



Press Release – Sandton Convention Centre – 12/04/2018

Tsogo Sun's James Khoza elected President of SA Chefs Association

James Khoza, Executive Chef of Tsogo Sun's Sandton Convention Centre

(<https://www.tsogosun.com/sandton-convention-centre-scc>), has been elected the first South African born and trained President of the SA Chefs Association since its inception 44 years ago, in an election of anonymous votes cast by the Association's nearly 10,000 members across South Africa. Khoza has been serving as Vice President of the association in a joint Competitions portfolio.

The SA Chefs Association is a non-profit industry body that represents the interests of chefs, cooks and caterers at all levels, with a focus on skills development, the celebration of culinary professionals, and transforming the industry. The President is tasked with heading the Association's governing body and Board of Directors, providing direction for its various initiatives, including the South African Culinary Olympics team.

Khoza says he is deeply humbled and honoured to take on this new role, which he describes as educational and overwhelming. "I now carry the hopes and aspirations of many chefs and I look forward to continuing the association's ongoing work of uniting all chefs. SA Chefs is home to all chefs and no one must feel excluded. I aim to further the association's work in building a space for development, in ensuring equal opportunity, in improving standards in the industry through training and mentorship, and to working with industry stakeholders to set and maintain the highest level of culinary excellence, growth and development of young chefs and professionalism." In accepting his new position, Khoza asked the audience of fellow chefs, "to be ambassadors of this noble society – it's not about any one individual, it's about people. It's about mentoring the young chefs in our association and advancing the unity of chefs."

Khoza has a passion for education and has been gratified by Tsogo Sun's focus on training and development. During his tenure with Tsogo Sun, both at Sandton Sun (<https://www.tsogosun.com/sandton-sun-hotel>) and Sandton Convention Centre, he has worked closely with many young learnership students and trainee chefs, personally mentoring them. "I believe that we have a vitally important role to play with the chefs who are starting out – they are our legacy and have the potential to make a difference in our industry in a country that has so much to offer by way of unique ideas and skills."

Khoza achieved his Diploma in Food & Beverage Management from Technikon Witwatersrand in Braamfontein in the 1990s and then started his culinary career working under Walter Ulz at Linger

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Longer restaurant as demi chef de cuisine. Through his career, he has travelled and worked in places such as France, Guinea, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Berlin, where he worked in a Michelin-starred restaurant. He then returned to his South African roots 11 years ago and joined Tsogo Sun, working in various Southern Sun kitchens, followed by the Sandton Convention Centre, where he has been for seven years.

Outgoing SA Chefs President, Stephen Billingham, says, “James Khoza has played an active role in SA Chefs for many years and has a true passion for improving our industry and developing new talent. He is ably equipped to continue the great work done by the Association and all its members.” Billingham adds that he is proud to leave the association in the safe hands of the new leadership supported by a strong board and thriving committees, clubs, and other initiatives.

Ravi Nadasen, COO of Tsogo Sun hotels, congratulates Khoza on his auspicious appointment as head of a strong association that has garnered global respect over the years. “James is a true asset to Tsogo Sun and I have no doubt that he will apply the exceptional work ethic, integrity, quiet confidence and wisdom for which he is so respected to the industry role he now deservedly occupies. As his employer we are delighted to offer our full support to James as he leads the South African Chefs Association to achieve his vision of mentorship and unification.”

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