

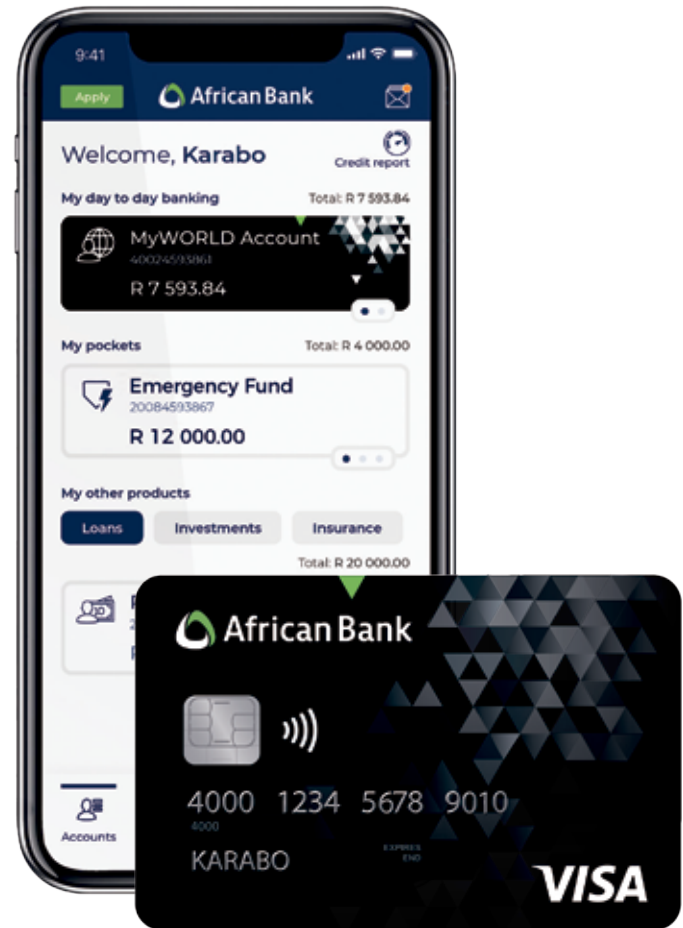
Sunday World **UNSUNG**
HEROES
CELEBRATING YOUTH **2023**



In Partnership with

 **African Bank**
Audacity to believe

Use your **VISA** card & you could **WIN**
ONE MILLION
audacious rewards points.
Every month!



- ▶ Zero monthly fees
- ▶ Audacious rewards
- ▶ Easy online banking

Zwakala to the bank that believes in you!

MyWORLD to Financial Freedom

www.africanbank.co.za

BANK | BORROW | SAVE | INVEST | INSURE

African Bank Limited is an authorised financial services and registered credit provider. NCR Reg No: NCRCP7638, Reg No: 2014/176899/06, FSP No 46094.

 **African Bank**
Audacity to believe

FOREWORD FROM ACTING EDITOR: SINGING ABOUT OUR UNSUNG HEROES

Any nation that fails to invest in its youth would probably need to have its head read – for the future of any land depends on the quality of youth each country nurtures for itself.

For South Africans, June 16, 1976, was a watershed moment, becoming a needed catalyst from which the people's revolution would evolve – a moment that would directly lead to the creation of a new land envisioned by former president Nelson Mandela, where every South African would have a stake in the land of their birth – to dream as they wished and pleased.

Today's edition of Sunday World's Unsung Heroes celebrates the great strides first put in motion by the brave 1976 students, who dared the might of the apartheid security forces to demand a dramatic change to the way education was dispensed to the black masses, demonising the inferior education they were receiving from the oppressive system as a system that needed not to be revised but to be abolished.

Happily, today's latter-day heroes and heroines of different kinds we present to you, our dear readers, through the project we describe as Unsung Heroes 2023, meet the test of what South Africa ought to be – a site of excellence through youth entrepreneurship.

They are a group of innovative young achievers identified by you, our readers, from your own localities in various categories. These categories include youth in business and entrepreneurship, youth in education,



ACTING EDITOR: NGWAKO MALATJI

Photo by Thendo Luruli

heroes in communities or sports, arts, and culture and heroes of climate and sustainability.

Without any shadow of doubt, these latter-day heroes and heroines stand on the shoulders of great women and men who came before them 47 years ago, infused with the spirit of justice to bring about democracy and human rights to the land of their birth.

These men and women who led the charge of change in 1976 included, Tsietshi Mashinini, Khotso Seatlholo, Murphy Morobe, Sibongile Mthembu Mkhabela, Jefferson Lengene, Thabo Ndabeni, Seth Mazibuko, Daniel Sechaba, and many others across the length and breadth of our country. They were dedicated to a cause of human rights, and sacrificed their young lives then, 47 years ago, so that a new just society

created out of the ravages of injustice would come into existence.

We are proud as Sunday World, that in today's edition, we bring to these pages, for your reflections, these heroes and heroines who are today shaping the fortunes of the country in various human endeavours.

Bantu education, the Verwoerdian creation, whose main objective was to keep the black man and black woman down, has been defeated, and will never return. The Sunday World, a black-owned publication that prides itself to be in the forefront of promoting black excellence, is proud to celebrate the achievement of these young innovators.

On this occasion, we thank our readers for playing a pivotal role in helping us to select our heroes, and our valued sponsors for making the project possible. Rest assured that as a newspaper we will continue to promote excellence as we do today, as well as encouraging entrepreneurship.

YOUTH IS A THING OF BEAUTY

Firstly, the team that laboured in passion to put this project together is honoured to present to you, South Africa, your 2023 Unsung Heroes – the flowers that define the scent of our nation.

"Botjha," writes prolific Sesotho novelist Dr. Maphalla, "ke palesa."

Of all things in the world, Maphalla compares the age of youth with being a flower because being young is a thing of beauty, yet so delicate. As a result, continues the award-winning storyteller, we should protect the joys of being in our prime years with all we have. This he says conscious of the perils that may come with both the urgency and agency of youth.



I found myself revisiting these words as I combed through this year's Unsung Heroes nominations, marvelling at how so many young people are part of something bigger than them.

This is, therefore, not just an ordinary supplement you pull out to read 'the real

news'. In contrast, these pages have a life beyond print. They're breathing in coal mining towns like Carolina in Mpumalanga, where we find Bongekile Zwane forming part of the women who are bringing a feminist approach in our country's electricity planning.

They live through the innovative entrepreneurship of Bloemfontein-based Karabo Tlhotlhamajane who started a mobile carwash by using taxis to come to his clients, and has since grown his business to a point of buying a fleet and securing profitable deals with big institutions.

And Mawethu Soga, a young business strategist who belongs to a team that is leveraging technology to revolutionise the car-care industry by making it easy for us to book mechanics. The heartbeat of these pages is felt during theatre workshops in townships like Botshabelo, facilitated by Khauhelo Maikhi, and online tutorials that make sure that every child is confident in maths and science, as Apiwe Hotele defines her vision.

There is more where all this excellence is coming from, told through every profile in this supplement. With it, we hope to share an inspiring narrative of what it means to be a vessel of glory, a disruptive innovator and a thought leader who is equally thoughtful.

To all our 2023 Unsung Heroes, we are greatly honoured to sing about you.

Ace Moloi

Unsung Heroes Project Editor

100+
UNSUNG HEROES
FROM AROUND
SOUTH AFRICA

We kindly request you to start nominating your candidates for Sunday World Heroic Women. Nomination details can be found inside this supplement. See page 32.

CREDITS

Acting Editor

Ngwako Malatji

Project Editor

Ace Moloi

Project Manager

Anastacia Martin

Design, Layout & Production

Russel Benjamin

Donnell Fasser

Content Producers

Justine Fortuin

Kananelo Mokoena

Ace Moloi

Thabiso Sothoane

Researcher

Justine Fortuin

Web developer

Siyabonga Majola

Picture Editors

Russel Benjamin

Donnell Fasser

Sub Editors

Jack Lesage

Lufuno Mutele

Asanda Moholo

Proofreader

Mangaliso Mdhlela

Video Production

Thendo Luruli

Social Media

Thando Dlungwane

Online editorial

Mbali Zuma

Coceka Magubeni

Anelisa Sibanda

Nompilo Zulu

Media Sales & Sponsorship

Anastacia Martin

Tsundo Mashele

Circulation

Maphala Makgoba

Lebogang Motlounge



Twitter:
@SundayWorldZA



Facebook:
Sunday World



Instagram:
sundayworldza



LinkedIn:
Sunday World Newspaper

© Published by Fundudzi

Media (Pty) Ltd

18 Hume Road, Dunkeld West,

Johannesburg

Contact us:

Anastacia Martin

011 268 6300

anastacia@sundayworld.co.za

Tsundo Mashele

011 268 6300

tsundo@sundayworld.co.za



YOUTH IN BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP



“The country must produce good leaders who will lift township businesses and support them

FIKILE NDABA, 31

Limpopo

To Fikile Ndaba, the township is a gold mine of economic opportunities. This conviction turned her into a township-driven businesswoman who runs her own accounting firm that serves the township market.

She realised township businesses needed an accounting firm which offered tailor-made services that understood the challenges businesses faced on a daily basis.

Being unfairly dismissed from a managerial post gave the accountant the push she needed to follow the path of entrepreneurship and she has never looked back.

However, her entrepreneurial thirst was not quenched by the accounting business. When the business started making a profit, she used the money to start Fifi and Son's Pies in Rustenburg, North West.

Ndaba says her journey as an entrepreneur turned out to be an amazing venture, although not an easy road, especially since she was used to having a stable job.

For South Africa to overcome the crisis of youth unemployment, the 31-year-old believes the country must produce good leaders to lift township businesses and support them, as there are already established businesses in townships that only need to be propelled further.

ELMA AKOB, 23

Gauteng

Winner of Top Youth-Owned Educational Brand in South Africa, Elma Akob has discovered the secret to monetising her gift of speaking. Akob has been shaking platforms with the power of her voice from as early as 16 years old when she got a standing ovation at the United Nations.

She is the founding CEO of Elevate Africa, an award-winning brand that trains young people all over the continent in public speaking. The decision to found the academy came after realising the demand for public-speaking skills and the opportunity to make a living out of the art. As a result, Elevate Africa trains African youth to embrace their different languages accents and explore economic opportunities in speaking.

“I believe Africans have the solutions to all of Africa's problems, but we do not have the confidence to communicate efficiently.”

The renowned voice-over artist records for Disney, DStv, Nedbank and other companies.

According to the University of Pretoria PhD student in Corporate Sustainability, the youth needs practical, crucial skills in addition to classroom theory, in order to do great exploits in entrepreneurship. Additionally, the youth do not only need financial support, but also advice and mentorship. Important a safe working environment that allows for creativity and promotes individuality.

For her achievement, Akob was recently included in the Top 10 Outstanding Young Persons in the World by Junior Chamber International. Her TEDx Talk titled The Dangers of Western Feminism to African Women has taken her all over the world to affirm the African matriarch story.



“I believe that Africans have the solutions to all of Africa's problems.

“We must work together to create an enabling environment for businesses, especially youth-owned, to thrive



KHANYISILE MOLOBA, 29

North West

When she experienced her mother's care, love and service for the people, Khanyisile Moloba's passion was sparked and a business was born. As a result, the digital strategist and media specialist, who boasts a wealth of experience in the media and communication industry, launched a platform that would help small businesses solve their communication and digital marketing challenges.

While the trending topic is about attracting young people to technical skills, the 29-year-old is of the view that society needs digital creatives too; particularly since we are in the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR).

She asserts that one can monetise creativity, while creating a platform that will serve as a viable and self-sustaining playground for other young professionals and creatives within the fields of journalism, marketing, communications, technology and design.

Moloba suggests that the government and its social partners must introduce subjects that promote creative thinking and problem-solving as a requisite in the schools' curriculum.



“I noticed the gap between the practical approach of the business world and the theory-based instruction in the LLB curriculum

KGOTHATSO MARWALA, 33

Gauteng



“The major reason businesses fail in South Africa is the lack of access to the market, a gap I aim to bridge

As a Meta-certified social media marketing specialist, Kgoghatso Marwala aims to help businesses in South Africa leverage consumer attention through social media marketing.

His love for social media marketing developed in 2018 when Marwala started learning about it on YouTube. He subsequently completed a Google Skills for Africa in Digital Marketing course and also enrolled for a six-month course in social media marketing.

Today, he is a rising star in content creation and campaigns management.

Marwala has ran campaigns and consulted for brands such as TEDx Unisa and Junior Chamber International. He has also been recognised as the World Economic Forum's Global Shaper 2018.

The 33-year-old says the government should move to facilitate skills transfer in emerging technologies as the world has become technology-driven.



“We aim to branch out far and wide to bring you our craft beer

KATLEGO NGAKE, 31

Free State

Katlego Ngake, an entrepreneur from Bloemfontein, is making good progress towards putting his locally brewed beer, Rooted Craft, on shelves in bars and restaurants across the country. Ngake says Rooted Craft Brewery wants to develop into a major producer, with micro-bars and restaurants providing jobs for young people. The craft beer is already available in major hangout spots across Bloemfontein.

In 2021, Ngake and his business partners, Itumeleng Melesi and Nthato Musa, won Shoprite's Hustle competition. “The Hustle competition is recognition of the critical role that the awarded SMMEs play in growing South Africa's economic future,” he tells us.

According to Ngake, this inspiring story began in 2018 when he was playing video games with friends. A moment's glance at the ingredients column on a beer bottle planted the seed. “Today that seed has germinated into Rooted, based in Bloemfontein. We aim to branch out far and wide to bring you our craft beer,” he declares.

Ngake believes unemployment is becoming an impending disaster. “It's increasing not only the crime rate, but the feeling of hopelessness, which coincidentally is having a direct impact on the youth's mental health.”

In his view, the government needs to ensure that every penny that is budgeted for small business development is channelled correctly. “Secondly, invest more in the entrepreneurial space but with the purpose of ensuring that the already established small businesses have the necessary education to run and later scale up the business.”

LETLHOGILE MORAKILE, 30

Free State

Co-owning a law firm that offers an array of services, doing some advocacy work and being an admitted attorney of the High Court of South Africa are what Letlhogile Morakile's heart beats for. As co-founder and director of the firm, the Free State-born attorney is the Morakile in Morakile Tibane Attorneys Inc, a law firm based in Johannesburg and Bloemfontein.

The 30-year-old's areas of expertise include civil litigation, copyright law, entertainment law, family law and administration of deceased estates. One of the largest royalty-collecting societies in Africa receives legal services from the firm.

Morakile conducts lectures and workshops in and around Johannesburg to inform owners of pubs,

restaurants and nightclubs about adhering to collecting societies' licensing requirements.

“I noticed the gap between the practical approach of the business world and the theory-based instruction in the LLB curriculum. As a result, I decided to lead an internship programme that provides students with crucial exposure to the legal fraternity.”

To give back to the community, Morakile regularly participates in efforts to inform the public about HIV/Aids.

Domestic violence victims receive free legal assistance from Morakile's practice as part of their campaign against GBV.

African Bank: A story of Audacity

Audacity. It is defined as “the willingness to take surprisingly bold risks”. You will find it in every great achievement, from Nelson Mandela’s long walk to freedom, to a house that starts off as a dream and ends up as a home. Audacity is what allows the seemingly impossible to become possible.

In 1964, a group of audacious black business leaders gathered for the inaugural NAFCOG (the National African Federated Chambers of Commerce) meeting in Soweto. Among them were the founding chairperson of African Bank, Dr Sam Motsuenyane, and business legend Dr Richard Maponya. Eager to find a solution to the lack of funding available to black businesses at the time, they resolved to form their own bank. According to Dr Motsuenyane, it was then that some of the members insisted that, to keep the dream alive, they should begin the process of raising funds for their bank there and then.

“Some guys said ‘but when we leave from here, we are going to lose this idea of starting our own bank. Why don’t we look into our pockets, and take out any money that’s in the pockets, and put it on the table’. R70 was raised...”

R70. It isn’t much in today’s money. Back then, it was nowhere close to the R1 million needed to start a bank. In 1972, Dr Motsuenyane travelled to London to lobby Barclays to assist with training staff and to invest in the bank. Yet another audacious move. But it paid off. In 1975, African Bank was born. It had taken 10 years of hard graft and determination, but the dream had finally become a reality. A bank for the people, by the people, serving the people.

The path to success is never a straight road. There will be twists and turns, obstacles, and potholes. African Bank has faced many challenges in its quest to serve the people. But the vision held by our founders is a dream that has refused to die. Today, African Bank is a growing institution, constantly strengthening its capacity to partner with our communities and entrepreneurs on that path to prosperity.

The year 2022, in particular, was a momentous year for African Bank. It was the year in which we acquired Grindrod Bank, and the majority of Ubank’s assets and liabilities. The Grindrod Bank acquisition will accelerate the return to our original mandate, which was to help the underserved entrepreneurs of South Africa.

When Ubank ran into trouble, African Bank decided to pick up the baton and continue to provide essential financial services to mine workers and their families. The acquisition of the majority of Ubank’s assets and liabilities not only aligned with African Bank’s strategic vision, but it also underlined the founding philosophy that inspired our creation. “This deal fits into our strategy of building a scalable and sustainable bank with a compelling listable proposition,” says Sibongiseni Ngundze, our Chief Executive Officer for Consumer Banking.

“The vision of our founders, of ‘an African Bank for the people, by the people, serving the people’, demands that we strive to make a meaningful difference in our country and in the lives of those who contribute so much to our economy.”

It is a deal that will give former Ubank customers access to even more products and services, as well as a wider network of Branches. Though many banks have closed down their physical locations in favour of purely digital services, we know that our customers at times prefer face-to-face interaction when it comes to important financial decisions. As a result, we have bucked the trend and expanded our Branch network, taking African Bank to the people, wherever they may be.

The audacity to believe that you can realise your goals and dreams is the beating heart of the African Bank story. It is this bold energy that has allowed us to weather many storms and emerge stronger, wiser, and even more determined to fulfil our purpose of advancing lives. Throughout the years, so many of our customers have seen their lives changed for the better by the products we offer. Houses have been built and renovated. Children have graduated in front of proud parents. Small businesses have found the support they needed to grow. African Bank is a champion of the audacious, your partner in finding your true potential and making things happen.

Do you have the audacity to believe?



YOUTH IN BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

KELEBOGILE LECHWANO, 29 Free State

When she noticed the need for extra classes in her community, Kelebogile Lechwano knew she could not look the other way. As a result, the B.Tech: Language Practice holder founded A Step to Brilliance Extra Classes.

The academic and social service establishment that is run from Rocklands, Mangaung assists primary school learners with homework, mental maths, creative writing, and life-skills activities. It is serviced by tutors who work on a casual basis; this includes the foundation-phase tutor who assists with the after-school programme, the Sesotho tutor and the mathematics tutor, who provide lessons to learners.

Her hope is for the business to grow and employ

tutors who will assist with natural science and social science, as these subjects seem to be a challenge for primary school learners.

Expressing her appreciation for her staff, the programme manager adds that the tutors have made a difference by helping improve learners' school grades and helping the institution grow.

To fuel her passion, there has been recognition in the form of a nomination as one of the National Youth Development Agency 2021 Trailblazers and being a runner-up at the Township Entrepreneur Alliance (TEA) business pitch competition for emerging entrepreneurs held in Mangaung.



“
The tutors have since made a difference by helping improve the learners' school grades and helping the institution to grow

“

There should be a change of attitude and behaviour



NKHETHOA MOKOENA, 33

Free State

Sometimes we must turn our backs on what we have studied in order to follow our passions and lead fulfilling lives. This is exactly what Nkhethoa Mokoena did when the idea to start Dile Events hit her. The radiography graduate and entrepreneur has been offering catering, décor and flower arranging to her growing customer base, and there is no turning back.

Though she started her entrepreneurial journey offering catering and décor services only, she later added a florist shop upon spotting a gap. “This is a big deal, as the people of Botshabelo are seldom exposed to such,” remarks the proud township florist.

Mokoena's aim is not only to create beautiful events or memories for her clients, but to also offer them a complete and personalised event-planning experience.

On winning the war on youth unemployment, the 33-year-old states: “There should be a change of attitude and behaviour.” The youth must be taught personal development and confidence, and those who aspire to be entrepreneurs should be encouraged to start as soon as they discover their drive.

“

What we are trying to build is not only a brand but a movement of greatness



KARABO TLHOTLHALEMAJE, 30

Free State

Even though the odds were stacked against him, Karabo Vincent Tlhotlhamajje rose above his circumstances to make a better life for himself and his daughter. He is the founder of PROLIFIC Mobile Car Wash, a fast-rising SMME in Bloemfontein.

“I started this mobile car wash business with only R70 in my pocket. Lockdown was difficult for everyone. We had no money and no way of earning a living. My daughter had just been born a week before, and I needed to find a way to support her.”

People thought he was crazy when he started a mobile car wash despite not having a car. “I did this with no transportation, only taxis, and sometimes by walking to clients with no proper equipment – just me and my bucket.”

Tlhotlhamajje and his team conducted research that revealed that about 60% of persons living in Mangaung's urban areas owned two or more cars, and that most people found it difficult to visit car washes because of hectic schedules and safety concerns. This sparked the idea of providing a full car wash experience to clients, whether they are at home or at work.

Tlhotlhamajje describes unemployment as a growing concern in this weakening economy that can only be solved by generating sustainable jobs through entrepreneurship and innovation.

LESEGO MAPHANGA, 26 Gauteng

“The key obstacle in photography is that these days everyone is a photographer.”



It is said some things are taught and some caught in the process of life. If there is one person who brings this saying to life, it is Lesege Maphanga.

When it became financially impossible – as it is for millions of young South Africans – to further his studies, Maphanga took advantage of the digital space and learnt a skill he had always dreamt of having – photography.

When he had mastered his photography skills, Maphanga gathered money from fixing computers, digital devices and doing some graphic design on the side, to afford his first camera. Eventually, he started his photography studio idea. Today, the studio employs two young people.

The 26-year-old states that the key obstacle in photography is that these days everyone is a photographer, adding that it takes something really special to get yourself recognised.

According to this go-getter, schooling and skills are the keys to job opportunities for the youth. Maphanga believes that no matter what obstacles come his way, nothing will stop him from making a success of photography.

MULALO GRACE NEMATAHANI, 31 Limpopo

“Our work is all about using literacy, especially financial literacy, to assist our people make informed decisions.”



When it comes to literacy, Mulalo Nematahane does not hold back. The certified financial planner from Muraga Village, Thohoyandou, wants those around her to be generally and financially literate.

Her passion for financial literacy, entrepreneurship, education and gender equality would not let her rest. This passion, coupled with her drive to empower, educate and celebrate women, led to the birth of ImPower'd Book.

The book club has been nothing short of a wild fire. Initially founded by only three women in July 2019, ImPower'd has spread rapidly to over 300 women all over the world. They read one book a month and review it on the last weekend of the month.

The recognition brought by the Business Engage Accenture Gender Mainstreaming Award in 2022 has been a confirmation that the 31-year-old is indeed changing the world, one woman at a time.

“Being an Unsung Hero is an honour and great recognition for the work we do. Our work is all about using literacy, especially financial literacy, to assist our people make informed decisions.”

She says the youth should be empowered to use the information acquired in their studies to start businesses, so that they can employ others.

“ Fighting unemployment among young people requires a comprehensive and long-term commitment from various stakeholders



NALEDI PHAHLO, 33

Free State

Looking at the high youth unemployment rate in her community, Thaba Nchu-born Naledi Phahlo knew she was destined for the entrepreneurial route. Through this realisation, coupled with an interest in owning a business in the chemical space and a love for mathematics, DeeDee Hygiene Solutions was established.

The business-intelligence analyst's establishment, which manufactures affordable, quality and biodegradable detergents for household and industrial use, is eradicating youth unemployment by employing eight young people.

Phahlo's intentions for her community's youth are not only job creation, but empowerment and self-reliance. According to her, fighting unemployment among young people requires a long-term commitment from various stakeholders. Young people should realise that everyone has their own unique gifts which can earn them a sustainable living.

During Covid-19, she offered her services to churches for free to ensure they remained safely open. She also donated face shields, sanitisers and masks in Thaba Nchu.

Phahlo has won business competitions from various organisations, including the South African Breweries.

NEO CHOLO, 18

Gauteng

Eighteen years ago, Mamelodi produced a dynamite that would prove to be a gift to the world. Now that dynamite has blown up internationally, winning awards and speaking to massive global audiences.

This is the inspiring story of Neo Cholo, the owner of public relations and marketing company, African Neo Media.

The author and entrepreneur's company profiles creatives and organisations to promote their work internationally. She also has a philanthropic side. As founder and chairperson of Teens with Vision CBO, Cholo focuses on creating poverty-free communities through food-relief programmes, dignity packs and educational outreach initiatives. As a contribution to the plight of women, he has also founded Mosetsana Feminine, which owns Mosetsana Pads and is involved in youth-empowerment programmes.

Cholo has received a Future Leader Award in Kenya and was African Achiever in Nigeria, among others. He is studying towards his BCom in marketing management.

“

Being a young entrepreneur means letting discipline and passion take care of my entrepreneurial journey



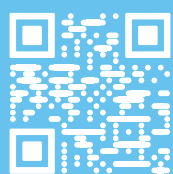


Standard Bank

10% at a time. Small start. Big result.

We all know that you don't just become a famous musician, CEO, or fly a plane. It takes many small steps to get there. Standard Bank's 10% movement is a plug to assist young South Africans to build their dream 10% at a time.

This movement aims to help the youth develop the right mindset and skills to achieve their dreams.



Scan to find
out more

<https://qrco.de/be31q3>

MyMo

For just R5.95 per month, the Standard Bank MyMo Account is loaded with benefits.

Standard Bank
mobile

Stay connected to your fam for less. Get R50 airtime plus an additional R50 airtime for R5* when you sign up now for a Standard Bank Mobile SIM.

*This applies to customers 18 years and older.

PLUGGEDIN

PLUGGEDIN is a career success platform designed to empower the youth to realise their career potential and succeed in the modern economy. Land your dream job with access to the following FREE tools: career assessments and recommendations, job opportunities, online courses, and funding opportunities.

Microsoft

Microsoft Digital Literacy (valued at R6 500 per customer): Receive a Microsoft Digital Literacy certificate that confirms your prior learning, certification and competence at any higher learning institution.

VARSITY VIBE

Varsity Vibe is South Africa's first youth-focused discount platform which gives you access to a world of deals and discounts on items ranging from fashion to food, beauty and so much more. The list is endless! Sign up for FREE and save.



Inspiring new ways

#BelieveInSA



YOUTH IN BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Sunday World Unsung Heroes 2023

“

Hardworking, inspiring and dedicated

THANDAZANI ZULU, 25

KwaZulu-Natal

Thandazani Nosipho Zulu is establishing herself as a young businesswoman to be reckoned with. She occupies an influential leadership positions in corporate, civil society and business.

Zulu holds a Bachelors of Business Administration degree from the University of KwaZulu-Natal. Again, she has bagged a B.Com Honours in Entrepreneurship, which has become the foundation on which she builds her businesses. She fashions herself as a young business leader.

Zulu is the owner and manager of Food by the Gift, a fast-growing catering and events management company. Also, she serves as a board member in three organisations, the South African School of Practical Skills, Life by Design Foundation and the Thandanani Foundation. As if all this were not enough, she was recently appointed joint director of Women in Business South Africa (Midlands).

Professionally, Zulu works in Johannesburg as a senior consultant.

She has attended the Africa Women Innovation & Entrepreneurship Forum, and is the first cohort mentee of the Cyril Madiba Foundation, GOPIO's Woman of Influence Award Winner. She is a recipient of the e-Preneur of the Year from Women in Business in collaboration with the Pietermaritzburg Chamber of Business.

Zulu has also been featured in a number of print, electronic and broadcast media platforms. She is a hardworking, inspiring and dedicated young woman who believes in investing in self-development and empowering other women.

APIWE HOTELE, 31

Eastern Cape

“My mission is to create a society that is inclusive and confident in Science, Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) regardless of their background, race, gender or age,” declares Apiwe Hotele. “A community where we use technology to improve the lives and economic status of ordinary South Africans and the broader African continent.”

Hotele holds a BSc in Computer Science and Biochemistry (cum laude) from the University of Fort Hare and a MSc in Computer Engineering from the University of Cape Town. She founded Enlighten Tech, a company that aims to use technology as a vehicle to improve education, unemployment and the safety of women and children.

Hotele founded #BreakingTheStereotype, a non-profit organisation that advocates for an inclusive environment for women in STEM and bust the myth that science and engineering are for men. Her CV includes working as a senior commercialisation specialist for the South African Radio Astronomy, the custodian of all radio astronomy initiatives in South Africa. She has received a number of awards for her contribution in STEM, such as Mail & Guardian's 200 Young South Africans and News24's 100 Young Mandela. Again, she was



“

My superpower is my ability to motivate, encourage and empower people

named as one of the top inspiring women in ICT by the Netherlands through the SA embassy and CoCreateSA and won the 2021 Accenture Rising Star Award under the ICT category.

MANTWA KHUTLANG, 34

Free State

Mase Mantwa Khutlang is the proud owner of two restaurants called Bokamoso based in Mangaung. The former schoolteacher also runs a dress rental service combined with a men's grooming service, as well as kiddies' lunchboxes for busy parents.

Khutlang first started this venture as a home-based cooking business, but it has since grown to become one of the prominent restaurants in Mangaung and a trusted partner for event organisers.

Bokamoso is a pioneering African cuisine restaurant that employs 14 workers, of which 90% are women. The restaurant caters for a growing customer base made up of locals and travellers looking for an authentic Free State dish.

Due to booming demand, Khutlang opened an express restaurant that is strictly for takeaways. Both restaurants enjoy a prime location in the busy business hub of Westdene.

Some of Khutlang's business highlights include



“

Passion always wins

winning the 2018 Coca-Cola DStv Food Festival, receiving the Free State Heroine Award, being listed as one of the top

100 Free Most Influential Free Staters, among others.

She believes the unemployment crisis in our country can be solved by young entrepreneurs like herself.

“The uniqueness of what we all have to offer, given the opportunity, could really be our breakthrough in reducing or even curbing unemployment. Passion always wins.”

“

Entrepreneurs shouldn't give up on their dreams



BONOLO MMUTSI BANDA, 29

Free State

Bonolo Mmutsi Banda, a young small-scale egg farmer from Mangaung, hopes to one day expand her farm and have a nationwide distribution entity. Banda founded LeePoultry (Pty) Ltd in November 2022, largely supplying eggs to the local community of Rocklands.

“In future, as an aspiring entrepreneur and young farmer my biggest dream is to grow production and supply more eggs to even bigger markets around the country, add about 7000 hens to increase production and have land and structures secure enough to sustain my business,” she says.

Banda fell for the idea of starting an egg farm while reading magazines and decided to embark on it as a way of creating economic opportunities for herself. “I noticed that poultry farming might work for me as it does not really require much to start. The motivation behind that idea was that I wanted to create something from the ground up and be the first young female to make a mark in my community,” she relates.

Banda also intends to hire more women as she grows her business. “This will show that no matter the business, women can also succeed.”

Banda is of the opinion that if young entrepreneurs unite, they can beat unemployment in South Africa. “Entrepreneurs shouldn't give up on their dreams, as they are an inspiration to the youth.”



“Starting an e-business just requires one to be digitally savvy.”

LEBOHANG LIKHOJANE, 30

Gauteng

Lebohang Likhojane is the founder of SmartSentials, an online grocery store, and co-founder of ReThink Afrika.

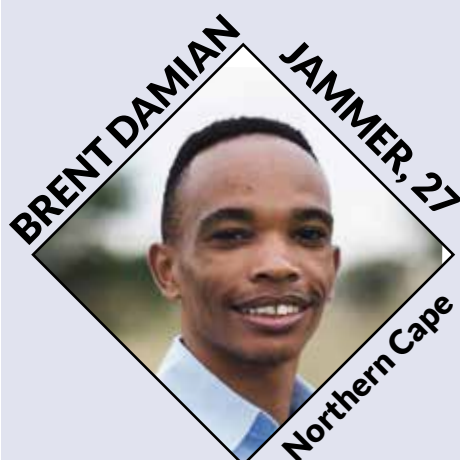
In 2016, while still a student in Mangaung, he launched the online grocery store, which he later expanded to Johannesburg. With the assistance of Digify Africa, SmartSentials won the Facebook for Business Award as the most digitally viable business.

Likhojane was selected as an Icon for Change in Southern Africa in 2019 during a ceremony held in Accra, Ghana. In the same year, his company scooped the Business Pivot of the Year award.

Likhojane is the co-author of a three-part eCommerce learner guide that helped launch ReThink Afrika, a company that creates educational content and offers eCommerce training. He's currently employed at Wits University's Tshimologong Digital Innovation Precinct as an enterprise development analyst.

Together with his team, he is now developing an online school and moving into the ed-tech sector.

“The approach to being an 'e-preneur' is different as you have so many digital tools you can capitalise on without spending huge amounts of money, starting an e-business just requires one to be digitally savvy and this has nothing to do with building apps or being a developer,” he says.



“

Farming is my passion

Brent Damian Jammer was born in Barkly West in the Northern Cape. He spent most of his holidays on the family farm, where he first discovered his love for agriculture. After matriculating, Jammer enrolled at the University of the Free State, where he obtained his undergrad and post-grad qualifications.

He holds a Master's in Agricultural Management, after completing a Water Research Commission project with an emphasis on youth employment in rain-fed crop farming and entrepreneurial development for establishing small farming businesses.

“My goal is to one day become a commercial farmer who adds value to the South African economy. I believe that by applying the right

strategies I will achieve my dream,” Jammer states.

Jammer has competed in the Old Mutual Agricultural Student of the Year finals. He had some of his essays published in Veeplaas, Stockfarm, and Farmbizz magazines. In 2019, he was named the agriculture department's Student Assistant of the Year, just a year after joining the department.

“The farming industry is a barren industry that is entered by few young people due to the stereotype of overalls and getting hands dirty mentality,” notes Jammer.

“This is one of the reasons why I chose the industry because since my childhood, I have been someone who likes to challenge the status quo. Farming is my passion.”



Local youth takes South Africa by storm with her traditional attire business

By Kagiso Bonoko

The challenges faced by the youth in South Africa are numerous and contribute to the high unemployment rate. These include inadequate skills and education, structural economic issues, limited work experience, inequality, discrimination and high competition.

The South African economy faces structural challenges such as limited job creation, a mismatch between skills demanded by the market and those possessed by job seekers, and a lack of investment in labour-intensive industries.

Socioeconomic inequality, as well as discrimination based on race, gender and class, also contribute to the challenges faced by the youth in accessing employment opportunities. This is compounded by a large number of job seekers vying for limited job opportunities, which contributes to intense competition for available positions, making it harder for young people to secure employment.

Despite these challenges, some youths have grabbed the bull by the horns and made it in the job market and business world against all odds. One of them, Lufuno Netshithuthuni, is the founder of an award-winning, locally manufactured traditional fashion brand called Funo Designs. She says her brand, which hails from a small village in the Venda area of Limpopo, offers unique products.

"We basically specialise in creating unique, innovative, and modern traditional attire and shoes for women from all cultural backgrounds who love cultural fashion. We are a team of five. None of my employees is permanent yet as I'm still trying to build and stabilise the business," says Netshithuthuni.

Of all her products, she says, her traditional shoes, known as Funo Designs' shoe, is a hit with customers. The story behind the traditional shoes began in 2019 when Netshithuthuni and her family hosted a traditional event. On that day she needed a pair of traditional shoes that had a cultural theme to match her traditional attire.

When she could not find anything suitable from the local town, she decided to buy raw materials to create her own shoes. The young entrepreneur then designed and created two pairs of shoes, for herself and her sister. Compliments and inquiries about the shoes flocked to her social media posts, with people wanting to find out where they bought them.

This was how Funo Designs was born. She had unknowingly identified a gap in the market and grabbed a business opportunity.

Years after the business was officially established, Funo Designs became a member of Proudly South African. This was a good opportunity for the business because it gave it a bigger platform to showcase its products.

"The Buy Local Summit was a big stage where we could showcase Funo Designs products. It was impressive to see the hunger that other entrepreneurs also have in there," Netshithuthuni explained. "I was really impressed at the number of people who wanted to work for themselves out there. People really want to be masters of their own destiny, and also to create employment for others. They are very creative, and they are also willing to share ideas. I got the opportunity to network with other entrepreneurs and developed

business relationships that were not going to be possible without this summit."

She says she is amazed by the number of existing opportunities for the youths.

"Growing up we were always told to go to university after completing matric and pursue certain careers. I am in no way encouraging others not to go to school, school is good; it really is. What I want to emphasise is that there are alternative business opportunities out there. Opportunities that one can create for themselves and not necessarily wait for someone else to create them. For instance, I studied nature conservation, and what I am busy doing right now is very far from what I studied. People need to be more creative beyond their career paths. The internet has made it easy for one to gather information.

You don't even need a computer; you can use your phone."

The government can do more to raise awareness about opportunities, Netshithuthuni maintains.

"I honestly think that the government needs to do more in raising awareness and share more information about available opportunities that can help self-starters like me. Rural areas are still at a disadvantage because there are so many skilled people with a lot of talents and gifts, but have limited access to information, especially information around free business courses and business funding," concluded Netshithuthuni, who plans to expand into other parts of the country.



Lufuno Netshithuthuni, is the founder of an award-winning, locally manufactured traditional fashion brand called Funo Designs.





NKOSINATHI TEMBA, 22

Gauteng

"I have been able to successfully combine my passion for education and finance through Thuto Education Online," relates Nkosinathi Temba, a young entrepreneur who grew up between Soshanguve and Klipgat. The founder has a demonstrable history in ideating, producing and commercialising innovative solutions in high red-tape industries such as finance.

The 22-year-old's construction of software programmes started in his teenage years with the intention of delivering alpha through active-fund management by utilising his numerology study, which is where his passion and career in the financial services industry began.

"I am now looking to solve social and financial exclusion, with Thuto.io, an innovative platform owned by Thuto Education Online," explains Temba.

The young entrepreneur says Thuto.io provides a ground-breaking response to the different challenges that include underpreparedness, lack of desire, exclusion, and psychological problems that impede students' performance and advancement.

By leveraging the power of technology, Thuto.io

"Thanks to social media, practical information is available at our fingertips"



empowers both schools and learners to achieve better results.

The platform's web-based application enables schools to create custom recognition and reward programmes that are tailored to the specific needs and goals of their learners. This level of personalisation ensures that each student receives targeted support and encouragement.

Overall, he believes Thuto.io revolutionises the way students engage with their education. The entrepreneur adds: "By combining personalised gamification, financial literacy, and comprehensive progress-tracking, the platform fosters a culture of self-driven learning and achievement."

According to Temba, the country's youth is taking full advantage of 4IR opportunities, as we live in an information age. "Thanks to social media, practical information is available at our fingertips."

ZINHLE MASEKO, 28

Gauteng

Despite the obvious hurdles that young female entrepreneurs face in South Africa, Zinhle Maseko has always worked to break these down. Having begun her career at one of the big four banks and worked her way up, she has become a multi-award-winning IT risk manager.

Outside of the business boardroom, she has distinguished herself as a speaker, angel investor, social entrepreneur, and technopreneur. She is also one of the creators of The Marking App.

As recognition to the strides she has made, Maseko was named one of the SA Top 30 Female Founders in Technology by the SA Innovation Summit in 2021. The following year, she was chosen by SEDA to participate in the 2022 Global Entrepreneurship Congress in Saudi Arabia.

She has also collaborated with the creator of Bloc Footwear to help expand the brand and business as a way of working with and investing in African start-ups. Bloc Footwear is a South African footwear business that creates attractive and comfortable athleisure shoes, allowing Africans to express themselves via customising.

The young entrepreneur intends to localise manufacturing to capitalise on the African Continental Free Trade Agreement and invest in more complicated shoemaking processes, which would lead to additional job prospects for South Africans.

Another intention of hers is to expand Africa's start-up ecosystem by investing in more innovative start-ups, believing that this is the surest road to Africa's success.

"

I was named one of the SA Top 30 Female Founders in Technology by the SA Innovation Summit



YOUTH IN BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP



"

We all have a part to play because we are all part of the national economic ecosystem

REFILWE XABA, 30

Free State

Refilwe Xaba is the CEO and founder of Glolooks, a high-quality cosmetic line that boasts a global footprint. Glolooks hair care products are available on the Glolooks website, partner salons as well as digital platforms.

Xaba's theoretical expertise is centred on small-business development, with a preference for enterprises owned and operated by women.

In addition to recently presenting at the International Business Conference and being chosen as an NRF scholar, she was also a runner-up in the National Engen Pitch and Polish competition. Furthermore, she was named among JCI's Ten Outstanding Young Persons in South Africa.

The 2023 Mandela Washington Fellow will be representing South Africa in the Africa and Middle East competition after winning JCI's Creative Young Entrepreneur Award.

Xaba says that she does not believe the government can eliminate unemployment on its own, stressing a need for all of us to work together.

"The only way to reduce unemployment is to ensure that an economy is active. This activity involves government, corporate, higher learning institutions, profit, and non-profit entities, as well as ordinary civilians. In essence, we all have a part to play because we are all part of the national economic ecosystem."

"We need more job creators than seekers."



Motholo believes that removing red tape and investing in small businesses through financial and non-financial means is what will defeat unemployment.

"We also need to encourage entrepreneurship and innovation in young people at an early age. We need more job creators than seekers."

MAWETHU SOGA, 33

Gauteng

"Sometimes the most innovative ideas are the ones that break the mould."



Sometimes the best business idea comes from what frustrates you the most. That is how Fixxr, which Mawethu Soga co-runs, was born. Soga's business partner encountered issues with locating a mechanic and immediately saw a business opportunity that resulted in Fixxr.

Fixxr is an online platform to book services online and qualified mechanics can visit clients' homes or offices. It also gives them access to maintenance schedules, get transparent pricing, make payments, access service history, and receive maintenance reminders.

Soga holds a BCom Honours in Business Management from Nelson Mandela University and is a former senior solution subject matter expert for Standard Bank.

As the business's head of growth and commercialisation, Soga is responsible for customer acquisition, engagement, and retention strategies, among others. Among its highlights, Fixxr expanded to two more provinces and introduced subscription plans. The company also clocked R15-million in investments over a five-year period.

"Don't be afraid to take risks. The digital space is vast, and sometimes the most innovative ideas are the ones that break the mould."

LEBOHANG MATLABE, 28

Free State

"Technology can be a catalyst of development."



Born in the Free State, entrepreneur, consultant, and trainer Lebohang Matlabe has more than seven years of expertise in business development and consultancy. He also has over five years' experience as a broadcaster and media practitioner through different community and university media platforms. He believes that technology can be a catalyst of development and a bridge for many in Africa. To foster a culture of reading and writing, promote literacy and create rooted social activists in schools, Matlabe started Sgela Mobile web-app. This came after obtaining his B.Tech in Marketing Management and Project Management from the Central University of Technology as well as a Higher Certificate in Entrepreneurship and Business Literacy from the University of the Free State.

According to the 28-year-old, Sgela Mobile is a school-management system that ensures learners have access to online tools and study materials, linking them up with virtual tutors. The platform allows cross-communication between learners, teachers and parents who subscribe to the platform through schools. It helps schools with administrative functions such as recording attendance, marks, arranging classes and submitting assignments.

Matlabe believes that education is still one of the best ways to achieve social justice, pull many out of poverty and address the socio-economic difficulties we confront.

The trainer also feels that more should be done to educate the youth about technology and innovation, as young people are taking full advantage of the 4IR in various sectors. We need to intensify the efforts made by both government and private sectors to unlock several bottlenecks in the ecosystem.

KEMISO MOTHOLO, 29

Free State

Kemiso Motholo, the owner of KemiChem, holds a chemical engineering diploma from the University of Johannesburg.

Hailing from Qwa-Qwa in the Free State, Motholo started the business after realising there was a huge gap in providing quality cleaning and hygienic solutions to the locals in his area. "My passion for entrepreneurship, manufacturing, and innovation is what drove me," he shares.

KemiChem manufactures cleaning and hygiene chemicals. It also provides cleaning and hygienic solutions such

as fumigation, disinfection and deep cleaning. The business currently employs four people full-time and one person on a part-time basis.

According to Motholo, they supply their products to schools, creches, local colleges, hospitals and resellers.

In 2022, Motholo was named one of the Free State Premier's Top 50 Most Inspirational Youth, an honour given to young people from the Free State making their mark in their own fields. He was also awarded the SAB Foundation Tholoana Programme Gold Star and SEDA Thabo Mofutsanyana Youth Enterprise Coaching Programme's Most Outstanding Entrepreneur as well as Best Business.

YOUTH IN BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP



Workplace training for young people can benefit South African economy

Most countries are grappling with rising unemployment, which is hitting the youth the hardest. South African youth is on the same boat and the country is responding by launching several training and entrepreneurship initiatives to stimulate the economy and roll back high unemployment.

The month of June is dedicated to honouring the youth, with the 16th commemorated as the National Youth Day in memory of the Soweto student uprisings.

This year's Youth Month marks the 47th anniversary of the uprisings, commemorated under the theme: "Accelerating youth economic emancipation for a sustainable future".

The theme is meant to galvanise the country to tackle with vigour the unemployment crisis facing the current generation of young South Africans. Long before the Covid-19 pandemic worsened unemployment, most of the youth was caught up in structural unemployment caused by a mismatch between the skills that workers offer and skills that employers require to grow their businesses.

Over the last four decades, the South African economy has undergone structural changes, whereby the contribution of some industries

to the gross domestic product (GDP) declined substantially.

Although still very much endowed in minerals, South Africa has morphed into a post-industrial economy resembling economies of the United States, western Europe, and Japan, where blue-collar workers have been largely replaced by white-collar workers such as software developers, engineers, doctors, accountants, lawyers, real estate managers, bankers, and fund managers.

In its current form, the South African economy is based on knowledge industries, financial services, technology, and e-commerce, with finance being the largest contributor to the GDP, accounting for roughly 23% to economic output, followed by personal services with 17%, and trade at 14%.

While this level of economic transformation is an indicator of industrial progress, it has unintentionally produced structural unemployment, which hits young people hardest than any other age group.

Despite the South African economy creating employment for four consecutive quarters last year, youth unemployment has remained stubbornly high.

According to Stats SA, the unemployment rate in the fourth quarter of 2022 was



South African youth are at the coalface of rampant unemployment.

61% for South Africans aged 15-24 and 39,9% for those aged 25-34 years. These unemployment rates are above the current official national rate of 32.7%.

In response, the government and business sector are partnering to find innovative solutions to address youth unemployment. Several youth development and empowerment initiatives covering formal education, training, learnerships, and entrepreneurship are underway to equip young jobseekers with skills that prospective employers require and ensure that they secure long-term employment.

Last year, the government announced R5.2-billion in tax cuts to help support post-covid economic recovery and to boost incentives for youth employment.

One of the flagship initiatives is the Presidential Youth Employment Intervention (PYEI), which aims to move no fewer than

2-million young people from learning to earning within the next decade. The PYEI plans to create employment for young South Africans in sectors such as digital and technology, global business services, agriculture, installation repairs and maintenance, social services and automotive.

Another initiative is the Youth Employment Service (YES) programme, which helps young jobseekers to gain work experience through 12-month employment placements. The initiative has a target of finding employment for 1-million young people.

There is no doubt that big challenges lie ahead in overcoming youth unemployment, but the efforts that are being made to address the problem are bearing fruit. More work must be done to scale up these initiatives, including accelerating policies that attract investment and stimulate small business development to ensure that employment is created across all sectors of the economy.

JUNE 16 | COURAGE

> **THIS IS WHO WE ARE**

We are the youth that summoned all our courage, rose to the occasion and refused to be silenced.
THIS IS WHO WE ARE.





NATIONAL YOUTH DEVELOPMENT AGENCY
OUR YOUTH. OUR FUTURE.

Accelerating youth economic emancipation for a sustainable future.

The NYDA was established primarily to address challenges faced by the nation's youth and this is guided by the vision of building "a credible, capable, inclusive and activist development agency that is responsive to the plight of South Africa's youth".

The NYDA continuously accelerates service delivery and has the aim of reaching out to young people across the country, particularly previously marginalised groups like young women, youth with disabilities, members of the LGBTQIA+ community and youth residing in deep rural areas and townships.

It is on that basis that, the NYDA linked its programmes to the following Medium-Term Strategic Framework (MTSF) outcomes:

- Transform the economy to serve the people through decent youth employment and youth entrepreneurship.
- Advance social transformation through the National Youth Service
- Coordinate the Integrated Youth Development Strategy

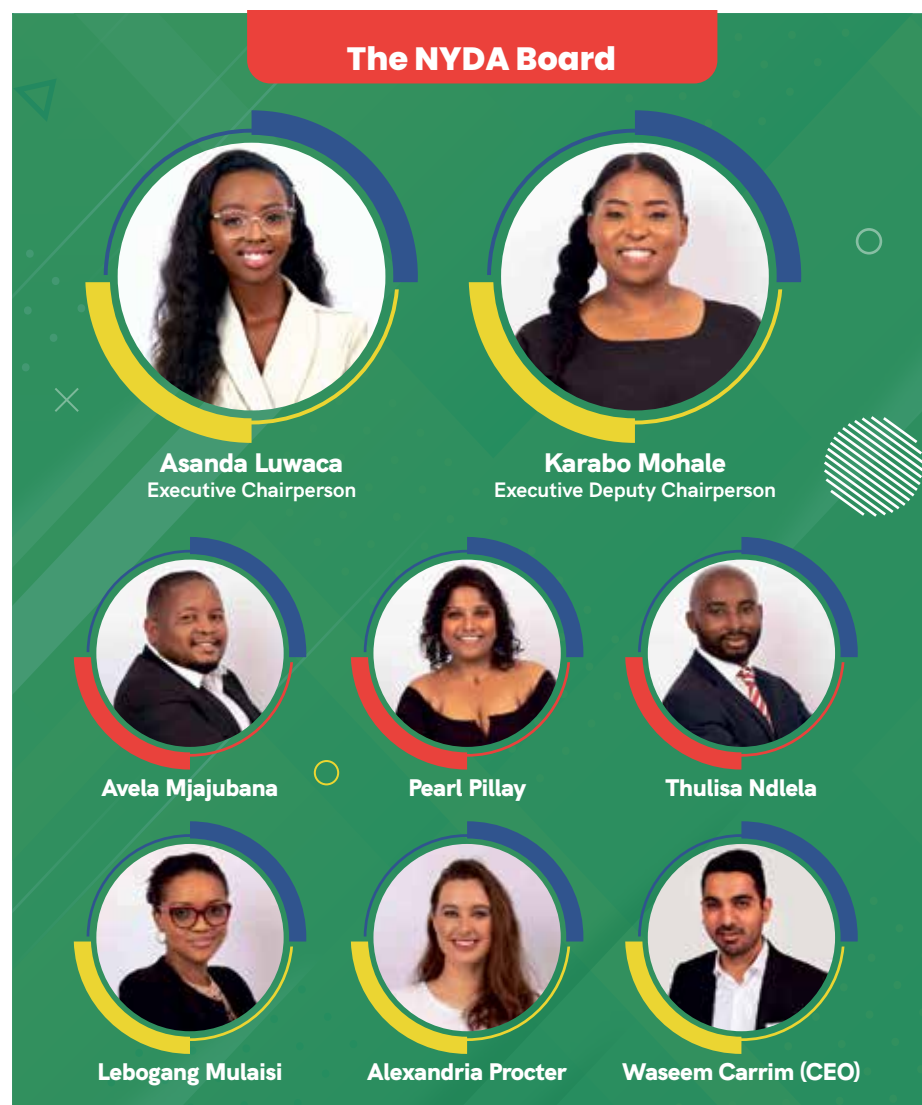
The NYDA has created an enabling environment to promote the full participation of youth with disabilities and young women in all NYDA programs and the agency aims to assist young persons with disabilities through linking them to

products and services of the NYDA as well as government at large beyond only setting targets but building an inclusive ecosystem for vulnerable youth to thrive.

The amendment of the NYDA Act is currently before Parliament and at an advanced stage. Such legislation is crucial, in the context of our slow-moving economic growth, resources constraints, and poor outlook. Therefore, the NYDA needs to forge meaningful partnerships with government, civil society organisations, business organisations, and development partners, in the quest to achieve common objectives.

The NYDA has rationalized its work and has a renewed focus towards youth entrepreneurship, the creation and facilitation of jobs as well as the coordination of the National Youth Services Programme across all sectors of government and society.

The Agency aims to adopt a more sectoral approach to job placements, which will include working closer with the private sector, civil society and industry at regional level and focusing on the



recruitment needs of business as well as ensuring that young people have the skill set to meet industry demands.

The NYDA looks forward to South Africa assuming the Chair of BRICS in 2023 and will position itself as a strong youth development agency, not just on the Continent, but also globally when South Africa hosts the BRICS Youth Summit in July 2023.

The NYDA has for the purposes of BRICS submitted the establishment of a BRICS Youth Secretariat for endorsement by young people, the Ministers of Youth of the BLOC and the Heads of State. This is an opportunity for the Youth Secretariat to become a structure of BRICS like the New Development Bank and the BRICS Business Council as well as for the structure to be headquartered in South Africa which can unlock benefits across employment, education, skills and research.

For Youth Day 2023, the NYDA moved away from the hosting of mass based rallies towards hosting a large career and opportunities expo for young people in order for them to receive access to information, knowledge and real life opportunities. This is informed by the changing nature of youth development work.

The opportunities expo incorporated Higher Education Institutions, Private and Public sector opportunities, as well as

opportunities provided by civil society organisations. Various masterclasses were hosted with industry experts to expose young people to modern day industries.

The Youth Day commemoration weekend also allowed for young people in the arts to be exposed to various platforms for them to showcase their work and understand how best to create a career within the creative industry.

The NYDA is currently working on high priority sectors for a skills revolution in the automotive industry, oceans economy and creative arts sectors. The agency has developed a concept for the placement of 250 000 young people in the National Youth Service across the civil society and the public sector in meaningful work that impacts not only on a young person, their communities but also the nation, building on the first cohort of 50 000 youth who have graduated through the NYS.

"By paying close attention to where young people are directing their efforts, and what barriers they encounter, the Agency will continue to see how to meet them where they are" - Executive Chairperson of the NYDA, Ms Asanda Luwaca.





NATIONAL YOUTH DEVELOPMENT AGENCY
OUR YOUTH. OUR FUTURE.

OUR PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

- Grant Programme
- Education and Skills
- Voucher Programme
- Business Management Training
- National Youth Service Programme
- Mentorship
- Market Linkages



• Did you know?

The NYDA has **44** offices across the country and are open from Monday to Friday between 08:00 & 17:00.

• How to access NYDA's products and services

To apply for the NYDA's products and services, register on our online portal: www.erp.nyda.gov.za

• Access to NYDA grant funding

Please read more about the NYDA grant funding on our website: www.nyda.gov.za. You may also contact our Customer Services Team on **0800 58 58 58** or email info@nyda.gov.za for more information.

• How much do NYDA's products and services cost?

Please note that all NYDA products and services are at no cost. **They are FREE!** If anyone requests any form of payment before they could assist you, please report them on our Fraud Line: **0800 203 240**

NYDA BENEFICIARIES

Samuel Bongani Zulu

Rise Ndabezitha Supply and Projects

Samuel Bongani Zulu is the owner of **Rise Ndabezitha Supply and Projects** which operates from Elukwatini Chief Albert Luthuli Local Municipality in Mpumalanga. This agricultural business was funded by the NYDA Secunda Branch. The owner used the NYDA grant funding to procure farming equipment and inputs such as a Jojo tank, manure, cabbage, spinach, green pepper, green chilli, as well as tomato seedlings.

The NYDA's intervention into his business has enabled him to supply Super SPAR in Elukwatini with 200-300 spinach bunches per week. He has further managed to sustain at least three job opportunities after receiving the funding from the agency.

For orders and business enquiries, email him at mageba.sb@gmail.com or call **060 864 0835**.



Amanda Nyoka

Amish Beauty and Glamour

The 33-year-old Amanda Nyoka is a proud owner of **Amish Beauty and Glamour (PTY) LTD**, which currently has a contract with Moja Love TV. The Eastern Cape-based beauty business is situated in Gqeberha. Amanda is a beneficiary of the NYDA grant funding. She initially accessed the NYDA Business Management Training course before proceeding to apply for financial support. The grant funding was used to purchase make up tools and products that have assisted Amanda to diversify her product offering. She shares that her business has been growing exponentially in Gqeberha.

Furthermore, Amish Beauty and Glamour (PTY) LTD's reputation has been internationally recognised. This youth-owned enterprise has worked with BBL Productions, a Los Angeles-based production company. Local corporations such as the SABC, Connect TV, Mahambehla Communications, Peeteenee Finance, and Isuzu South Africa have in addition utilised beauty services offered by Amanda's company. Amish Beauty and Glam manufactures the Amish Healthy skin care products as well. These range from body lotion, tissue oil, face cream as well as face serum oil - designed to improve skin health. Their social media handles are: [@amish_makeup_artists](https://www.instagram.com/amish_makeup_artists) on Instagram **Amish Beauty And Glam** on Facebook



REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



PRESIDENTIAL
YOUTH
EMPLOYMENT
INTERVENTION



TRAILBLAZERS CAMPAIGN 2023

The current challenges of the day, require young people to rise to the occasion, raise their hands up and become change makers. These are our 2023 Trailblazers who are community builders, risk takers, job creators, innovators and entrepreneurs.



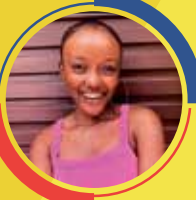
Tlotlisoang Mhlambiso

Tlotlisoang David Mhlambiso, originally from the Eastern Cape Province in Mount Fletcher "Tlokoeng", at Lugaadweni village has published one isiXhosa poetry book entitled, "Ukuphuma Kwelanga", "and one short story anthology entitled "A Journey Worth the Ride". Some of my craft has appeared in the UFS African Languages Press Book Anthology entitled Tsoho "The Awakening" 2023, Avbob Poetry 2022, Sol Plaatje European Union Poetry Anthology 2022, Fundza Literacy 2021 and on the University of the Free State's African Month website. Some of my work is co-authored with other UFS Student writers and is available on the University of the Free State's website.



Masimbonge Vuma

Masimbonge has been assisting other young people to start and run their own farming business, he has over 100 mentees and uses his social media to teach other young people about farming. He works as a field supervisor farming food for underprivileged communities in Cala his hometown. He is also running his own farm and has employed 7 young people permanently and his business was funded by National Youth Development Agency (NYDA).



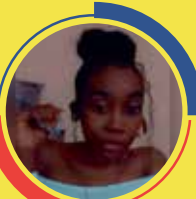
Thandolwenkosi Nkosi

Princess Thandolwenkosi Nkosi is a devoted 17-year-old young lady who has gone out of her way to assist children and young people of the community in Kwa-Thema. Young pioneer, philanthropist who is assisting in her community development.



Zintle James

Zintle started her own piggery in 2020, she trains young people who have an interest in piggery farming. Her business has hired 2 permanent workers in her community. She attends farmers' workshops in Sterkspruit where she teaches people who want to start their farming and assists them with funding applications.



Esihle Priscila Mhluzi

Esihle is a Disability Advocate and a pioneer of diversity and inclusion. She is the first model with a physical disability to walk the runway for Free State Fashion Week and has been cast by the likes of Gert Johan Coetzee. She was also Miss Free State SA 2021 2nd Princess: the first model with a physical disability to win such a title. She is a hospital Board Member at one of the best regional hospitals in the Eastern Cape.



Neziswa Mlenzana

Neziswa Mlenzana is the Co-founder and CEO of Greenvines Agricultural primary cooperative LTD and has established 2 school gardens and motivated 19 women and youth to start their own vegetable gardens she trains them on how to farm, make insect repellents, and worm farming. She has successfully linked two youth businesses to be funded by Nyandeni Municipality. She organized NYDA to train young people in life skills and Business Management. She is also running a campaign of encouraging youth to be registered on the voter's roll. In 2021 she became a secretary of Youth in Agriculture and rural development (YARD) and a member of the South African Youth Council to empower youth in rural areas in the OR Tambo district.



Sapho Wulana

Sapho is a pioneer in the film industry and has dedicated her career to helping young people from disadvantaged communities to learn the art of filmmaking using nothing but their cell phones. Despite many challenges she faced along the way, from lack of funding to resistance from those who doubted the potential of film projects made with mobile devices, she has always remained committed to her goal of empowering young people to tell their stories through film. Through her work, she has witnessed the transformative power of filmmaking for young people who may have never had the opportunity to express themselves in this way before.



Margaret Mabulane

Margaret Mabulane, CEO of Rea Dira Lehuma PTY Ltd, owns a 40-ha farm where she previously planted cotton on dry land. She is focused and dedicated to her work. She contributes significantly to employment in her community, she employs people at her farm from time to time. She is a talented and skilled individual, inspiring the youth in her community to pursue farming while actively sharing her knowledge and supporting aspiring farmers. Margaret's dedication to personal growth, her foundation in her mother's name, and her commitment to fighting poverty, hunger, and unemployment make her an exceptional trailblazer.



Zama Magubane

Zama is a young black woman based in the city of Johannesburg who works as a fine artist. Zama creates artwork to promote Afrofuturism and African narratives or rather African truths. She extended her capabilities by also showcasing the work of other artists and other performers involved in dance, singing, and designing through the events that she plans. Her writing educates readers drawn to African stories and thus opens a panel for conversation. In 2023 Zama fused her unique fashion sense together with her art and now is able to move the stories from art galleries to everyday garments allowing people to wear the story they feel not only looks appealing but resonates with a part of them.



Lukhanyo Nani

Lukhanyo is passionate about empowering disadvantaged schools and communities by providing them with free websites. With a strong belief in the transformative power of technology, he has dedicated his time and skills to visiting these schools and collaborating with their staff and students. By understanding their unique needs and goals, he designs and develops customized websites that showcase their achievements, resources, and initiatives. These websites serve as valuable tools to enhance communication, increase visibility, and create opportunities for collaboration within the community. Through his efforts, he strives to bridge the digital divide and empower disadvantaged schools, enabling them to better serve their students and foster a brighter future for the community as a whole.



Jordachelin Moodley

Jordachelin (Jody) Moodley is a technology enthusiast who hails from Durban, KwaZulu-Natal. Jordachelin has achieved many merits, awards, and international recognitions for his academic excellence. To date, he has achieved more than 50 distinctions under his tertiary education belt and strives to reach more. Apart from being academic, Jordachelin contributes effectively to the development of youth. During his secondary and tertiary phases, he formed a student group that he spearheaded to equip youth in community schools and universities with life coaching skills in dealing with and addressing issues such as (peer-pressure, substance abuse, goal setting, and self-confidence).



Olefile Hope Matlala

Olefile has demonstrated innovation excellence in the area of student accommodation and housing solutions for higher education institutions. As a co-founder of Reslocate, he spearheaded the development of a web-based application that tackles the critical shortage of student housing in South Africa, addressing challenges such as overcrowding, high rental prices, and rental scams.



Nokuzola Kakaza

Nokuzola is a true agent of change and a woman of substance, being in a wheelchair made her not question life and her strength. She runs multiple projects which are sanitary and toiletry campaigns, volunteers as a science tutor, sponsors Miss Royal SA & Lindhaven, trains school leavers with computer literacy, promotes the fight against xenophobia by donating food and clothes, and is a founder of a model school for woman with special needs.



Leonard Moliki

Leonard was born in Twelagte, a deep rural of the North-West, and grew up in Westonaria, west of Johannesburg. Leonard wishes to eradicate hunger for needy communities and help combat the climate crisis through farming. Leonard is the founder and CEO of Eco-Clean Cycle, a self-funded profit company with a Social Mission organization that develops food systems aimed at alleviating poverty while ensuring sustainable development. Eco-Clean Cycle drives two projects, namely the Farm to Table programme and Eco-Clean Cycle Hydroponics Enterprise Supplier Development for emerging youth-led agribusinesses.



Arthur Junior Makama

Arthur hosts community spelling Bee events, he hosts creative writing and mathematics competition for the community with Inspire Champions. He mentors, teach, motivate, and apply for learners free of charge. He started volunteering when he was only 16 in a youth encouragement program on Meletjie FM and secured sponsors for calculators, computers, and school uniforms.



Siyabulela Sophi

Siyabulela Sophi established MK Originals, an apparel manufacturing company in Makhaza Khayelitsha, Western Cape. The apparel company exists to promote local creativity and to provide job opportunities for young people. He uses his clothing to create unity and long-term growth in our Makhaza community. MK Originals offers a modest boutique store in Makhaza, Khayelitsha, where members of the community and tourists may enjoy local aesthetics. Siyabulela Sophi also founded Sophi Strategies Inc, a multifaceted management consulting firm and business strategy expert. Sophi Strategies Inc exists to help young people build legally compliant firms that can enter a market and compete profitably.



Matshepo Molotsi

Matshepo is a creative visionary, beauty enthusiast, self-taught makeup artist, and graphic designer. She holds a degree in Architecture and a certificate in Business & Entrepreneurship Development from the Young African Leadership Initiative. She is the founder of KebaSkin Organic Skincare, a brand she started after she lost her mother to COVID-19 in December 2020. She was also nominated for the Female Founders Initiative-Middle East & Africa Awards, in the Emerging Young Entrepreneur of the Year. In 2021, she won the SEDA Pitch & Perfect national pitching competition, as number 1 in the North West province, and was also one of the top 10 finalists and winner of the Hollywood Bets 2021 #EmpoweringHer funding competition.



Masindi Netshakhuma

Masindi has been highly active in world change since she was a child. She has won many continental awards for the work she does for youth and women. In 2021 she implemented two projects (Woman, My Breed, and Renda Writers Foundation) to help women and youth to publish their stories about Gender-Based Violence. In 2022 she implemented another project called Unmute Women Voices to continue with the legacy to stop GBV. Masindi is one of the top 50 Mail & Guardian Powerful women and also one of the South African Shining Stars 2022. Not only that, but Masindi also won the Forty Under 40 Africa Awards. A continental award that celebrates continental icons under the age of 40. Masindi founded an SME in 2021 and won in the Kenya-SA Chamber of Business.



Sisamkele Ndundula

Sisamkele is a passionate young guy who strives for change in his community and is an advocate of economic stability. He is a poultry farmer based in Cape Town and employs youth in his business. He doesn't confine his new skills; he is always willing to share with those who are hungry for change. He started his business in 2020, and though he is facing hurdles along the way he is still operating his business.



Abraham Mnguni

Abraham is a Founder and CEO of Positive Flames & Campaign Against Alcohol & Drug Abuse Organization of South Africa - Positive Flames South Africa, the organisation was founded in 2015 and operates in Evaton West in the Vaal area and at Ikageng in Potchefstroom. The organisation provides SGBV awareness and education, Victim Empowerment Services, Educational Support, Business Development and Handling programs for youth & women, Sexual reproductive health and rights for learners in all institutions of learning, HIV/AIDS and Advocacy and Lobby. Through the leadership of Mr. Mnguni the organisation has been afloat for over the years and has provided 25 job opportunities to the youth



Dr. Avuyile Mbangatha

Dr. Mbangatha (25) is a medical doctor and award-winning philanthropist with a passion for Public health who holds a bachelor of medicine and surgery degree from the University Of Stellenbosch. He served as the former united nations change the world model UN Ambassador and are currently a one young world ambassador, their world global Youth Ambassador, a UK-based global children's non-profit organisation that forms a Network of young leaders committed to promoting UN SDG 4 (Quality Education), ending The global education crisis and unleashing the potential of the next generation



Itumeleng Mahoang

Itumeleng is a young black woman in Construction, she specializes in General Building, Civil Works, home renovations, and maintenance. She has since completed various projects both for the Public and Private sectors. To date, she has created 10 jobs for young people. Not only has she employed young people, but she assisted them in developing their skills in trades (Bricklaying, Plumbing, Carpentry).



S'mangele Zonia Sibisi

S'mangele was born with the talent of being a hairstylist but she has managed to run a successful business for 7 years. Having to survive the hardship of COVID-19, closing down 2 salons of her salon she had to bounce back to opening her store again. She runs a natural hair salon, and their services include make-up, freelance, photography, and influencing partnerships.



Bevan Clement Rossouw

Bevan is a football coach and a footballer, who grew up previously disadvantaged in Belhar - "Self Help" and today I am in a much better position to assist others. This year 2023 he achieved his UEFA C Licence as a Coach through the Scottish Football Association, his CAF C Licence as a Coach through The Confederation of African Football and has traveled to Poland to play football at European Academy to gain further insight to be more aware of the football industry. Bevan has gained more experience abroad and came back to coach players in his community. Bevan says "It is such an honor and privilege for me as I feel I can relate to their minds and teach them that it's always possible to achieve your goals through the Confederation of African Football."



Candice Chirwa

Candice Chirwa is an author, professional speaker, and dedicated social entrepreneur. Fondly referred to as the 'Minister of Menstruation', Candice is recognized for her development and implementation of fun & educational menstrual workshops through her acclaimed NGO, Qrate. She has authored several influential books: "Perils of Patriarchy"; "Flow: The Book About Menstruation"; and has also made significant contributions to "V: An Empowering Celebration of the Vulva and Vagina."



An enabling environment for youth economic emancipation requires the involvement of all.

Throughout history, every generation has encountered a watershed moment that would define their legacy. In South Africa the youth has often been at the forefront of such moments and the triumphs of past generations of young people continue to echo through time.

The youth of 1976 faced their watershed when they confronted the murderous apartheid regime and tragically, many young people paid the ultimate price in the fight for democracy and freedom.

This year marks the 47th anniversary of the 16 June 1976 student uprising in Soweto and the actions of young people on that cold winter's day have helped to shape our democracy and our freedom.

Following the advent of democracy in 1994, the new democratic government declared 16 June as National Youth Day and June as the Youth Month. As we look forward to Youth Day and Youth Month many people might well ponder whether democracy has benefitted the youth of South Africa.

It is indeed a fair and valid question, which cannot be answered in a simple way, yet there are a number of absolutes. The majority of the youth of '76 lived in fear and were routinely harassed and brutalised. The youth of today live in a democracy which upholds the rights of

all and opens doors to a better tomorrow. The youth of today live in a country, which abounds with opportunities, which can be unlocked through dedication, hard work and collaboration of all sectors of society. Since 1994, successive administrations have worked to ensure that young people have the tools and opportunities to change their lived realities, through policy and active inclusion of youth in the mainstream economy.

The 2023 Youth Month will focus on opportunities for young people in the private sector, public sector, academia and civil society across the spectrum, including: entrepreneurship, skills development and youth service opportunities.

As government, we are working to accelerate youth development programmes, and we have created opportunities for young people to gain the much necessary work experience by granting access to internship programmes.

The Presidential Youth Employment Intervention creates new pathways into employment for our young people by ensuring that the youth gain the right skills to enable them to not only locate their desired opportunities, but for them to also be self-starters and create their desired opportunities.

As the National Youth Development Agency tasked with ensuring the inclusion of young people in all forms for employment, have also opened employment opportunities through the Expanded Public Works Programmes, Community Works Programme and the Harambee Youth Employment Accelerator.

The opportunities presented to young people are also anchored on activism which enable young people to be activists which through the National Youth Service contribute to the upliftment of their communities.

The SAYouth.mobi network also offers access to learning and work opportunities for young unemployed South Africans. It helps youth to connect to work through a range of services and work readiness training opportunities.

Government has also put measures in place to create a favourable and supportive environment for youth to become successful entrepreneurs. The NYDA Grant Programme provides young entrepreneurs with an opportunity to access both financial and non-financial business development support to enable them to establish or grow their businesses.

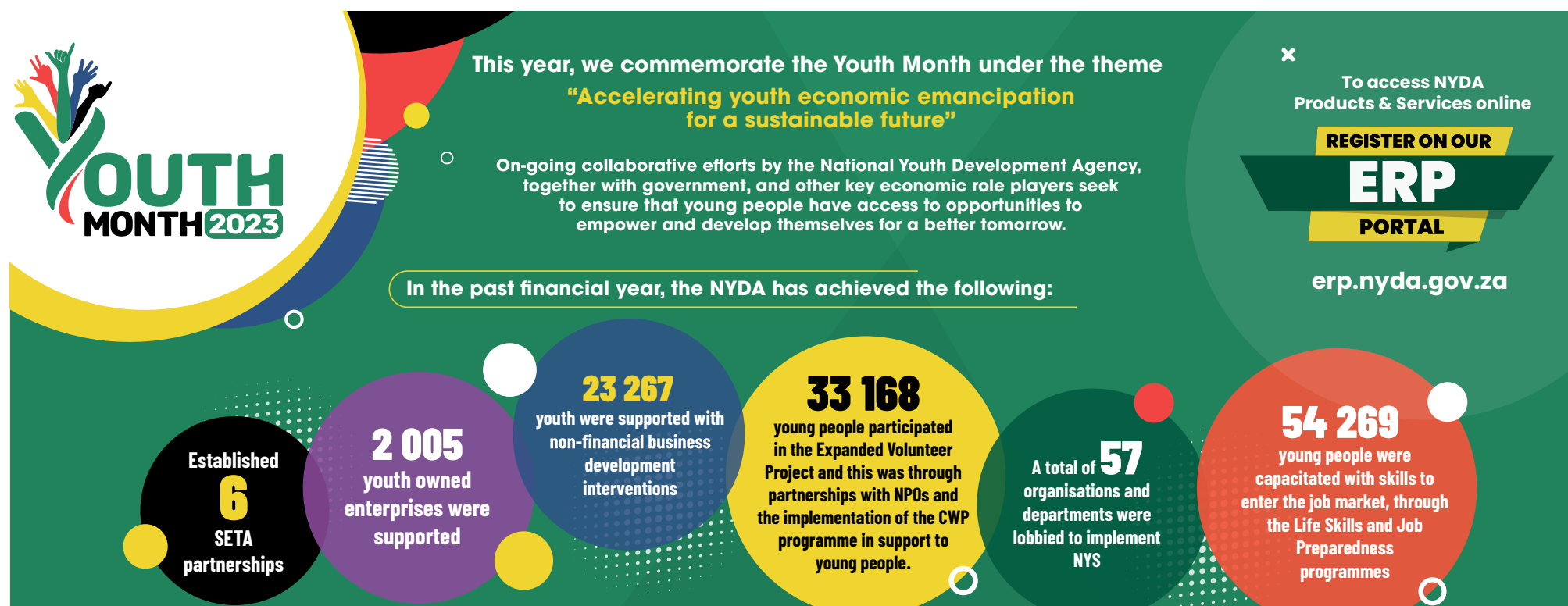
We call on the youth to explore the many opportunities that are available for us to create sustainable economic growth for all South Africans.

Together let us awaken the spirit of 1976 where young people were actively involved in defining their future and the country they wanted. It is through the collective efforts of all socio-economic stakeholders, that we will indeed reach the ideal state of economic emancipation for all. Let us awaken the spirit of patriotism and volunteerism in our youth.

Together we can ensure that the democratic gains we have made since 1994 are sustained and further developed, especially as we look ahead to 30 Years of Freedom.

Asanda Luwaca
Executive Chairperson

Waseem Carrim
Chief Executive Officer



REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



PRESIDENTIAL
YOUTH
EMPLOYMENT
INTERVENTION



YOUTH IN CLIMATE SUSTAINABILITY

LIVHUWANI GUNDULE, 35 Limpopo

Livhuwani Gundule is a young small-scale farmer from Venda who produces okra, green chillies, karela and green beans. She supplies the Tshwane and Joburg markets with her produce.

Not only is Gundule a farmer, but she is also a dedicated climate ambassador who works tirelessly to protect sacred sites and natural resources in her community. As South Africa journeys towards a Just Energy Transition, Livhuwani is playing her part by pursuing and advocating for organic farming.

“Organic farming is when we as farmers use production that excludes the use of pesticides and fertilisers and genetically modified organisms, where we, instead, use things like compost manure and also green manure,” explains Gundule.

According to her, organic farming improves the soil and makes crops adapt to the ever-changing climate. It also yields a higher harvest and most importantly, reduces greenhouse gas emissions.

“Organic products cater for higher income options for us as farmers and serves and promotes climate friendly farming practice.”

“Organic products cater for higher income options for us as farmers”



“A large contingent of young people remains isolated from nature”

MAHLATSE MAMAILA, 32 Gauteng

Reading about the advantages of recycling sparked a business idea that has added Mahlatse Mamaila to the list of climate-responsible, environmentally conscious young people doing their part towards net-zero.

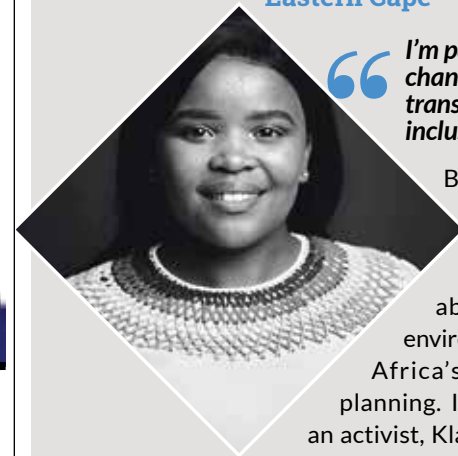
This climate ambassador recycles waste cooking oil and converts it into clean fuel, or biodiesel, which is then used in mining equipment, construction, generators, fleet and even airplanes.

In partnership with women and youth in rural communities, her company undertakes agricultural development for food security and the processing of organic cooking oil. By preventing waste oil from entering the rivers in her community, she ensures that residents can have access to clean water.

“I read about the advantages of recycling waste cooking oil and after realising that many of my peers are unemployed, losing their small businesses and jobs due to Covid-19, after further research, I found an industry built in renewables. It was an article that drove me to take action,” says Mahlatse.

Unfortunately, regrets Mahlatse, not all young people want to bear climate responsibilities. “A large contingent of young people remains isolated from nature. Coupled with the mindset that cleaning up is ‘someone else’s problem’, many young people don’t enjoy or have the desire to care for the environment,” she observes.

BULELWA KLAASEN, 35 Eastern Cape



“I’m part of a collective channelling a transparent and inclusive movement”

Bulelwa Klaasen is a firebrand youth activist who is passionate about climate, the environment and South Africa’s future energy planning. In her records as an activist, Klaasen has worked on climate change and the Just Transition with a particular focus on anti-nuclear work in Gqeberha, South Africa.

In addition to being the current chairperson of the grants committee at the Environmental Justice Fund, she also serves on the Eastern Cape Environmental Forum and is part of a group of activists from Earthlife Africa providing advice to the Presidential Climate Commission.

What is more, Klaasen sits on the Water Crisis Committee that is spearheading accountability and transparency from the government on the well-documented water issues facing the residents of Nelson Mandela Bay. She’s a member of a movement called #the!sh!sReal. The purpose of this movement is to address the sewage problem that runs through townships putting people’s health at risk.

All in all, Klaasen is passionate about bringing change to her community and continuously works to ensure that elected authorities respect the people they are called to lead by addressing their basic and environmental needs in a safer, sustainable way. In the process, she makes sure that nobody is left behind, in the true spirit of South Africa’s Just Energy Transition.

BONGEKILE ZWANE, 25

Mpumalanga
“Working with communities is not easy”

Bongekile Zwane is an activist who fights for the rights of her mining community, especially women, in electricity planning, Just Energy Transition consultations and research processes.

As part of the Womxndla Community Development NPC, her work focuses on the mining town of Carolina in Mpumalanga. Carolina’s main economic activities are farming and the mining of coal and precious stones. There are 22 mines and coal operations in Carolina, and their impact on the community is concerning. The air in Carolina is poorly ranked and water is polluted by the mining operations.

The Womxndla Community Development NPC participated in multi-stakeholder consultations carried out by the Presidential Climate Commission about the country’s path from coal-dependency to a low-carbon economy.

Zwane is not only involved in addressing the environmental ills in her community caused by these operations, but she also ensures that women and girls in the community are empowered and have a voice in how they are affected. Her organisation is advocating for taking a feminist approach towards sustainable women development in communities.

Zwane was one of the principal researcher for the Southern Africa Resource Watch community study, which produced a document titled “Women on Coal Report: A Feminist Participatory Action Research on Coal, Climate Change by women in Carolina”.

Some of the challenges facing the women in Zwane’s community include floods, soil erosion, shifting rainfall patterns and extreme weather, which also affect food security. These are the issues that keep Zwane fired up to bring about change in her area, putting women at the centre of the energy transition and climate policy.



NTHABELENG MOFOKENG, 30 Free State

“What I find most rewarding is seeing how our efforts inspire bigger change”

Nthabeleng Mofokeng (30) is a University of Pretoria Mechanical Engineering graduate. In 2020 there was a clean-up campaign in her community organised by the local youth who wanted to clean illegal dumping sites to turn them into food gardens. Nthabeleng joined the call and organised other young women.

The clean-up campaign was later registered as Qwakanda E Ntjha NPC, known popularly as Qwakanda. Nthabeleng Mofokeng is Qwakanda’s treasurer.

Another Qwakanda initiative was the #90Minutes for Qwa-Qwa Clean-Up Campaign, which attracted an international climate change initiative called Gigatone Challenge. Gigatone is a globally decentralised climate action strategy with equity at heart. Mofokeng was appointed team leader for Qwa-Qwa, having stopped 37 tonnes of carbon emissions while assisting over 100 households with food.

“The most rewarding part about working with Qwakanda is seeing how our initiatives, small or big, propel our local government to act,” she says.

Through Mofokeng’s leadership, Qwakanda has so far hired 14 permanent staff and created temporary employment by buying organic waste from the under privileged and turning it into compost. They also made a deal with a major cellular network company to build zero-emissions bicycle trailers that help with collecting organic waste from households, businesses and illegal dumping sites before they reach landfill sites.

Again, the environmental activism movement partnered with one of the local malls in Qwa-Qwa to host regular clean-up campaigns. Young people who join the campaign receive food vouchers worth R250.



BERTHA LETSOKO, 29 Free State

“The key is in our voices and actions for change”

Bertha Letsoko is currently the organising lead in the climate and energy team at Greenpeace Africa. Her work involves building relationships with individuals and groups by cultivating their leadership skills to act collectively on the Just Energy Transition programmes.

Letsoko has experience in activist work for women and girls’ rights, socioeconomic justice, participatory planning as well as mobilisation and engagement. She has worked with organisations such as Oxfam South Africa in campaigns that sought to influence policies for the equality of health workers, access to markets for farmers as well as informal traders.

Letsoko has also worked with young people through Thari E Ntsho, a youth organisation initiative that she started with the hope of creating spaces for youth to be progressive with programmes that focus on digital literacy, innovative careers and holistic health with the focus on mental health awareness.

She has collaborated with organisations such as Girl Up, Rosebank College, Frida Hartley Shelter for Women, Takalani Home for mentally challenged and Sibonile School for the Blind.

“At my core, I am passionate about community work and creating and advocating for the youth to be decisive and accountable leaders. The system cannot have us in chains forever; the key is in our voices and actions for change,” she states as her mission.



LIMPOPO PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT COMMITTED TO YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

“ The provincial government has entered into impactful social partnerships to make sure no young person is left behind

The Limpopo Provincial Government and its social partners, the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA) as well as the Small Enterprise Development Agency (SEDA), remain committed to youth development. The NYDA is South Africa's national custodian of youth affairs, while SEDA is a multipurpose hub aimed at meeting various business needs for SMEs.

Through this partnership, the provincial government reaffirms its support to the youth of Limpopo in every stage of their lives as they contend against the challenges of unemployment, poverty and lack of skills.

Martin Boima, founder and Director of Martin's Nature Care (Pty) Ltd, is one of the many beneficiaries of the NYDA and SEDA collaborative partnership. Boima's small business is a brave leap into the future of food which presents the marketplace with a possible alternative to crowded feed lots and battery chickens.

The 27-years-old entrepreneur from Bolobedu Village in Greater Letaba Municipality established his agro-processing business in October, 2020. He was assisted by SEDA.

Boima's story is one of resilience, passion and an unquenchable desire for knowledge. "I walked the long road from collecting and cooking termites as a child around my father's fire, to employing local experts to collect soldier termites from the mud mounds and turn them into specialised snacks. These are not the reproductive flying termites which are only available once a year for a few weeks. These are "Makeke", the soldiers, which are available year-round if one knows how to find and entice them out," he shares the narrative of his life.

"I have developed a unique flour, which is gluten free, high in protein and good fats, and can be utilised as the main constituent of energy bars or biscuits or used as an additive to increase the protein content of conventional cereal flour," he illustrates.

Boima's work is supported by science and research, and has passed quality assurance assessments. The termites themselves were analysed for their nutritional value at the University of Limpopo, and once the bars were developed, their nutritional analysis was again tested by the South African Bureau of Standards (SABS) for correct labelling when packaged.

Martin's Nature Care has been actively in business for just three years, but has already proved to be a viable and valuable startup, providing employment and community growth. With financial support from the NYDA, the business has managed to grow, employing 3 registered staff members and 15 students from the Tshwane University of Technology (TUT) as well as Nelson Mandela University (NMU).



Martin's Nature Care Staff



Founder and Director of
Martin's Nature Care (Pty) Ltd,
Mr Martin Boima

Students From Tshwane
University of Technology
and Nelson Mandela
University





“

Education empowers and uplifts.

BASETSANA SHEANE, 20
Free State

As cliché as it may sound, education is the key to success. This is a sentiment held by education enthusiast Basetsana Sheane. She believes that when we correctly apply all the knowledge we have gained, education can open many doors for us.

“Education empowers and uplifts. I am passionate about education because it is a powerful tool that one can use to break barriers and create a better society for all,” declares Sheane.

The education enthusiast is the founder of Tsebo Ke Lesedi, a community reading club that caters for primary school children between the ages of 7 and 13 in the small, disadvantaged community of Theunissen in the Free State. According to her, the reading club was initiated as a way of providing a safe space for socialising and learning for children in the town during the school holidays.

Another reason for establishing the reading club was to create a stable, sustainable culture of reading in the townships from an early age. Through Tsebo Ke Lesedi, the sole facilitator works with children in her community in her home and at a local church. Her passion for her work has the 20-year-old also visiting local primary schools to take her services to those who do not come to her. The children participate in storytelling, reading, writing, oral question-and-answer sessions and interactive games that boost their confidence and enhance their communication skills with their peers. Each child has at least one storybook which they use to improve their literacy skills at home.

MPHO DIGASHU, 27
Limpopo

“

South Africa needs a curriculum that is tailor-made for all learners



Mpho Digashu's passion for education is inspired by his mother, who is a teacher. His mother tirelessly worked to ensure that all her learners were not left out of accessing their basic needs, including their right to access education. It follows that the senior education specialist for e-learning would apply the same principles and continue to carry that out in his new role.

Even though he always strives to ensure that the voices of the learners are amplified, he feels he is not immune to being held accountable for diligence in performing his duties for the benefit of the South African learner. As such, Digashu calls on all stakeholders to ensure that every learner can access quality basic education without any challenges.

The 27-year-old is not blind to the fact that key stakeholders should be consulted to tackle the challenges plaguing the public education system. At the top of the list is how the curriculum can be applied to different contexts that students can relate to maximise learner performance and output.

“South Africa needs a curriculum that is tailor-made for all learners through consultative efforts and the will of different stakeholders, including the government and curriculum developers.”



MONGENI MABUSHA REVONIA 26

Limpopo

“

Education teaches one skills and knowledge to conquer and succeed in life

With some educators, the passion is palpable and it restores the public's confidence in the profession and calling. Mongeni Mabusha Revonia from Botlokwa, Polokwane, is one such educator, with a belief that education shapes independent and critical thinkers who will positively impact the economy.

The Mabjwaneng Primary School teacher is very impactful and influential in her job, because not only is she a professional, but also an active citizen committed to building her community.

The 26-year-old is wide awake to the system thorns. Inclusivity, or lack thereof, is but one such thorn; only the academically gifted learners are able to thrive without obstacles. Struggling learners, who need time and attention, are left behind.

Another challenge that is more general is the neglect of boys, a habit that breeds angry boys and men. For this reason the young teacher launched a Groom a Boy Child initiative, which helps to teach boys to express their feelings. Another important principle fostered by the initiative is that violence solves nothing.

“

Education provides tools for creativity and critical thinking that can open paths to opportunities



ANELISA THENGIMFENE, 28
Eastern Cape

It is easy to detect Anelisa Thengimfene's love for education from the manner she speaks about the subject. The writer and poet's sentiments are that education empowers individuals and allows them to make informed decisions that can positively impact themselves, their community and the world.

“Education provides tools for creativity and critical thinking that can open paths to opportunities people might not otherwise have access to. It is a vital resource necessary for positive change to occur,” she shares.

The Ngqamakhwe-born education enthusiast, like many, has what she calls fundamental concerns confronting the country's education system. These are inequality and limited access to school opportunities. Furthermore, Thengimfene laments that many rural and underprivileged areas lack the educational infrastructure and resources required to effectively teach learners. These shortcomings often lead to poor academic performance, with the learners struggling to keep up with their more privileged peers. Another area of concern is the disparity between student-skill acquisition and job-market requirements.

“The education system is rigid and fails to nurture creativity, critical thinking and problem-solving skills. It does not equip learners with practical skills that are applicable in the ever-changing workplace. Its rigidity leaves little room for customisation,” concludes the 28-year-old.

KARABO MOGANE, 33

Gauteng



“

What I enjoy about what I do is seeing an enhanced self-esteem

“I did not decide to do work of this magnitude, it is simply a calling, one I naturally answered as it fulfils my life and adds great meaning to it.” These are the words of Karabo Mogane, who has been serving her community from the tender age of 15.

No one would have guessed how the music teacher's life would change when her teacher recognised her musical talent and zeal for community upliftment. The teacher proposed that Mogane teaches primary school children from her community of Soshanguve. Having grabbed the opportunity with both hands, the 33-year-old now teaches drama, African dance and music to children at the Good Hope Community Organisation. To add to the list, the arts teacher also teaches violin, viola and

theory of music to children from Stinkwater.

What gives Mogane pride is the grading of her music examinations by Unisa, a stamp of approval that makes her qualifications worth more than the paper they are printed on. Seeing the enhanced self-esteem, self-efficacy and sense of achievement in the lives of her students is also another source of pride and joy. The greatest in this aspect has to be the success story of a former student of hers, Moleboheng Manganye, who has achieved his Unisa violin Grade 8 qualification and has been awarded gold first and second prizes in the Unisa Youth Music Festival in 2019-2022. Manganye was also a finalist at the South African Music Scholarship Competition in 2022.



SIKHOSANA COMPLETES HER PhD IN TWO YEARS AT THE TENDER AGE OF 27

By Mpho Moloele

Dr Lettah Sikhosana, a young academic in Environmental Education, completed her PhD in two years, at the age of 27, at Unisa, earning her the Youngest Female Doctoral Graduate Award at the recent Unisa 2023 Research and Innovation Awards.

Her PhD qualification is special in the sense that she obtained it in the year that Unisa celebrates its 150 years of existence.

She reiterates the importance of Unisa in society and the resilience of its students.

"Unisa, a Comprehensive Open Distance and e-Learning (CODEL) university, has allowed many students to pursue their studies despite their multiple roles. These students are affected by the barriers of distance, cost and time.

"Unisa students are outstanding as they need self-motivation, focus, dedication, discipline, time and support to complete their studies at a distance university."

Sikhosana comes from Kwaggafontein C, formerly known as KwaNdebele, in Mpumalanga province. She attended school at Thubelihle Primary School up to Grade 7. She then completed Grades 8 and 9 at the Sozilani Combined School before matriculating at Mkhephuli Secondary School in 2012.

Having been raised by supportive parents who value education above all else, despite never having had the opportunity to acquire a higher education qualification themselves, Sikhosana positively used that experience to continue with her studies after matric, towards an undergraduate qualification and then postgraduate studies.

Dr Sikhosana mentioned that her parents sacrificed a lot in order to provide financial assistance and support towards her studies.

"I appreciate my mother's employers for welcoming me with open arms in their home. With the little that my parents had, regardless of their occupation (dad as a truck driver and mom as a domestic worker at the time), they made sure that my siblings and I lacked nothing regarding our studies," she says with admiration.

Sikhosana herself also worked as a domestic worker on weekends where her mother was employed and used the money to travel to Unisa's Tshwane-based campuses to access

study resources.

Today, Sikhosana has a Doctor of Philosophy in Education, specialising in environmental education; Master's and Honours degrees in Education, both in environmental education; and a Bachelor of Education in Senior and FET Phases, which she obtained cum laude. She obtained all these qualifications through Unisa.

Sikhosana, a former teacher at Buhlebesizwe Secondary School in Mpumalanga, is currently employed as a lecturer at the College of Education (CEDU), Unisa.

She also serves as the chair for Research and Innovation, Postgraduate Degrees and Commercialisation at the Department of Science and Technology Education, CEDU.

Balancing work, studies, and family life

"Balancing work, studies and family life was not easy," Sikhosana reflects. Her parents and late elder siblings worked far from home and only returned home on weekends. As a result, she had to take care of her younger siblings and prepare them for school at a young age.

"That, in essence, taught me independence and the ability to juggle all the responsibilities I had at a tender age. I grew up with a culture of having to learn and knowing how to multitask, something I instilled in my life and day-to-day activities," Sikhosana says.

During her studies, she formed a routine where she would do all her work tasks during the day, rest in the afternoon and focus on her doctoral research until the early hours of the morning. "This is when I realised that I am nocturnal," she says fondly.

Her achievement of obtaining a PhD in two years was made possible through the endless support of her supervisor, Prof Awelani Mudau, and family and friends.

Sikhosana also received support from the Mpumalanga Department of Education in the Nkangala district and selected circuits, as well as the primary schools, school principals, members of school governing bodies, general workers, food handlers, teachers, and learners, who participated in her study.

She is also grateful and appreciative of the financial support provided by Unisa.

Research that promotes



Dr Lettah Sikhosana

environmental awareness and education

Sikhosana's research interest in environmental education, aimed at promoting environmental awareness and education, started in 2017.

"I am interested in acquiring knowledge-based perspectives from around the world, to gain new experiences and train myself on how to handle a wide range of challenges," she states.

Environmental education is an important theme that is infused and must be integrated into teaching and learning. She shares that, through environmental education, people can better understand the world around them and, in return, know how to take proper care of the world so that it can become better and more sustainable.

The primary issue in South Africa is that schools generate enormous amounts of solid waste, and some have minimal, or no waste management practices in place.

During Sikhosana's doctoral research period, she developed and implemented a sustainable intervention strategy for solid waste management titled "Sustainable Intervention Strategy for Solid Waste Management Through Partnerships (SISS-WMP)" at primary schools in the Nkangala District of Mpumalanga.

She says it is imperative that, with all the other strategies not resulting in sustainable outcomes, an alternative, a sustainable intervention strategy for solid waste management, be implemented through partnerships to assist schools in managing the solid waste they generate.

Young and vibrant, Sikhosana is currently focused on developing her career, growing as a researcher, scholar and academic, and enhancing and acquiring more knowledge in her field of specialisation.

She also plans to collaborate with other national and international experts in environmental education and further research fields for interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary research while learning more from them.

Stay prepared

"Often, as young people, we beat ourselves up for missing the greatest lifetime opportunities in our personal lives, studies and work because we are unprepared for them or not ready for change," says Sikhosana.

She has the following advice to affirm young people's role in society:

"Stay prepared and ready for transformation so that, whenever opportunities are presented to you, you can grab them with both hands and make the best out of it."

• Mpho Moloele is from Unisa's Research, Innovation and Commercialisation Department



YOUTH IN EDUCATION



BOKANG RAPATSA 32

Limpopo

The combination of Bokang Rapatsa's drive for education and community development coupled with the need for an after-school programme saw the young lady found Bokang's Learning Academy in January 2023.

According to the young woman from Moletji Makgodu, Polokwane, the number of children who went to school without doing their homework made her realise the need for her academy.

At the centre, Rapatsa supports social, emotional, cognitive, and academic development. This reduces risky behaviour, promotes physical health and provides a safe and supportive environment for children. She also assists children with homework, assignments, school projects, reading and writing. A bonus for the founder's efforts has to be the centre helping many children stay off the streets.

As a qualified caregiver, an award winner and a Funda leader, Rapatsa believes that what is missing in the South African education system is commitment and support for teachers.

She concludes, "I'm passionate about education, because it helps one have a better life, it helps one develop critical thinking. It even enables one to have flexible thoughts and ideas."

“

The shortage of quality teachers and consequent ongoing delivery of poor educational outcomes are just the tip of the iceberg.

AMANDA NOMNQA

25

Gauteng

As a social entrepreneur who also supports the national economy, Amanda Nomnqa is driven to make the world a better place. She also works as a facilitator and public speaker professionally. She chairs ShelsBrave, a non-profit organisation that targets girls' and young women's lack of mentoring and empowerment.

Nomnqa became renowned for speaking up for young people and promoting gender equality after being chosen to serve as the executive secretary-general of the Rojalu Africa United Nations Youth Network. As such, she represented the youth agenda in Africa and the diaspora to more than five heads of state and the government and more than 100 leaders.

The facilitator was honoured with the Forbes Woman Africa Young Achiever Award in 2022 and was included on the list of the Most Powerful and Influential Africans.

She thinks that teachers are where education reform starts to take place.

"The shortage of quality teachers and



the consequent ongoing delivery of poor educational outcomes are just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to the challenges facing basic education in South Africa.

"When analysing the school system in the country, it is flawed with poorly-performing and unmotivated teachers, poor work ethics, lack of community and parental support, poor control by education authorities, poor support for teachers and very low levels of accountability," states Nomnqa.

Some people's purpose is revealed during times of crisis. Asive Dlanjwa fits into this category. When the Libode-born activist settled into a formerly white-male residence of the University of the Free State, nobody would have guessed that he was stepping on a spark that would ignite his life purpose. He says it himself: "What drew me into activism at the university must have been my experience in the residence I lived in."

When the then-student realised the culture of exclusion and racism, his hunger to challenge the status quo was violently stirred. What followed would be a life of activism that would take him to different platforms. These include spearheading the Fees Must Fall movement in his second year in 2016 and eventually being elected the university's SRC president in 2017.

His activism would also open other doors for Dlanjwa. He is a youth coordinator

ASIVE DLANJWA, 28

Free State

“

What drew me into activism at the university must have been my experience in the residence I lived in.

for the Free State Premier's Office, the national spokesperson for the South African Union of Students and the deputy secretary-general of the South African Students Congress.

The 28-year-old says his movement has done well in expanding educational possibilities across the country. He does believe that a good litmus test for determining if increasing access has been

SHADRACK MLAMBO, 30

Limpopo

We have maintained 100% bachelor pass rate for our matric learners.



Shadrack Mlambo believes that tertiary education provides everyone with the opportunity to shape and map their future. It is for this reason that the 30-year-old started Project-20thirty in 2018, to assist learners from Burgersfort in Limpopo with their university applications.

To ensure that communities are uplifted and development is driven through higher education, Project-20thirty further provides learners with mentors and tutorials in mathematics, physical science and accounting.

The organisation is also able to provide prospective students with data to attend online tutorials and their application fees are also paid in full.

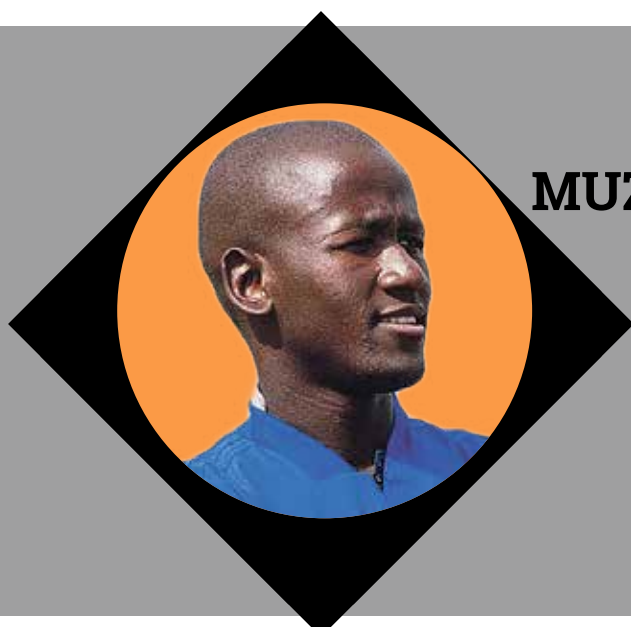
"Our organisation started with a pilot project with only five learners. Since the project started, we have maintained 100% bachelor pass rate for our matric learners. We further have 18 tertiary students across 12 South African universities. My proudest moment was when school principals from the areas we work in reached out to us to go and work with their schools," he bursts with pride.

To him, being an Unsung Hero means that the great work that he does in his community is valid and is considered as very important. It will also keep him motivated.



effective is how well the product lives up to the expectations and goals of an educated society.

"That is what is missing with our education system. We have measured the success of it through its massification, but the character and content of that massification is incongruously tagging behind," states Dlanjwa.



MUZI NDUKU, 30

“

As a creative-arts instructor, I adopted two schools and began teaching young students

Our backgrounds make or break us and for Muzi Nduku, it was the former. The Mbizana-born looked at his surroundings, where many young people struggled to find proper employment due to a lack of job opportunities and the necessary skills set, and it sparked his love for his community. He realised that it was the very dire situation that led to the youth engaging in criminal activities, dropping out of school and being trapped in teenage pregnancy.

As an escape from the trap, Nduku indulged in different activities that allowed him to develop a wide range of skills. He later decided to enlist his peers to start a soccer club for men and women.

He developed a hunger for more and subsequently added cycling, poetry, performing arts, and awareness campaigns against drugs, GBV, teenage pregnancy and crime.

The more the optimist did, the more he wanted to do. He then joined the Department of Social Development's Soul Buddies club as a peer educator. The Department of Education then hired him to work as a peer-group facilitator in schools. He was later rehired by social development as part of the Teenagers against Drug Abuse programme.

The 30-year-old was also employed by the Nelson Mandela Institute for Education and Rural Development, based at Fort Hare University. This collaboration resulted in the publication of two poetry books written by students.

"As a creative-arts instructor," Nduku shares, "I adopted two schools and began teaching young students traditional dance, poetry, and drama."



Empowered to continue upholding academic integrity

By Christy Kotze and Nancy Legodi

Humbled by the Women in Research: Emerging Researcher Award that she received at the recent 12th Unisa Research and Innovation Awards ceremony, Dr Mphoentle Modise of the College of Education's Department: Curriculum and Instructional Studies, describes it as a token that empowers her academic and research journey.

"I am excited and encouraged that I am on the right track," says Modise.

For Dr Mphoentle Puleng Modise, this honour serves as a branding tool that highlights her commitment to excellence and high-calibre research.

She adds: "It also means Unisa's internal and external stakeholders can trust my work."

From Personal Assistant to PhD graduate

Modise started her journey at Unisa in 2001 in the web section of the Department of Institutional Advancement and later worked as the Communication and Marketing Officer of the then Thabo Mbeki African Leadership Institute (TMALI).

She left Unisa for a period of four years and later re-joined the university to work as the departmental secretary and personal assistant in the College of Education (CEDU).

She continued with her studies and completed her Certificate of Technology in Distance Education and e-Learning in 2014 at the University of Maryland Global College (UMUG), previously UMUC, USA.

In 2016, she completed her Master of Education in Open and Distance Learning (ODL) with distinction from Unisa.

In 2018, she was employed as a lecturer in the College of Education, where she proved to be a valuable addition to academia. Modise subsequently completed her PhD study.

Modise says a journey of this kind requires the solid support of family, friends, colleagues and mentors.

"Always remember that there is support and help, but one must step out and avail himself/herself. I am grateful for this achievement, and I look forward to more blessings and help from God and the angels he will send in times of need."

Remaining relevant in open and distance e-learning environment

Modise's research interests are in open and distance e-learning (ODEL),

continuous professional development of academics and schoolteachers and student support, technology adoption and integration, use of e-portfolios, open educational resources (OERs), and massive open online courses (MOOCs).

Having recently focused on these areas, she has also looked at the adoption of a learning management system for facilitating modules in ODeL.

"I also focused on the potential of MOOCs as a tool for widening access to higher education in the African context," she explains. "Also," Modise continues, "I looked at Covid-19 accelerated training and technology adoption of academics in Nigeria and South Africa."

Acknowledging that everything she does is interconnected, Modise asserts: "For us to remain relevant, we should constantly develop ourselves and acquire skills that can advance our craft and have an impact in our profession."

Additionally, Modise says that to improve teaching, student learning and social sustainability, academics must continually seek new methods and technologies.

"What inspired me to be in the education field is that our job as ODeL educators is unique as we have the chance to influence the lives of others, locally and globally," she notes.

Asked where or how she finds her motivation, Modise says: "There is always help in the dry valleys or up the mountains. God is always nearby, sending an angel or two when the need arises."

Modise believes that where there is a will, there is always a way.

According to Modise, she is driven by the need to design an effective and empathetic student support system in an ODeL environment. She says that she is developing and equipping herself with new knowledge and keeping abreast with current trends.

She remarks: "This will assist me to improve what I do, including teaching and learning, research, and sharing these lessons with other scholars."

Reflecting on a fruitful journey

Modise's research highlights and achievements include receiving the 2022 Doctoral Dissertation Awards from the South Africa Education Research Association (SAERA), as well as from the Education Association of South Africa (EASA). She is also an executive committee member at SAERA, representing the needs and interests of early career researchers in South Africa and other African countries.

Awarded by the UNESCO Chair on



Dr Mphoentle Puleng Modise

Open and Distance Learning, one of Modise's PhD papers won the Best Paper Award at Unisa's 2021 ODeL Conference.

"I also received the Digital Humanities Open Educational Resources Champions Initiative. It is a grant by the North-West University UNESCO Chair on Multimodal Learning and Open Educational Resources to develop an OER on using e-portfolios for teaching and learning," remarks Modise.

She has also published three articles in The Conversation Africa, an independent news site that publishes material from the academic and research community.

Modise affirms: "I believe in research for visible beneficial change, and that it should improve our practice and performance as educators, as well as the quality of teaching and support for students."

According to Modise, these research products must evolve with the changing times and changing needs of stakeholders.

"Importantly," Modise concludes, "I believe in academic integrity, research

outputs produced with highest ethical principles, understanding our responsibility as researchers, and impactful research products on communities we serve."

Modise's PhD study, entitled "Academic professional development and support of academics for digital transformation in African large-scale open and distance education institutions", involved two of Africa's giants in open distance e-learning (ODEL) – the University of South Africa and the National Open University of Nigeria.

The key findings of her study emphasise the importance of academic professional development and e-learning readiness in the digital transformation of higher education institutions, especially ODeL institutions in Africa and developing countries on other continents. A robust and comprehensive e-learning policy is also key in the implementation of e-learning activities.

• Christy Jean Kotze, lecturer, Department of Curriculum and Instructional Studies

• Nancy Legodi, corporate journalist, Department of Institutional Advancement



LERATO MOJAPELO, 29, MPUMALANGA

I'm passionate about education because it helps one have a better life

It is not just her tender age that sets Lerato Mojapelo apart from her colleagues, but also her brilliance and achievements despite the mere five years she has been teaching at Thorisong Primary School in Secunda, Mpumalanga.

The 29-year-old has succeeded in promoting the digital way of teaching through ICT integration in

teaching and learning. She is now the district's first-place finisher in the Excellence in Primary School Teaching category of the National Teaching Awards.

The energetic teacher has worked with young boys and girls who are struggling to read and write at her home-based after-school programme, but her enthusiasm stretches even further than that. Mo-

japelo is also involved in youth development and educational programmes in and around Secunda. She has attempted to find methods that can assist the youth to capitalise on their skills, while working on their deficiencies. That way, they can pursue their dreams with all their might and subsequently reach their goals.



SATSOPE GEORGE MAKOLA, 27
Limpopo

Founder of Lesedi Institute of Education and Development, Satsope George Makola, is focused on delivering quality education in the rural villages under the Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality in Limpopo.

According to Makola, the lack of access to learning materials, computers and information is still a major social problem in the disadvantaged villages in Limpopo and that is why the Lesedi Institute of Education and Development exists.

Not only does Makola have a great passion for education and development, but he also founded the first library based in Bakoneng Village. The 27-year-old did not complain about the situation or give in to it, he changed it. No more would the people from his village have to commute to the nearest townships to access a public library.

"Three years ago, I identified an old, unused two-room house. My team and I renovated the building and turned it into a library," he states.

With more than 2000 books collected from donors, scholars and public school, learners from various schools started using the facility for homework, assignments, research, studying and reading.

"We also help Grade 12 learners with university applications for free. This includes registration fees and basic computer training to prepare them for university. The library initiative contributes to improved performance by Grade 12 learners and improves the literacy level in the community and surrounding villages."

RORISANG GOMOLEMO THAGE, 27

“Education liberates one from the chains of poverty”

As the first and only lecturer permanently employed in mine surveying, Rorisang Gomolemo Thage has been a junior lecturer at the Unisa Department of Mining Engineering since 2018. She is also the only professional mine surveyor in South Africa whose research focuses on open pit mine planning. This is understandable, considering her list of academic accolades.

With a B.Tech in Mineral Resources Management (UJ), Masters in Mine Planning (Unisa) and a pending PhD in the same field, it is small wonder The Woman of Stature Foundation acknowledged her as one of the top-five finalists in the category of Women in Engineering in March 2022. Her undisputed contribution in South African engineering called for the honour.

The young mine surveyor also received an award from the Womandla Foundation in August 2022 in the Rising Star category for Women in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics. She also serves on the Institute of Mine Surveyors of Southern Africa's governing council as a co-opted



member of the committee responsible for education.

"As a young woman, I have a strong belief that education liberates one from the chains of poverty and equips knowledge-consumers with a certain level of intelligence. Therefore, I am of the view that education affords the youth, young women in particular, with many opportunities that often see them taking up prominent roles both in the public and private sectors," Thage concludes.

PHELADI MANGWALE, 26, LIMPOPO

Enthusiastic teacher, Pheladi Mangwale is passionate about imparting reading, writing and robotics to her foundation phase learners. The teacher at The Dikobo Primary School in the Waterberg district in Limpopo also teaches coding.

Mangwale has also launched a YouTube channel where she shares all her expertise with other teachers, mostly on how to integrate ICT into regular teaching and learning, as well as how to teach youngsters reading and writing. It is, therefore, no wonder she is chairperson at her school, Waterberg's ICT coordinator and the newest member of the school management team.

Her zeal and passion saw her compete in the National Teaching Awards, demonstrating her abilities in teaching and learning. She was also named an ICT champion and received funds to attend a short course in Integrating ICT at the University of Witwatersrand.

The South African Democratic Teachers Union also recognised Mangwale for



"She shares all her expertise with other teachers, mostly on how to integrate ICT into regular teaching and learning"

having the capacity and expertise to educate other teachers unplugged and plugged coding and robotics.

SEBONE THAPELO, 31

Limpopo

Teaching at her day job is not all enthusiastic Sebone Thapelo does with her time. The teacher at Toronto Primary School in Polokwane, Limpopo, who teaches mathematics, coding, and robotics, is also the founder of Basal Academy, where she teaches students the fundamentals of mathematics.

Her academy's objective is to teach students, teachers, the school governing bodies and the community that accomplishing big dreams is only feasible if you put in more effort and are enthusiastic about your work.

Thapelo is also an ICT educator and chairperson at the school, as well as an ICT coordinator in and around Mankweng where she educates and shares digital skills with other teachers on how to use ICT in their daily teaching and learning.

In 2019, the ITC enthusiast trained Grade 7 learners and teachers in ICT integration. The fruit of her labour was eight learners coming first and one second in a digital usage competition.

The 31-year-old teacher was named an ICT champion by the district and received funds to attend a short course in Integrating ICT at Wits University. Owing to her aptitude in coding and robotics, she was reined in by SADTU to impart her knowledge to other teachers.



"The South African Democratic Teachers Union also recognised me for having the capacity and expertise to educate other teachers."

ISFAP: STUDENT FINANCIAL AID FOR SA'S MISSING MIDDLE

Our focus is on critical skills and our graduates are in demand



At Ikusasa Student Financial Aid Programme (ISFAP) we understand the immense challenge faced by students in the missing middle to obtain funding to support their dream of obtaining a higher education.

WHO WE ARE

We are a not-for-profit foundation that heeded the call by the government to find solutions to the student funding crisis. Our focus is on critical skills and we have a presence in eleven of the twenty-six public universities in the country. We provide funding to students from the "missing middle", that is, households whose total income is R350 000 to R600 000.

HOW WE WORK

We provide comprehensive support that extends beyond just providing financial support for university fees, accommodation, meals, books, a laptop and living allowance. We give our bursary beneficiaries additional academic support and tutoring. We have dedicated programme managers at our partner universities to support students academically and psychosocially. We also provide life skills training, mentoring and mental health support. We focus on ongoing support, including regular check-ins with students to ensure they remain on track to succeed.

WHO WE WORK WITH

We currently work with 11 public universities in South Africa, and the areas of study funded by ISFAP vary for each institution. We support specific programmes in line with South Africa's occupations of high demand.

WHERE DO WE GET OUR FUNDS

We raise funds from the private sector, government institutions, foundations, non-profit organisations, development finance institutions, local and international donors, and private individuals.

GRADUATES



SARAH LUFUNGULA

Completed her BA in Speech and Hearing Therapy in 2021. In 2022 she worked as a community service speech therapist and audiologist at Edenvale Hospital, working with children and adults with varied communication, feeding and hearing difficulties. She is now working in the UK as a school-based speech and language therapist.



THAPELO BILA

Graduated with B.Sc Honours in Mining Engineering with the help of Ikusasa. He is currently employed as a mining planner. "Throughout my studies, I learned not only about engineering but perseverance, discipline and hard work. As a mining planner, I'm excited about the prospect of contributing to the growth of the country's mining industry, creating jobs and making a difference in people's lives."



BONGANI SIBIYA

Is a BCom Accounting Sciences and a Postgraduate Diploma in Accounting Sciences graduate. He is currently doing auditing training with one of the big four auditing firms and in his last year of articles to become a chartered accountant.



MAHLOHONOLO NGOMANE

BCom Accounting Sciences graduate and currently studying for a post-graduate diploma in applied accounting. "At ISFAP we had a programme manager taking care for us as she wanted us to succeed."

APPLICATIONS FOR 2024 NOW OPEN

ISFAP is accepting applications for the 2024 academic year. To apply, visit our website www.isfap.org.za to access our partner university and programmes that we currently fund. The closing date for applications is 31 October 2023. Visit our website www.isfap.org.za for more information.



AMINA FAROUK, 27 GAUTENG

“

Ability
beyond
disability.



Amina Farouk describes herself as a teacher by profession, a mentor by passion and an educator at heart. Farouk, who is an educational sociologist by profession, serves the education sector at Cambridge level. She is the founder of Teach With a Passion Mentorship Programme, through which she moulds student teachers by providing skills development and different methodologies for them to deal with on-the-ground situations. This she offers without any financial gain.

Farouk is also an active member of her community, serving her people as a motivational speaker who uses the trials and tribulations she has been through to ignite hope. She is a car accident survivor, in which she lost her right leg when she was merely 8 years old, as well as an endometriosis warrior. Her motto through life is ability beyond disability.

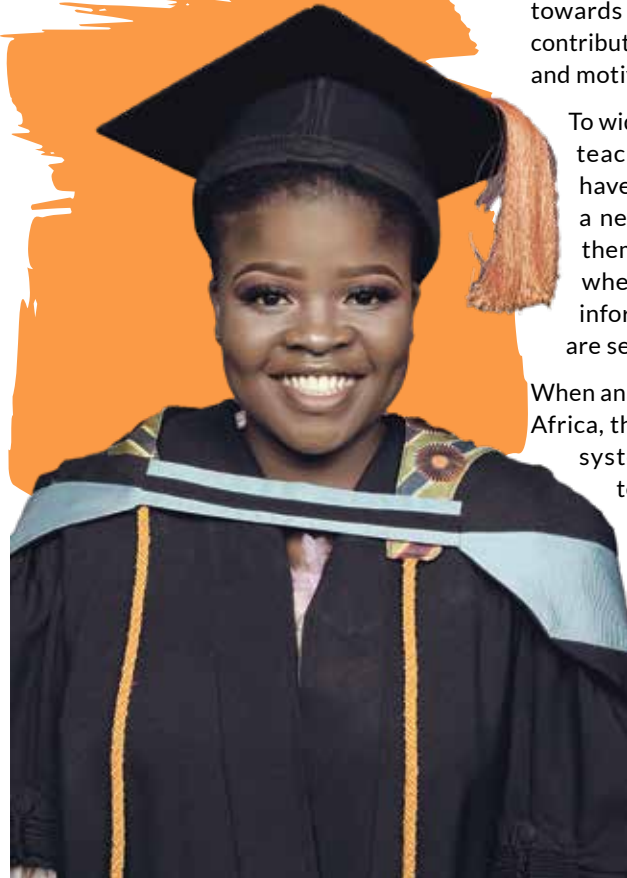
To her name she has many accolades, such as Women of Wonder Gauteng 2021 and 100 Influential Women in South Africa 2022. She is Miss Inspire SA Women 2022/2023 as well as a Casual Day Ambassador for the National Council for Persons with Disabilities.

Amina Farouk is determined, willing and able to claim her space.

NOKWETHEMBA MVUBU, 29

Gauteng

This Maphutha Secondary School teacher sacrifices her time to give her learners life lessons, outlining the importance of education in improving their circumstances. Nokwethemba Mvubu is passionate about education because she believes that learners could do great when given a chance.



“

I believe teachers are sent to rescue the world.

The young teacher knows the importance of fair chances too well, as she feels she would have turned out differently had she been not given one. This is why she wants to contribute to the black child as much as possible.

“I’m not only supporting children, but I also understand that as a teacher, I am a lifelong student. I do this by continuing my studies towards my masters degree, so that I can contribute towards educational discussions and motivate my learners,” Mvubu states.

To widen the scope of her influence, the teacher also supports learners who have learning difficulties by creating a network of mentors who can help them. “I love seeing a black child win, whether it is the result of formal or informal education. I believe teachers are sent to rescue the world,” she says.

When analysing the school system in South Africa, the 29-year-old mentions that the system has some underperforming teachers with poor work ethic. She adds that the lack of community and parental support is also what largely affects the education system. She is frustrated by parents who have no interest in their children’s schoolwork. She is concerned about overcrowding, which impedes the necessary support that is necessary during teaching and learning.

MALESELA EDWARD MONTLE, 28 Limpopo



Higher education provides a brilliant platform for one to make a remarkable contribution towards finding solutions

With his love of English and good marks in the subject and the teaching baton from his late father, Dr Edward Montle’s fate as a teacher was long sealed. Starting his teaching career at secondary school, the Burgersfort-born was destined for bigger things, as he would progress to teach in higher education.

Now a senior lecturer of English Studies at the University of Limpopo, his alma mater, the 30-year-old has blazed more trails than his seniors, and his father must be proud. Not one to idle and rest on his laurels, Montle has served on several academic societies and journal editorial boards. His research publications mostly address postcolonial themes in the African environment. His efforts as a student earned him recognition as one of the top students in the Faculty of Humanities and the much-coveted Vice-Chancellor’s Award for Best Overall Upcoming Researcher. Be that as it may, these accomplishments do not compare to the realisation of his goal of acquiring his PhD before age 30. The achievement pleases the supervisor of postgraduate studies.

According to Montle, the system is yet to break away from colonial identities. He thinks that more scholarships and other measures should be invested to decolonise the system.

“Higher education provides a brilliant platform for one to make a remarkable contribution towards finding solutions for Africa and the world at large,” he says.





NOMPUMELELO GINA, 32

KwaZulu-Natal

"In 2019 I won the Tourism Lilizela Award for the best Cultural Tourist Guide in KZN"

The love for sharing the knowledge she has about nature and culture, as well as creating unforgettable memories for tourists, is what inspires Nompumelelo Gina. Gina says her business venture, Theo Tours and Culture, offers tourists an authentic Zulu cultural experience by taking them to villages to meet chiefs, traditional healers and more.

"We also organise a boat cruise to Lake St Lucia, game drives to both Hluhluwe iMfolozi Park and iSimangaliso Wetland Park, as well as hiking trails and bicycle tours," she adds.

The Department of Tourism assists her business with market access programmes through which she has signed deals with big companies that bring her clients.

In 2016, her business partner won the Tourism



Lilizela Award for Best Nature Tourist Guide in the province and was the second runner-up for Best Cultural Tourist Guide. Three years later, Gina also won the Tourism Lilizela Award for the Best Cultural Tourist Guide in KZN.

NTSHABO LEHONG, 31

Gauteng

Ntshabo Lehong is the founder of m-Temp, an opportunity- and talent-matching platform that works through WhatsApp and was built for the hospitality and tourism industry.

According to Lehong, tourism is one of the largest job creators, yet it's highly underserved, especially for skilled and unskilled level workers.

"With m-Temp, the goal is to create access to opportunities in underserved communities. This is why the decision was made to build within the WhatsApp environment as the most used app within the country and the rest of the continent," she narrates.

Being in travel and tourism opens up the mind, says Lehong, because it allows one to engage with different people.

Lehong was named one of the 20 entrepreneurs selected as beneficiaries of the Tourism Technology Grassroots Innovation and Incubation Programme by the Department of Tourism and the Technology Innovation Agency. According to her, this programme



"The goal is to create access to opportunities in underserved communities."

allowed her to build m-Temp into what it is today.

She also entered the Africa Youth in Tourism Innovation Challenge and was the only nominated representative for the SADC region who was shortlisted and subsequently made it to the Top-three out of over 100 entrants on the continent for 2023.



SIYABONGA XULU, 36

KwaZulu-Natal

Siyabonga Xulu naturally loves to interact with people, sharing knowledge about history and events. So, being in the tourism industry was a no brainer for him. Xulu is the owner of Ing Travel and Tours based in Durban.

"We started off with no vehicle but now we have five vehicles. We employ six full time staff members, meaning our business looks after five families," says Xulu.

Xulu was the first runner-up in the Durban Tourism Business Awards 2022 and is also listed as the one of the best customer service businesses in tourism.

According to him, his business provides transport to clients traveling for leisure, adventure and corporate business.



Our business looks after five families.

"The inspiration for the business comes from the importance of exploring things that are out of the ordinary and well known by sharing our own to others who don't know about us. The exchange of experiences can be culture, adventure or historical events," says Xulu.

He adds that tourism is about learning new things about where you are and traveling.

Xulu says the Department of Tourism has assisted his business with a three-year programme to participate in some of their programmes for small enterprises. They have also been able to attend the Tourism Indaba and Meetings Africa through the department.



Tourism has taught me a lot of things

NONQABA MAKAPELA, 28

North West

Nonqaba Makapela has always wanted to be in the tourism industry. This is why she furthered her studies in Tourism at Vuselela TVET College. Makapela is the owner of the Klerksdorp-based Chelles Travel and Tours, which offers a variety of travel packages for companies, individuals, and groups. The packages include accommodation bookings, individual bookings, group bookings, business bookings, tour packages, cultural heritage tours and adventure tours.

"I have always wanted to own my company and not work a 9:00 to 17:00 job. Other tour operators also inspired me to go into the tourism industry," she says, adding,



"Tourism has taught me a lot of things and it has showed me how to run my own company."

True to its commitment to create a thriving local tourism industry, the Department of Tourism has given her the opportunity to market her product and has exposed her to different cultures all over the world. The support also included being trained in various areas of tourism management and going to the Africa Tourism Indaba to market her company and products.

"Ever since my training and the expo, my company has grown," Makapela reports.

PRETTY NGUBANE, 33

KwaZulu-Natal

"Seeing our clientele expand steadily is a testament to our dedication"

Pretty Ngubane holds a National Diploma in Tourism Management from Durban University of Technology and is the founder of PSN Travel Frenzy.

"What inspired me to start PSN Travel Frenzy was my deep love for tourism and my profound admiration for the enchanting country of South Africa," she says.

She adds that being surrounded by diverse cultures, breath-taking landscapes and a vibrant history is what made her want to share this richness with others. "The desire to showcase the diverse beauty and experiences in South Africa is the driving force behind PSN Travel Frenzy," she explains, emphasising that the Department of Tourism has played a pivotal role in the company's growth.

"Through their support, we have been able



to showcase our services on prestigious platforms, connect with industry leaders and gain exposure to a wider audience. Their sponsorship of our participation in the Sigma International Tour Operators Incubation programme has been a catalyst for our success, allowing us to collaborate with key players in the industry."

Securing two substantial contracts with municipalities and the consistent growth of their clientele is a significant achievement for Ngubane. She says the contracts have not only boosted her company's credibility, but have also opened exciting opportunities to grow on a larger scale. "Seeing our clientele expand steadily is testament to our dedication in providing unforgettable journeys and exceeding their expectations," Ngubane concludes.



YOUTH IN TOURISM



KYLE BRIJDER, 28

Western Cape

Kyle Brijder is the founder of two innovative tourism ventures, Bag Drop and Gido.

Bag Drop, is a last-mile luggage delivery and short-term storage company. He describes the service as an answer to the 'where can we leave our bags?' question when waiting for a check-in or flight at the airport. Gido, is a marketplace connecting travellers to relevant, registered tourist guides. "We use a technique called Profile-based Itinerary Creation in which we provide a list of touring suggestions based off a traveller's profile. On the other side

we are creating an algorithm which will equally distribute work opportunities amongst registered freelance tourist guides."

According to Brijder his biggest accolade is being named a Top Innovator in the tourism industry as part of the collaboration between the Department of Tourism and the Technology Innovation Agency.

"I am passionate about tourism because it allows people to explore new places and promotes cultural exchange, personal growth and economic benefits."

Tourism allows people to explore new places

KHOTSO CHRISTIAN CHAKA, 31

Free State



"Tourism is one of the biggest contributors to the country's GDP"

Khotso Desmond Christian Chaka, professionally known as Chris Chaka, fell in love with tourism at a young age. He went on all tours from high school to university, which fuelled his ambition to start a tourism business.

Chaka holds an NDip in Tourism Management and a BTech in Project Management from the Central University of Technology, Free State. He is currently pursuing his MBA with a UK-based institution. Chaka established Afrikan Native Travel in 2017. Headquartered in Bloemfontein, the company is also establishing a new office in Cape Town.

"We are well positioned in the industry by being fully accredited and affiliated with the two main watchdogs of travel in the world which are the International Air Transportation Association and the Association of Southern African Travel Agents. We are one of the needed experts in travel within the Free State province," Chaka explains.

The Department of Tourism assisted them during the pandemic through the relief fund and by sponsoring their participation at the Africa Tourism Indaba for 2022 and 2023. Lastly, the department funded the company to attend the 2023 South Asia Travel & Tourism Exchange and roadshows in India.

Chaka is passionate about the tourism industry because he believes that it is the best industry to solve issues such as youth unemployment. "Tourism is one of the biggest contributors to the country's GDP. It gives people the ability to refresh and regain strength," he says.

VIVIAN HLAYISI, 35

Gauteng



We have been ranked one of the best out of three travel agencies in Soweto

Between 2009 and 2019, Vivian Hlayisi has completed a number of short courses to equip herself with knowledge and skills to run a successful tourism business. Her passion for tourism stems from her love of meeting new and interesting people from different walks of life and the ability to create a dream vacation or find the perfect destination for them.

Tlhari Travel was established in 2011 after she completed her certificate in tourism. The business was inspired by her dreaming of becoming an air hostess. Hlayisi is proud of the fact that Tlhari Travel has been able to secure two major corporate clients and that they will be employing five workers over the next financial year. This will bring up their number of employees to nine.

The Department of Tourism has been of great help to the business.

"They have assisted us in being locally and internationally recognised and trusted, as you cannot conduct business with someone who is not vetted and might not deliver. They have also helped us build relationships with companies who specialising in different destinations," she says.

The company has been ranked one of the best out of three travel agencies in Soweto.

Buntu Matole was born in Gauteng but raised in the streets of Khayelitsha, Western Cape. He has travelled to most areas of the country playing for his school, community group, and province due to his love and passion for sports. In 2016, he became an Airbnb experience host after Airbnb approached him, and in 2017 he became a registered tour guide.

Since then, Matole has grown into an entrepreneur who takes great pride in serving the Khayelitsha community. He co-founded ABCD Concepts with his business partner Ayanda Cuba in 2015, with the key aim of changing the way Khayelitsha is seen, particularly in terms of crime. The duo dedicate their work to breaking the stigma for the community's young leaders and taking Khayelitsha to new heights as a tourist attraction.

Matole runs the operational side of ABCD. He is also responsible for creating and curating concepts.

He credits the Department of Tourism for injecting hope and resources into his dreams.

For the last two years, reports the National Department of Tourism has been assisting his company with the opportunity to attend the Africa Travel Indaba, which is an annual event that takes place in Durban. "For this event they pay for everything from flights, accommodation, food, transport and a three day pass to the event. The aim for this support program is to assist and give small businesses an opportunity to market products and services in the biggest tourism event in Africa."

BUNTU MATOLE, 35

Western Cape



“

Taking Khayelitsha to new heights as a tourist attraction

KAONE NTLHAILE, 29

North West

Kaone Ntlhaile, who hails from Rustenburg in the North West province, says she is passionate about tourism because she wants to nullify the stereotype that travelling is expensive.

Ntlhaile established Tholo Tours & Safaris in 2014 with the goal of taking the current state of the tourism industry and growing it outside of South African borders.

"Tourism truly broadens one's horizons. You truly get to see life in a different light other than your every day norm," she says.

According to Ntlhaile, the Department of Tourism has assisted her business with more exposure and marketing. "I now have an international clientele because of the department, which I am truly grateful for."

Ntlhaile adds that Tholo Tours & Safaris was the only female black-owned company selected by the department to represent the North West province under "Hidden Gems" at this year's World Market Travel in Cape Town. She also took part in this year's Africa Travel Indaba in Durban.



“

Tourism truly broadens one's horizon

"I am the first black female deputy secretary general of Greater Pilanesberg Tour Operators in Sun City. I recently completed the Nationwide Tour Operator Incubation programme with Sigma international, sponsored by the Department of Tourism," she states.

YOUTH IN COMMUNITY, SPORT, ARTS & CULTURE



LIMPOPO
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



Free State

I find that I am inspired by stories that are not spoken about enough

SIBAHLE MABASO, 23

"Tell me, what is it you plan to do with your one precious life?" is a quote by Mary Oliver that Sibahle Mabaso lives by.

Hailing from a small town called Kestell in the Free State, the 23-year-old artist says being an educator is what she considers one of her biggest dreams. "It does not matter which space it is in or what form it takes," she asserts.

The young lady hopes to run a successful skills-development programme, wherein she can expose communities to the arts and increase the investment and buy-in to the arts as a means of social reform.

She also hopes to, one day, form part of an organisation or a company that develops the youth through programmes and integration. More than anything, she wants to be "in the room where it happens", so that she can be active in the change-making process.

Mabaso's art is rooted in a deep desire to uplift the voices of the marginalised through storytelling.

In closing, the future educator mentions, "I find that I am inspired by stories that are not spoken about enough. I have made a conscious effort to include those who have been excluded from the discourse a priority. I feel fulfilled when my privilege to create is coupled with my activism and social awareness."

Being an Unsung Hero, according to Mabaso, will open a plethora of opportunities, exposing her to individuals who are also change makers in the artistic space.

Khauhelo Maikhi, 34 Free State

"Being an Unsung Hero will motivate me to keep being selfless in helping others in the arts industry"

Trading skills with aspiring art practitioners and going beyond for the community is what Khauhelo Maikhi from Botshabelo in the Free State is known for. He holds a BA Drama and Theatre Arts degree and has been active in the professional-artistic space for the past 10 years.

The performer, writer, director, stage manager and theatre technician was recognised as the best writer for his 100% Sesotho show titled "Lesedi", under the Performing Arts Centre of the Free State's capacity-building programme. His acclaimed script "The Masks", which speaks on the challenges of the LGBTQI+ communities, has been approved and funded by the National Arts Council and has gone on a national theatre tour.

The artist's passion stretches beyond art, his heart also beats for inclusive education. This can be seen through his school tours, where he writes shows about socially relevant issues to provoke discussions and awareness.

From his relatively small home, Maikhi holds workshops for young people interested in taking over the artistic space. He also volunteers at schools with creative-art classes. Coming from humble beginnings, he has reached and traded skills with the youth in and around the Free State.

What he is looking forward to in being an Unsung Hero is the opening of more doors for his work, as helping others can be challenging because of the lack of support and resources.



DIDINTLE MOATSHE, 21

The pain and trauma of losing a baby through miscarriage, stillbirth or infant loss is not easy to process. Didintle Moatshe, having suffered such a loss herself, is braving it out and using her story to uplift women who are going through this difficult time.

She started the support group, Still a Mom-ZA, after she lost her triplets in 2020. With the support, she focuses on the needs of moms who have lost their children. The support group has been joined by more than 200 angel moms all over the country.

"I started Still a Mom, because I believed that the angel-moms community had been neglected and was not given that much support. Hospitals, as it is, are not as equipped when it comes to providing support for women who have lost their children," Moatshe says.

The angel mom adds that when she lost her children, she did not know how to grieve and which mechanisms to use to get through the ordeal. "Fortunately, I could afford psychological services, yet I felt stronger and uplifted when I spoke to other women who had been through a similar experience. I have been able to help a lot of women without physical meet ups, but through online interactions."

A true philanthropist from the age of 15, Moatshe has been a helping hand in other areas of her community as well.

She concludes, "What I mostly enjoy about this is living my purpose, which is healing souls. The feedback I get from the women I have assisted keeps me going."

"Hospitals are not as equipped when it comes to providing support for women who have lost their children."

To me, being an Unsung Hero means that the work I am doing in my community and in other provinces is being noticed

PFARELO MAPHANGULE, 20



Gauteng

At his tender age, Pfarelo Maphangule can be considered a philanthropist who sets the needs of the community above his own. The 20-year-old from Tembisa is the founder and chairperson of Youth Leadership Organisation, a registered NPO that focuses on giving back to the community.

Maphangule has impacted over 2000 young people and over 150 families who have received food parcels and donations from his work. Since 2018, he has done a lot for the community through various projects.

When the philanthropist was in grade 12, he became part of the Congress of South African Students, working with the district office in Jo-

hannesburg to assist most schools in Ivory Park, Kaalfontein and Ebony. In 2021, he was named one of the finalists for the Young Essay Writers Africa.

The third-year Bachelor of Education student at the UFS has hosted over 40 different motivational talks, empowering young people in different schools, some stretching as far as the Free State.

"To me, being an Unsung Hero means that the work I do in my community and in other provinces is being noticed and will serve as a motivation to continue doing it," states Maphangule. The accolade will also shine some light on the work that has already been done, thereby paving a way for greater things to come.

GIGGS KGONAMOTSE KGOLE, 25

Limpopo



Deejaying, installations, music composition, multimedia, paintings, poetry, sculpture and writing are just some of Giggs Kgonamotse Kgole's artistic mediums. The 25-year-old artist born in Kutupu Village in the Limpopo Province is now making waves in Europe.

Destined for greatness, Kgole – at a tender age of 21 – became known as the youngest gallery owner in South Africa with his GasLamp Gallery in Johannesburg.

In 2017, he received a Prestigious Presidential Scholarship that landed him in Rome, Italy where he had his first solo showcase in Europe titled "Before the High Walls". He is completing his degree in art history with double minors in communication, studio art and design at the John Cabot University.

A few years after the solo showcase in Europe, Kgole spent six months in France in a residency organised by Undiscovered Canvas. Last year he was part of the two Miami Art Fairs. This took place just after he curated a group exhibition Mehlolo organised by Expat South Africa on his turf at the Polokwane Art Museum.

For this ground-breaker, success started at school. A former recipient of the Student Sponsorship Programme and having attended the prestigious St John's College, Kgole became not only the first person to attend a private high school in his family; but also the first to pass matric.

Kgole was also named under the Mail & Guardian's Top 200 young South Africans.

He received a Prestigious Presidential Scholarship that landed him in Rome, Italy



LIMPOPO
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

YOUTH IN COMMUNITY, SPORT, ARTS & CULTURE

Luvo Nkwenkwe, 32,

Eastern Cape

The quote is one Luvuko, better known as Luvo, Nkwenkwe lives by. This can be seen through his organisation that hopes to bring change to the people of his community. Through this NPO, Utshintsho Loluntu, the Mthatha-born hopes to be a vehicle that will assist the youth that is battling with social ills and with no one to assist them.

In his village, Cegcwane and community at large, numbers of young people are dropping out of school, engaging in drug and alcohol abuse. Consequently, forming this organisation was aimed at creating a facility that would help the youth change their lives for the better.

The organisation is living up to its name by changing the community. It hosts sport tournaments that seek to take children off the

streets and have them focus on something positive, and also provides sanitary towels to young girls in the community.

"Through this organisation, there is stability in families in our community, because people are now encouraged to go back to school, children are encouraged to engage in sport. Some of the organisation's players were scouted and subsequently played for established teams outside the region.

"What I enjoy most about being involved in this is bringing about change in my community. If the status quo of the people is changed through this initiative, then I am happy."

That being said, there isn't more a founder can ask for.

“

It's all about the people.



MPHO SALAMINA MOFOKENG, 32,

GAUTENG

"Like slavery and apartheid, poverty is not natural. It is man-made and can – therefore – be overcome and eradicated by the actions of human beings."

This quote by Nelson Mandela is Mpho Mofokeng's motto. It is what the president and co-founder of the Life 4 U Foundation hopes to achieve through her NPO.

The NPO, which caters for the communities of Tembisa, Ivory Park and surrounding townships, works with vulnerable children, the elderly and the unemployed youth, where the daily feeding scheme caters for 384 000+ community members on an annual basis. There is also support for funerals

of indigent families and assistance to disaster-stricken and poverty-stricken families with food parcels. Mofokeng's NPO also provides spiritual counselling and motivation to widows in Gauteng townships.

According to Mofokeng, the youth-development programme links unemployed youth with work opportunities. "We also assist the youth obtain their driver's licences, specifically those in need of a Code C in conjunction with the public driving permit. We also offer accredited short courses in ICT, cashier training and plumbing. Annually, our organisation reaches and supports 2000+ unemployed youth."

The diligent helper says she enjoys supporting her community. "I become fulfilled when I see people developing and exiting the cycle of poverty."

"We also assist the youth obtain their driver's licences."



FRANS PHOOKO, 35, Limpopo

"I took part in the First International Mural Encounter in Tzaneen in 2013 and have since worked on a few similar projects"

Being part of a group of artists who created murals around his city in anticipation of the 2010 Soccer World Cup in 2009 was a great stepping stone for Frans Phooko. The Capricorn TVET College Art and Design graduate participated in numerous mural art projects throughout Limpopo the following year. His efforts saw him being a finalist in the Absa L'Atelier Art Competition and the Sasol New Signatures Art Competition in 2010.

"Ultimately, I took part in the First International Mural Encounter in Tzaneen in 2013 and have since worked on a few similar projects," shares Phooko.

The artist participated in the International Mural by Mail Project at the Elizabeth Jones Art Centre, in Portland, US in 2021. He was one of the top 10 muralists and artists to conceptualise the Brave Space mural project in Eersterust and the City of Tshwane. He has established an Anti-Bullying Alliance campaign to put an end to bullying by bringing together artists to create artwork, construct murals and hold workshops for children.



ZANELE CEKISO, 33, Gauteng

The countless possibilities of social media have taken Zanele Cekiso from an HIV activist and registered nurse at work to an online sensation. The holder of a Postgraduate Diploma in HIV Management from Stellenbosch University has built an online presence that surpasses her education and seven-year experience in the HIV sector.

Currently a quality assurance coordinator for Strategic, Evaluation, Advisory and Development (SEAD) Consulting, Cekiso's main duties include providing expert advice to the Wits RHI NGO in the Ekurhuleni District on quality in HIV testing.

With a Facebook and Twitter following of 2 900 and 4 500 respectively, Nurse Zee has really cemented herself in the hearts of her followers as The Nurse of the People. She is also the first YouTuber in Africa to document her life as a nurse. Her channel has 5550 subscribers.

Nurse Zee serves the people beyond the borders of South Africa through her social media platforms, providing confidential psychosocial support to people living with HIV. She also makes educational YouTube videos teaching people about HIV prevention, management, and diagnosis.



"Nurse Zee serves the people beyond the borders of South Africa through her social media platforms"

YOUTH IN COMMUNITY, SPORT, ARTS & CULTURE



LIMPOPO
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



Gauteng

KGOMOTSO MOPHULANE, 32



The former journalist worked for SABC's external service and Channel Africa for 8 years before joining public service as an assistant director for communications at the Helen Joseph Hospital.

Shortly after joining Helen Joseph Hospital in 2019, Kgomotso Mophulane was part of the Rahima Moosa Mother-and-Child and Helen Joseph Hospitals project task team, where she was then recognised by the then Gauteng Department of Health's HOD, Prof Mkhululi Lukhele, for her input.

In her current position as communications and strategic information manager for NGO Sonke Gender Justice, Mophulane heads a team of communicators who advocate for gender-transformative and youth-inclusive decision-making by leaders in the Southern African Development Community.

The 32-year-old also facilitates capacity-building initiatives through media training for women and youth-led organisations across the region. She further contributes towards projects that engage men to change social and gender norms that reinforce patriarchy and inequality.

She lives by Luke 1:37 which says: "For there is nothing that God cannot do".

Being an Unsung Hero is an honour for the former journalist. It will also encourage her to strive to do more and aim for even greater heights.



"I get to empower and impart knowledge with community-based and youth-led organisations through media advocacy campaigns"



"I hope and believe that one day one of my players, will make it to the national squad"

Grace Tshiping is passionate about netball and uses it as a tool to empower young girls, take them off the streets, reduce teenage pregnancy and drug abuse in her community.

Through Grace Golden Eagle Netball Club, the founder promotes equal access and opportunities for participants and fosters enjoyment and skills development through dedication and sound management practice.

The coach dreams of one day opening a netball academy where she will be coaching and developing children. She sees herself teaching them about the importance of sport in their lives and the valuable social and communication skills a team sport can impart to players as they work towards a common goal.

"I hope and believe that one day one of my players will make it to the national squad," she shares.

Even though she loves netball, her love for helping young women and children stretches beyond the field. Tshiping also hosts beauty pageants aimed at empowering young women in her community and giving them an opportunity to showcase their talents.

"Being an Unsung Hero is a great honour for me. I am very grateful to be recognised for my hard work and it will give me courage to do more for my community," is her parting shot.



"We often don't realise the rich and authentic history we have in this country, especially in creativity."

Being a mouthpiece for creatives is what the creator of Itheku Connect, Zama Khumalo, is passionate about.

Khumalo, an online media specialist who specialises in digital marketing, created this platform to showcase what creatives had to offer to the industry and also document the history they were creating for future generations.

She mentions that she enjoys reading the stories of the various creatives she has profiled. "The journey I am on is not a small feat. My existence is of value and a part of something great."

The media specialist hopes to create more platforms to document the stories of other unsung heroes. "We often don't realise the rich and authentic history we have in this country, especially in creativity. We tend to look outside our borders, but forget how powerful and majestic we are," she states.

She believes that "Unsung Hero" is the perfect title for the work she does. "This is because most of the time, the work I do doesn't mean much to many and that is okay, but those who follow me, know the value I add. Lastly, both of my parents died within a space of two years, this recognition is a great honour to both of them - I'm their Unsung Hero."

Khumalo's achievements include being nominated for the Gagasi Shero 2021, Hustler of the Year 031, Women in Marketing as well as the Afroblogger Awards.

THENDO BRILZ, 27



"I'd spend a lot of time by myself just writing stories"

When Thendo Brilz realised, as an Urban Brew Studios intern, that she did not have the opportunity to do most of the things that she was passionate about and that she had very little to no creative input, she took the decision to start her own production company. This dissatisfaction came after the first production assistant job for a BET Africa show a few weeks after her graduation from AFDA in 2017. That is how Brilz Films was founded.

As a soft-spoken person, the best way the producer, director and writer expresses herself is through writing. "I'd spend a lot of time by myself just writing stories and letting my imagination run wild, not knowing that I could have a career as a filmmaker. I always thought my only options were journalism, teaching English or authorship, because there was no information on filmmaking in the township. I then found out about AFDA, applied and the rest is history," explains Brilz.

The 27-year-old realised that there were so many talented young people in Venda who - because of lack of knowledge and exposure - were sitting at home, not knowing where to go or what to do with their talents. "I'm happy to have helped some realise their potential and hope to continue doing so," she says.

NKATEKO EMILY MABASA, 32

Gauteng



"I live with my disability, but I do not let it become my life."

The quote is Nkateko Emily Mabasa's motto, as she was diagnosed with cerebral palsy at an early age. She has not let her disability stop her from living a full life and giving back to her community.

"I am currently using my knowledge, skills, and talents to teach different types of art. I also introduce the love of reading and giving back to the youth, regardless of the challenges. I do all this through my volunteer work and my non-profit organisation, Phoenix Alexandra," explains Mabasa.

The 32-year-old believes in normalising people's differences and allowing them to embrace their true selves. She does this by identifying the



gaps in her own community of Alexandra and giving the youth opportunities to believe in their dreams. "My life story is proof that when you believe, anything is possible," her determination is palpable.

Phoenix Alexandra advocates for inclusion and accessibility for all, no matter what their background, because Mabasa swears by affording everyone a fair and just opportunity.

Always ready to do more, the community developer is also an active volunteer for an organisation called A Stranger Kind and a brand ambassador for the life-changing Duke of Edinburgh International Award.

To Mabasa, her passion for achieving inclusivity is not merely a dream, but just something that requires hard work and determination. The result will be one united community.

THATO MOTANA, 32,

Limpopo

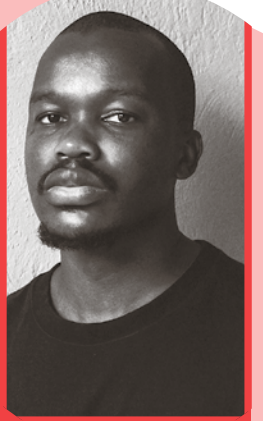
As a self-taught artist, Thato Motana has been practicing fine arts since 2016. The Polokwane-based independent fine artist could not resist the many therapeutic processes of creating visual artworks. This contributes a lot to his mental health and that of those he is privileged to mentor.

Even though the Polokwane Art Museum Market Photo Workshop student and volunteer archivist has faced a few hardships in his life, he has continued to demonstrate a life of purpose to his township peers through art. He soldiers on through his aspirations of becoming a curator in the future and his desire to exhibit his debut solo artwork before the end of the year.

The archivist shares his other dreams, "I would like to partner with local and international associations to help establish an art institution with the aim of educating and growing the art industry in the rural areas of Limpopo."

The 32-year-old has been busy, having showcased his work in group exhibitions such as those in the

"I would like to partner with local and international associations to help establish an art institution in the rural areas of Limpopo."



Pretoria Art Museum, Number Four Museum - Constitution Hill, Oliewenhuis Art Museum and Polokwane Art Museum.

To fuel his passion, there has been also recognition as well. The self-declared theological aesthete was winner of the 2019 Thami Mnyele Fine Arts Awards: Art on Paper Merit Award as well as a Sasol New Signatures 2019 finalist. The Art Bank of South Africa is a collector of his work and in 2019, Business and Arts South Africa also notably nominated him for the Department of Arts and Culture Debut Awards.

BRIDGET NWOVHE, 27

Limpopo

Writer and poet Bridget Nwovhe is passionate about lending a helping hand, whether directly or indirectly. The 27-year-old from Makonde Village, in Limpopo does so by using her craft to connect humanity and send a message to people from different groups.

This giver-at-heart often partners with different NPOs in doing wonderful works for the community, but does not shy away from going solo from time to time. She does public speaking and hosts literature projects to promote a culture of reading and writing.

"We are in a digital era that does not favour everyone, especially those in villages. Through writing and reading programmes, we are slowly changing the situation," states Nwovhe.

The writer also runs an online group with the hope of turning it into an official organisation that focuses on mental health, GBV and education.



"We are in a digital era that does not favour everyone, especially those in villages"

"I am the co-founder of South African Students Career Show which focuses on mentorship and career advice for high school learners," reveals the poet.

Nwovhe has a string of achievements under her belt. Last year alone she was selected as a Black Woman in Science fellow, Woman of Stature Global Awards finalist, Influential Woman of the Year winner, Global Good Governance 2022 winner in Nigeria and one of the 50 Most Memorable Women in 2022.

In 2017 she published a poetry collection titled Calendar's Time, and Collectors of African Literature in Nigeria has published her work.



LIMPOPO
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

YOUTH IN COMMUNITY, SPORT, ARTS & CULTURE



WONKE MAPEYI,
32

Western Cape

"My NPO intends to stretch its services and reach out to the remote areas of the province"

His passion for youth development in the less fortunate areas of the Western Cape is what drives community activist Wonke Mapeyi.

As the founder of his registered NPO, Elevator Ground, the focus is on providing young girls in Cape Town with sanitary pads, as some of them tend to skip school during their menstrual periods due to their inability to afford pads.

And because the job is never done, Mapeyi is also a Bar-One: One Starter Ambassador, a campaign that recognises individuals who have brought positive change in their respective communities.

Among his successes, Mapeyi counts the pivotal role he played in the success of a Youth Day event, where youth from various areas of Cape Town engaged on matters affecting their daily lives.

His NPO intends to reach out to the remote areas of the province and other provinces in the future as most of the children do not get the services they are entitled to.



GIVEN BUNGENI,
35

Limpopo

"Agricultural community-schemes are also used to create employment opportunities for young people"

Armed with a mission to end poverty by transforming young people's lives and society at large, Chief Given Bungeni of Bungeni Village started the Given Bungeni Foundation (GBF). The 35-year-old felt he had to do his bit to better the lives of his people.

The GBF actively works to end poverty and launches programmes targeted at empowering young people and other vulnerable groups in the community. This is accomplished by giving unemployed youngsters the knowledge and skills they need to survive.

The foundation also offers training programmes and public education-campaigns to increase people's knowledge of diseases such as tuberculosis, alcoholism, Covid-19, HIV/AIDS, cancer, other health-related topics and addictions such as alcoholism.

The foundation also runs agricultural community-schemes geared towards creating employment opportunities for young people and other unemployed groups.



MZWAKHE XULU,
29

KwaZulu-Natal

66

My NPO's mission is to promote the art of debate among high school learners

Sifundo Mzwakhe Xulu is the Co-founder and chairperson of Calibrating Minds Society NPO, an organisation that promotes academic scholarship and excellence in the Empangeni and Richards Bay, KZN. The NPO's mission is to promote the art of debate among high school learners, host career expos that provide learners with access to a wide range of career opportunities, while also providing mental health talks to learners to help them cope with the challenges of adolescence.

Every year, Xulu convenes the annual Empangeni Debating

League Championship, where hundreds of learners from rural and urban high schools participate in competitive debating, and are selected to progress to provincial and national schools debating levels.

Despite the limited resources and support the NPO receives, he continues to demonstrate resilience and courage through his leadership, which has earned him recognition among 100 South African Shining Stars (Inside Education), Mail & Guardian's 200 Young South Africans and 100 Africa's Brightest Young Minds.

Celebrate the women who inspire the nation

HEROINE: A WOMAN ADMIRER FOR HER COURAGE, OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENTS OR NOBLE QUALITIES.

Sunday World HEROIC WOMEN 2023

Help us find Inspirational women who champion change and adapt and transform Business, Health, Tech, Education, Sport, Arts & Culture, Community, Tourism and the Environment for the good of all.

NOMINATE NOW

sundayworld.co.za/nominate-women-2023

Call: 011 268 6300

For Sponsorship and Advertising

Anastacia Martin - Project Manager
anastacia@sundayworld.co.za

Tsundo Mashele
Tsundo@sundayworld.co.za

Level up

your **work, learn & play**

Upgrade your Tech
and Stay Cosy with the
**Best Tech Deals this
Season.**

12%
LOW INTEREST
RATE

guaranteed over
24 months with our
Tech Credit



New!

**Youtility Fusion
Portable Power
Station**

From
R489
x 24 months

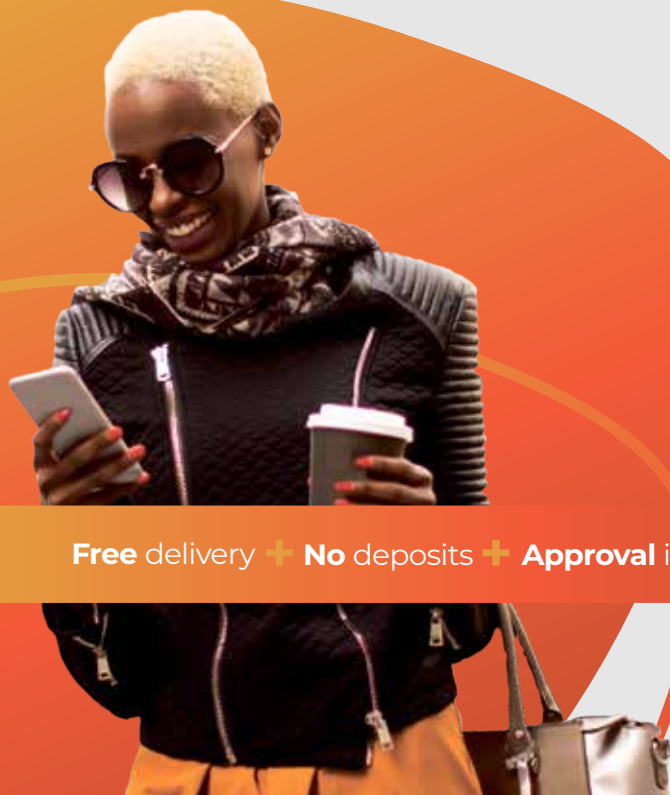
- Stage 6 Compliant
- High Efficiency Inverter Technology



**Samsung
Galaxy A23**

From
R626
x 24 months

- Pinnacle 2GB TopUp
- ZTE MF937U Router
- SmartData 5GB TopUp
- Belj Mini UPS 60W POE



Free delivery + No deposits + Approval in minutes

BANK | **BORROW** | SAVE | INVEST | INSURE

To get our Tech Deals, **SMS "TECH"** to **30963**, simply apply online on www.africanbank.co.za/en/home/tech-deals, or visit your **nearest branch**

Terms, conditions & affordability rules apply and are available on www.africanbank.co.za. African Bank Limited is an authorised financial services and registered credit provider. FSP No. 46094.NCR Reg No: NCRCP7638. Reg No: 2014/176899/06.

 **African Bank**
Audacity to believe



Top place to **work** ☒ **bank** ☒



Journey with **African Bank**
to the top. We're a certified
Top Employer, **2nd year**
in a row!

BANK | BORROW | SAVE | INVEST | INSURE

African Bank Limited is an authorised financial services and registered credit provider. NCR Reg No: NCRCP7638. Reg No: 2014/176899/06. FSP No 46094.

 **African Bank**
Audacity to believe