

# Tsogo Sun hosts women united in moving SA forward

Tsogo Sun's Citizenship team hosted a 'Celebrate and Inspire' Women's Day event with keynote speaker, businesswoman Phuti Mahanyele, executive chairperson of Sigma Capital investment group, in celebration of Women's Month and in acknowledgement of the powerful role women play in South Africa and its future.



Shanda Paine, Phuti Mahanyele, Hubi Mboya and Candy Tothill

With more than half of Tsogo Sun's workforce being comprised of women, the group's impact on creating opportunities and ensuring gender diversity in the workplace is significant. "52% of our employees are women and we rely on the value they bring to the business," says Candy Tothill, Tsogo Sun's GM of Corporate Affairs, who was recently announced as one of three corporate finalists in the Businesswoman of the Year Awards, run by the Business Women's Association of SA.

"Tsogo Sun has a strong focus on developing female managers within the group, which is reflected in the fact that 43% of our executive and senior management comprises of women. This is significantly higher than the national average of 27% reported in the 2015 Grant Thornton International Business Report."

## Honouring women

Guests at the all-women event included leaders, entrepreneurs, businesswomen, and drivers of change and development who share a common commitment to unite women in moving South Africa forward, which is the national theme for this year's Women's Month. The event honoured brave women who have paved the way in this country over the last six decades since 1956 and recognised the work of those who are forging the path towards an equitable future for women to come.

“When women emerge as positive and powerful role models for the younger generation, the whole of society experiences the benefit,” says Shanda Paine, Tsogo Sun’s group CSI manager. “That is the thrust behind this event – and our guest speaker, Phuti Mahanyele, embodies this philosophy and serves as a shining example of what can be achieved when one is committed to realising their full potential.”

Mahanyele, who has won numerous awards, including the Forbes Woman Africa Business Woman of the Year Award, told guests, “Have a strong sense of connection to yourself because that is something that is constantly being tested, particularly if you are a woman. There are many who will question why you are in your position. But you have to have the confidence to be in the role that you are in.”



Phuti Mahanyele

## Tsogo Sun 2016 Entrepreneur of the Year Award finalists announced

Also highlighting the Celebrate and Inspire theme was the announcement by Tothill of the five Tsogo Sun 2016 Entrepreneur of the Year Award finalists, four of whom are women – Meisie Nkosi owner of Bella Bonni Guesthouse, Carol Senosi owner of Lefa Cleaning Services, Lucille Cremen owner of Cresco Tours, Zinzi Masina owner of La Emme Guesthouse and Nqobile Nkosi owner of NQ Jewellery Design Services. The judges include captains of industry and past winners of the Tsogo Sun Entrepreneur of the Year Award. The 2016 winner will be announced at a gala banquet on 20 October 2016.



TS Entrepreneurs

Tothill notes the relevance of Women's Month for Tsogo Sun. "In the arena of the group's Corporate Affairs, the group's commitment to gender equality is strongly evident – particularly within the citizenship portfolio encompassing the upliftment of local communities, entrepreneurial development, and environmental education, which is resulting in a significant and positive change all over the country. These results are being achieved by a dynamic women-led team of employees and suppliers to the group."

"It makes sense to empower women," adds Paine. "Someone wise once said that if you empower a woman, you empower a nation, suggesting that the more we advance women, the more we advance society, and in turn the world. It's a win-win situation for everyone. It's encouraging to have Women's Month in South Africa to highlight the valuable role that women have played and continue to play in this country, and it's a privilege to be able to share it with so many inspiring women."

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