. Comprehensive entry forms are evaluated and five finalists are shortlisted and interviewed by a panel of judges.

The Tsogo Sun Entrepreneur of the Year Award banquet forms part of a three-day conference that includes an intensive business workshop and a Supplier Showcase, and concludes the Entrepreneurs year-long programme.

Tothill says, “We’re proud of what the programme is achieving for the participating entrepreneurs, and even further afield. Successful entrepreneurship is imperative for growth of our economy and job creation, particularly with the high rate of unemployment in South Africa. The Tsogo Sun Entrepreneurs programme showcases the good work being done by the entrepreneurs, it assists participants with skills development and exposure to the markets that Tsogo Sun serves, it helps them build self-confidence, and it encourages their success in the business world.”

Tsogo Sun has a portfolio of over 100 hotels and 14 casino and entertainment destinations throughout South Africa, Africa and the Seychelles. For more details, visit <https://www.tsogosun.com>, follow on Twitter [@TsogoSun](https://twitter.com/TsogoSun) or like on Facebook [/TsogoSun](https://facebook.com/TsogoSun).

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