



Press Release – Tsogo Sun – 01/11/2018

Tsogo Sun Entrepreneurs graduates celebrate living the Legacy

Big achievements and lasting legacies dominated at the 'Living the Legacy' themed Tsogo Sun Entrepreneurs Graduation Ceremony on 31 October, when 33 entrepreneurs celebrated completing their first year, 13 graduated from second year to alumni status, and Lowe Furniture & Décor from Bloubostrand in Johannesburg won the 2018 Achiever Award.

The ceremony, which was held at The Pivot at Montecasino (<https://www.tsogosun.com/southern-sun-montecasino/meetings-events/the-pivot>) with Rams Mabote, celebrity speaker, radio personality and entrepreneur as MC, commemorated 100 years since the birth of Nelson Mandela, and marked the dawn of a new chapter in the Tsogo Sun Entrepreneurs programme.

Candy Tohill, Tsogo Sun's GM of Corporate Affairs, says, "It has been 13 years since Tsogo Sun Entrepreneurs took its first brave and hopeful steps with a handful of guesthouses in Soweto. We have steadily evolved to meet the changing needs in the entrepreneurial landscape – and today we have 240 beneficiaries. Of these, 152 are enrolled in development with us while the rest receive benefits to make doing business easier for them. 128 own and operate accommodation establishments, and 82% are South African women. There are also an additional 125 beneficiaries of the HCI Supplier Club, which was created with Tsogo Sun's shareholder, HCI Limited."

Tohill remarks on the privilege of following the journeys of the entrepreneurs, "I have watched them come to recognise that their voices can be heard and their stories identified with, that their sphere of influence is greater than realised, and that their impact is powerful. Today's graduates are joining the ranks of enterprises at different stages of development, but all with a passion for developing and growing their businesses, and for building a proudly South African legacy that will continue long into the future."

In the spirit of local growth – for their beneficiaries and the country – Tsogo Sun Entrepreneurs has partnered with Proudly South African and sponsors membership of the organisation for the emerging businesses it supports. Happy MaKhumalo Ngidi, Proudly South African's Chief Marketing Officer, says, "Proudly South African is truly privileged to endorse Tsogo Sun's Entrepreneur programme (<https://www.tsogosun.com/citizenship/entrepreneurs>). Enterprise and supplier development initiatives such as this are important in providing entrepreneurs with access to new markets to which they wouldn't otherwise be exposed. This programme speaks exactly to the work Proudly South African is doing in promoting local procurement *by* local companies *from* local

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companies. We look forward to seeing the success of the new 'intake' of entrepreneurs match that of past recipients of Tsogo Sun's training and mentorship."

As the graduates were introduced onto the stage, short films about them and their businesses – 'The Legacy Series' – were shown. These videos were developed by Tsogo Sun Entrepreneurs to give the businesses additional professional exposure on social media and in the public domain.

The graduation consisted of four categories:

Second year to alumni (13) – Alex Ceramic Art in Design, Gemkids, Intaka Yempakamo Co-Operative, Ronem Maintenance Solutions, Sumting Fresh, Rifumo Bed and Breakfast Guesthouse, Vulamehlo Widows Support Group, Before Time Indlondlo Events, Sibahle Tours, Relax Spas, Ekhaya Nelspruit Guesthouse, Tlhagola Gardening & Cleaning Services, and 3@ Marion Guesthouse

Certificate of Foundation Skills for First Years Class of 2018 (7) – Smooth Energy, Enhlecreatives Photography & Design, Glenz Cakes, Back to Basics Sports Academy, Norman's Tours and Shuttle Services, Alabanza and Alegria Trading, Dev'or Cosmetics and African Roots (Seven Sisters Wines)

Certificate of Completion First Years Class of 2018 (8 individuals in 6 businesses) – Roba Monakedi Guest Lodge, Asipiko Events and Marketing, CBK Master of Books, The Zone eMdeni Pub 'n Grill, Greatone Infinity Design, and Fly Free Pest and Weed Control

Certificate of Merit First Years Class of 2018 (18 entrepreneurs from 15 businesses) – Be-Dazzled Party & Décor Hiring, Kasi Brothers Events, Asipiko Events and Marketing, Tych Labour Solutions, Geotra Exporters, V-A Virtual Assistant, Hitech Industrial Services, MGD Protection Services, World of Real Life Dreams, Bahati Tech, Luthando-Nto General Trading Enterprise, OBT Waste Management, Magauta Designs and Projects, Lowe Furniture & Décor, and Dimzique Jewellery

The 2018 Tsogo Sun Entrepreneurs Achiever Award was presented to Lowe Furniture & Décor owner Velaphi Mpolweni who won R20,000 from Tsogo Sun Entrepreneurs and a business bursary from Tsheto Leadership Academy valued at R10,000 entitled 'Master 1 – a new state of consciousness', as well as a hamper from Proudly South African. Mpolweni started his business in 2016 and designs and manufactures custom-made and contemporary furniture, steel products and ornamental accessories using solid wood, steel and glass. Mpolweni says, "We are constantly developing new product designs that are beautiful, enduring, environmentally friendly, compatible with our landscape, and in

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line with our slogan, 'Evolution of style, enhancing the beauty of Africa', because Africa is a beautiful continent."

Tohill congratulated Mpolweni on achieving the highest marks in the University of Cape Town business management course. "Velaphi Mpolweni overcame adversity and is building a legacy both for his family and for the country. We are immensely proud of all he is accomplishing and wish him the best, as well as our continued support, into the future."

To all the graduates, she said, "We continue to celebrate and encourage this remarkable entrepreneurial spirit that exists in all of you and we look to a future where we can continue to provide 'ordinary' South Africans running their own businesses with this extraordinary platform to become successful instruments of positive change in our country."

Tsogo Sun has a portfolio of over 100 hotels and 13 casino and entertainment destinations throughout South Africa, Africa and the Seychelles. For more details, visit <https://www.tsogosun.com>, follow on Twitter @TsogoSun or like on [Facebook.com/TsogoSun](https://www.facebook.com/TsogoSun). To learn more about the Tsogo Sun Entrepreneurs, visit them on [Facebook.com/TsogoEntrepreneurs](https://www.facebook.com/TsogoEntrepreneurs).