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2020

200 YOUNG

SOUTH AFRICANS





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Mail & Guardian 200 YOUNG SOUTH AFRICANS



Photo by Paul Botes
Ron Derby: Mail & Guardian editor-in-chief

CELEBRATING THE CREATORS OF SOUTH AFRICA'S

INCLUSIVE, EQUAL AND SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

Change is by its nature uncomfortable, as I'm sure we can all attest. However, there are still dreams to be dreamt and we have to celebrate those who have managed to keep them alive and positively impact the world they live in through future-focused innovation and passion, leaving their mark for generations to come.

In a world where everyone is seeking out and increasingly addicted to instant gratification, as South Africans we can't be a very satisfied bunch. I have observed a popular misconception in this regard: that this phenomenon is unique only to the youth. This is not the reality of things. Over the past decade, if not more, we haven't been able to shake off the doom and gloom that has followed from a faltering economy and a growing unemployment crisis, among the youth and women in particular.

For the youth, I can only imagine there must be much in their lives that resonates with the lyrics of one of the Mail & Guardian 200 Young South Africans alumni, Ami Faku's song – Into Ingawe. The opening words of the song that sadly I've only just discovered (Ndandisemnyameni, Ndingaboni nalomnyango, kwabalekintsuku, ndikhangela indlela yophuma) roughly translates into a person being in darkness and not knowing where to turn to and just how to escape their circumstances. For the more than 20-million people classified as the youth by Statistics South Africa – 15 to 34-year-olds – this is their truth.

The second part of Faku's co-written song, however, speaks of hope, an expected miracle and her dreams coming to fruition. I suppose the reason the Mail & Guardian decided to start honouring young South Africans 17 years ago was to celebrate those whose dreams have come to life against a sometimes very challenging and ever-changing backdrop that is the experiment of this new country. In their pursuit of social justice, the youth are encouraged to break barriers, create jobs and innovate to perhaps pacify the fears of the older generations over what the future holds for this extraordinary piece of rock on the bottom of this great continent. They have to create spaces where the youth can garner critical skills to fully engage in the future.

In this year's instalment, we are looking for innovators and creators of viable and non-conventional solutions through convergence with technology, who are helping to create an equitable future where every person has access to resources and opportunities that provide professional and economic parity, enabling them to live prosperous and fulfilling lives.

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HOW WE CHOOSE THE 200 YOUNG SOUTH AFRICANS

WANT TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT OUR WINNERS?

Every year, we open up nominations online on mg.co.za. This year we received about 6 000 nominations. Once nominations close, we go through the list thoroughly and shortlist potential candidates. We then select candidates for each category. Our team of writers contact the selected candidates and we write profiles based on these interviews. If you know someone we should profile in 2023, be sure to nominate them when entries open next year on 200youngsouthafricans.co.za



Opening your phone's camera and pointing it at the QR code next to a name will let you head straight to their online profile, where we've published longer profiles covering their talents, careers and achievements.

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SHANDUKANI MULAUDZI, 32

Communications officer: Mozilla Foundation

Shandukani Mulaudzi has always been passionate about telling stories. She completed her journalism degree at Wits, being awarded student of the year, followed by further studies at Columbia University, where she finished in the top 15% of her class. "Everyone said it would be close to impossible, but I just decided to show up as the best version of myself," Mulaudzi says. The entrepreneur now manages the Studio Nxumalo Contemporary art gallery in Linden, Johannesburg, where in her work she advocates having more black artists in the world of art fairs and exhibitions. "Art is African – we are inherently a people who draw, speak, sing, dance and create to communicate our most intimate thoughts and feelings," she says. Mulaudzi's dedication to empowerment also extends to her role as communications officer at Mozilla, where she enjoys working on projects at the intersection of technology and social justice. – Luca Hart



PHILISWA LILA, 34

Visual artist and researcher: University of Johannesburg in partnership with Cambridge University

Philiswa Lila is a visual artist and storyteller. She is influenced by the nuances of memory, brought about by the sensory explorations of personal objects – how the touch of an intimate object can evoke a recollection of senses, imagination and emotion. Her work brings to life the specific narratives identified by the personal connections between the object and the person. Her artwork becomes a reflection of the emotional history between them. Lila works across multiple disciplines such as oil and acrylic painting, installations and performance art, while using a variety of mediums in her work that include animal skin, beading, wood, paper, photography, video and poetry. Lila received her master's degree in art history from Rhodes University and honours in curating at Michaelis School of Art, University of Cape Town. She is currently in residence at University of Johannesburg, in partnership with Cambridge University. – Carol Chamberlain



LEHLOHONOLO MASINA, 35

Operations manager: Current State Presentations Pty (Ltd)

Born and bred in Sebokeng, Lehlohonolo Masina's journey into the arts began with a chance meeting with poet and now business partner Vus'umuzi Phakathi. "My friend asked if it would be possible for me to drive his friend to Durban for a performance," he remembers. "This friend turned out to be Vus'umuzi. I fell in love with the arts on the drive." The following year, Masina resigned from his job at Nampak, where he felt he had reached a ceiling. Work began to establish Current State Presentations, a company working with artists – particularly poets – from disadvantaged backgrounds. This resulted in a partnership with the Joburg Theatre's youth development arm. Concurrently, Masina worked with Arts Alive, starting in 2016, handing out flyers and eventually working on activations, becoming an artist liaison officer and, later, part of the production team. – Sandiso Ngubane



BANZII MAVUSO, 31

Freelance filmmaker and musician: Kosmic Natives

Johannesburg-based Banzii Mavuso is the founder of Kosmic Natives, a creative agency working with South African filmmakers, designers and musicians. "We are ensuring that black women are humanised, elevated and seen," Mavuso said about her company. As a freelance filmmaker and musician, Mavuso has worn many hats over the years, including organising events at companies she's worked for, such as Jam That Session and Blvck Queer. Her proudest moments include receiving funding for the short film Gang 888 from the National Film and Video Foundation and the Gauteng Film Commission, and being shortlisted to perform in Switzerland, both in 2020. Mavuso is inspired by her late brother and parents to connect with their ancestors and ensure their legacy lives on. Mavuso says, "I want people to understand that they matter and that just like in the old days, we still need our values of love, gratitude, respect and support for one another." – Neil Buchner Jr



TSHEGOFATSO SEOKA, 34

Founder and managing director: Ms Simone

Art specialist Tshegofatso Seoka wears three hats in the sector. She's the founder of Ms Simone, an art theory lecturer at Tshwane University of Technology, and the education and events officer for Unisa Art Gallery, where she handles publicity and organises events. In all three roles, her aims are to make visual arts a more sustainable career, to see African art gain prominence on the global stage, and to encourage more black people to become collectors. Seoka launched Ms Simone as a consultancy to support and develop contemporary South African and African art by curating exhibitions, representing artists and managing collections. The company's research arm develops and updates art archives and is involved in publishing books and academic journals. "In less than a year, I had already employed two interns, partnered with big institutions in the sector and presented a show at the Turbine Art Fair," she says. – Lesley Stones



EKTA SOMERA, 23

Founder and editor-in-chief: Paper Trail Literary Journal

Ekta Somera studied criminology because of her fascination with psychology and a need to help others. Then she discovered a passion for poetry and a knack for writing, and realised that she needed to change her career choice. Last year she self-published her first collection of poetry titled Made in Poetry, followed this year by her second collection, Twenty-Two. Not one to rest on her laurels, the ambitious Somera then started Paper Trail Literary Journal as a platform for young creative voices to be heard. The journal's name represents leaving something behind for now and future generations. When Somera was at school, she felt that there weren't that many opportunities for her to express herself freely, so she set her sights on creating a space for others to do so, while engaging with and raising awareness about important social issues. – Patrick Visser

RENDANI NEMAKHAVHANI, 31

Artist: PRSDNT HONEY

Rendani Nemakhavhani, aka PRSDNT HONEY, uses illustration, photography and film to tell stories representative of people like herself. Her work is inspired by African culture and centred on blackness and womanhood because, she says, "I believe in our power – past, present, and future." PRSDNT HONEY says she's driven by the pursuit of happiness; creating and sharing work that resonates with others

makes her happy. She strives to solve problems using creativity, to leave the world a more interesting place, and explores new ways to make art more accessible. "I'm working towards being one of the greats of our lifetime." "The biggest mistake I made was talking myself out of being an artist," she says. She advises young artists to believe in their genius and have the courage to pursue it.

– Luca Hart

JAZZY



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JULY

JAZZY AT THE MARKET



MANDI VUNDLA, 35

Founder and chief executive: Poetry Zone ZA

Mandi Vundla is the founder of Poetry Zone ZA – a poetry development agency focused on improving the quality of spoken word poetry in South Africa. Vundla is an educator, mentor and curator, in addition to being a poet. One word at a time, she addresses how poetry is perceived, consumed, and how the youth engage with it. Vundla's work allows her to express her own journey and future ambitions. "I use poetry to confront

the physiological and psychological limitations and expectations imposed on me by the world, as a black woman born and brewed in the township." These poems, which Vundla created for her own personal resolve, have expanded beyond comprehensible reach and have created hope and a home for the communities that encounter her work.

– Shai Rama



NALEDI MASHISHI, 27

Researcher and author: Africa Check

Having trained as a journalist, Naledi Mashishi now works as a researcher for Africa Check, Africa's first fact-checking organisation, where she uses the large online platform to debunk misinformation. "I believe that people can only make the best decisions for themselves and others if they have the right information they need to make them," she says. Through her work, she has learned the importance of not limiting herself. "I spent most of my life thinking that anything health-related was out of my reach," she says. Naledi now writes reports verifying claims made in the public domain. Much of her work has included debunking misinformation around the Covid-19 virus and vaccine, as well as claims regarding women's health, education, and South African law. Committed to being accessible, Mashishi posts her research to the Africa Check website and in conversational threads on Twitter to her thousands of followers.

– Andie Reeves



XABISO VILI, 30

Director: Siziintsoni Creations

There is nothing original under the sun," muses Xabiso Vili. This is why the 30-year-old Johannesburger prefers to focus on authenticity instead. He pursues this goal through storytelling, the unifying thread of a diverse creative output, and through his postgraduate studies in applied theatre at Wits University. The Future Africa grant recipient has produced two collections of poetry, Eating My Skin and Laughing In My Father's Voice, and a one-man show, Black Boi Be. It's Vili's work in the augmented reality field that has taken him from his upbringing in the rural Eastern Cape to the likes of Vancouver and Paris. He had to pinch himself when, wandering through the latter's crowded suburbs, he heard his own voice booming from the historic Church of St Eustache, a feature of his projection-mapping installation. Vili is busy working on a 360-degree visual poetry album, which will become his first virtual reality film.

– Zia Haffejee



OBETT MOTAUNG, 29

Multidisciplinary artist

Obett Motaung is an artist, academic and a member of the Golden Key International Honour Society. Wits University awarded him for making the best postgraduate film. Motaung's vision is to support others to excel and attain their own wish fulfilment. "I want to be the wings that others use to go out there to reach for their dreams," he says. He would advise his younger self to stay focused and be brave enough to overcome whatever obstacles may arise. His work is focused on those who are on the margins of society. He is driven by a hunger to learn about the world in order to better himself. He believes his biggest mistake is thinking he was too young to be in certain spaces, but now he sees that young people need to be represented, and should speak up and be heard.

– Oratile Mashizi



SLINDILE MTHEMBU, 29

Playwright, script writer and creative director: Mabu Art Foundation

Slindile Mthembu is a storyteller. Through her work, she challenges one-dimensional ways of depicting black womxn and their lives. She was featured in Advance Media's 100 Most Influential South Africans of 2020. The proudest moment in her journey was taking 16 young black performers and a creative team to the National Arts Festival in Makhandla in 2016. Their concept musical Milked Voice sold out every day and received standing ovations. IGAMA? is an award-winning play that Mthembu developed during her master's in theatre and performance at Wits University. The play tells the story of five womxn who live in a well-behaved South African community. The aim is to see if the womxn can break out of their stereotypes, or whether they merely conform to narrow postcolonial South African social norms.

– Louise van den Bergh



BRITTANY SMITH, 27

Opera soloist: Cape Town Opera

Brittany Smith is a living example of what happens when a talented woman pushes through the barriers of self-doubt and fears of not fitting in: she blossoms into a professional and flourishes as she does what she loves for a living. Smith is an opera singer for Cape Town Opera, which employed her as a young artist only to promote her shortly afterwards. She studied for six years at the University of Cape Town's South African College of Music, specialising in opera, followed by a postgraduate certificate in advanced opera studies. In a near-disaster, Smith contracted tuberculosis only 4cm below her vocal chords. This put both her career and her life in jeopardy, but fortunately she recovered. Pushing through the trials of this adversity was worth it. She describes the feeling of opening her mouth to sing opera as "freedom and bliss". Smith's biggest piece of advice is to never underestimate the power you have within yourself, as it is unfathomably great.

– Jennifer Worthington-Smith



NOLUYOLO NGOMANI, 31

Station manager: RX Radio

Noluyolo Ngomani is a station manager at RX Radio, a radio station for children. "It provides a platform for communication between hospitalised children with chronic conditions, their families and healthcare workers. The station aims to enable children to be ongoing participants in decision making on matters that affect them," says Ngomani. RX Radio was one of the two winners of the World Health Organisation's Reboot Health & Wellbeing Challenge 2021. Ngomani is passionate about amplifying children's voices. She completed her master's in media theory and practice at the University of Cape Town as well as two honours degrees, a bachelor of arts in film and media, and a certificate in radio production from the National Electronic Media Institute of South Africa. "A new day means more possibilities," she says. "Always be willing to work hard as, more often than not, it pays off".

– Sarah Irwin



NICHOLAS RIEMER, 32

Co-founder and chief executive: The Invigilator

A lasting legacy of the pandemic lockdowns has been that so much of life has moved permanently online. That includes many aspects of education, but sitting exams still requires the students and supervisors to be physically present. Nicholas Riemer is changing that with an app developed by his company, The Invigilator. The app allows school and university students to write exams at home, while ensuring the exam's integrity. It works on entry-level smartphones and uses very little data. Riemer himself is a qualified accountant, which gave him the financial foundation to branch out and build The Invigilator. It became South Africa's most downloaded education app in 2021, with more than 20 universities and schools currently using it. It allows students to write their tests in a place that suits them. It also lets teachers conduct continuous assessments, rather than having to call students in for tests.

– Lesley Stones



LISA VON BENECKE, 29

Founder and chief executive: LC Dynamics

Lisa von Benecke is the founder and chief executive of LC Dynamics, a clean-tech company that improves green energy access through tech products and data-driven systems. LC Dynamics manufactures and sells smart solar blinds, which are capable of powering everything from your cellphone to your security system. An innovative problem-solver, she is helping the planet while finding ways to help manage South Africa's electricity woes. Von Benecke was a national finalist in L'Oréal South Africa's Brandstorm 2021 innovation competition. In 2019, she was among the 100 delegates that the Royal Academy of Engineering invited to the 4th Global Grand Challenges Summit in London. Von Benecke is a women and youth advocate through DREAMS Thina Abantu Abasha, a youth-led programme working to decrease HIV infection rates in Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal. She has also done volunteer work with global nonprofit WomEng, which supports women in STEM.

– Alice Sholto-Douglas



SIYAVUYA BANDEZI, 17

Founder and managing director: Liyana Beauty

Hair always has been and always will be a big deal for Africans, says Siyavuya Bandezi, the founder and managing director of Liyana Beauty. Sporting an afro and glowing skin, Bandezi is a walking advertisement for her company's hair and skincare products made from indigenous plants, tested and approved by the South African Bureau of Standards. The unusual thing is that she's only 17, and still studying at The Glen High School in Pretoria. Liyana Beauty was born out of her frustration with her hair's inability to retain moisture. "I have this big afro that I love and it was becoming a mission to maintain it," she says. Seeking a quick and simple daily routine, she researched the power of plants and began making her own products, which has grown into this business. Bandezi sells Liyana Beauty product online and at craft markets, and hopes to soon feature in major retailers.

– Lesley Stones



SIBUSISO XABA, 32

Founder and chief executive: Africa Cannabis Advisory Group

The aim of creating 130 000 jobs in the legal cannabis industry in South Africa isn't the only point on the agenda for Sibusiso Xaba, the co-founder and chief executive of Africa Cannabis Advisory Group. After leaving his investment banking job in London to move back to South Africa and start a business, Xaba wanted to build an organisation that plays an instrumental role in helping South Africa to realise its potential in the growing cannabis industry. The goal of the Africa Cannabis Advisory Group is to implement affordable healthcare and climate-friendly industrialisation, which would mean that ordinary South Africans could play a major role in securing a sustainable future. Xaba says that he is "most excited about being part of a growing movement of young entrepreneurs who are building the Africa of tomorrow, an Africa that reflects the potential of its people; an Africa we can be proud of".

– Simon Dey



GUGULETHU MAHLANGU, 29

Aquaponics horticulturist: Finleaf Farms

Aquaponics horticulturist Gugulethu Mahlangu develops nutritious, chemical-free food with Finleaf Farms, a scalable, biological farming brand. She specialises in lettuce, microgreens and herbs. Aquaponics is a self-sustaining ecosystem that utilises the natural relationship between fish and plants. Plants clean the water for fish and they give plants nutrients to grow. Mahlangu believes that the harmonious pursuit of farming with renowned institutions in Switzerland and America. Now he designs, laser-cuts and assembles watches that proudly reflect African culture, including Bapedi, Swati and Batswana patterns. He's moved from a room in Soweto to premises in Midrand, and his website attracts international buyers. He's been featured in American, Japanese and German media. He also trains upcoming watchmakers in townships to grow the trade. Masha says he wants to see watchmaking become a viable career choice in South Africa. "I want the world to know that Africans are brilliant at what they do."

– Carol Chamberlain



KHOLOFELO MASHA, 32

Director: Xesha South Africa

Self-trained horologist Kholofelo Masha may have been subconsciously guided into his career by his middle name, Xesha. It means "time" in isiXhosa, and it's the perfect name for his watch design business. Horology barely exists in Africa, where finely crafted watches are usually imported, and Masha learned the trade by taking timepieces apart with a kitchen knife because he couldn't afford specialist tools. He then enrolled for online courses with renowned institutions in Switzerland and America. Now he designs, laser-cuts and assembles watches that proudly reflect African culture, including Bapedi, Swati and Batswana patterns. He's moved from a room in Soweto to premises in Midrand, and his website attracts international buyers. He's been featured in American, Japanese and German media. He also trains upcoming watchmakers in townships to grow the trade. Masha says he wants to see watchmaking become a viable career choice in South Africa. "I want the world to know that Africans are brilliant at what they do."

– Lesley Stones



VANN VAN STADEN, 35

Motor journalist: APEX magazine

Vann van Staden is a motor and lifestyle journalist who wants to build a team of enthusiasts who – on paper – wouldn't stand a chance of writing their own success stories. In 2021, Van Staden decided to take a leap of faith and launch an independently owned motoring magazine called APEX. With this magazine, she aims to challenge the stigma that success in the male-dominated industry is unachievable for women.

APEX magazine tries not to be "just another car magazine", by bringing a young twist to the motoring industry. Van Staden plans to achieve this by empowering aspiring writers who have not had opportunities to qualify for writing jobs. "Everything I know has been self-taught and self-made," she says. "Given the right guidance and tools, young writers can make anything happen."

– Simon Dey



200 YOUNG SOUTH AFRICANS 2022 BUSINESS & ENTREPRENEURSHIP



NICOLE DUNN, 26

Venture scale lead: Founders Factory Africa

Nicole Dunn graduated cum laude for her honours in commerce at the University of Cape Town. Her dissertation, which investigated spaza shop transformation in South Africa, shows that her goal is to manifest opportunity in the country. This Allan Gray Orbis Foundation fellow was the editor-in-chief of SAX Appeal magazine during the turbulent time of #FeesMustFall. She made it her mission to make this annual University of Cape Town publication

a voice for the voiceless by cultivating a space of inclusivity. Dunn now works as a venture scale lead for Founders Factory Africa, an early stage investment company that helps start-ups to achieve sustainable business growth. Outside of her work-related efforts, she supports start-ups with strategic advice, sponsorships and other assistance, with a focus on companies founded by women.

— Louise Bell



THANDO HLONGWANE, 24

Co-founder and chief executive officer: Lipa Payments

Education and financial inclusion are among Africa's biggest challenges, and Thando Hlongwane has made it his mission to use technology to solve them.

The young entrepreneur pioneered two companies while studying computer science at the University of Cape Town. He was a member of the National Advisory Council on Innovation's foresight initiative committee, and continues to work with industry leaders on cutting-edge technologies that improve the world we live in.

Hlongwane built on his experience as a finance and tech entrepreneur to found Lipa Payments, a contactless payment solution available across Africa.

His proudest moment was to have one of the largest banks in South Africa use Lipa Payments software in a recent pilot programme. He sits on the steering committee for the Unicef Youth Agency Marketplace project, which aligns with his vision to empower African youth through digital skills development. — Daniël de Jager



OLWETHU MHLANA, 30

Founder and chief executive officer: Lulibo Market

Olwethu Mhlana wants to make an impact by helping transform the economy through inclusive policies and platforms, as well as sustainable growth where black and indigenous people have access to funding, business tools and support. She intends to do her part by being at the helm of a mission-driven company. Mhlana is the founder and chief executive of Lulibo Market, an e-commerce marketplace that connects shoppers in South Africa with high-quality, locally sourced products from black-owned brands.

She believes that as an entrepreneur, her journey entails creating access, building sustainable tools, reimagining technology and ultimately empowering other new business owners. She is committed to a vision to create a culture where consumers are intentional about supporting local small businesses, and she says she won't rest anytime soon knowing that there is a lot more work to do and people to empower. — Patrick Visser



ALEXANDER OLOO, 32

Head of design: Absa Bank South Africa

Head of design at Absa bank, Alexander Oloo is a young South African to keep tabs on. UX (user experience) design is a rapidly expanding field that concerns the meeting point of information technology and human psychology.

Fascinated by interaction design and human-centred design principles, Oloo is equally passionate about paying it forward. Not only does he lead, he avidly teaches. Much of his job entails mentoring, teaching and encouraging a culture of curiosity. He heads a team of more than 100 coders and UX designers at Absa, guiding them towards improving the bank's apps and interfaces, aiming for ease of use, cultural sensitivity and general efficacy. He also assists fledgling start-ups, trouble-shooting problems in their software interfaces and business models.

Oloo volunteers at Sprint, a career-readiness initiative that assists university graduates with the soft skills needed to enter the workplace. — Francesco Nassimbeni



TIANG MOABELO, 28

Founder and chief executive officer: Loadlot

Tiang Moabelo demystifies and diversifies artificial intelligence (AI), using it as a workable, digital solution to logistical problems. His company Loadlot aligns packing, cleaning, storage, moving and unpacking through an ecosystem of strategic partners.

His vision is to make the fourth industrial revolution a reality for everyone, and show future generations the vast potential of AI. Moabelo has developed and launched the first South African AI solution in the moving and storage industry, and is encouraged by the interest shown by the youth in his company's product. He has an accounting and commerce background and imbues his work with the efficiency taught by these professions. Moabelo knows how much consumers value speed of service, and the role that AI will play going forward excites him. With ambitions to work with the informal sector, Loadlot is a future-fit company to keep an eye on. — Albert Troost



PHILIP JOUBERT, 34

Co-founder and chief executive officer: OfferZen

In 2022, we're well into the age of software-based digital transformation and innovation – developers are in high demand, and that's not changing anytime soon.

Philip Joubert, the chief executive officer and founder of OfferZen, knows this and says, "I want more South Africans to realise that software development is one of the best career paths available to them.

While you need a degree to become a lot of other professions, you don't need any qualifications to get started as a software developer." OfferZen has created a global marketplace that connects software developers with tech companies. The company started in South Africa and now operates across Africa and Europe. The OfferZen team has grown to more than 150 people mostly based in South Africa and the Netherlands.

Joubert and the team share a singular vision of finding thousands of developers their dream jobs while connecting global and local tech communities. — Patrick Visser



NANDI MKHWANAZI, 35

Farmer: Nanloy Organic Farm

Farmer and entrepreneur Nandi Mkhwanazi sees food not only as a source of nutrition, but also as tool for poverty alleviation and wealth creation. The owner of agri start-up Nanloy Organic Farm aims to combine innovation and indigenous African knowledge to provide high-value organic fresh produce. "As a farmer, I have been focused on building healthy soil, protecting local environments and improving biodiversity," she says.

"I love to nurture nature and my work affords me the privilege to carry an entire generation of plants in my hands. I get to see the seeds grow, thrive and fulfil their purpose."

Through the Ayanda Organic Home & Schools Garden initiative, Mkhwanazi teaches the entire value chain of food production and the power of growing one's own food, focusing on indigenous crops and nutritious vegetables that are drought resistant. She is also the current SADC chairperson of the Africa Under 40 entrepreneurs network. — Sandiso Ngubane

Meet the inaugural **COLLECTIVE** Shapers **WINNERS**

"70% of people living within sub-Saharan Africa are younger than 30." – United Nations

At the end of September 2021, Metropolitan set out to activate local economies in towns and cities across South Africa. Our goal is to uplift communities across the country by honing in on existing skills and passions driving local economies, and then develop them further, spreading knowledge amongst the youth. Because of the promising talent, passion and drive, Polokwane was chosen as our first stop.

Metropolitan CEO, Peter Tshiguvho, asked young members in this community to grab this opportunity to learn, develop skills and grow, with both hands. And they did. Over a period of nine weeks, we gave 20 young South African farmers the tools they needed to create long-lasting and sustainable advancement for themselves and their community. At the end of the programme, each participant from the first Metropolitan Collective Shapers intake pitched their businesses to Metropolitan's executives, with four Shapers finally emerging as our winners.

Metropolitan Collective Shapers aims to transform the potential of our youth into economic growth opportunities across South Africa. To grow these leaders, entrepreneurs and innovators, we have to plant the right seeds, provide opportunities and empower our youth to help them reach their full potential. This was just the first programme, and your city could be next.

Here are our first set of winners:



Pete Mashaphu – Winner: R50 000

"Thanks to Collective Shapers, I'll be able to extend my borehole, purchase point-of-lay chickens and strengthen security back at the farm. I'll go back to the farm and make sure that I never look at my business the very same."



Jeffrey Takalo – Winner: R20 000

"The Collective Shapers programme taught me a lot in terms of how to take my business to the next level. I will invest the money back into the business, using technology to advance aspects such as precision farming. Technology will also play a bigger role in my business."



Huli Takalani – Winner: R50 000

"From management through to bookkeeping, the initiative really empowered me to run my business in a formal and professional manner by managing aspects such as cost of production more thoroughly. I will be using the prize money to improve the farm's irrigation system, amongst others, and to increase the number of drips we use. In addition, I will also be purchasing high-quality seedlings to plant for the forthcoming harvest."



Benjamin Nkanyane – Winner: R20 000

"My future goals include assisting in the reduction of local unemployment, which is a big issue in our country and, by creating jobs, providing skills and training to communities and schools, I will be able to pay the favour forward as it were by helping youths in the same way that the programme has helped me."



Together we can #

#CollectiveShapers



METROPOLITAN
Together we can

MetropolitanZA @MetropolitanZA metropolitan_za

You can support the initiative by sharing the message far and wide because together, we can. For more information, check out www.metropolitan.co.za or follow the official social media pages:



GABI IMMELMAN, 31

Founder and chief executive: Mindjoy

As its founder and chief executive, Gabi Immelman heads up Mindjoy, an education technology start-up for children. She trained at the Lincoln Centre of Education in New York and dropped out of her master's programme in inclusive innovation in education to start working on Mindjoy. Mindjoy offers live virtual coding classes where small groups of kids code with friends on projects supported by a Mindjoy coach.

Immelman wasn't a neurotypical child, so the school system didn't always work for her. Her journey of creating projects stemmed from this experience. "Projects have the power to connect peers, invite play and unleash passion in young people – every child should have the opportunity to work on a project of their own," says Immelman. She has since worked with thousands of children from all walks of life, cultivating a community where young people come together to learn valuable skills such as programming.

– Ncumisa Lerato Kunana



BULELANI BALABALA, 35

Communications officer: Mozilla Foundation

"Get things done!" is Bulelani Balabala's motto. As a township entrepreneur himself, he is passionate about township entrepreneurship. This motivated him to start and run an initiative in 2015 called the Township Entrepreneurs Alliance (TEA), which has directly impacted more than 50 000 township entrepreneurs. The alliance brings information, skills, mentorship and funding to individuals from previously excluded communities. Balabala wants to help establish hubs in townships to help shape ideas into viable products. He also wants to have a direct impact on the 1.8-million informal businesses that trade in townships, as well as help them gain access to markets locally and abroad. He is a professional speaker who covers brand developments, entrepreneurship and transformation. A defining moment in his journey was when he realised he was providing a better life for his family, staff and community. "I am township!" says Balabala proudly. – Alexander Brand



SIVUYILE PEZULU, 33

Visual artist and researcher: University of Johannesburg in partnership with Cambridge University

Sivuyile Pezulu is the co-founder and managing director of Indalo Water Technologies. The company was started as a response to the ongoing water crisis in South Africa. The Indalo objective is to halve freshwater use in Africa. It does this by helping organisations to reclaim their wastewater, treating it on site to become reusable greywater for landscape irrigation and toilet flushing, or as water for heating, ventilation and air conditioning units. Clients include power stations, mines, resorts, lodges and factories. Pezulu's proudest moment was in June of 2021, when Indalo partnered with a community organisation in Limpopo to raise funds to build safe sanitation facilities for a school. This led to the company pledging 10% of its profits towards providing clean water and safe sanitation solutions to underprivileged schools in the Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal, Mpumalanga and Limpopo.

– Louise van den Bergh



ZINHLE SIMAMANE, 33

Operations manager: Current State Presentations Pty (Ltd)

Zinhle Simamane trained as a chartered accountant at Wits. She started her career at Zanusi Brand Solutions, then accepted positions at PwC and Barclays, before taking on the role of chief financial officer at rail services solutions company Traxtion, a position she still holds. "I'm responsible for managing all the finance-related matters of our international subsidiaries, associates and branches, which includes operations in Mozambique, Zambia, Tanzania, Mauritius, Zimbabwe and Namibia, with planned expansions into Senegal and the DRC," she says. Simamane's work requires a deep understanding of the requirements and regulations in each country, as they all present unique challenges in terms of operations, accounting and taxes. "I need to hold and manage key strategic relationships with various stakeholders, which includes government entities and regulators in multiple international jurisdictions. It is a complex and ever-changing role, which is what attracted me to it." – Sandiso Ngubane



ERNEST MAJENGE, 29

Freelance filmmaker and musician: Kosmic Natives

Hailing from Germiston, Ernest Majenge is the founder of wheelchair manufacturer The Wheelchair Doctor. "I started operating in August 2018 as a wheelchair repair service," Majenge says. "We're busy developing an off-road wheelchair that will cater for people in townships, rural areas and on farms." Majenge's company produces the Ruby wheelchair, which can neatly climb and descend stairs, making it ideal for urban areas and distinguishing it from its competitors. The Wheelchair Doctor offers customised and specialised sports wheelchairs. Majenge's innovative wheelchair has won him several awards, including the South African Breweries Foundation disability empowerment award and Transnet Matlafatso Centre pitching competition in 2021 and 2020, respectively. "My biggest mistake was when I was trying to come up with a product using assumptions instead of facts and the product did not do well in the market," Majenge says. His aim is to restore dignity through mobility for wheelchair users. – Nabeel Allie



KENNETH DIROLE, 29

Founder and managing director: Ms Simone

Kenneth Dirole works for Growthpoint GEMS, which helps the immediate families of qualifying employees to obtain educational grants for their children at all levels of education. The pillars of this programme are academic performance, leadership and personal development. Learners benefit from several interventions, such as year-long tutoring, 24/7 psychosocial support, leadership development camps and continuous personal development programmes. The intention is to provide them with holistic support to ensure that they become high-achieving and well-rounded young people. Dirole also does policy work for the youth, and is the youngest member of the national council of the South African Institute of International Affairs. In addition, he writes opinion and commentary pieces on various youth-related matters in Daily Maverick, Business Day and City Press. – Nelisiwe Masango



SIYAMTANDA HLOBO, 28

Founder and editor-in-chief: Paper Trail Literary Journal

What drives Siyamtanda Hlobo more than anything is helping small businesses to reach their full potential. "I feel most alive when I've made someone see what they can do with the ideas they have," she says. While studying business principles at Varsity College, and later accounting science at Unisa, she realised how intrigued she was about running a business, which led her to register her own, Eleglam, in 2017. Her company assists entrepreneurs and start-ups with business development and advisory services. "I'm also passionate about technology, so not only do we assist in developing sustainable businesses, we also build systems that work effectively so that businesses can be profitable and thrive," she says. Hlobo is a brand ambassador for Yoco Technologies, and a member of the Brics Chamber of Commerce and Industry, EDHE (Entrepreneurship Development in Higher Education), and Start-up Grind East London. – Luca Hart



AYANDA MAJOLA, 22

Founder and managing director: Yanda Cosmetics

Ayanda Majola is the founder of Yanda Cosmetics, which specialises in chemical-free, vegan and cruelty-free skincare and makeup. Majola, who is a health sciences student at the Vaal University of Technology, uses ethically sourced plant-based ingredients in all of her products. "As someone who has struggled with the fear of failing I've come to realise that failure and success coexist," she says. Majola's biggest inspiration is to give her family the best

life possible, and this motivates her to succeed. Starting a business without any investors or external funding was challenging, but Majola believes that hard work and determination go a long way. Alex Mall recently recognised her as a trailblazing young business owner in the community, and is now sponsoring Yanda Cosmetics. As a business owner from a disadvantaged township, Majola is proud to show that it is possible to achieve your dreams regardless of age or background.

– Ncumisa Lerato Kunana



Paying tribute to the youth of South Africa: A message from ANC Treasurer-General, Paul Mashatile

June is a special month in the South African calendar. It is a month in which as a nation we take time to reflect, remember and honour the role played by young people in our struggle for liberation and in the ongoing effort to reconstruct and develop our country.

History records that Enoch Sontonga, at the age of 24 years, composed *Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika*. It was a group of

young people that brought to life the African National Congress Youth League – that became a powerful force behind the ANC and was at the forefront of the militant and mass-driven Defiance Campaign of the 1950s. We will never forget the fighting youth generation of 1976, who were prepared to lay down their lives for us to enjoy the freedom and democracy we have today. And it was the youth of the 1980s who responded to the call to render South Africa ungovernable and apartheid unworkable.

Like those young people who came before them, the young people of today have a responsibility to lead society and

to propel our nation to greater heights. They must be given space to do this, they must be supported, and most importantly they must be given meaningful responsibilities in society and within our movement.

Young people are clear that political freedom on its own is not sufficient. They have chosen to take the lead in the struggle for radical socioeconomic transformation. The whole nation has a responsibility to rally behind our young people as they undertake this important task. We dare not fail them.



BLACK TORRES 96

Black Torres 96 is a multi-disciplinary civil engineering construction company, with proven capabilities in many technical fields in the civil engineering industry since 2010. It is registered with the Construction Industry Development Board as a contractor with the ability to perform work within the 4CE PE, 4GB scope, and is a BBBEE Level One Contributor that is 100% black owned.

Services include: water supply systems; roads and earthworks; stormwater systems; sanitation; plant hire; fuel management and security systems. It has an extensive modern plant fleet and a purpose-built workshop, and has done work for several major clients.

The company employs in excess of 150 permanent staff and annually in excess of 400 part-time staff are sourced from the local communities. Black Torres 96 supports schools and local communities with the necessary tools to build their future. It has a dynamic development plan to involve, train and uplift local SMME contractors, suppliers and community members in its operations.

Write to: info@blacktorres.co.za



METTLE SA

Mettle Corporate Communications is a black youth-owned full-service corporate communications consultancy founded in 2016, focusing on niche industrial sectors, including the mining and resource industries of South Africa.

By integrating strategy, media relations, social media management, branding and overall stakeholder engagement, the company proactively shapes the perceptions of its clients. Mettle recognises the importance for industry to integrate impactful communication and PR strategies to advance their overall business goals.

The company provides these services: communication and PR strategy development; financial PR; stakeholder engagement; digital marketing; media relations; social media management; graphic design, web development and branding event management; and media and presentation training.

Mettle is small enough to provide each client with individual attention, has the BBBEE credentials to maximise business development opportunities for its clients, and has a core team of consultants that has vast experience in different roles in the industrial sectors, particularly mining.

Write to: collaborate@mettlesa.co.za



JORDAAN AND SONS

Jordaan and Sons is a 100% black youth-owned South African entity that specialises in mining, civil construction and logistics services. The company is unique because it has qualified black engineers with vast experience in the mining and civil industry and exceptional professionalism. It aims to ultimately diversify into a formidable services company.

Managing Director Mike Mohalala has 14 years of experience in mining and construction and has worked for companies such as BHP Billiton and Glencore.

Services offered include: construction (roads, stormwater, dams), logistics (stockpile and siding management, material hauling) mining (topsoil stripping, mine rehabilitation, load and haul, drill and blasting, mine road maintenance) and underground mining services (ventilations walls, air crossings, refuge bay construction and secondary roof support).

Write to: info@jste.co.za



ZARSOM

Zarsom is a 100% black female-owned entity managed by two sisters who offer specialised skills in the hospitality, construction, supply chains and project management. The sisters realised that what could just be seen as chores of a housewife could be something that the women of this country can use to initiate business ideas and take economic transformation to the next level.

With skills in many industries, the sisters are able to provide multiple services. The company's objectives include decreasing unemployment, enhancing the economy and providing relevant skills to other like-minded women so they can start their own businesses.

The Zarsom team has worked with big corporations and is able to multitask in demanding environments. Services include supply of fuel, tanks and bowsers; contractor management, training and planning; textiles, embroidery, silk screening and sublimation; school uniforms and sport gear; events; and a variety of catering services.

Write to: info.sistersonthemove@gmail.com



The Progressive Youth in Business programme strives to be a home for youths in business By Siphon Mbele, Convenor of the Progressive Business Forum

Young people in South Africa face the challenges of unemployment, poverty and lack of access to economic opportunities. They remain vulnerable in the labour market, with only 24 000 gaining employment in the first quarter of 2022.

Studies have shown

that the average lifespan of an SMME in South Africa is three years, due to lack of access to finance and markets for their products. Some of the challenges faced by SMMEs and emerging youth businesses are: red tape caused by late payment of their invoices; demands for bribery to process invoices by state employees; the rigid regulatory environment for business permits; and lack of infrastructure with which to do business.

The PBF has a programme focused on youth called Progressive Youth in Business (PYB), which is aimed at mobilising youth-owned

companies to make a difference in the economy and to be able to shape the economic policies of our country.

The PYB is designed to be future focused and strives to be a home for the youth in business. It creates a platform for young people in business to engage with leaders in government and to participate in trade promotion and investment.

Through PYB, subscribers can participate in policy processes, networking sessions, round table and research work. The PYB also offers training programmes for its subscribers.



PHUMLA RANDELA, 34

Chief executive and director.
Randela Wine and Lushaka Wealth Solutions

Phumla Randela is the founder and director of Lushaka Wealth Solutions, an accounting firm founded in 2020. She is also the chief executive of Randela Wine, established a year later in 2021. Although mainly focused on red wine, Randela Wine products include rosé and MCC, and are widely available in restaurants and stores. "The journey of running your own business is not easy; it requires a focused, strategic plan with clear, achievable and realistic

goals," she says. A qualified business accountant, Randela has shared her motivational speaking skills on podcasts, radio and television. She's proud of the ongoing success of her two businesses, both of which were founded during the uncertain times of the pandemic. She encourages young South Africans interested in business to seek out opportunities, and to believe in themselves and their abilities.

— Louise Bell



MAREA LEWIS, 35

Founder: Toasted

Marea Lewis is the mind behind Toasted, a space that is more than just sarmies on demand. It's also a workstation and hangout for entrepreneurs, cloud-based start-ups, or the average young professional trying to work in the gig economy without the luxury of office space. Lewis signed the lease of her business's site in Rosebank three days before South Africa went into lockdown. Undeterred, she used the time spent in mandatory isolation strengthening her value proposition and making sure her revenue streams would be plentiful and profitable. Now, Lewis heads a business that provides safe and inclusive spaces that serve youth, women and small businesses — all while providing delicious food at affordable prices. Lewis values community above all else. She lifts others up and, in turn, brings opportunity and growth to South Africa. — Jennifer Worthington-Smith



KULANI SIWEYA, 31

Chief economist: Agri SA

Kulani Siweya was astonished when he, as a young black man, became one of the leading voices in agriculture. "When you consider our historic dispensation and the factors of the sector, being invited to speak to and for the sector has really blown my mind, many times," he says. Siweya is the chief economist at Agri SA, the country's biggest federation of agricultural organisations. Its work includes advocating for better policies around land and the environment, and promoting the development, profitability and sustainability of agriculture. His proudest moment was being invited to parliament to comment on policy dynamics that impact the sector. "I have always been passionate about policy work, and to make submissions to the lawmakers remains fulfilling," he says. "Making a difference to the state of affairs in the country drives me to be at the centre of changing things for the best." — Lesley Stones



NONHLE MATSEBULA, 27

Chief executive: Girl Boss South Africa

Nonhle Matsebula is the co-founder and chief executive of multimedia and beauty brand Girl Boss South Africa. "We develop content that aims to empower girls across Africa between the ages of 16 and 25," says Matsebula. "We also manufacture and sell beauty products for natural hair and relaxed hair, as well as body care products using natural ingredients." Matsebula wants to expand Girl Boss South Africa to a wider audience to help build the confidence of girls. "We are focused on cultivating young minds to develop a boss mentality from the early stages of their lives," she says. Girl Boss South Africa's vision of assisting black women to occupy leadership spaces is seen in its content, which provides leadership and collaborative opportunities, educational and informative material, and an expressive creative platform. Girl Boss South Africa products are available at major retail chain stores nationwide. — Sarah Irwin



TSHEPISO MALEMA, 19

Founder and chief executive: Gamer's Territory

Tshepiso Malema has a passion for entrepreneurship and gaming. By the time he was 16, he started his own company, Gamer's Territory, which has helped bridge the divide between video game access and township life.

As the world surges into the fourth industrial revolution, Malema is determined that the youth in South Africa's townships are not left behind. His company is now providing coding and robotics classes to children in disadvantaged areas, exposing them to technology and a free-flowing entrepreneurial spirit.

More recently, Malema founded the organisation Tshepiso Malema Speaks, which equips the newly matriculated with the necessary entrepreneurial skills to find success. "The entrepreneurship space taught me to take risks and I cannot take risks if I still wanted validation," he said. Malema teaches those around him to have agency and build self-belief through actions that have an impact on society and the great potential of South Africa's youth.

— Jennifer Worthington-Smith



LAUREN DALLAS, 34

Co-founder and chief executive: Future Females

Lauren Dallas's passion for women's leadership in entrepreneurship shines through in her mission to help women achieve financial independence through her entrepreneurship platform and school, Future Females. Co-founder and chief executive, Dallas describes Future Females as "a movement that exists to increase the number of and support the success of female entrepreneurs". Dallas launched Future Females in August 2017 in Cape Town and has since grown the platform from fewer than 600 people to more than 100 000 members with 2 300 graduates. The platform operates in 55 cities around the world with trained ambassadors inspiring and motivating women entrepreneurs through community workshops, events and training programmes. Future Females is partnering with the United Kingdom's International Tech Hub Network to widen its reach across 26 countries. Dallas wants to expand Future Females' vision of entrepreneurship support through education, community, inspiration, mentorship and coaching, and funding across the globe.

— Alice Sholto-Douglas



THEO BALOYI, 32

Founder and chief executive: Bathu

Pivoting from accounting to footwear might seem like a bizarre thing to do, but that's exactly what Theo Baloyi did. After a challenging start, the qualified accountant and entrepreneur started selling sneakers from the boot of his car. They sold out within days and Bathu, the first authentically South African sneaker brand, was born.

Today, there are 30 Bathu stores nationwide and an online store. Baloyi's sneakers also enjoyed a hugely successful collaboration with Castle Lite in 2020, and Baloyi recently received the Young Business Leader of the Year award at the All Africa Business Leaders Awards. He says his proudest moments have been expanding Bathu's retail footprint during the pandemic, creating sustainable jobs, and maintaining the positive impact it has on communities at large. Baloyi wants to see a positive change in South Africa's economy and an improvement in the unemployment gap. These are the pillars of Bathu and what drives Baloyi to excel.

— Shereen Goosen



THATO MAGASA, 33

Managing director: Mitsubishi Motors South Africa

As managing director of Mitsubishi Motors South Africa, an automotive retailing original equipment manufacturer, Thato Magasa oversees the company's operations locally and in Botswana, Namibia, Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Zambia with the help of a franchised retail dealer network. Magasa ended the 2021 calendar year with sales up by 71.5% from the previous year. This meant that the company was operating above pre-Covid-19 levels. Even more importantly, "through environmental, social and governance initiatives, we are able to directly contribute towards a better South Africa," says Magasa. Magasa keeps being impressed and surprised by the resilience of South Africans despite the challenges we face. This also motivates him to work towards reducing unemployment and inequality in our country. He says he would, however, like to make more time for exercise. He advises the youth of South Africa to never lose their work ethic and to be patient with themselves. — Alexander Brand



ALEXANDRIA PROCTER, 29

Co-founder, chief executive and head of product: DigsConnect

While at university, Alexandria Procter realised the scope of the student housing crisis and endeavoured to change things for the better. With the help of her co-founder, Greg Keal, DigsConnect was born. Launched in 2018, the start-up acquired over R12-million in seed funding to aid its expansion — the largest raised by a female founder in South Africa. DigsConnect was forced to pivot its business model during lockdown in order to survive. While the process was undoubtedly stressful, Procter was able to adapt and keep the business afloat through the once-in-a-generation catastrophe. Procter passionately believes the power of education can help to alleviate poverty and create a thriving and dynamic citizenry. Through her work with DigsConnect — which is now available in 30 countries and lists over 1.3-million beds — she has shown initiative in tackling one of the most pressing issues faced by students worldwide. — Tshiamo Seape



MAVHUNGU TRACY NELWAMONDO, 32

Medical doctor and chief executive: Modern Traditions and Malie's Ice Cream

Dr Mavhungu Tracy Nelwamondo is inspired by the potential role of food in medicine. As a qualified medical doctor, she says she is honoured to be able to combine this practice with her background in African indigenous healthcare, the culmination of which was her founding Modern Traditions and Malie's Ice Cream. Malie's Ice Cream, named after her son Malibongwe, is an ice cream made from indigenous marula nuts. It includes other healthy ingredients, and has a reduced sugar content. Modern Traditions provides healthy nutritious staples such as nut butters, baobab powder and indigenous wholegrains. Nelwamondo's product range is available at some independent retailers and Pick n Pay stores. Her vision is a healthy South Africa; she is driven to excel by a desire to bring healing to people, using the resources already available on the continent. — Oratile Mashazi



LOUW HOPLEY, 28

Co-founder and chief executive: Root

Louw Hopley is chief executive of Cape Town-based insurance start-up, Root. The company provides a complete end-to-end cloud solution, enabling customers to seamlessly launch new products and digital engagement channels through application programme interfaces. Root was founded in 2016 by Hopley and his business partner, Malan Joubert. Soon, Root reached number one on Y Combinator's Hacker News with the launch of its programmable bank card. For Hopley, this was a lifetime achievement goal and one of his proudest moments. Root's mission is to help businesses and developers launch new insurance products faster. The platform was designed to promote innovation in the fintech arena. Hopley's focus is now on direct marketing, product strategy and managing his dedicated team. He has already put his business on the path to success, "to make insurance more relevant and personalised, and reduce many bad practices in the industry using technology". — Carol Chamberlain



TEBOGO SELOANE, 30

Chairman and group chief executive: Aruba Group (Pty) Ltd

Tebogo Seloane is the chairperson and chief executive of the Aruba Group (Pty) Ltd, the holding company of two subsidiary entities in the oil and energy fields. In his leadership role, he oversees top-level executives and engages with various stakeholders in the field: shareholders, government entities and representatives of multinational companies. Once a university dropout with no real plan, Seloane's drive and ambition soon took the wheel, transporting him to a rung high on the corporate ladder at the age of just 30. Despite championing a sector reliant on fossil fuels, he is vocal about the need for sustainability and strives to ensure a high standard of social responsibility in Aruba's practices. He wants to see South Africa shift its focus from the provision of primary goods to become a secondary goods supplier, with a focus on innovation. — Zia Haffjee



MASHUDU MODAU, 31

Start-up ecosystem specialist and founder: Yoco, Lutcha and Founders Sauce

Mashudu Modau is a start-up ecosystem specialist who works with small businesses and creators in South Africa to empower entrepreneurs and build impactful platforms. "My job is to enable people to build the things they believe in with as little friction as possible," he says. Aiming to tackle youth unemployment, Modau helps young creators through his own start-up, Lutcha, an African podcast network. He's also the founder of Founders Sauce, a platform that helps entrepreneurs find the tools they need to launch a business. He ardently believes that the internet and social media are tools that can be used to transform a generation's prospects. "The university of YouTube has been the institution that's shaped me the most as an entrepreneur and creator," he explains. Modau has worked to connect Yoco with small businesses and also served as a judge for the MTN App of the Year awards for three years. — James Nash

SIHLESENKOSI MAJOLA, 33

Founder and chief executive: Popping

Sihlesenkosi Majola is the chief executive of Popping, a Gauteng-based platform that assists small businesses in discovering pop-up markets and booking stall space for their stores. Majola intends to help as many small businesses as possible, motivated by his belief that small businesses are the future of employment in South Africa. During his final year at the University of Zululand, Majola left his studies in order to pursue business

full time. Today, he works together with the Popping team to host strategic markets in some of the most popular shopping centres in and around Gauteng. One of Majola's proudest moments was being invited to speak about the state of e-commerce in Africa at the 2019 World Economic Forum. "Make sure you get the right people around you and don't be afraid to tackle hard choices. Always hold people accountable for their actions," he says. — Gracie Winkler



LESEDI SENAMELE MATLALA, 28

Researcher and evaluator: JET Education Services

Lesedi Senamele Matlala works as an educational researcher and is involved in various youth development projects. Through his work and research at JET Education Services, he hopes he can change South Africa's education system. "It's only through the development of the social welfare system and appropriate government policy that the disadvantaged may be helped and protected," he says.

JET Education Services is an NGO that works to improve the quality of education in South Africa, regularly working with government and educational institutions and organisations. In his role as monitoring and evaluation officer, Matlala regularly presents at conferences.

Matlala also serves as executive director of Career Avenue and Education, an NGO that creates in-depth career exhibitions for geographically isolated learners. Matlala is a PhD candidate at the University of Johannesburg, researching how new technologies are impacting monitoring and evaluation in the public sector.

— Andie Reeves



ZANOXOLO MCITEKA, 22

Community development practitioner: Department of social development

Promoting the rights of women and children and combating gender-based violence as well as economic inequality are key focuses for Zanoxolo Mciteka.

As a community development practitioner with the Department of Social Development, he supports community development through interventions including facilitating the No Means No campaign and the Stepping Stones programme. Mciteka is studying law at Wits University and organises fundraising through Unicef Wits. He grew up in a family affected by poverty, substance abuse and gender-based violence and knows it's the reality for many, yet he believes social justice is attainable.

"I want the work we do to create sustainable livelihoods for the people who need it most," he says. His proudest moment was his first case of household profiling, when he identified needs and organised solutions for several families. "The joy on their faces gave me a sense of fulfilment and purpose," he says.

— Lesley Stones



RETHABILE MOSESE, 34

Admitted legal practitioner and deputy director: Lawyers Against Abuse

Rethabile Mosese is an admitted legal practitioner with qualifications from the University of Cape Town and the University of Pretoria, among other institutions. She is a master's candidate at the University of Pretoria and the deputy director at Lawyers Against Abuse (LVA).

Mosese says she is driven to excellence by the knowledge that she is making a difference, and that the work she does matters. Through her work with LVA, Mosese employs an innovative approach to addressing gender-based violence (GBV) in the country, working in individual communities to strengthen the justice system's response to GBV by providing holistic support to survivors, engaging with local state actors and empowering these communities.

Lawyers Against Abuse operates in three community-based centres, located in Diepsloot, Orange Farm and Hillbrow. Mosese would like to see LVA's model replicated across all South African communities.

— Neo Khanyile



KARABO MOGANE, 32

Educator: University of Pretoria & St Benedict's College

Karabo Mogane is a researcher, lecturer and educator who is skilled in lecturing in music education methodology, arts and culture, music education and musical arts production.

She is also a transformation, diversity and inclusion officer at St Benedict's College, and an advisory board member at the National Arts Council of South Africa.

She is focused on original, creative performing arts productions. Her studies have helped her acquire a comprehensive foundation in musical arts principles and music education.

At 15, she started teaching the recorder to children in her hometown, Soshanguve; the project was sponsored by the Unisa Music Foundation.

She now teaches arts and culture to children in Mabopane, and the violin, viola and theory of music to children from Stinkwater. All her music students are enrolled for graded music examinations at Unisa.

— Nelisiwe Masango



SHADRACK MLAMBO, 29

Founder and board member: Project 2030

Shadrack Mlambo is the founder of a nonprofit organisation called Project 2030. Driven by the desire to change the lives of young boys and girls in rural areas, Mlambo's goal is "to see a South Africa characterised by equal access to opportunities".

The core mandate of Project 2030 is to produce 10 lawyers, accountants, doctors and engineers in and around the small rural town of Burgersfort in Limpopo.

Every year, high school learners from these communities are selected for the high school programme.

They are provided with tutoring, career guidance and financial support in applying for tertiary education. In 2021, the organisation managed a 100% matric pass rate and sent eight out of 10 learners to universities.

"My work seeks to change the shape of my rural town, then Limpopo province, then eventually South Africa and, potentially, the entire African continent," says Mlambo.

— Simon Dey



MPHO MANYISA, 28

Coordinating ambassador: One Young World

Mpho Manyisa has made her voice heard across the globe and brought about meaningful change through her own ambition and entrepreneurial spirit, particularly through One Young World.

This is an organisation that aims to convene the brightest young talent from every country and sector, and Manyisa is the coordinating ambassador for South Africa.

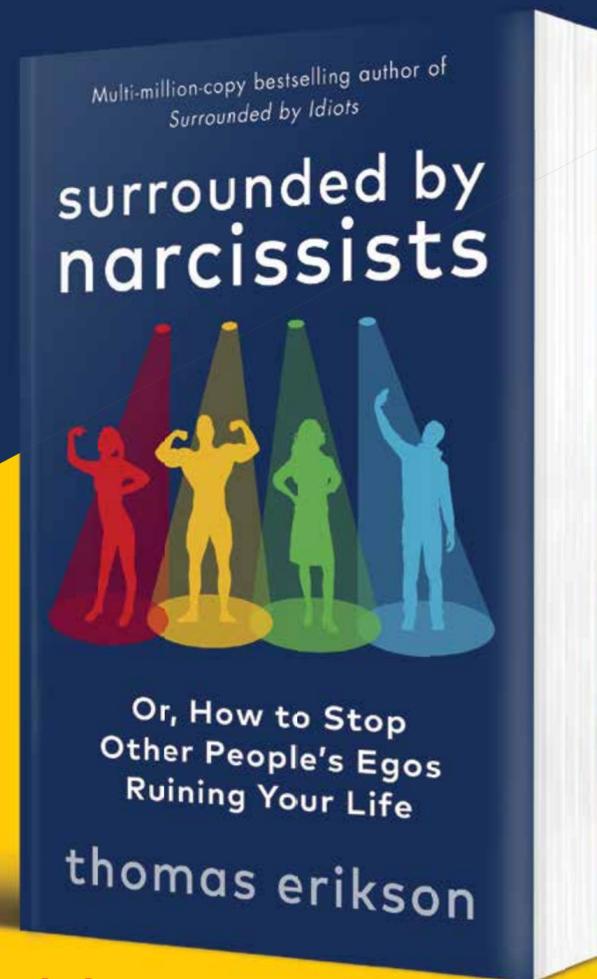
One Young World works to accelerate social impact by identifying, promoting, and connecting the world's most impactful young leaders to create a better world, with more responsible and effective leadership.

Manyisa's proudest moment was during her term leading and hosting the Future Economies Caucus in collaboration with EOH. The caucus brought people together to pack meals with Rise Against Hunger for 7 000 families across South Africa.

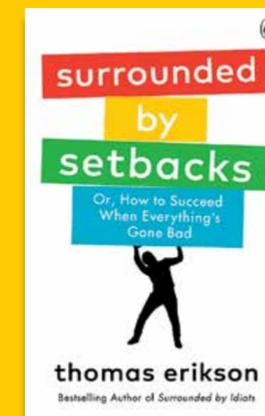
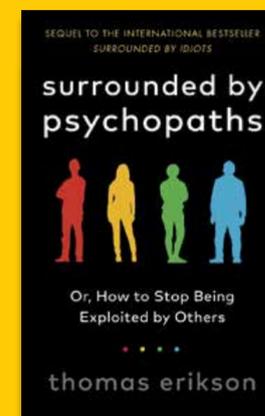
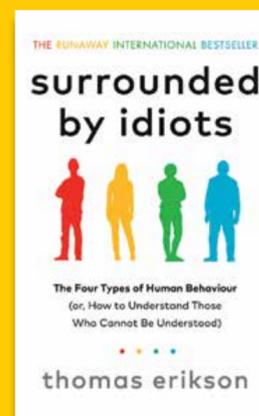
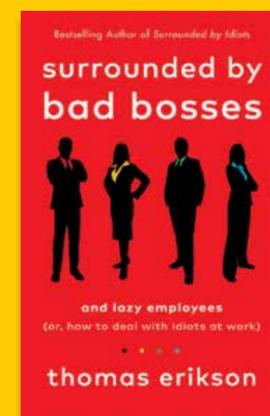
She plans to tackle the UN Sustainable Development Goals, particularly in delivering quality education and reducing inequality among and within countries.

— Tshiamo Seape

From the *Sunday Times* bestselling author of *Surrounded by Idiots*



Also available



Penguin
Random House
South Africa



NTEBOGANG SEGONE, 25

Quantitative analyst: Investec

He may have grown up amid economic hardship and even been financially excluded from the University of Cape Town in his first year, but the odds that were stacked against Ntebogang Segone didn't defeat him. With a bachelor of science, honours and master's degrees under his belt, he's proved the importance of finding your passion. In 2021, he was awarded the highly prestigious Mandela Rhodes scholarship.

With past leadership involvement in organisations such as the University of Cape Town's Black Management Forum and student representative council, Segone is a person for the people.

The biggest impact Segone wishes to have is to support disadvantaged individuals seeking career advice, which is the reason he created YourCareerPlug, a guidance service to empower young professionals.

Today, Segone works as a quantitative analyst at Investec with a focus on exposure to the various facets of the company. His goal for the future is to provide his mother, who cared for seven children alone, with her own home.

— Louise Bell



THOKOZILE NHLUMAYO, 35

Executive secretary: International Youth Parliament

Thokozile Nhlumayo gained recognition throughout Africa for her #NotTooYoungToLead campaign. She recalls, "This was a defining moment for my career because it meant the whole of Africa is finally heeding the call to give young people a seat at the table."

As executive secretary of the International Youth Parliament, Nhlumayo is dedicated to advocating inclusive and collaborative government practice across the continent.

With a particular focus on young women and the LGBTQIA+ community, her term of office has achieved international regard, from the African Union to the United States government.

When asked about what she aspires to accomplish, Nhlumayo explains, "My hope is that in years to come, I won't have to be doing this work anymore; that we will have moved on, that we will be on our way to gender equality, to racial equity, and there will be no need to do what I do."

— Gracie Winkler



DIMPHO LEKGEU, 27

Community manager: Youth Lab

Overseeing social media strategy, creating online content and implementing community programmes are Dimpho's duties at youth development outfit Youth Lab.

As the company's community manager, the Johannesburg resident spearheads projects such as #LeanOnMe, a drug awareness campaign that teaches school learners how to deal with substance abuse in their communities, and Community Vaccine Conversations, which facilitated partnerships with community organisers to promote Covid-19 vaccine awareness.

She was one of the 2020 winners of the World Bank's Blog4Dev competition, an annual writing contest that invites young people to weigh in on aspects of their home country's economic development. Dimpho is a One Young World ambassador and has moderated discussions for organisations such as the African Centre for Economic Transformation, TuksNovation at the University of Pretoria, and World Bank Africa. She was also recently spotlighted by True Africa as one of 25 African women breaking barriers in male-dominated industries.

— Zia Haffjee



ALISTAIR CONN, 33

Chief innovation officer: SA Harvest

Alistair Conn gave up his Qatar-based job in film and production, where he worked with the likes of The Rolling Stones, Ed Sheeran and Cristiano Ronaldo, to respond to the dire hunger crisis in South Africa.

His idea was to intercept food before it went to waste and divert it to communities in need. Conn used his savings to start the nonprofit UPcycle Project in 2015, which was later invited to join the Western Cape's greening initiatives.

In October 2019, Conn joined SA Harvest. The team has expanded from three to 35, with warehouses in Cape Town, Johannesburg and Durban. Conn began as regional manager for the Western Cape, and is now chief innovation officer overseeing branding and media.

SA Harvest has rescued 6.5-million kilograms of food and delivered 21-million meals to communities in need, with plans to expand further. Conn dedicates his M&G 200 nomination to his dad.

— Shaazia Ebrahim



VUYOKAZI FUTSHANE, 32

Project officer (mining, extractives and climate justice): Oxfam South Africa

As Oxfam South Africa's project officer for mining, extractives and climate justice, Vuyokazi Futshane coordinates initiatives that involve those affected by the mining industry, particularly women. Futshane's experience spans social justice, media and communications, advocacy and research, and movement building and training.

Among these initiatives, Futshane's contributions arise from seeking out opportunities to influence policymaking, placing focus on people-centred development, as well as shifting to a just social, economic and environmental narrative.

She is busy coordinating Oxfam South Africa's climate justice media project, the objective of which is to defend community rights and to realign our society towards ecological and economic justice. In pursuit of an equal and feminist future, Futshane envisions a South Africa where everyone is seen and heard, and where women, young people, excluded communities and sustainable design are active on the frontline of progress and reform.

— Gracie Winkler



THANDILE CHINYAVANHU, 26

Environmental and social activist (climate and energy campaigner): Greenpeace Africa

Thandile Chinyavanhu is a Johannesburg-based climate and social activist working towards establishing an intersectional response to the climate crisis as the norm. She places the focus on the women who are most affected by extreme weather events due to poverty, and what their reality may resemble when factors like gender-based violence and the femicide rate are considered alongside environmental issues.

"I am happy to have the opportunity to work with an organisation as renowned as Greenpeace Africa. It has opened many doors for my advocacy and has allowed me to have enough resources to pursue it full time," says Chinyavanhu. Chinyavanhu holds on to the hope of a socially equitable South Africa where everyone can experience an environment that is safe, free from harm and conducive to a life of dignity.

Working together, South Africans can achieve the goal of a society that is safer for women, and where environmental issues and inequality don't further displace marginalised groups.

— Jabulile Dlamini-Qwesa



BEVERLEY SIWISA, 34

Chief operating officer: Afrizan Academy

As the chief operating officer of Afrizan Academy, Beverley Siwisa has dedicated her professional life to ensuring that young people in South Africa are equipped with the tools to attain gainful employment.

The academy's focus is training young South Africans to arm them with the skills that are needed by corporates, and then providing them with the experiential opportunities that get them employed. Siwisa studied psychology with the intention of becoming a clinical psychologist, but went the entrepreneurial route shortly after graduating.

From this experience, she decided to help broaden the perspectives of young South Africans beyond traditional work roles, and encourage them to find the right careers.

Siwisa believes the youth unemployment crisis is not insurmountable if we can meet the pressing need to invest in our youngsters.

— Anita Makgetla



NTOMBIZODIDI MAPAPU, 34

Student: University of Reading

Ntombizodidi Mapapu is completing a master's in climate change and development degree at the University of Reading in the UK, focusing on the interface between climate change and development, specifically on ecological economics.

She is a three-time University of the Western Cape graduate, most recently with her master's in law. In 2021, she was awarded the Chevening Scholarship, one of 1 633 successful candidates out of 64 408 applicants.

Mapapu has worked in policy and research for eight and a half years, largely in parliament, writing research briefs and preparing analytical documents. Her research was key in the implementation of laws, application of budgets, and management of government departments and entities.

She believes there is more to life than what is presented to her, which drives her to seek a happy life. Mapapu says, "I want to demonstrate to those who believe that it can't be done, that it can and will be done."

— Ncumisa Lerato Kunana



LEBOGANG MULAISI, 32

Head of policy: Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu)

Lebogang Mulaisi is labour market policy coordinator at Cosatu, who coordinates and implements its labour market policy and the just transition to a low carbon economy.

As a member of the National Economic Development and Labour Council's executive committee, she represents organised labour in the labour market chamber.

Mulaisi is also a commissioner on the Presidential Climate Change Coordinating Commission. Her goal is poverty eradication through job creation that pays workers a decent wage. Surprised by how much she enjoys trade union work, Mulaisi never expected to contribute to society at the scale she does now.

Her proudest moment was when she was appointed to the National Development Agency Board by President Cyril Ramaphosa in 2021.

Mulaisi is pursuing a PhD in economics at the University of Johannesburg. She realised there is no age to have things figured out, and encourages herself and others to be more patient and kinder to themselves.

— Shaazia Ebrahim



TYSON MTHOKOZISI SITHOLE, 33

Trustee and chairman: Temba Bavuma Foundation

As the trustee and chairman of the Temba Bavuma Foundation, Tyson Mthokozisi Sithole is a product of opportunity, and wants to give other people the same level of access he's had in his career.

He worked with the foundation to donate food parcels and winter blankets to more than 5 000 people during the Covid-19 lockdown. These initiatives took place in Kagiso, Alexandra, Tembisa, Langa and other townships around the country.

Through his work, the University of Cape Town business science and senior leadership development graduate wants to level the playing field at a grassroots level through access to quality education, and the requisite infrastructure in township schools for learners to compete at the highest level and realise their full potential.

Sithole is driven by a "deep passion and purpose to make a difference" in the lives of young people in South Africa and the rest of Africa.

— Jabulile Dlamini-Qwesa

**WE NEED TO CREATE
THE PATHWAYS TO GIVE
HOPE TO OUR YOUTH
THAT THEY CAN HAVE
THE OPPORTUNITY
THROUGH EDUCATION
AND HARD WORK
TO ESCAPE
THE TRAP OF POVERTY
CHRIS HANI**



200 YOUNG SOUTH AFRICANS 2022: SPECIAL CATEGORY EDITOR'S CHOICE



VIWE JINGQI, 17

Athlete: TuksSport High School and Tuks Athletics Academy

Viwe Jingqi is the fastest girl in the world in her age group over 200m and second-fastest for over 100m. TuksSport High School offered her a full athletics scholarship after watching her at the SA Schools tournament in Gqeberha in 2019. When she moved to Pretoria from Ngcobo in the Eastern Cape she had to overcome homesickness, family tragedy, expectations and injuries – far earlier than most. "She'd rather die than lose," said her coach, sprinter Paul Gorries.

Jingqi combines humility and raw confidence in a manner all of her own. "For a girl coming from Ngcobo like I do, being recognised and being well-known is difficult. It's not going to last for a long time, so while I can still be noticed, I'll grab it with both hands," she said. If her run continues till the Junior World Champs, she might just have to eat her words.

– Cameron Peters



JAEN-JACQUES NELL, 23

Chief executive and founder: The CMF Group (Pty) Ltd

Jaen-Jacques Nell believes that nothing is impossible. He is the chief executive and founder of the CMF Group, a consumer services company specialising in IT distribution services, from e-commerce to B2B clients. CMF Group specialises in turnkey solutions and has a successful retail segment, fulfilling 2 000 orders per month. Nell prides himself on the fact that his company offers affordable repair solutions without compromising on quality. He believes that with hard work, you can reach the stars, and this paid off when he was listed in Forbes Africa's 30 Under 30 this year. Part of his motivation to succeed is to help his close-knit team find financial freedom, and he places considerable value in the advice of his colleagues and staff. For Nell, learning is for life, and he strives to make a positive impact in everything he does.

– Laura du Toit



RABIA GHOOR, 22

Creative director and founder: switchbeauty

Rabia Ghoor is the founder of switchbeauty, a South African makeup and beauty brand. Since its founding, switchbeauty has accelerated in growth, with Ghoor most recently winning the Forbes Woman Africa Young Achievers award in 2021. "I saw a gap in the South African market for a local beauty brand harnessing the power of social media to connect with its consumer – and so switch was born," explains Ghoor. Ghoor believes in listening to the consumer and tailoring her products to them, and not compromising on integrity or quality. Social media has been a major asset to switchbeauty. "Social media is not a marketing tool – it's a storytelling tool," she says. "Content is much more to do with saying something than selling something." Ghoor is driven by the switchbeauty community and support from her family. She hopes that the South African makeup and beauty market expands.

– Sarah Irwin



AWONKE NQAYIYA, 26

Student: Nelson Mandela University

Awonke Nqayiya's biggest mistake – not preparing for his mathematics paper 1 and subsequently getting a zero – led him to his greatest achievements. He got a distinction for paper 2, and turned his focus towards youth empowerment through education. In 2021, Nqayiya was recognised as one of the top 10 outstanding persons in the country by Junior Chamber International South Africa. He empowers youngsters from rural areas and townships through education, offering academic support by way of tutoring, mentorship and providing career guidance to high school learners and university students. Nqayiya compiled and published a mathematics study guide in 2020 for grade 11 and grade 12 mathematics paper 2. He helps learners master basic concepts and primary principles before moving to advanced levels in his study guide, Mathematics with Nqayiya. According to Nqayiya, the testimonials from people who use the study guide inspire him to do more for youth in academia. – Lineo Leteba



RUSSELL ABRAHAMS, 29

Illustrator: Yay Abe

Russell Abrahams is an artist and illustrator. He recently collaborated on a capsule with H&M, which he describes as "my proudest moment". The Cape Town-based illustrator also released a collection with Markham earlier this year. "I want to inspire the kids of South Africa, and for more people of colour to believe that art and illustration can be a career path," Abrahams says. He grew up with a grandfather who was a painter, who returned home with paint-splattered overalls. "Two generations later, we're back to painting walls," he says. In 2021 he plastered his blend of maximalist colours and minimalist patterns over the FNB Water Tower in Soweto for Adidas, and created an accompanying mural for their flagship store in Sandton City. He's grateful for the professional success. "But most of all, how the people of South Africa have gravitated to my work. It's such a beautiful and organic growth." – Nabeel Allie



SEMAKALENG MATHEBULA, 27

Hot air balloon pilot: Balloon and Airship Federation of South Africa

Semakaleng Mathebula followed her honours degree from Wits University with a formal qualification from the Balloon and Airship Federation of South Africa. She became the country's first black woman hot air balloon pilot. The Midrand resident's perspective on her career path is grounded in the change she envisions for the local aviation sector. Mathebula hopes to pave the way for greater diversity and inclusivity in the industry by inspiring others to follow their passions in the face of difficult social realities. "Ballooning is the art of acceptance; it is only when you let go that the natural path destined for you becomes much clearer," she says. Mathebula wants to increase the visibility of her sport and is making strides towards achieving this goal. Her achievements have made international news – she's been featured on Reuters and CNN's African Voices: Changemakers. – Zia Haffeejee



THAKGALO THIBELA, 23

Doctor: Helen Joseph Hospital

Thakgalo Thibela is South Africa's youngest woman doctor. She graduated from the University of Witwatersrand after matriculating at 15. "I was initially rejected by all medical schools, until Wits had a change of heart and offered me a spot," she explains. Currently an intern, Thibela has worked across multiple departments, including paediatrics, obstetrics and gynaecology, orthopaedics, and anaesthesiology. "You never stop learning and you can never know enough. There'll always be a patient who will surprise you, no matter how much experience you have," she says. Thibela manages patients from when they present their complaints through to when they are prescribed medication or moved into surgery. She hopes to achieve a better quality of healthcare in South Africa. "The majority of South Africans are unemployed and cannot afford private health care, but one shouldn't have to go to a private institution to get quality care," she says. – Alexander Brand



THUSO MBEDU, 30

Actress

Thuso Mbedu is a South African actress with a reel of work that speaks of a reputable performer on the ascent. Since winning a Safta award for Best Actress in a TV Drama, *Is Thunzi*, Mbedu is adamant about growing her global presence. Her starring role in *The Underground Railroad* made her the first South African leading woman in an American television series. Mbedu has collected a number of accolades for this performance – three Emmy nominations

and one Critics Choice Awards nomination. Currently, anticipation is rising around her leading role in *The Woman King* alongside Viola Davis and a notable cast. In 2022 she signed a first-look deal with VIS at Paramount's international studio. This aligns with the impact she wishes to make on job creation within the South African industry as she expands her experience and artistry by creating, developing, and producing exclusive programming. – Nelisiwe Masango

YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS LEADING THE WAY



INSPIRE INNOVATE CREATE

innobiz DUT Centre for Entrepreneurship and Innovation is a Durban University of Technology private entity registered under the South African Companies Act as a Non-Profit Company (NPC). The entity serves as an umbrella body for all DUT entrepreneurial units offering both theoretical and technical entrepreneurial learning, business support, and related activities.

The offerings of innobiz DUT Centre for Entrepreneurship and Innovation are biased towards students based in Midlands and Durban, neighbouring communities, and local entrepreneurs. Our core business is to produce entrepreneurs with a strong focus, confident, knowledgeable, thriving, innovative, adaptive, problem-solving business leaders and entrepreneurs.

Ntobeko Mafu is the founder of Madame Clucks A Lot, a company providing high-quality and healthy chicken meat to customers at affordable prices.



NTOBENKO MAFU

Nonjabulo Ndebele is the founder and CEO of Ksaselihle Vegetables, a business specialising in crop production (Agriculture), producing various vegetables such as spinach and cabbage.



NONJABULO NDEBELE



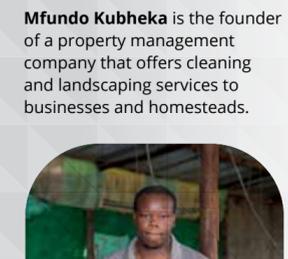
MBONGISENI NGUBANE

Mbongiseni Ngubane is the founder of Inzuzo Yokusa, a company dealing with carpentry, yard cleaning services, swimming pool cleaning, carpet cleaning and roof cleaning.



THEMBEKE MADONDO

Thembeke Madondo is the founder of Grissenda Euphoria, a company that sells unique long-lasting perfumes individually and in bulk. The perfume store is situated in the Pietermaritzburg's central town.



MFUNDO KUBHEKA

Mfundo Kubheka is the founder of a property management company that offers cleaning and landscaping services to businesses and homesteads.



SURPRISE SIFUBA

Surprise Sifuba is the founder of Eggstastic poultry, a company that grows broilers that produce quality eggs which are sold in and around Harding, KwaZulu-Natal.



MQONDISI NYOKA

Mqondisi Nyoka is the founder and CEO of Mkabayi Business and Projects which is a company based in Vryheid, KwaZulu-Natal, specialising in Agriculture: Poultry and crop production.



LONDIWE KHWELA

Londiwe Khwela is the founder and owner of K CHELSEY. Her company provides special lip and beard products that are naturally formulated to accommodate all skin types.



SMISO MSIMANGO

Smiso Msimango is the founder of the second part of a two-fold company called ZART Printing. The initial part is ZART Clothing. ZART is a branded company that provides trendy streetwear that is hip and happening, tailored to suit its young clientele.



THEMBA GUMBI

Themba Gumbi is the founder and owner of Wyne's Accessories, a company that hand makes custom leatherware according to each individual's taste. From belts to wallets and purses, Wyne's Accessories prides itself on quality and durability.



ZAMANI SIBISI

Zamani Sibisi is the co-founder of GNS Cleaning and Pest Control (PTY) LTD, a fully accredited fumigation and pest control company that provides deep cleaning, sanitising and disinfecting services to properties, car seats, mattresses, carpets etc.



NOSIHE DLAMINI

Nosihe Dlamini is the co-founder of Get2Natural, that provides hair and skin products, specially formulated with natural, botanic extracts that speak to the natural lady.

For more information about DUT, visit www.dut.ac.za (+27) 31 373 2000 (DBN) • (+27) 33 845 8800 (PMB) • info@dut.ac.za

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- [DutCampusTV](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC...)



ZETHU SHUDE

Zethu Shude is the founder and owner of Destiny Leather, which transforms and refurbishes old furniture into new and trendy tastes. The company recycles old couches, chairs and furniture, and polishes them up and completely transforms them to be appealing to its target market.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN COMMUNITIES

The Durban University of Technology is committed to engage with its "people" (students, staff, and alumni) and the public (community members, industry, corporate sector, NGOs, NPOs, Government, Business, etc.) as key internal and external stakeholders, partners, and communities that DUT needs to relate to. Engagement at DUT is strongly integrated within all the core areas of the University, in its teaching and learning, research and innovation, and entrepreneurial education.

Fanie Nicholas Ndlovu is the creator of the student leadership platform, VarsityGenie. Ndlovu is currently pursuing his Master's Degree in the field of Information and Communications Technology (ICT), with a focus on Artificial Intelligence. VarsityGenie aims to develop the skills of the youth in communities and townships that are under-resourced.



FANIE NICHOLAS NDLOVU

Mukelani Mbuyiseni Radebe is a social justice warrior and student from the Durban University of Technology (DUT). The third-year Power Engineering student is also the founder of the non-profit organisation (NPO), Ikusasalentsha. Their objectives are to assist the youth in the area with career guidance; substance abuse campaigns; anti-gender-based violence campaigns and more.



MUKELANI MBUYISENI RADEBE

Bheka Mbonambi is a Department of Horticulture graduate from the Durban University of Technology (DUT), who took his love for sustainability and environmentalism beyond the lecture room. He is the co-founder of Enriching Foundations through Sustainability which aims to create and develop functional school gardens to inspire greater environmental consciousness in the schools and communities.



BHEKA MBONAMBI



ZAMATHEKU ZIYANDA THABETHE

Zamatheku Ziyanda Thabethe is a final-year Accounting student with the dream of uplifting communities through education. Her community project, Ikusasasaletu, seeks to change the lives of youth by offering career guidance, assistance with applying for universities and funding as well as accessing ABET schooling.



PROFESSOR S MOYO

At Durban University of Technology, we form an integral part of the regional ecosystem, encouraging our students to adopt an entrepreneurial mindset so they can not only become job seekers but also create them, to form a solid foundation for the generations to come. DUT is proud of the accomplishments of our alumnus as they continue to flourish in their entrepreneurial endeavours and create employability for themselves and their communities.

Professor Sibusiso Moyo
Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Research, Innovation and Engagement.

GRADUATES ACHIEVING ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

The New Generation of Academics Programme (nGAP) is a prestigious programme under the Department of Higher Education and Training (the Department) which involves the recruitment of highly capable scholars as new academics.



DR THEMBISILE PATIENCE MAHLANGU

Dr Thembisile Patience Mahlangu is a lecturer and researcher at the Durban University of Technology. She obtained her doctoral degree in Chemical Engineering at the age of 31. Mahlangu engages in public speaking to promote Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics and Innovation (STEMI). She is passionate about bringing awareness to the community at large on STEMI and how STEMI contributes to the betterment of life.

Nokwanda Shezi is an Electronic Engineering Ph.D. candidate and lecturer at DUT, she is a registered ECSA candidate engineering technologist and a member of SAIEE. In her position at DUT, she enjoys imparting knowledge in the classroom and is currently working on a computer literacy project for underprivileged high schools which she is hoping to pilot later this year.

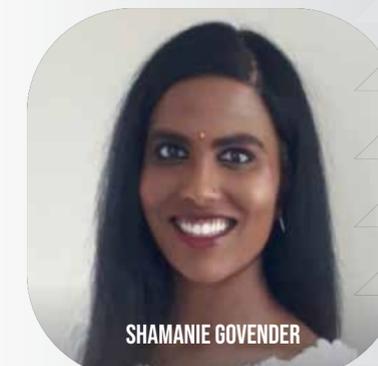


NOKWANDA SHEZI



NKANYEZI XULU

Nkanyezi Xulu is a Social Sciences intern at the Durban University of Technology, and in the pursuit of academic progress, she currently supports her mentor in the coordination of several academic development programmes at DUT, among which are the nGAP (New Generations Academic Programmes) and GOOT (Growing our own Timber). These programmes are targeted at supporting young academics complete their postgraduate and postdoctoral studies.



SHAMANIE GOVENDER

Shamanie Govender is a registered clinical technologist in the speciality Nephrology and is currently employed at the Durban University of Technology at the Department of Biomedical and Clinical Technology, Faculty of Health Sciences as an nGAP lecturer. She was the guest speaker at the South African Renal Congress 2022, in which she presented her Masters in Health Sciences.



DR MAPULA RAZWINANI

Dr Mapula Razwinani is a postdoctoral research fellow at the Durban University of Technology, co-founder of Global Health Biotech (PTY) LTD and holder of a D-Tech Biomedical Technology. She has specialised in tissue engineering and regenerative medicine of bone and cartilage using stem cells and medicinal plants, and has co-developed a natural anti-inflammatory ointment gel from medicinal plants called La-Africa Soother (LAS) that effectively relieves muscle and joint pain.

For more information about DUT, visit www.dut.ac.za



OBAKENG LESEYANE, 23

Technical partnership manager: LearnWorlds

Obakeng Leseayne leads technical integrations for LearnWorlds, an online learning platform. Leseayne was a child who had the odds stacked against him, but through receiving multiple scholarships and fellowships – including being selected to be a summer scholar at Wharton Business School – he now considers himself to be a global citizen with an Africa-focused impact mission. Being awarded a full scholarship for a private boys' high school in Cape Town, after coming out of poorly funded government primary school in Rustenburg, counts among his proudest moments. Leseayne believes that "those who risk going too far can possibly find out how far one can go". He says he wants young South Africans to dream beyond South Africa, and believes that access to quality and affordable internet is a means to achieve that dream. – *Oratile Mashazi*



MASOI MHLOPE, 29

Founder and chief sciences tutor: BraYn Tutoring

Engineer Masoi Mhlope does oil refinery research at Cape engineering firm Proconics, and is the founder of BraYn Tutoring. With a vision to propel young, inquisitive South African learners into careers in STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) subjects, BraYn Tutoring was inspired by Mhlope's love of education, his passion for science and his altruistic wish for a South Africa where citizens have access to quality education, a clean environment, a respectable standard of living and a better chance of pursuing tertiary education. Learners in the BraYniacs programme receive mother-tongue tutoring in the sciences, using phonetics to bridge the language gap and translate challenging scientific terms. The tutoring system uses WhatsApp, making it accessible to any young person with a phone. Mhlope continues to develop and broaden the scope of BraYn Tutoring, hoping to achieve a nationwide network of tutors and learners. – *Francesco Nassimbeni*



MAVHUTHU MUSETSHO, 27

Junior payroll tax administrator: TMF Group

Mavhuthu Musetsho is an entrepreneur who wishes to see the young people of South Africa achieve their dreams, so he gathered 150 young people in a WhatsApp group focused on motivating the youth to become responsible citizens. After attaining his honours degree in accounting from the University of Johannesburg, Musetsho was awarded a scholarship to the Istanbul Sabahattin Zaim University, and is now an MBA graduate. "Growing up as a child in rural areas, I had big dreams," he says. "However, I never dreamed of studying overseas and being the first one in my family to acquire a master's degree." As a tax administrator, Musetsho works to ensure that entities doing business in South Africa comply with the regulations of the South African Revenue Service. Musetsho's vision to create job opportunities for the youth is what drives him to work hard, so that he can be an active participant in the economic growth and development of the country. – *Neo Khanyile*



NAPJADI LETSOALO, 33

Senior lecturer: Unisa

Never let outside voices determine who you are and where you are supposed to go – everyone is the architect of their destiny," says Napjadi Letsoalo. As a family-driven man from a disadvantaged background, his work ethic and strength of character propelled him to obtain his PhD in linguistics from the University of Limpopo in 2019, thus becoming the first person in his family to attain a PhD. He is now a decorated lecturer at Unisa and is involved in research and community engagement projects, such as the Unisa Language Festival, an institutional strategic project that promotes multilingualism in South African communities; and Inspired towards Science Engineering and Technology, a robotic project to develop robotics teaching resources in South African indigenous languages. Letsoalo aims to combat the attitudes and stereotypes surrounding indigenous languages and contribute towards seeing them used as languages of instruction in the fields of linguistics, science, engineering, technology and economics. – *Robert Sam-Kputu*



BOITUMELO DIALE, 23

Accounting teacher: Sans Souci Girls' High School

At 23, Boitumelo Diale has only just begun her professional life, yet she has achieved so much already. She is a triple graduate of the University of Cape Town, subject head for accounting at Sans Souci Girls' High School and an entrepreneur. As a high school teacher, Diale has developed a love for pedagogy and the general wellbeing of students.

This is supported by her work outside of school, which includes private tutoring, emceeing, and curating events and seminars. Diale helps young people overcome the challenges they face daily in their pursuit of academic excellence. Her advice for them is to persevere in the pursuit of excellence, seek out strong mentor-mentee relationships – and never give up.

– *Gracie Winkler*



PRUDENCE MATHEBULA, 32

Chief executive: Dynamic DNA

Tackling youth unemployment in South Africa takes effort and initiative from people such as Prudence Mathebula.

As chief executive of Dynamic DNA, a training and skills development academy, Mathebula provides young South Africans with no-cost education in IT skills. The company focuses on employability and collaborates with key partners to fund their trainees through learnerships, bursaries and soft skill training to ensure they're well-rounded. The goal is to bridge the gap between companies that require expert technology professionals and young learners with the aptitudes and abilities to step into those positions. Mathebula's goal is ensuring South African youth are given opportunities to succeed, and are equipped with the skills and knowledge needed to make the most of them. "If you feel you have the right formula, go for it, as you are the only person hindering your growth and success," she says.

– *Robert Sam-Kputu*



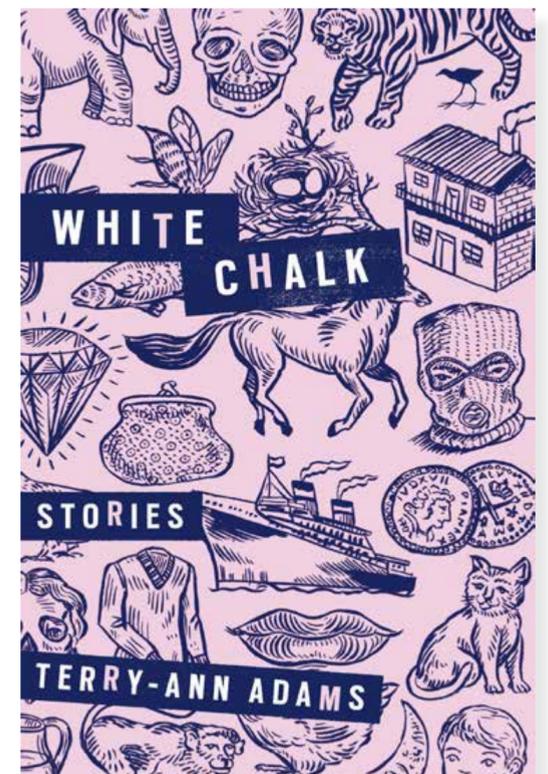
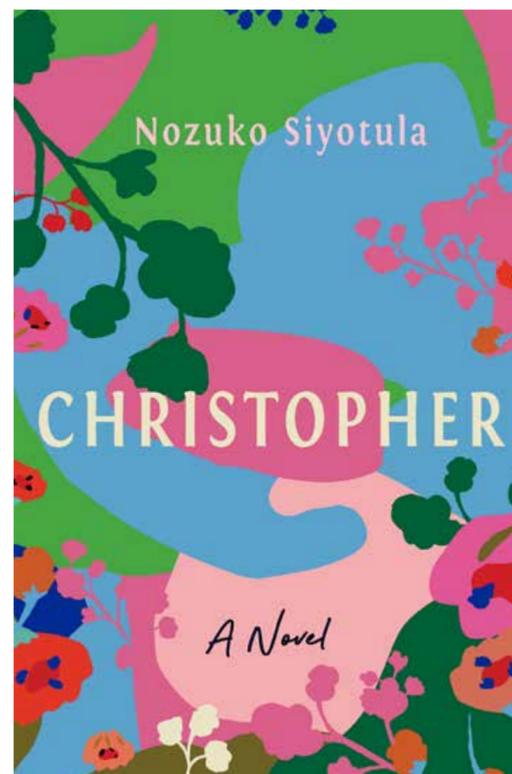
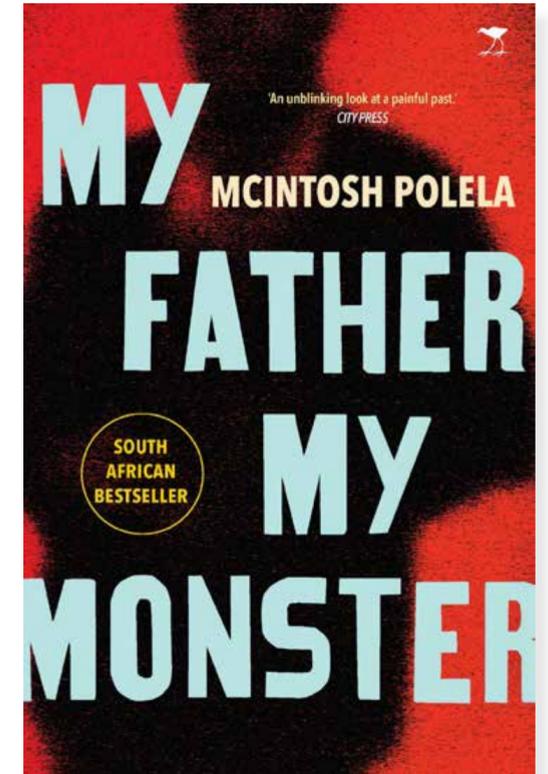
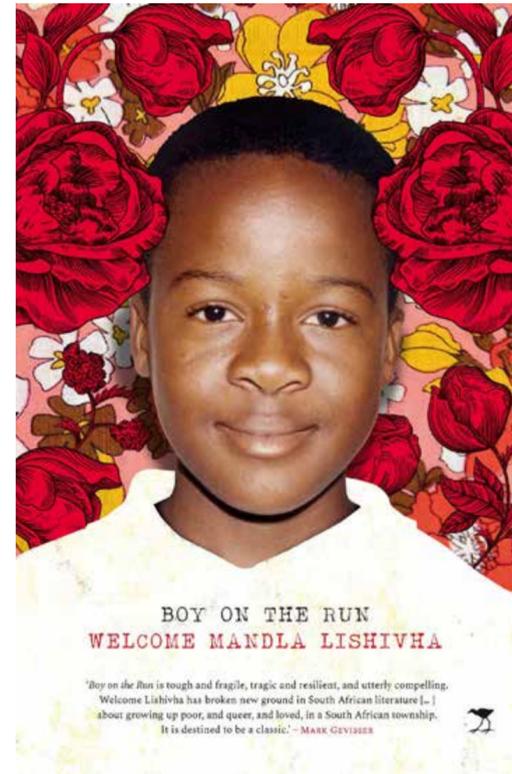
BOITUMELO KUZWAYO, 34

Senior lecturer and deputy head of department: University of Johannesburg

Boitumelo Kuzwayo is driven by a need to honour human dignity by helping to bridge the gap of inequality in education. She is a qualified chartered accountant with a master's in international accounting. In her role as deputy head of the teaching and learning department at the University of Johannesburg, she ensures that the learning material at the institution is up to standard, year after year.

And as a senior lecturer, she sees to its implementation. Kuzwayo has also been a project coordinator for a bursary and academic support programme that caters to approximately 400 students, providing disenfranchised students with tools and access to quality education. This includes additional lectures, mentorship, soft skills training and financial assistance to students who are at risk of not completing their qualifications. "I believe self-worth, dignity and knowledge are very important. I love to see people build themselves through education and the appropriate skill set development," she said. – *Jabulile Dlamini-Qweshu*

Young classics, enduring stories





KAGISHO MASAЕ, 34

Co-founder and chief operating officer: Matric Live

Kagisho Masae's efforts in the education technology space have laid important groundwork for democratising access to quality education. A finance professional by trade, Masae pivoted to education as a means to fulfil a higher calling.

His company, Matric Live, is a digital learning platform that helped more than 600 000 learners during the 2020 and 2021 lockdowns – a feat that Masae counts as one of his greatest professional achievements.

While Matric Live's flagship product contains tools for learners, the company recently launched learning tools aimed at teachers. The business continues to evolve and so Masae and his partners hope to make greater use of data-informed insights to create more personal and efficient learning experiences, as this is fundamental to closing the inequality gap in South Africa in the long term. He believes in passion over profit and is driven by the idea that his effort and dedication has the potential to change people's lives. – *Tshiamo Seape*



SIMONE PETERS, 29

Postdoctoral fellow: University of Cape Town

Postdoctoral fellow, Simone Peters is part of a multifaceted team of psychologists, psychiatrists and anthropologists looking at infant mental health in South Africa and Africa. Peters says, "Our aim is to create an archive of the only infant mental health module in Africa, learn ways to decolonise this very Western model of observing infants and create an African-centred model that can be distributed throughout Africa."

Using decolonial methods, Peters lectures on black masculinities with the aim of shifting how young people are researched towards more holistic narratives about marginalised groups. "Academia uses methods that replicate stereotypes about certain bodies of people," she says.

Her work also involves researching and writing, including work with migrant women living with HIV and navigating Covid-19, as well as working with young coloured men living in and navigating often violent spaces, and how their stories are told in academia. – *Afrika Bogatsu*



JEANINE ROUX, 30

Company director and tutor: Khula Learning Centre

Many children battle to reach their full potential in schools that are often overcrowded and under-resourced. Kids with learning difficulties face additional challenges, which many schools lack the capacity to address.

Khula Learning Centre in Cape Agulhas, however, is flourishing. Khula was opened in 2019 by Jeanine Roux, its co-founder, director and one of the tutors. It provides academic tutoring and social and emotional support for home-schooled children with individual needs, including learners with dyslexia, ADHD and autism.

"Nothing in the world is more rewarding than seeing those tiny humans grow and excel, and being the example they look up to and follow," Roux says. She also runs Jeanine Roux Consulting, helping families with parenting strategies, developing behaviour plans and creating individual education plans for children. She hopes to make Khula a champion of inclusive education by providing a replicable model that is affordable and accessible. – *Lesley Stones*



#IAMSOFASHION

**FASHION'S #FUTURE
IN SOUTH AFRICA**

The beginning of the 2020s brought a whirlwind of challenges and opportunities that seemed to overwhelm the senses. While many aspects of daily life became complex and the future seemed less predictable than ever, certain factors of our lives became crystal clear; the people of South Africa are resilient. We are a nation of hardy, creative, and community-focused people.

Nevertheless, South Africans are again searching for reasons to feel positive and hopeful about our futures. One industry increasing its potential to deliver hope to South African communities is the fashion and clothing production industry. The South African Retail-Clothing, Textile, Footwear and Leather (R-CTFL) Value Chain has created a Masterplan to support locally owned businesses. The plan had already been created before the global pandemic however border closures during COVID19 accelerated the move to increase local sourcing and sealed the plan for growth and opportunity in the country.

Agreements securing supply contracts for local textile manufacturers aim to reduce input costs and arrest declining competitive costs and capacity of local clothing manufacturers. The plan includes domestic procurement targets. In fact, according to the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition,

“Retailers committed to a target to grow local CTFL share of sales to 65% in order to support R69 billion local CTFL procurement that delivers total R-CTFL employment of 333 000 workers including 165 000 CTFL manufacturing jobs.”

Quick response manufacturing, driven by retailers and design houses, places pressure on clothing manufacturers' agility and rapid response to changes in fashion, style and design. Talented, South African professionals across the fashion-retail supply chain, from designers, textile experts, buyers, merchandisers, entrepreneurs, supply chain optimisers, and so many more, are needed to support the potential growth in the industry.

STADIO School of Fashion (formerly LISOF) is working to ensure international-standard programmes that produce graduates with the skills and knowledge to fill the gap in the market. With a range of higher certificates, diplomas, and degrees in fashion to choose from, STADIO School of Fashion is fully accredited by the Council on Higher Education (CHE) and internationally accredited by the British Accreditation Council (BAC). We continue to work closely with major industry players, such as H&M and Mr Price, to strengthen our ability – and ultimately our graduates' ability – to positively impact the South African Fashion industry. At the same time, our staff and students are working at a community level to engender a strong sense of South African identity and willingness to inspire social upliftment.

"We are proud of our local fashion industry as it plays a notable role in our economic development, both from being a key financial contributor as well as a job creator. STADIO is pleased to be part of moulding the industry's next generation of talent. Our graduates can enter the industry as part of an already established production chain, aid in creating such a production chain, or initiate their own brand," comments Mariette Smith, STADIO School of Fashion's Programme Coordinator.

The DTIC said that "Supporting the young designers and design houses would be crucial to the success and development of the entire local industry." The School of Fashion is committed to this call-to-action.



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FRANKIE CILLIERS, 33

Manager for road safety engineering;
Road Traffic Management Corporation

Harnessing the ability of technology to uplift, inspire and empower is a passion for Frankie Cilliers, the head of educational innovation at Saxonwold Primary School.

Cilliers teaches students coding and app and website development, and encourages collaboration, critical thinking, creativity and problem-solving. He also trains teachers how to use technology efficiently and innovatively in their lessons. Because of his work, the school was featured in an international study by ReD Associates and LEGO into the effective use of technology in the classroom.

Saxonwold is an affluent area, but many of the learners there are the children of domestic workers. "My mission is to not let any learner fall behind in terms of technology, so they become future-ready and innovative future-thinking leaders to improve not only their own lives, but also the lives of many South Africans," Cilliers says.

His website, frankiecilliers.com has resources to help teachers use technology effectively.

— Lesley Stones



AYANDA MHLONGO, 28

Founder and managing director: Science for Ubuntu

When Ayanda Mhlongo looks back proudly on her graduations, her mother's joy and the knowledge that she's breaking generational patterns and creating new norms for generations to come fuels her. Mhlongo is now at the University of Cambridge, where her PhD research explores historical trauma from the perspective of black women military veterans from uMkhonto weSizwe.

Her study considers the relationship between historical trauma and sustainable development in South Africa. Mhlongo longs to see an end to the anxiety and fear that come from a lack of economic opportunities in South Africa.

She is committed to helping to reduce poverty, promote social and economic enterprise, eliminate gender disparities, promote peace and resolve community conflict, and to foster youth development and social integration.

"I believe that Africa will either rise or fall based on the quality of our leaders. I strive to demonstrate ethical and servant leadership in Africa," she says.

— Shaazia Ebrahim



DAWN SHABANGU-RIKHOTSO, 30

Commissioner: CRL Rights Commission

Pretoria-born Dawn Shabangu-Rikhotso transitioned from engineering and the built environment to publishing. She is the chief executive officer at Lingua Franca Publishers, an independent publishing house committed to inspiring all children to prepare their own paths for a brighter future through learning and reading.

They recently published the best-selling children's book My Coily Crownly Hair, written by Zulaikha Patel in 2021, and a six-set children's book series called The African Adventures of Sena and Katlego, written by Carol Ofori.

Shabangu-Rikhotso's advice to South Africa's youth is "dare to be a change agent in your sphere of influence, and never be afraid to face the challenge of breaking barriers".

She serves as the deputy chairperson of the African Publishers' Association, is a member of the Legal Deposit Committee and a co-founder of a nonprofit organisation Women of Note Empowerment, a platform where like-minded women share their experiences and help each other.

— Alexander Brand



SIBUSISO MASOMBUKA, 29

Teacher: Oprah Winfrey Leadership Academy for Girls

Sibusiso Masombuka is a senior life orientation and economic management sciences (EMS) teacher at the Oprah Winfrey Leadership Academy for Girls.

Masombuka left a management role in the fashion retail industry for his childhood dream of becoming an educator.

During the pandemic, Masombuka taught learners through a YouTube channel, Africa Teen Geeks, which reached more than five-million learners during the peak of the lockdowns and landed him an MTN Local Hero Award.

He then started his own YouTube channel, Swaggy School Teacher, where he teaches business, life orientation and EMS. Last year, he helped learners in Riverlea and Soweto over weekends to prepare for their business studies final exams.

"Every day, I find a way to reach out to my learners in a way that would make them want to be at the service of others as well," he says. — Alexander Brand



LUNGILE MASHIGO, 34

Founder: Stripped Money Conversations

Noting a lack of awareness about financial products in disadvantaged communities, Lungile Mashigo decided to found Stripped Money Conversations. Through her website, seminars, podcast and a weekly appearance on e.tv's The Morning Show, Lungile leads accessible conversations about money.

Making a positive contribution to society is important to Mashigo. She uses the decade of knowledge she gained working in the financial sector to help people build a better relationship with their finances, and ultimately to grow generational wealth.

"I want to see the gap between the haves and the have-nots decrease significantly," she says.

Mashigo prides herself on being able to simplify financial jargon and economic issues into discussions that any South African can learn from. "The world of money and investments is intimidating, complicated and appears to be just for the wealthy," she says.

"I empower others with simple information in a language they can understand." — Andie Reeves



SEBASTIAN PRETORIUS, 12

Primary school learner: Laerskool Randfontein

Young Sebastian Pretorius is only a grade six learner, but he's already helping others to grow up into the honourable men that our country needs.

As an ambassador for Laerskool Randfontein, he strives to uplift younger kids and improve their skills so they can become valuable contributors to society. He also MCs at functions and gives motivational talks to his peers.

"I believe young boys in their journey to become men need to be encouraged," he says. "I stand against bullying, gender-based violence and child abuse. It's important to embrace and appreciate our differences."

Pretorius loves acting and has won a National Eisteddfod Young Performer Award, and will appear in his first movie, Spoedgrens, this year.

He's learned that not everyone is happy when other people achieve success. "More often, you become a target, so I've learned to keep my head up high," he says. — Lesley Stones



TEBATSI MOAPE, 31

Lecturer: Unisa

As a woman in the fields of computer science, artificial intelligence and machine learning, Tebatsi Moape is helping young girls access the education that will bring them into this vital sector.

Moape is a lecturer at Unisa and she's studying towards a PhD in computational linguistics. Her research addresses the scarcity of African languages online. "I'm working towards developing a language technology tool for Setswana and raising awareness on the importance of the availability of online content and technologies

in all official languages in South Africa," she says. In 2018 Moape founded Rebao ICT Foundation and Youth Development to provide information and communications technology resources to disadvantaged young people.

The foundation has also run community projects including providing sanitary towels and school shoes, and donating building material to a children's home. To encourage younger children to believe in themselves, she wrote a book called I Am. I Can. I Will.

— Lesley Stones



LEMOHANG MONYATSI, 33

Manager for road safety engineering;
Road Traffic Management Corporation

Driven to see South Africa be better than it was yesterday, Lemohang Monyatsi manages road safety engineering at the Road Traffic Management Corporation, an agency of the department of transport. Here, Monyatsi formulates policies to ensure South African roads are safer.

He also serves as chairperson of the traffic calming working group, which involves different road authorities in South Africa and is responsible for shaping traffic-calming policies. He hails from a rural town, where he is accustomed to walking alongside roads, and Monyatsi says he has witnessed children being knocked over by cars. Therefore, he is personally invested in and dedicated to making roads safe and equitable spaces.

Monyatsi wants safe roads and zero road-related deaths and injuries. His work has made an impression: Monyatsi's research on traffic calming was selected for presentation at the UK Transport Practitioners' Meeting in London in 2021. This June, he presents his research at the International Conference on Engineering, Technology, and Innovation in France. — Shaazia Ebrahim



MABONI MMATLI, 29

Founder and managing director: Science for Ubuntu

Assionate advocate for science and science education, innovator Maboni Mmatli is committed to helping young and would-be scientists to find their voice.

The education crisis in South Africa is ongoing and with literacy, maths and science specifically affected, Mmatli's initiative is an essential public service in getting more young minds into science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) fields.

While studying for a BSc in biological sciences at Nelson Mandela University, Mmatli's intuition directed him toward his specific field: science journalism and science communications. He obtained a science communication certificate from Stellenbosch University in 2021.

He believes, and has demonstrated, that science education has myriad applications, including wellbeing, a sense of belonging and self-care. He leads by example with the groundbreaking initiative Science for Ubuntu, of which he is the founder and director. Science for Ubuntu is a science and science communication initiative committed to the promotion of STEM literacy, application and education.

— Francesco Nassimbeni



TSHOLOFELO MOSALA, 33

Commissioner: CRL Rights Commission

Promoting and protecting the rights of cultural, religious and linguistic communities is at the centre of Tsholofelo Mosala's practice as a commissioner at the CRL Rights Commission. Currently reading towards a PhD in anthropology at the Nelson Mandela University, her thesis is based on orthodoxy, modernity and coexistence.

The Soshanguve native describes herself as a community builder, establishing the youth consciousness movement to empower youth businesses in her immediate community by helping them with funding.

In addition to youth development programmes such as the Mr and Miss Tshwane Culture pageant, Mosala does work that involves publications on issues of heritage. "Issues of language, heritage and tradition are often isolated," she says.

"However, it brings pride and joy to me to contribute to the preservation, protection and upliftment of our South African cultural heritage." She's currently working with the Azania Research Centre to develop mechanisms for the testing of African traditional medicine.

— Sandiso Ngubane

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When Covid hit, tertiary institutions not only had to shift their teaching and learning systems online, but their assessment processes, too.

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MINENHLE KHOZA, 29

Lecturer: University of Johannesburg

Minenhle Khoza works in academic development and youth empowerment to make education meaningful and fashionable. She is a lecturer and Work Integrated Learning (WIL) coordinator at the University of Johannesburg's department of biotechnology and food technology.

As a WIL coordinator, Khoza assists students with preparation for the working world, which includes interviewing and CV-writing skills, and applications for WIL and internship. Since 2020, Khoza has helped over 160 undergraduate students get internships and 15 graduates to secure employment.

Khoza is the chief executive of Faculty of Best Advisory, an NPO at which she facilitates career guidance workshops for high school and university students, and assists matriculants from partner schools in applying for tertiary education opportunities.

"I wake up understanding that there's someone who draws inspiration from seeing me strive. I make it my mission to excel so they can stay motivated and encouraged, to make their lives meaningful," she says.

— Shaazia Ebrahim



MARCEL NAGAR, 30

Research fellow: South African Research Chairs Initiative

Marcel Nagar is a senior postdoctoral research fellow at the University of Johannesburg, focusing on African developmental states. She has attained numerous degrees from universities around South Africa, and continues to contribute to academic literature through journal articles, book chapters and research reports.

Nagar's proudest moment was when she graduated in 2019 as a doctor of literature and philosophy in political science, and later published her thesis as a book volume with Palgrave Macmillan.

Her biggest mistake, she recalls, was prioritising the opinions of others. Nagar has since learned the importance of trusting her own judgement and taking full responsibility for her choices. She is motivated to excel by her love for her career, country and continent.

Political science provides Nagar with a unique lens through which the world can be understood, and she is inspired by its transformative potential. Her ambitions reside in the hope to see a more inclusive and equitable society.

— Gracie Winkler



NOMFUNDO BRUKWE, 25

Educator: PEPPS Motheong Primary School

Taking the ancient art of educating on to social media is where Nomfundo Brukwe has found her niche. Her purpose is to lead, teach and serve and using social media lets her do all three. She posts job opportunities for unemployed educators on Twitter, and shares more about the profession and creative ideas for activities on TikTok.

Brukwe teaches at PEPPS Motheong Primary School in Atteridgeville. "I would like to see more future educators employed, engaging in creative lessons in the classroom that make learning fun, and making quality education accessible for all through my academic research findings and social media presence," she says.

She is currently studying for a master's degree in education with her research focusing on how to accommodate dyslexic learners in an inclusive classroom.

Brukwe is a former vice-chairperson of the Unicef University of Pretoria Society, and is now an alumni volunteer teacher.

— Lesley Stones



BONGIWE BEJA-NTSIKO, 35

Head of partnerships: The Student Hub

While pursuing her master's in development finance at the University of Cape Town's Graduate School of Business in 2018, Bongwiwe Beja-Ntsiko had already worked for more than four years as a business development consultant at Sanlam, and had recently left her position in client services and business development at Perpetua Investment Managers. "I am currently the head of partnerships at The Student Hub, which provides technical and vocational education and training colleges with the infrastructure to offer optimised online teaching and learning," she explains.

At the 2018 Most Influential Young South Africans, an annual initiative by Avance Media, Beja-Ntsiko was named the 11th most influential young person in the country and won the personal development and academia category.

A business leadership PhD candidate with Unisa's Graduate School of Business Leadership, Beja-Ntsiko is preparing herself for the future.

"I hope to play a pivotal role in integrating technologies like artificial intelligence and automation into education," she says.

— Nabeel Allie



MOTSHEDISI LIKATE, 25

Director and tutor: Motshedisi Likate Foundation

Growing up in a village in Phuthaditjhaba in the Free State was part of what motivated Motshedisi Likate to start the Motshedisi Likate Foundation, which aims to empower girls and women to become the best version of themselves.

During the week, she tutors primary school children between grades one and seven in all subjects – mainly English and mathematics.

She also runs a mentorship and empowerment programme for adolescent girls, BetSheCan, doing activities with them once a month to encourage them to be responsible and fight for the lives they'd ideally like to live.

"Three of the girls I started BetSheCan with got accepted into university and lived according to the values of our programme, which are to thrive, inspire and succeed," she says.

Likate was selected as an international girl champion for Save the Children and got the opportunity to travel and be an advocate for the rights of children and women across the world.

— Alexander Brand



SIBUSISO MALINDISA, 30

Lecturer: Unisa

Sibusiso Malindisa is on a doctoral quest to discover anti-cancer drugs. His research focuses on proteins involved in cancer, and he is working to find alternative cancer therapeutics that target the specific proteins, are permanent and not toxic.

Malindisa received a teaching assistant award at Wits University at the end of the first year of his master's in molecular and cell biology. He had to get a job as a petrol attendant to raise money for registration and squat with a friend for a year until finally graduating in 2016, one of the best moments of his life.

Malindisa is a biotechnology and biochemistry lecturer to third-year and honours students at Unisa.

He takes technology and innovation to the next level with online lectures using YouTube, Journal of Virtual Experiments, Facebook and other platforms for teaching and research.

He supervises postgraduate research projects, has co-supervised eight students to completion and is working with seven others.

— Lineo Leteba

PLANNING FUTURE CAREERS TODAY

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SARAH ROBYN FARRELL, 30

Managing director, co-founder and coordinator:
African Climate Alliance

Sarah Robyn Farrell is fighting for the future of our planet. In 2019, after co-leading climate protests in Cape Town, Farrell co-founded the African Climate Alliance (ACA). ACA advocates climate justice, with a focus on Afrocentric climate literacy and social inclusion. In the same year, ACA was awarded the Amnesty International Ambassador of Conscience Award as part of Greta Thunberg's Fridays for Future movement. As managing director, Farrell oversees ACA's operations, as well as its action and advocacy programmes. Most notably, she's created and coordinated digital climate literacy resources and campaigns in English, Afrikaans and isiXhosa, opening the door for a more inclusive environmental narrative. Farrell also uses music to raise awareness of socio-environmental issues, performing at protests, workshops and festivals. One of her proudest achievements is ACA emerging as a springboard for young activists to access important spaces in the fight for environmental justice. — Laura du Toit



PASEKA MABINA, 31

Engineer: Council for Scientific and Industrial Research

Paseka Mabina aims to draw up the blueprint for the use of artificial intelligence to help build a sustainable South Africa. "The sector accounts for more than 40% of global energy use and accounts for 30% of greenhouse gas emissions," says Mabina, who is also a PhD candidate in electrical engineering at Stellenbosch University. Mabina works at the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research as a research engineer, working to implement renewable energy projects for the tourism, mining, banking and education sectors. Mabina also helps business owners to lower their energy costs and carbon footprint through energy-efficient upgrades. The advice Mabina gives to those starting in the same field is to find a mentor to guide you in building on the foundation set by others, rather than facing adversity alone. Mabina has also had his work presented on an international level, putting South Africa on the map in the fight against climate change.

— Simon Dey



NEOKA NAIDOO, 30

Project lead: UNFCCC

Neoka Naidoo is at the forefront of one of the most pressing issues facing society today: climate change. Holding qualifications in both environmental science and public leadership has given Naidoo the tools to excel in her current position as project lead for the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). In her role, she strengthens the relationship between governments and NPOs that are interested in or affected by the elements of the climate change convention. If we are to tackle the problems associated with climate change, it is essential that there is consistent engagement from all stakeholders — a goal that Naidoo works tirelessly to facilitate. She trusts that her work on the frontlines of the climate crisis will create an impact. "My proudest moment was being the leader that I thought I would be — empathetic, genuine, strategic and supportive," she says.

— Tshiamo Seape



LEE-ANN MODLEY, 33

Senior lecturer: University of Johannesburg

Working as a senior lecturer at the University of Johannesburg in the department of geography, environmental management and energy studies, Lee-Ann Modley is an academic who focuses on the significant role humans play in the management of our water resources. Modley has pursued a lengthy education, holding a bachelor of science degree in human physiology and zoology, with an honours degree in general zoology, as well as a master's degree and PhD in environmental management with a focus on aquatic ecology. The purpose of Modley's research is to rehabilitate, restore and maintain the health of our rivers in consultation with local communities. Her work mostly focuses on townships and involves community members as important stakeholders in spreading awareness of the role of society in water resource management. She believes people are aware and empowered by their responsibility to make things better.

— Daniël de Jager



SIBUSISO CALVIN ZULU, 29

Co-founder and chief executive: Swift Lab

Sibusiso Calvin Zulu is an active ambassador for youth upliftment in the South African creative industry. "Most young people in my community did not get a chance to further their studies like myself, but have natural talent when it comes to the creative sector," he says. In 2015, Zulu founded the charity organisation Sneakers 4 Change, and in 2017 co-founded the Makers Valley Youth Expo. With his new social enterprise, Swift Lab, the entrepreneur aims to educate the youth about fashion waste, sustainability, and the value of a cyclical economy. "Swift Lab is an upcycle fashion brand that redirects preloved fashion items from landfills into the wardrobes of the youth, through the intervention of design and craft," he explains. Through his pioneering work with Swift Lab, Zulu was chosen to represent South Africa at the Social World Enterprise Forum in Ethiopia in 2019. — Luca Hart



NADIA SHAH NAIDOO, 31

Senior manager: C40 Cities

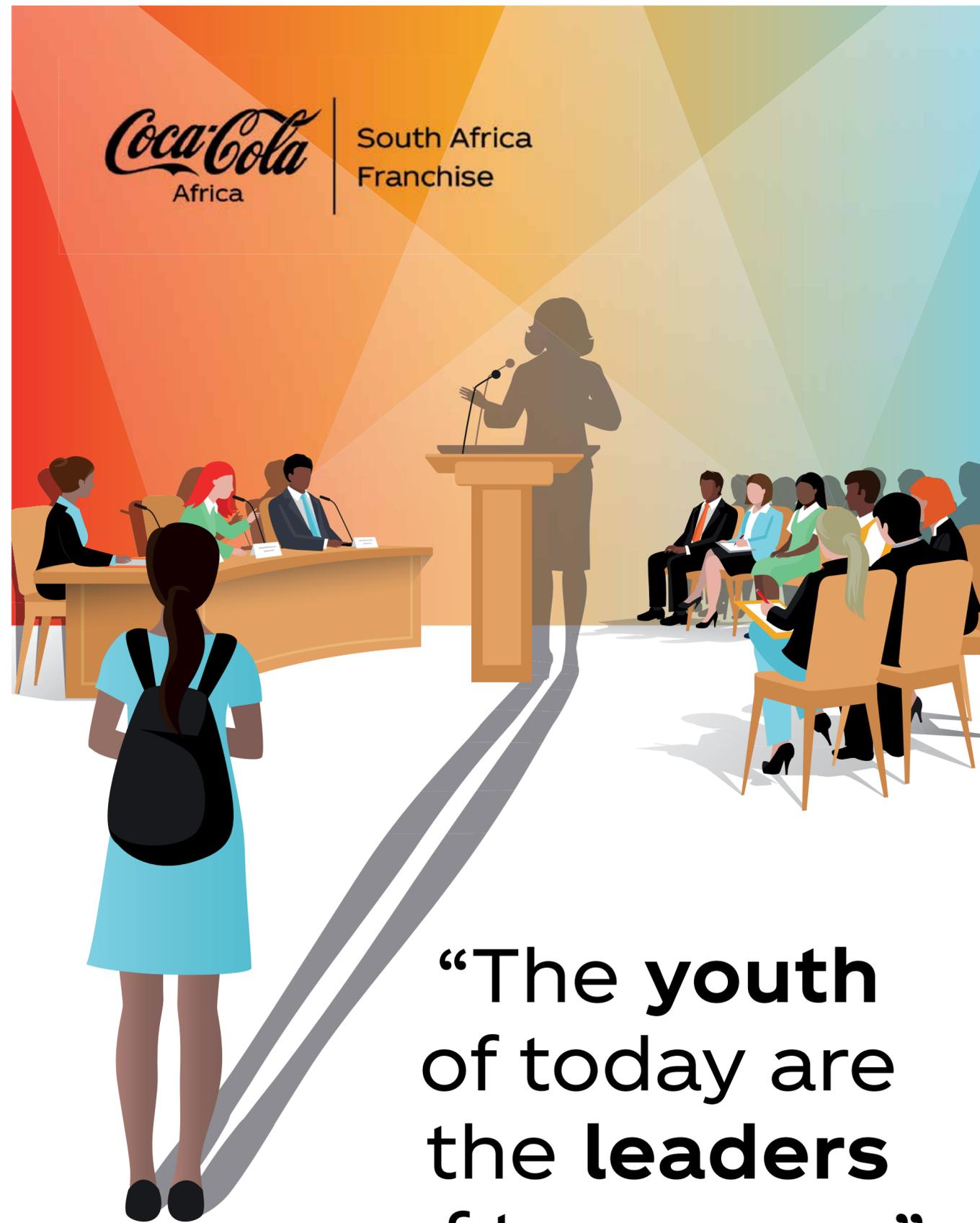
Cape Town-based inclusive climate action manager Nadia Shah Naidoo believes that an effective transition towards a greener future in South Africa needs to centre on social and climate justice. Working with the C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group, Shah Naidoo's work focuses on minimising climate risks for marginalised groups and others who are most vulnerable to extreme environmental conditions. She has provided technical and strategic guidance on climate change to national, provincial and local governments in South Africa. Her career in climate change began at the eThekweni municipality, where she served as a consultant on the project team for Durban's Climate Change Strategy and 100 Resilient Cities Programme. "I entered the world of work eager to tackle environmental challenges, naive about how changes in society are actually brought about and just how interconnected environmental, social and economic challenges are. Climate change is truly a developmental issue with justice at its core," Shah Naidoo explains. — Jabulile Dlamini-Qwasha

CARINA PIENAAR, 30

Project manager: BirdLife South Africa

After completing her master's degree in environmental science at North-West University, Carina Pienaar started working to conserve the high-altitude grasslands in the eastern Free State and their threatened bird species. She works closely with landowners to implement biodiversity-friendly land management principles. "Working with the landowners has led to the declaration of protected areas in the grasslands of approximately

50 000 hectares through biodiversity stewardship — including the Ingula Nature Reserve, Upper Wilge Protected Environment and Sneeuwberg Protected Environment," says Pienaar. Her proudest moment was being part of the team that secured Ramsar Wetland international importance status for the Ingula Nature Reserve, as well as declaring the 24 000 hectares of Upper Wilge as a protected environment this year. "I want to ensure that the grasslands retain their splendour and rich biodiversity, and that agriculture and land use in the grasslands remain sustainable for future generations," she says. — Alexander Brand



“The youth of today are the leaders of tomorrow.”

~ Nelson Mandela



PINKY JEDIDAH MOKWENA, 28

Founder and chief executive: Metsi a Teng (Pty) Ltd

In addition to being an environmental scientist and radio broadcaster, Pinky Jedidah Mokwena is the founder and chief executive of Metsi a Teng, an advanced water purification enterprise. Located in Tshwane, Metsi a Teng has won four different awards for its innovative nature, including the Inter-Varsity Innovation Challenge and the Blue Ocean Award.

Mokwena explains that she never imagined starting her own company in relation to her studies. As a first-generation graduate, business owner and visionary, she is propelling youth to dream beyond the limitations that may inhibit them. She is driven to excel by the women in her family, and humbled by the privilege to take up opportunities they never had available to them. Mokwena was selected as the only South African delegate to join the COP26 Youth4Climate campaign in 2021.

Today, she encourages everyone to recognise the authentic power that they possess to be leaders in whatever spaces they hold.

— Georgia Satchwell



MFUNDO MDLET SHE, 28

Chief beekeeper: Urban Deep Bees Company

Imagine a future where humans transcend their anthropocentric world view and adopt an ecocentric world view. I hope through my work I can change my fellow citizens' perceptions and attitudes towards nature and the resulting human-environment interactions," says Mfundo Mdletshe, the chief beekeeper at Urban Deep Bees Company.

This company exists to foster a sustainable human-bee coexistence. Urban Deep Bees Company offers beekeeping services to commercial and residential areas. Its main services are raw urban honey production, live bee rescue and its Adopt-A-Hive programme. The programme starts with a trained beekeeper delivering a hive and installing a bee colony, then making routine house calls to check on the hive's health – while the adopter gets a share of the honey harvest. Mdletshe says his work allows him to fuse his love for the superorganism of bees with his passion for environmental education, amplifying the cause of pollinator awareness and protection.

— Patrick Visser



SAMANTHA NICHOLSON, 32

Project manager: Endangered Wildlife Trust

Samantha Nicholson heads up the African Lion Database, a conservation project that collects and analyses key data on the species to inform conservation-related decision-making.

By creating a repository of reliable information, the database aims to bolster the capacity of governments and organisations to assess the impacts of their interventions. Through her team's efforts, she hopes to see South Africa acknowledged as a leader in lion conservation. Nicholson has published various academic papers on carnivore conservation, and is currently busy with a PhD in zoology at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. When her enrollment coincided with the birth of her child, many people around her encouraged her to delay her registration. Nicholson decided to march on, determined to balance the commitments of motherhood with keeping her career aspirations on track.

"Never say no to something that you can learn from and that could provide opportunities to grow in your career," she says.

— Zia Haffeeje



STEPHEN HORN, 31

Director and producer: Politically Awesh

Stephen Horn is the director and producer at Politically Awesh. He works with the Clean Creatives campaign against greenwashing, and to foreground the role the fossil fuel industry's marketing plays in delaying climate action. With more than 10 years of experience in media, Horn has a few accolades under his belt: a climate change explainer video series on which he worked in 2019 placed in the top three of the 2021 international CMCC Climate Change Communication Awards, along with another climate project for which he produced a video through his production company, Bouncing Biscuit Studios. The series won an award at the Inside the Greenhouse Climate & Comedy video competition at the University of Colorado. Politically Awesh partnered with the Climate Justice Coalition and 350Africa.org to produce a satirical video starring Siv Ngesi. The 2021 video was featured on Al Jazeera's The Listening Post and gained impressive traction on social media.

— Lineo Leteba



VUSI AFRICA, 33

Filmmaker: Trial By Media

Stretching a R6 000 budget for an Afrikaans-medium short film marked the birth of Vusi Africa's filmmaking career. The successful penny-pinching paid off: the rudimentary project eventually premiered at the Silicon Valley Film Festival in California and was nominated for the best short film award at the African International Film Festival. The accolades continued with Africa's debut feature-length film, Letters of Hope, which premiered at the 40th Durban International Film Festival, where he scooped an award for artistic bravery. The film subsequently opened the fifth edition of the Rapid Lion film festival and earned him a South African Film and Television Award for best emerging filmmaker. Unique South African narratives underpin Africa's work. He wants to inspire his audiences "to see themselves, defeat their shortfalls and regain their confidence". His sophomore offering, Surviving Gaza, is a coming-of-age tale set against the vibrant backdrop of Kwaito's heyday, and has just been released.

— Zia Haffeeje



ONDELA MLANDU, 31

Multimedia journalist and podcast host: Go Hustle and Modern Magazine

Multimedia journalist and podcast host Ondela Mlandu loves the opportunities her job gives her to sit with businesspeople and entrepreneurs and elicit their stories. She's experienced in print, podcasting and radio broadcasting for titles including Go Hustle, Women's Health, Getaway and Metro FM, and she's hosted podcasts for entrepreneurship platforms such as Heavy Chef. She's now studying Communication and Influence in the Digital Age to stay on top of future developments. "I'm very intentional about the work I produce, and writing for a platform such as Go Hustle aligns with my vision to leave an impact, so women can be fully equipped to run their own businesses," she says. Long-term goals include promoting a society where women can use their skills and experience to drive empowerment initiatives across Africa. She's also the curator for Global Shapers Cape Town Hub, a World Economic Forum initiative for youth-focused community projects.

— Lesley Stones



GERALD CARLTON, 29

Social scientist: Social Assistance Welfare

Gerald Carlton is a social scientist and a student at the African Advanced Level Telecommunications Institute studying towards his master's in communications management. Currently based in Kenya, he is researching climate migration in the region. His enthusiasm for social entrepreneurship inspired him to launch Social Assistance Welfare (SAW), his own NPO. SAW provides social interventions and influences public policy to improve the lives of young people in developing countries. It partners up with similar

initiatives to provide social assistance with health and sanitation projects, such as acquiring deworming kits for more than 10 000 children globally. Carlton has several qualifications in the domains of trade law, trade economics and entrepreneurship. He's also a member of various philanthropic and conservation organisations, including the Queen's Commonwealth Trust and the Chatham House Common Futures Conversations initiative.

— Robert Sam-Kputu



NOMBULELO KUBHAYI, 29

Physiotherapist and chief executive: TOYDS

Nombulelo Kubhayi is driven by the idea that one day we'll have more inclusive media for children affected by disabilities. "My company, TOYDS, focuses on the inclusion of children affected by disabilities in society as well as in mainstream media," the founder says. Kubhayi, a Wits University graduate, is a storyteller as well as a qualified physiotherapist. Her experiences in physiotherapy exposed her to the realities of disabilities in South Africa. Producing books about children with special needs, TOYDS aims to increase awareness among children about the different physical abilities of their peers. This is done through books such as 4 Friends, which includes four separate stories – Sally's Big Fall, Bobo's Big Day at the Beach, Jimmie's Lost Red Ball and Pam Bakes a Cake – all written and illustrated by Kubhayi and Peace Makinita, respectively. "The amount of support I've received for my work has been astounding," Kubhayi says.

— Nabeel Allie



SIHLE-ISIPHO NONTSHOKWENI, 32

Head of production: The Ultimate Book Show

In addition to being the host and head of production of The Ultimate Book Show, Sihle-Isipho Nontshokweni is a bestselling author. Her book Wanda is a children's story that follows a young girl's journey to self-celebration as her grandmother teaches her to love her hair. Wanda's success gave Nontshokweni the opportunity and drive to write a sequel, and Wanda the Brave was released worldwide in 2021, published through Wanda World. With support from the National Arts Council, the series will soon become an animated cartoon for television and digital consumption. For The Ultimate Book Show, Nontshokweni has interviewed many of the biggest names in South African literature, music and visual art. A year after recording the show's first season, she presented it at the Cannes Film Market in 2021. Soon, you'll be able to catch The Ultimate Book Show on SABC TV.

— Alice Sholto-Douglas



LEBOHLANG KGANYE, 32

Visual artist: Independent artist

Lebohlang Kganye is a visual artist and photographer who uses her family archive to explore and re-enact notions of home and belonging. "My work has explored themes of personal history and ancestry, while resonating with the history of South Africa and apartheid, by incorporating the archival and performative into a practice that centres storytelling and memory as it plays itself out in the familial experience." With regards to what drives her success, Kganye says that the concept of individuality within a society or community has always been important. "However, I always think about the concept of 'black excellence' versus 'black exceptionalism'. I have never wanted to be the exception, but rather a part of a community that has a mindset backed by actions that display leadership through perseverance. The true purpose of these actions is to advance the black community that is black excellence," she says.

— Afrika Bogatsa

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MALEBO MALOPE, 30

Lecturer and genetic counsellor: Stellenbosch University

The first black genetic counsellor in South Africa, Malebo Malope wants to take her career to new heights. The Stellenbosch University lecturer is in charge of the medicine and health sciences faculty's teaching activities, clinical training, genetic counselling, and intern and student rotations at Tygerberg Hospital, Cape Town. She provides prenatal genetic and intermittent cancer genetic counselling. Malope is a PhD candidate

at the University of Cape Town, where she focuses on patient and health professional experiences and the perceptions of terminating pregnancies. She is a contributor to the national department of health's Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights training course, and is a committee member of the Southern Africa Society of Human Genetics, and Genetic Counselling South Africa. Her biggest regret was not believing in herself, but she built up the confidence to launch her Instagram page to bring awareness to genetic counselling and genetic conditions. — *Lineo Leteba*



SEBATSO TSAOANE, 27

Registered nurse, midwife, chief executive and founder: Black Woman Arise Women's Health Foundation

Sebatso Tsaokane is a registered nurse, midwife and a midwifery preceptor at the University of the Free State. Due to her endometriosis diagnosis and the silence surrounding sexual reproductive health in her upbringing, she founded the Black Woman Arise Women's Health Foundation. This nonprofit organisation focuses on spreading awareness of female sexual reproductive health to women in rural communities. Through education about and discussions around the sexual stigmas surrounding this subject, the organisation creates a safe space for women to learn and voice their concerns. This enables women to embrace health-seeking behaviour. The foundation has been awarded a grant from the Bristol Myer Squibb Foundation for the Cervical Cancer Promotion Project in the Free State, which gives women in disadvantaged areas access to mobile clinic cervical cancer screenings. Tsaokane has also founded the How I Met My Vagina initiative, where women can openly discuss sexual reproduction-related topics with healthcare professionals.

— *Louise Bell*



MAX RATH, 32

Doctor and founder: Wits University and Wits Healthcare Innovation

The need for skilled healthcare workers has been clear during the pandemic, yet medical staff are often overworked and under-resourced. To address that, Max Rath founded and heads Wits Healthcare Innovation (WHI) to support health innovation initiatives and tackle pressing issues. WHI runs innovation events, conducts clinical research, works with academia and companies to solve health challenges, and creates an inclusive community of innovative professionals. "I want to change healthcare so it better serves maintaining health rather than just treating disease," he says. Healthcare workers know how to develop patient-centric, technology-driven solutions by collaborating across disciplines and nurturing a culture of inclusivity and respect, Rath says. "Given the right support, I believe our health workers have the potential to move South Africa towards more equitable healthcare." Rath is completing his final year of specialisation in internal medicine, and also works for Wits University on strategies to encourage undergraduate innovation.

— *Lesley Stones*



MOHAMED HOUSEN SULEMAN, 25

Student: Nelson R Mandela School of Medicine, University of KwaZulu-Natal

Mohamed Hoosen Suleman is an undergraduate medical student at the University of KwaZulu-Natal's Nelson R Mandela School of Medicine. He wants to use his research findings to contribute to a South Africa where each person adopts a spirit of togetherness. Suleman is involved in social welfare-oriented academic research in hair loss and HIV susceptibility in women of African ethnicity. Radio stations regularly invited Suleman to speak about Covid-19 and its emerging variants during the pandemic. As part of the official youth delegation to the Youth World Health Assembly held at the World Health Organisation headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland, he was one of three medical students representing South Africa and Africa. Suleman also volunteers for the Childhood Cancer Foundation of South Africa, a nonprofit organisation that supports the wellbeing of children and teenagers diagnosed with cancer or life-threatening blood disorders.

— *Daniël de Jager*



MERCY SEPADI, 29

Operational manager: environmental health: City of Johannesburg

Mercy Sepadi specialises in environmental health, specifically those aspects of health determined by chemical, physical, biological, social and psychosocial factors in the environment. She is the operational manager in the City of Johannesburg's health department, managing and coordinating the operations of environmental health practitioners. "We focus on the interrelationships between people and their environment, promoting human health and wellbeing, and fostering healthy and safe communities," Sepadi explains. She has a BTech in environmental health, a master's in public health and is currently pursuing her PhD in health sciences, all with the University of Johannesburg. She also does mentorships at schools and is involved in NGOs that uplift women

— *Francesco Nassimbeni*



BRETT LYNDALL SINGH, 29

Founder and chief executive officer: Alpha & Omega MedTech (Pty) Ltd.

Brett Lyndall Singh hopes to improve the state of healthcare in South Africa by using his skills as a medical doctor, researcher and entrepreneur. His company, Alpha & Omega MedTech, develops medical products specifically for the African market, tackling issues such as malnutrition. "As a doctor, I can only treat 20 to 50 children a day, but with stronger public health governance and more resources, I can help millions," says Singh. With his team, Singh developed Kovifast, a rapid antigen Covid-19 test. Using his entrepreneurial spirit, Singh donated R25-million worth of test kits to the South African Medical Research Council. In the future, he hopes to produce locally made rapid tests for fertility, infectious diseases, sexually transmitted diseases and more. His company also developed a patented nutrition formula, NutriPowder, to address paediatric malnutrition in sub-Saharan Africa. The product is expected to be distributed directly to governments and NGOs in the near future.

— *Andie Reeves*



ZANELE CEKISO, 31

Clinical manager: Institute of Health Programmes and Systems

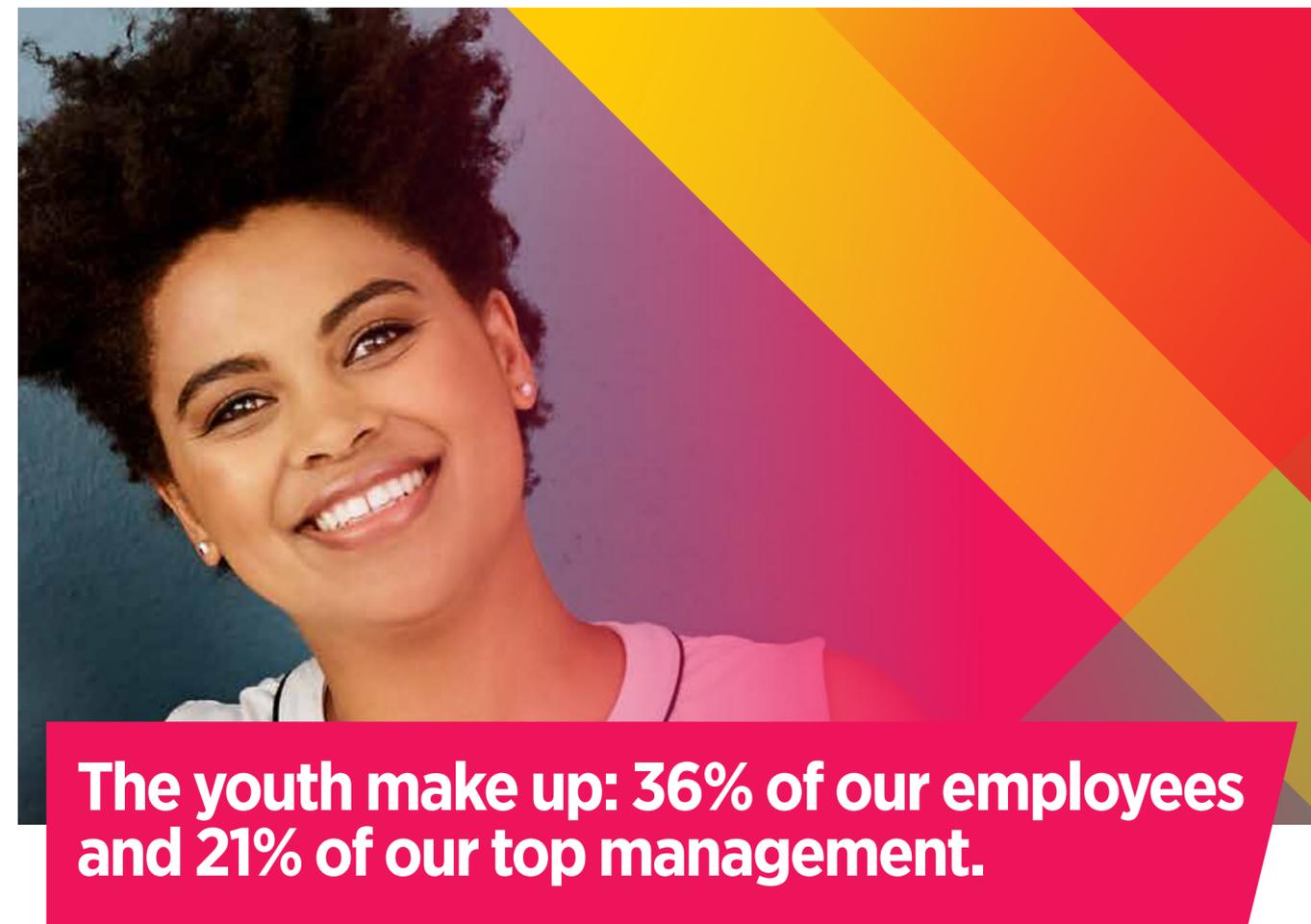
In service of those infected with HIV, Zanele Cekiso works as a clinical manager at an organisation that renders HIV prevention services and psychosocial support to the key population of the men who have sex with men (MSM) community within the Bojanala district in North West. Cekiso juggles the multiple responsibilities that come with running HIV interventions, and has built up an established online presence in the name of HIV education. Cekiso, better known as "Nurse Zee", uses her Facebook page and YouTube channel to educate the public about HIV prevention and stigmas that still shroud HIV awareness. "I also offer online social support to those affected and infected," she says. Cekiso is completing a postgraduate diploma in HIV management at Stellenbosch University, and hopes to see South Africa reporting zero new HIV infections for the youth, MSM, sex workers and transmissions from mothers to newborns.

— *Simon Dey*



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BUSISIWE KABANE, 29

Medical doctor: Douglas Murray Trust

After completing her MBChB in 2018, Busisiwe Kabane began her medical profession believing her career would follow one of the usual paths. "The biggest surprise of my career has been finding out that specialising in a medical field can go far beyond being a surgeon or paediatrician. The work of 'saving lives' can extend far beyond the confines of a clinic or hospital," Kabane says. Having worked on the frontlines during the pandemic inspired her to redirect her career. Through her work at the Douglas Murray Trust, Kabane has helped lead the trust's #KeReady campaign. "My proudest moment was when our campaign was mentioned during one of the president's 'family meetings,'" she said. The campaign encourages young people to get vaccinated, with the chance to win weekly prizes through creative social media posts. As well as increasing vaccination rates among the youth, Kabane wants to improve healthcare access for the country's most marginalised people. — Nabeel Allie



MVUYO MAKHASI, 30

Data manager (public health):
National Institute for Communicable Diseases

Mvuyo Makhasi is a data manager for respiratory diseases and meningitis at the National Institute for Communicable Diseases. He is responsible for overseeing the data systems for South Africa's pneumonia and influenza-like surveillance programmes, used for reporting purposes by the World Health Organisation and the national department of health — including important data on influenza and Covid-19. He develops and conducts research studies related to respiratory diseases and provides technical support to surveillance across the country. CoughWatchSA, a project that Makhasi led, is the first digital participatory surveillance system for respiratory diseases in South Africa, created in collaboration with researchers from Africa, Europe and the US. He also represents South Africa in the Global Telco on standardising protocols for participatory surveillance, in which more than 20 countries participate. Makhasi says that he is driven to excel, knowing that he can make a lasting impact on many lives and leave a legacy behind. — Louise van den Bergh



FARAI MZUNGU, 26

Chief operations officer: Youth Health Africa

In the world that Farai Mzungu is working to create, her role will no longer be necessary. She's the chief operations officer of Youth Health Africa (YHA), with a dual focus on healthcare and youth unemployment. YHA runs initiatives to help young people become employable and healthy, including a year-long skills development programme that puts them into healthcare facilities in entry-level roles as tracers, data capturers, navigators or lay counsellors,



SIKANDER KALLA, 29

Clinical psychologist and founder: Cohesive Collaboration

With a bachelor's degree from the University of Pretoria, an honours from Wits and a master's from Nelson Mandela University, Sikander Kalla had already crossed the country before starting his mental wellness business, Cohesive Collaboration. Qualifying as a clinical psychologist is a rigorous process. "Individuals often have to apply more than once. Each university receives hundreds of master's degree applications but only takes about eight candidates," Kalla says. "Cohesive Collaboration strengthens the values of rehabilitative redress and optimised development by promoting mental health awareness, as well as offering consulting services and wellness programmes to corporate partners," he explains. His journey with Cohesive Collaboration has had several highlights, especially sponsoring Miss South Africa 2021, the fruit of almost a decade of labour. "A bittersweet highlight was when the business started prospering during the pandemic through our marketing of digital accessibility to mental health services." — Nabeel Allie



MUBEEN GOOLAM, 33

Lecturer: University of Cape Town

A research project that could change stem cell research in Africa — this has always been the goal of pioneering geneticist, microbiologist and pathologist Mubeen Goolam. Goolam completed his PhD at the University of Cambridge, researching cell fate decisions, a field crucial to the understanding of cell biology. He then became a junior research fellow at Wolfson College, University of Oxford. He is now at the Department of Human Biology at the University of Cape Town, where he heads up the eponymous Goolam Lab. He oversees a group of microbiologists using cutting-edge technology to further our understanding of human development, specifically in the South African context. The vast majority of scientific "discovery" is heavily biased towards Western practices and case models. The Goolam Lab, however, focuses on stem cell research relevant to solving local priority health challenges, such as improving understanding of fertility, pregnancy and maternal-foetal disease transmission. — Francesco Nassimbeni



EVE MASHAMBA, 21

Full time student: University of Pretoria

Authenquility is the new name of a nonprofit entity that Eve Mashamba set up during her high school years — known then as BeYou — which earned her various youth initiative awards. A portmanteau of "authenticity" and "tranquility", the rebranding better sums up the 21-year-old's vision of being at peace with oneself. Mashamba is a full time microbiology student at the University of Pretoria, but it is her extracurricular emphasis on the promotion of mental health awareness that fills her schedule. As the director of Authenquility, she facilitates educational visits for school learners and the provision of resources on YouTube and social media platforms. She also serves as a peer mentor at the Allan Gray Orbis Foundation, where she is a candidate fellow. Mashamba has aspirations that Authenquility's work will ultimately find its way into the national life orientation curriculum, a subject that she feels has much unfulfilled potential at South African schools. — Zia Haffejee

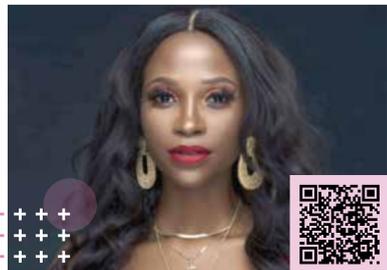


KOKETSO RATHUMBU, 27

National youth ambassador:
The South African National AIDS Council

In conjunction with her position as a national youth ambassador for the South African National AIDS Council (Sanac), Koketso Rathumbu is pursuing an honours degree in social and behavioural studies through Unisa. "I am a public health specialist in the area of HIV prevention and management concentrated among adolescents and young people," Rathumbu says. "I am an adviser to key stakeholders such as government, donor partners, civil society and the private sector on optimising HIV prevention efforts." Rathumbu is working towards a South Africa with fewer TB-related deaths, and where young people are less disproportionately affected by HIV. She serves as the technical lead for Sanac's youth programmes — one of her proudest achievements. "My biggest mistake has been doubting my abilities," she says. "Every experience, no matter the magnitude, is shaping me for the person I am meant to become." — Nabeel Allie

freeing the clinical staff up to see more patients. Mzungu also runs youth-focused HIV testing campaigns to encourage people to know their status, take the necessary treatments and live healthy lives. In her time at YHA, she has benefited more than 3 400 people, 75% of them women, and plans to expand across Africa. "To be able to ease the burden off healthcare systems while empowering young people across the continent is phenomenal," she says. — Lesley Stones



SINAKO LINDAZWE, 30

Advocate: Johannesburg Society of Advocates

Advocate Sinako Lindazwe's upbringing makes her want to make it easier for other disadvantaged young people to succeed in a legal career. To do that, she founded the Sinako We Can Movement to mentor, guide and empower others and demystify the legal profession.

Born in Colesberg, Lindazwe had to work full time to fund her studies. Perseverance saw her graduate with a master's degree in law at the age of 23 and she was quickly appointed as a constitutional court law clerk. She now handles constitutional, business and international law and general litigation.

She believes transformation of the judiciary and legal profession is a stepping stone towards transforming society. "The impact of my work is reflected in my mentees, who now occupy positions throughout the profession, including the constitutional court. My goal is for the legal profession's composition to be broadly representative of the society in which we live and practise," she says. — Lesley Stones



THANDEKA KATHI, 34

Human rights attorney: Centre for Applied Legal Studies

Thandeka Kathi is an attorney working with the Centre for Applied Legal Studies. She primarily works with activists, community forums, and other structures in mining-affected communities, championing their civil and political rights, as well as their right to a safe and healthy environment.

She boasts several qualifications from Rhodes University and Wits University, and is currently a master's candidate in international human rights law at the University of Oxford.

Kathi recognises that as a black woman from a working-class background in South Africa, the issues for which she advocates are issues that affect her neighbours, family and friends. She hopes her work will help amplify the voices of those she serves by shining a light on the plight of working-class communities — often ignored by the government — regarding decisions that affect their lives. — Neo Khanyile



REFILWE ROSS, 28

Senior associate: Black-White Inc

Refilwe Ross heads the sports law department at Black-White Inc, attending to the various engagements that business and society have with sports. She led her firm's recent appeal against the South Africa Football Association.

"I want the little black girl to see that it's possible to not only make it in law, but also to thrive," she says.

Ross has had a storied career. Beginning in the automotive industry with a compliance role, she moved on to provide counsel for a marketing company, thereafter joining Roth Media Group before landing her current role. "The biggest mistake I made was assuming that my career would be linear. It's been everything but linear," the attorney remarks.

She's learned that cultivating relationships has benefits. "I'm proud of how far I've come in my career," she says. "It's the start of my journey, not the end."

— Nabeel Allie



MUHAMMED COOVDIA, 28

Advocate: Johannesburg Society of Advocates

What drives Muhammed Coovadia in his work as an advocate is helping people solve their problems in a cost-effective and efficient manner.

In addition to running his own general litigation practice in Johannesburg and dealing with the various aspects of corporate law, he prides himself on providing high-quality pro bono legal services to indigent members of the community. He is driven to provide everyone with access to justice, regardless of background, socioeconomic status, culture or race.

Even after the years of hard work it took to complete his law degree, Coovadia's mindset is still one of continuous learning: he enjoys sharpening his skills and improving his knowledge on important subjects. "No matter how much you think you know, there is always more to learn, because the law as a subject is dynamic in nature," he says. — Luca Hart



ASHLEIGH DORE, 33

Environmental lawyer: Endangered Wildlife Trust

As the wildlife and law project manager of the Endangered Wildlife Trust (EWT), Ashleigh Dore strengthens the legal frameworks relating to environmental justice in South Africa. Dedicated to conservation, Dore strives for an effective criminal justice process for wildlife and other environmental offences.

Her work aims to reclaim our environmental rights, and to ensure that our world is protected for generations to come.

Dore obtained her law degree from the University of Pretoria in 2011, and completed her articles of clerkship at Edward Nathan Sonnenbergs. In 2015, Dore was admitted as an attorney of the high court of South Africa, and has graduated with her master's degree in environmental law from the University of Cape Town since then.

Besides her involvement with the high-impact conservation projects instigated through the EWT, Dore's proudest moment was serving on an advisory committee for the minister of forestry, fisheries and the environment. — Gracie Winkler



TOBIA SERONGOANE, 30

Associate attorney: Webber Wentzel

Tobia Serongoane's hard work and perseverance led him to become an associate attorney at Weber Wentzel.

A graduate of both the University of Johannesburg and Harvard University, Serongoane has a spectacular academic record — but it's his professional career that has truly set him apart.

He is an associate in the company's dispute resolution team, particularly focusing on mining and medical malpractice. In the latter, he often defends doctors.

With respect to mining, he reviews mining contracts and resolves community disputes between mines and communities. Serongoane works to square economic with social issues, to ensure the wellbeing of all stakeholders.

When it comes to advising others, he keeps it simple: "Be yourself and work hard." — Tshiamo Seape



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KARABO VAN HEERDEN, 31

Advocate: Johannesburg Society of Advocates
Thulamela Chambers

Advocate Karabo van Heerden was admitted to the Johannesburg Society of Advocates in 2016 and has appeared in the Constitutional Court, the Supreme Court of Appeal and countless lower courts.

She trained in media law, but expanding into business and human rights law has shown her how many people she can help. She is currently challenging a mining giant's pollution in Zambia, and if she wins, she will be assisting more than 100 000 people.

One proud moment was winning a case against Unisa's decision to exclude 500 students from registering. That victory meant educational institutions can be held accountable for decisions that arbitrarily limit student rights.

"Often where no laws exist, it's my job to assist the courts to develop the law to keep up with evolving markets in both business and our ordinary lives," Van Heerden says.

— Lesley Stones



NCHAFATSO PITSO, 30

Student: University of KwaZulu-Natal

Nchafatso Pitso is a PhD candidate at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, with a focus on state capture in South Africa. Her research looks at the issue through the lenses of corruption and the shadow state, and examines the efficacy of the Zondo commission.

Pitso's academic career also includes an honours degree in sociology from Nelson Mandela University and a master's in industrial sociology from the University of Johannesburg. She was the youngest managing director at 20 Elevation Construction and Landscaping, a construction, waste management and logistics company.

She believes that it is critical to not let fear prevent you from taking the steps needed to achieve your goals. Having seen in the past how it has been the only obstacle between her and her success, she is determined to never let fear dampen her confidence again.

— Anita Makgetla



MUCHENGETI HWACHA, 28

Executive director and candidate attorney: Asylum Seeker, Refugee & Migrant Coalition and Lebea Inc Attorneys

Muchengeti Hwacha is a candidate attorney at Lebea Inc Attorneys, executive director of the NGO Asylum Seeker, Refugee & Migrant Coalition, and a proud father.

The 28-year-old works with his NGO to address discrimination against foreign nationals through advocacy and litigation. The organisation also contributes to public discourse on issues facing the migrant community within South Africa.

According to Hwacha, class, race, and ethnicity are indicators of who becomes successful because meritocracy is a fallacy in this world of good favour and connections.

His proudest moment was when he visited the home of one of the NGO's members to get the go-ahead to launch a case against discriminatory provisions of the Legal Practice Act. Hwacha was pleasantly overwhelmed by how the other members of his organisation trusted him to lead the cause that was so important to them and their families, and hopes to be victorious.

— Lineo Leteba



GISCARD KOTELO, 23

Candidate legal practitioner: Fasken

Giscard Kotelo is a candidate legal practitioner at Fasken, an international law firm. Kotelo is interested in cybersecurity law, and is currently pursuing his certification in data privacy and technology. Kotelo graduated cum laude with a bachelor of laws from Unisa, one of his proudest moments.

Despite enduring academic setbacks and financial pressure, Kotelo persisted to realise his goals of academic excellence. He's excited about what the future holds for this relatively new profession, and wants to inspire anyone who believes that their dreams are unattainable.

Motivated by "waking up with the idea that I am always going to learn something new the following day", Kotelo refuses to be a victim of circumstance, and rather chooses to view life's obstacles as opportunities to rise above. In a country where the pace of technological development is overtaking legal reform, Kotelo hopes to see more young lawyers succeed in contributing towards future-facing lawmaking.

— Gracie Winkler



KABELO SEDUPANE, 34

Legal and compliance manager: Tshiamo Trust

Pursuing her master's in multidisciplinary human rights law at the University of Pretoria is one sign that Kabelo Sedupane is determined to accelerate social impact in South Africa. "My biggest mistake was turning down opportunities I felt unqualified for. I've learnt through the years that I belong in every room that I am invited to," she says.

As a practising attorney, Sedupane provides in-house counsel for the Tshiamiso Trust, a R5-billion public benefit trust established to compensate current and former mine workers who acquired work-related tuberculosis. To date, the trust has paid more than R300-million worth of claims. Beyond this duty, Sedupane spearheaded the establishment of the legal and compliance unit that supports the business, operations and programmatic units of the Tshiamiso Trust organisation across southern Africa.

"I hope that the work that I do will result in some form of meaningful social and economic transformation for our people," Sedupane says.

— Nelisiwe Masango



SPHEHILE NXUMALO, 28

Associate attorney: Baker McKenzie

Sphehile Nxumalo is an attorney of the high court and an associate in Baker McKenzie's Antitrust & Competition Practice Group. His career evolved from being a law clerk to Justice Mbuyiseli Madlanga at the constitutional court to advising and representing multinational companies on high-value transactions.

Nxumalo is a member of the International Bar Association and the Association of Competition Law Practitioners of South Africa. His expertise spans antitrust and competition law across African jurisdictions, making him a valuable law practitioner in developing a legislative framework for antitrust analysis for South Africa.

Some of his proudest work has been devising youth-centric policies and strategies for implementation towards the African Union's Agenda 2063. The AU Youth Volunteer Corps is a flagship programme that promotes youth volunteering in Africa by uniting leaders to exchange skills, knowledge and strategies to build a more integrated, prosperous Africa, deepening youth involvement as key actors in Africa's developmental goals.

— Nelisiwe Masango

NORTHAM

PLATINUM HOLDINGS LIMITED

We believe in developing future leaders from grassroots level



In their communities, we enable people to organise themselves in such a way that they are able to contribute positively to the social, cultural and economical wellbeing of their families, communities and societies.

"Initially, it was not easy to adapt in an environment dominated by men. Despite the uneasiness, I learnt that Northam cares about my wellbeing: there are systems in place to protect women, to give them a voice and offer them opportunities."

"The mining industry has shaped me irrevocably: as a daughter of a single unemployed mother, whose hope was restored by the opportunities provided by Northam, my great aspiration in life is to provide hope. Hope for women, for children and to grow them into the leaders we need in this country."

Junior metallurgist
Kutwano Modise



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200 YOUNG SOUTH AFRICANS 2022 MINING & MANUFACTURING



TLHALEFANG MOELETSI, 29

Creative director: Mebala

Tlhalafang Moeletsi is the founder of Mebala, a premium luggage brand that combines finely crafted bags with the freedom of individual customisation. "Start small, experiment a lot and be adaptive. In everything that you do, it is important to always surround yourself with a good support system," he says Moeletsi's greatest desire for his brand is to contribute to the reindustrialisation of South Africa and offer an abundance of work opportunities in a sustainable way. He also works as a senior associate at Genesis Analytics, where he contributes to research that aims to unlock economic opportunity, particularly for women and young people. With bachelors, honours and masters degrees in economic sciences from the Wits University, Moeletsi is a businessman and innovator by heart. He later returned to the university in 2017 as a sessional lecturer to share his extensive expertise. — Louise Bell



NOZIPHO DLAMINI, 35

Technical services manager: Thungela Resources Limited

Nozipho Dlamini is the first woman president of South African Colliery Managers' Association, which is central in the coal mining industry, playing a strategic and influential role in its direction and decisions. Dlamini is a mining engineer with more than 15-years of experience in the mining sector. She is also the technical services manager at one of South Africa's most productive underground mines, leading a team of professionals that includes mining engineers, geologists, rock engineers, surveyors and business improvement change agents. "Mining is one of the biggest contributors to the country's GDP. I want to be part of the solution when it comes to its sustainability, and the positive environmental and social impact of our mines," says Dlamini about the legacy she wants to impart. — Patrick Visser



KOKETSO MBEWE, 28

Postgraduate student: University of Pretoria

Through her research on the improvement management principle of lean manufacturing, Koketso Mbeve aims to elevate the efficiency of the South African manufacturing industry and boost economic growth. Mbeve believes in being future fit and feels a responsibility to contribute solutions to society's challenges. She strives to do this by bridging the gap between academic research and industry practice. She's received numerous accolades for her work in the engineering sector, and hopes this will encourage more women to enter this male-dominated field and do impactful work in their communities. As an alumnus of Harvard Business School, as well as the University of Pretoria, she's learned the power of resilience, which she hopes to instil in the youth. Mbeve says: "Your dreams are valid and possible, and as you work hard towards your goals, pray for the wisdom and grace to navigate the journey." — Neil Büchner Jr



SANERA MAHARAJ, 32

Industrial engineering manager: MAHLE

Sanera Maharaj is an industrial engineering manager working for MAHLE, one of the largest automotive suppliers in the world. She leads a team and oversees several improvement areas to keep a careful eye on productivity, cost and waste reduction, and process mapping. In the past, she was chosen by the Super Scientists initiative to be a spokesperson for STEM careers. More recently, Maharaj and her team were one of two winners of the MAHLE Global Incubator 2021. With funding from the company, and since winning the competition, she's been able to pursue her own idea. She's been busy creating her own corporate start-up — and has learned much along the way. "My work has changed from a traditional industrial engineering manager to an entrepreneur," she says. "I look at the product, market and customers all at the same time." — James Nash



PITY PHEKO, 35

Production section manager: Thungela Resources

Pity Pheko works as production section manager at Thungela Resources, South Africa's leading thermal coal exporter. "I want my work to contribute to environmental, societal and governance drives, reduce carbon emissions, rehabilitate mined land and create a future for our children through green energy generation," explains Pheko. She sits on the council for the South African Colliery Managers' Association, is a member of Women in Mining South Africa's committee and was in the finals for the Accenture Rising Stars' Awards. She also sits on Anglo American's Global Workforce Advisory Panel to represent Anglo American Thermal Coal employees on the company board. Pheko is driven to make a difference in the lives of others. "My passion specifically lies with young and upcoming engineers," she describes. "I'd like to not only contribute to their lives through mentorship, but be someone they can look up to." — Sarah Irwin

LEBOGANG NKOANA, 32

Operations manager: Enaex Africa

"Our key business value is humanising mining," says Lebogang Nkoana, revealing a longstanding personal vision for the cornerstone of South Africa's economy. Nkoana was recently appointed to the role of operations manager at Enaex Africa, one of the largest explosives firms in the industry. "I'm responsible for safe management of explosives and its value chain until delivery to clients. I lead business sustainability and new business acquisition within our region and beyond," he explains. The executive from

Emalahleni was the first in his family to graduate and is currently completing his master's in engineering management at Tshwane University of Technology. Alongside his personal achievements, he counts the successes of his mentees as his proudest moments. For Nkoana, transformation has two sides: a return to the peak in successful growth and power of the Gauteng minefields and a collective movement towards progress and redistributed hope. As he puts it, "We are because of mining." — Cameron Peters



LINDY SCOTT, 34

Founder and creative director: Amber, The Health and Safety Communication Platform

The need for safety in industries such as mining promises a bright future for Lindy Scott, whose company, Amber, offers health and safety communications as a service.

Their offering includes ready-to-run safety campaigns, workshops, how-to guides, printable posters and ways to document insights and lessons learned to build evidence for reports and audits. Her vision is to save lives through creativity in the workplace. "I want to see South African companies, leaders and workers understand that a safe work environment is a productive one. A safe work environment where communication is at the heart of all operations will have a ripple effect on communities, people and our economy," she says. In 2021, the year of founding, Scott won the AfriSAFE Shining Star award, and today hundreds of safety professionals use Amber's software. She also champions female entrepreneurship and design thinking to inspire the next generation. — Lesley Stones



DRIVING CHANGE FOR AN INCLUSIVE, SUSTAINABLE FUTURE



Royal Bafokeng Holdings (RBH) is a 100% Black-owned investment company with the unique responsibility of protecting and growing the financial capital of the Royal Bafokeng Nation (RBN).

Through prudent management of an investment portfolio, RBH applies an inter-generational outlook to provide dividend income and portfolio capital appreciation to our sole shareholder, the Royal Bafokeng Nation Development Trust (RBNNT). Since inception, RBH has invested R7 billion towards the socio-economic benefit of the RBN.

As a long-term investor with a legacy of acquiring significant stakes in high growth, defensive sectors and high-quality companies with established track-records, RBH actively manages a diverse portfolio with a net asset value of approximately R46 billion consisting of listed and unlisted assets. Diversification of our portfolio over the past few years, and going forward, is critical to our sustainability and achieving our mandate.

"Driving growth in our asset value remains a key objective, but given the uncertainty in our operating environment, we are taking a very measured approach to ensure our sustainability in the long term."

Albertinah Kekana, RBH Chief Executive Officer

RBH's primary responsibility in terms of sustainable development is to act as a responsible investor and in accordance with our Sustainability Strategy, we are committed to the following sustainable investment objectives:

- To protect and enhance the wealth (asset base) of the RBN and provide sufficient cash (yield) to deliver on the budgeted service delivery projects of the RBN by generating positive real returns at moderate levels of risk, whilst complying with sound corporate governance principles.
- To ensure that due consideration is given to the environmental and social consequences resulting from the business operations of current and target investee companies.

For us, investment is not only a financial decision and we strive to be on the right side of ethical principles. We avoid investments where we are in doubt about business model sustainability or the investee company's ability to raise finance based on their environment, social and governance (ESG) credentials.

We monitor the ESG compliance of our existing assets and aim to exert influence to elevate the importance of ESG matters within investee companies. As a first step in driving the universal United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), we have identified and prioritised six SDGs where we believe we can have the most meaningful impact.

SDG	Our focus areas and impact
Goal 1 No Poverty	Our mandate is to protect and grow the wealth of the RBN, and provide reliable and predictable inter-generational income. This money goes towards community investments such as the construction of schools, roads, health facilities and the provision of various other social services. This has not only benefited the RBN, but those who live on our land and the broader South African society.
Goal 4 Quality Education	Among the aspirations of Bafokeng is the attainment of a better standard of living. This entails breaking the cycle of poverty and creating opportunities for individuals to develop themselves and become productive members of society. Education can make an important contribution towards this objective and is one of the key focal areas of RBN's Plan '35, our CSI programme and overall approach to community investments.
Goal 5 Gender Equality	RBH fosters equality of opportunity, inclusion and a healthy workplace through our human capital policies and practices. 63% of the workforce are women.
Goal 6 Clean Water and Sanitation	Our community investments are guided by Plan '35, the developmental roadmap and long-term strategic plan of the RBN. Plan '35 envisages the development and wellbeing of both the community and individuals. We contribute to this by supporting our shareholder to invest in and ensure the provision of quality and a reliable supply of water.
Goal 8 Decent Work and Economic Growth	Our overarching strategic intent is to enable our shareholder to fulfil its responsibility of addressing the socio-economic needs of the Bafokeng people and those living on Bafokeng land, while realising the ambitions of Plan '35. We contribute to this through our skills and enterprise development programmes.
Goal 9 Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure	RBH has a mandate to create wealth for the RBN and contribute to the wellbeing of the Nation. Following the transaction with Northam Platinum, we will be making significant investments in renewable energy that will enhance the security of supply and lower the cost of energy for the RBN.

As the RBH group of companies, we are focused on contributing toward the creation of an inclusive and sustainable future for all. We do so through our focus on infrastructure, our people and through the activities of our investee companies, for example, at Fraser Alexander.

Our focus on infrastructure

Over the past six years, RBH has invested in renewable energy and oil and gas infrastructure assets. Key reasons for investing in infrastructure includes;

- Yield potential – high dividend and cash yield due to predictable and resilient cash flows
- Portfolio diversification – defensive alternatives to other equity investments
- Low correlation – seeking low correlation to other asset classes in the portfolio

RBH's infrastructure portfolio targets investments across the risk-return spectrum and value add in South Africa and select economies in Sub-Saharan Africa. This portfolio focuses on the following sub-sectors: Power and Renewable energy; Oil and Gas midstream infrastructure; Digital Infrastructure; Water and Environmental; Transport; and Social Infrastructure / Alternative Real Estate.

Through our people

Our human capital philosophy is built around creating an inclusive and enabling environment, embedding a performance-driven culture, investing in learning and development and creating a pipeline of talent to meet the future needs of the business.



Q How are you balancing financial performance with the increase in focus on ESG?

A "We are at the early stages of our ESG journey where we are articulating our position in terms of ESG considerations and how these are integrated in our risk and investment portfolio management. Ensuring that the business does not only focus on delivering a financial return, but that a social return/ performance is equally critical to support our shareholder and as a good corporate citizen, underpinned by robust governance practices. We achieve this by applying ESG in both the decisions to invest as well as ensuring the implementation in underlying investments through board representation."

Tinyiko Sihlangu CA(SA), RBH CFO

Through our investee companies

Fraser Alexander has been providing customised solutions to the mining industry since 1912. As a trusted global partner and industry leader operating at more than 200 sites, we add value to mining, waste and infrastructure through smart solutions.



Q What initiatives does your company undertake to help reduce energy consumption and improve safety standards?

A "We are establishing a carbon reduction roadmap and we have started to measure electrical consumption at directly managed facilities as well as fuel consumption for company-owned or leased vehicles. The monitoring will be increased in future to include power that we use from our host clients. This will assist in giving the real energy requirements for the business in the future. A hybrid head office model was also implemented in 2021 which will result in substantial carbon savings. We prioritise health and safety and believe that zero harm at work and at home is attainable and we have focused on bringing technology and high quality automated solutions to enhance our management offering which includes safer operations for all stakeholders."

Nompumelelo Makhoba CA(SA), Fraser Alexander CFO
www.fraseralexander.com



NKELE GALEDZANA, 27

Horticulturist: Johannesburg City Parks and Zoo

A horticulturist by profession and a community leader at heart, Nkele Galedzana is involved in a number of programmes that help economically disadvantaged communities. These include distributing food parcels and sanitary towels, and providing essential mentoring for young people. Galedzana's love for helping people, especially the youth of South Africa, is what drives her.

From organising blanket drives and soup kitchens to tutoring and hosting career expos, she builds a strong sense of family with the young people she works with, many of whom are struggling with drug abuse.

She strongly believes that any situation can be changed, no matter how impossible it may initially seem. "I want to see the youth of this country mentally and emotionally stable. A South Africa filled with leaders – not just any leaders, but selfless community builders. A South Africa filled with love, and a South Africa for all." – *Shai Rama*



VHAHANGWELE TSOTETSI, 24

Chairperson: Project Youth South Africa

With an ever-increasing list of socioeconomic and political problems to contend with, youth participation in civil society and politics is more critical than ever.

Vhahangwele Tsotetsi has created the nongovernmental organisation Project Youth South Africa to both educate and advocate for the youth. Tsotetsi obtained a degree in political science and international relations from the University of Johannesburg in 2020 and has gone from theory to action since then.

Through Project Youth South Africa, he would like to improve a dwindling youth turnout at the voting stations across South Africa, and show the next generation that their participation matters and will shape the prospects of this country. Democracies can only function successfully with large-scale societal participation. Tsotetsi wants to foster this through Project Youth South Africa and intends to play an important role in shaping a stronger and more engaged future for a country that needs its young to be heard. – *Albert Troost*



ALBERTUS SCHOEMAN, 28

Africa fellow: The World Bank

Based in Pretoria, Albertus Schoeman is a member of the World Bank's Governance Global Practice. His work focuses on building institutions and improving governance, and he aspires to alleviate poverty and economic inequality in South Africa.

He has published his research in journals such as Commonwealth & Comparative Politics and Institute for Security Studies Southern Africa Report. Schoeman has a practical and educational background in political economy and anticorruption. After his undergraduate degree in international relations at the University of Pretoria, he studied at the University of Nottingham for his master's in political development. He received his PhD from the University of Sussex, where his research focused on understanding state capture. Since then, he has gone on to work as an adviser to policymakers, government officials and legislators in several countries.

In this capacity, he has focused on policy and reducing the risk of corruption. – *Alice Sholto-Douglas*



ITUMELENG MOKOENA, 27

Economist: Trade and Industrial Policy Strategies

Itumeleng Mokoena is an economist at Trade and Industrial Policy Strategies (Tips) – a think tank that develops research that informs industrial policy and, economic development strategies, and facilitates dialogue around economic issues in the country.

Mokoena finds great fulfilment in this work, as he can see the impact that its research has had on strategic choices made by relevant policymakers and government bodies. Some of the work Mokoena has participated in looks at securing livelihoods through the shift to ecofriendly industries and uptake levels of frontier technologies in the fourth industrial revolution, as well as leading a quarterly bulletin on the performance of South Africa's exports. In his time at Tips, one of his proudest moments was being the first intern promoted to economist at the organisation.

This promotion is significant because of the stiff competition for economist positions at Tips, and is indicative of the organisation's faith in him. – *Anita Makgetla*



CEBBIE WOLF, 34

Head of security integration: Transnet

Cebbie Wolf boasts an impressive career that has seen her move throughout the public sector as an invaluable public servant. After matriculating, Wolf had a strong desire to serve South Africa, a desire that saw her start a career in the South African National Defence Force.

Serving in the military gave her a unique perspective on the functioning of armed forces as an extension of democracy and also allowed her to continue her studies at the South African Military Academy. After completing her undergraduate degree she pursued two honours degrees as an academic assistant within the Military Strategy Department. In 2020, Wolf joined Transnet as the head of physical security integration, which was yet another opportunity to further display her commitment to her country.

In her latest role, she is set to continue influencing and advising policy- and decision-makers on issues relating to national and internal matters of security. – *Tshiamo Seape*



CHRISPIN PHIRI, 33

Spokesperson: Department of justice and correctional services

As a department spokesperson, Chrispin Phiri communicates official government positions. As a law practitioner and communicator, he is in a position to influence the room from a young, energised perspective.

For him, the law in the private and public sectors is an instrument that can correct the injustices that afflict society, and he believes that public service needs young professionals who have the will to become change agents.

The feedback from citizens and communities regarding resolved matters raised with the department of justice and correctional services highlights the importance of being responsive and approachable.

Phiri understands that the law is an enabler of change in South Africa, but it is not a remedy for social attitudes. – *Nelisiwe Masango*



ALUWANI CHOKOE, 26

Deputy director of parliamentary and stakeholder relations: Gauteng department of economic development

Aluwani Chokoe has dedicated her professional life to the improvement of government services in Gauteng. As the deputy director for the parliamentary liaison office and stakeholder relations, her area of focus is to provide information and support to the Gauteng economic development MEC, as well as developing regular reports and liaising with business and other stakeholders.

For Chokoe, it's important to be part of a government that understands the needs of the people it serves and that it consistently delivers relevant services efficiently to those communities.

"May the final hour meet us in service of our people," she said, reflecting her passion for serving South Africans. Chokoe's proudest moment was seeing the Township Economic Development Bill passed into law. As a part of the stakeholder engagement team, she understands the impact this legislation can have on the people it most directly affects. – *Anita Makgetla*



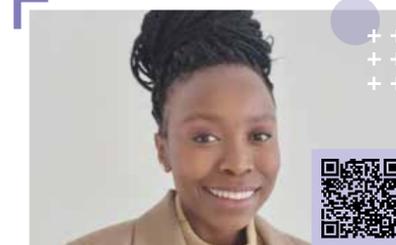
COMFORT MATOTI, 22

Graduate intern: Infrastructure South Africa

Helping to fix South Africa isn't as hard as we think, says Comfort Matoti. His job with Infrastructure South Africa has shown him that good things can happen. "It only needs willingness and dedication to action," he says. Which is good news, because Matoti is an intern helping to implement South Africa's National Infrastructure Plan 2050. He provides technical assistance to identify and plan the huge infrastructure projects South Africa so desperately needs.

He's currently working with some municipalities on electricity, water, sanitation, education, health and human settlement projects. Eventually, he hopes to help to transform this country and its people. Matoti has already learned not to underestimate his power to make a difference. In 2019 he closed his own construction company because he questioned his abilities. In hindsight, he believes he could have succeeded, instead of temporarily becoming part of the problem by not acting to achieve the necessary solutions.

– *Lesley Stones*



TLOU SEOPA, 26

Senior campaigner: amandla.mobi

Civil action groups are vital for bringing about change. The cellphone-based app amandla.mobi allows people to flag important issues and campaign for change.

Senior campaigner Tlou Seopa researches and listens to community concerns, designs community-driven calls for action, liaises with other organisations and submits petitions to decision-makers. The app turns individual users into a collective voice for maximum impact; it has run hundreds of campaigns, spanning gender-based violence, economic justice, police brutality, corruption and climate change.

"My proudest moment was getting an opportunity to work on a campaign demanding an increase on the child support grant, to help put enough food on the table for children while they stayed at home during the Covid-19 lockdown," Seopa says. "When not only the child support grant was increased but other grants as well, it was a powerful reminder of what's possible when we come together."

– *Sandiso Ngubane*



ASHLEY MABASA, 27

Deputy director and speechwriter: Gauteng department of sport, arts, culture and recreation

Ashley Mabasa was appointed deputy director of research, policy and speechwriting at the Gauteng department of sport, arts, culture and recreation when he was just 24, making him the youngest deputy director at the time. His diligence and longstanding efforts to advocate for the wellbeing of his community have led to him being entrusted with handling the MEC's sixth administration service delivery commitment.

As part of this work, he has thrown himself into extensive research on community development. His concern for people's quality of life and eagerness to positively impact South African society extends to his role as part of the departmental policy committee team. In this capacity, he takes the lead with policy formation.

For the MEC, Mabasa also coordinates legacy projects, such as the Sharpeville and West Rand heritage routes, to raise awareness about our local heritage.

– *Alice Sholto-Douglas*



MPHO BUNTSE, 33

Projects and communications associate: Access Chapter 2

"Speak, speak and never get tired of speaking. People may not hear you, but invest time and intellect to convince them to listen." This is Mpho Buntse's advice to others.

Buntse has been an activist for the LGBTQIA+ community since he was 15, driven by the injustices to which people who live outside the gender binary are subjected. He writes extensively on contextualising erased histories as a way of demystifying misconceptions about the LGBTQIA+ community.

At a local level, Buntse lobbies for queer-inclusive legislation and has been part of the campaign to push the passing of the Civil Union Amendment Act and the Hate Crimes and Speech Bill.

He was invited to be a speaker at the Victory Institute LGBTQIA+ Leaders World Conference in Washington, D.C., attended by more than 500 LGBTQIA+ affirming legislators, judges, academics, business leaders and activists. Buntse now works for Access Chapter 2 as its communications lead. – *Simon Dey*



KELEBOGILE MAKGABO, 34

Director of policy development: Department of home affairs

Kelebogile Makgabo works in South African government in the area of policy development. She holds a master's degree in sociology and has participated in the drafting of the White Paper on marriages in South Africa, the White Paper on international migration, the one-stop border post policy and the official identity management policy, and contributed to the drafting of the national policy development framework in the presidency. Makgabo's work takes her into townships and rural communities, where she feels that she and her team do their best work.

"The work of developing government policy impacts greatly on people's lives and I would like to continue seeing the work I do have a real impact on improving the lives of South Africans, especially women, girls and members of the LGBTQIA+ community," she says.

She is motivated by her two daughters, knowing that the work she does shapes the South Africa in which they will live as young women. – *Nabeel Allie*



KGATHANE PAULINA MAMOGOBO, 33

Director of trade and investment promotions: KZN Dept. of Economic Dev., Tourism and Environmental Affairs

As director of trade and investment promotions in KwaZulu-Natal, Kgathane Paulina Mamogobo is responsible for developing the province's industrial sector through attracting and promoting foreign direct investment and helping capacitate local industries to become ready for and competitive in the export market. Her portfolio encompasses all manufacturing and services industries across the province. She develops interventions to enhance manufacturing and trade competitiveness, facilitate global market access for local products and services, and encourage business retention and expansion through investment aftercare. Mamogobo leads provincial stakeholder coordination comprising government, business, labour and civil society to propel economic development and create employment. Lastly, she interacts internationally to attract investment and market access for locally produced products and services. With a raft of qualifications under her belt, Mamogobo is completing a doctorate in business administration at the Gordon Institute of Business Science. She rates finding a career mentor as excellent advice for other young people starting their careers. – *Nelisiwe Masango*

When she was president of the student representative council (SRC) at the University of Johannesburg, the university council and the SRC were able to raise more than R100-million towards student fees. In 2019, she was the first woman to win One Day Leader on SABC1 during the #TeamAnisaMazimpaka campaign in season 7, with many of her counterparts from opposition student formations coming together to support the campaign. – *Louise van den Berg*



NATIONAL YOUTH DEVELOPMENT AGENCY
OUR YOUTH. OUR FUTURE.

Back in 2014, the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA) business funding changed its youth enterprise funding model from a loan structure to that of a grant funding system.

Since then, many young entrepreneurs have benefited from the NYDA grant programme. During the Financial Year 2020/2021, 2316 youth owned enterprises were supported with financial interventions ranging from R1 000 up to R100 000. The financial assistance from the NYDA grant funding can be used for working capital, financing the assets and purchasing stock.

In addition to the grant funding, the NYDA also offers non-financial support to youth owned businesses that qualify. The support includes mentorship, business consultancy services, market linkages and business management training programmes amongst others.

As the NYDA, we understand the challenges that are facing the youth of today and we continue to implement sustainable programmes for the benefit of the youth.

Through, the Presidential Youth Employment Intervention (PYEI), the NYDA as one of the network partners has been enabling youth access to opportunities that are offering employment, education and training.

“We want impact-driven programmes that are tailor-made, because youth development issues are complex in nature,” said NYDA Executive Chairperson, Ms. Asanda Luwaca.

The young people who manage to access these opportunities tend to navigate on often broken pathways, falling in and out of education and short-term work so that they cannot realise their potential to participate in the economy.

These young people remain resilient against all odds. This is our ongoing battle to defeat youth unemployment, youth landlessness, youth unsafety especially from GBVF and all other crimes, youth drug and alcohol abuse, youth exclusion from ownership and participation in the mainstream economy.

The NYDA has played a key role in empowering young people and creating easy access to the platform through our walk-in centres across the country. NYDA has also played a major role in ensuring a commitment from all partners and to share opportunities onto the network.



NYS AIMS TO:

- Engage South African youth in community service activities
- Strengthen service delivery
- Build patriotism
- Promote nation-building
- Foster social cohesion

Furthermore, through the National Youth Service Programme, the NYDA seeks to coordinate and implement community service activity in all the nine provinces. The National Youth Service Programme also targets the youths that are not in education, employment and training.

The NYDA recognises that through the National Youth Service Programme, young people are afforded the opportunity to identify their social and development needs. By so doing, these young people are then engaged in services that are designed to meet those needs to impact both their own skills and life chances in order to create a better future for themselves and their communities.

The NYDA was tasked and mandated by the NYDA Act of 2008 to develop the Integrated Youth Development Strategy linked to the National Youth Policy which seeks to enhance the participation of young people through targeted programmes initiated by government, business, and civil society. The Integrated Youth Development Strategy will create a framework within which all youth related work in South Africa can be coordinated and linked, to build relationships, foster information-sharing, avoid duplication and ultimately maximize impact.

Most importantly the strategy will give responsibility to young people to take charge of their own development. A detailed programme of action from the strategy will enable youth to see themselves as key contributors to the success of the countries development trajectory as set out in the National Development Plan (2030). The strategy affords us an opportunity to set a futuristic agenda for the South Africa's youth and it goes a long way in bridging the gap between policy and implementation.

Indeed, the NYDA Board is faced with greater responsibilities as the country continues to strive to empower young people through skills development, employment, work experience and other opportunities. Young people need to be provided with tangible interventions to meet the requirements of the ever-changing world of work.

With a recovering and growing revenue base, strong partnerships and supportive structures within and outside of government, the NYDA Board remains resolute in tackling the challenges faced by the youth and it is through collaborative efforts with the public and private sector that these can be overcome.



Female-led NYDA Board



Asanda Luwaca
Executive Chairperson

Karabo Mohale
Executive Deputy Chairperson



Avela Mjajubana

Pearl Pillay



Lebogang Mulaisi

Thulisa Ndlela



Alexandria Procter

Waseem Carrim (CEO)

Most recently the NYDA introduced ERP as another way of enabling faster and easier access to opportunities, services and products. This is how young people can access the portal and register.

HOW TO REGISTER ON OUR PORTAL

STEP 1

- On the NYDA website, click on the NYDA Portal menu item
- Click on the Register menu item
- Click on the Youth Enquiry/Registration Button
- Complete your profile
- Click Submit

STEP 2

- Wait to receive an email from us
- Once email received, click on invitation button
- Enter your new password
- Click Submit

STEP 3

APPLY FOR OUR PRODUCTS

- Once you are logged in, you will have access to all our products and services that you can apply for
- Choose a product or service and complete your application
- One of our friendly personnel will keep in touch with you either by email or telephone, so make sure you keep a lookout

STEP 4

LOGIN TO THE PORTAL

- Enter username (email address)
- Enter Password
- Click on the sign-in button

STEP 5

HOW TO RESET YOUR PASSWORD

- On the login screen, locate and click the "Reset Password" link
- Enter your email address (Please double-check for any mistakes)
- Click on the "Confirm" button
- A confirmation message will appear on the screen that an email has been sent to you.
- Open your email and click on the "Change Password" button
- Capture your new password and click on the "Confirm" button.



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KEATLEGILE MNGUNI, 26

Chief executive officer, agri-entrepreneur: AgriNouri

Keatlegile Mnguni is an agri-entrepreneur working in agricultural processing and community development.

After working as a chef, Mnguni founded a fresh produce processing company named AgriNouri by merging her skills in food management with her experience in farming. By supplying the retail market with fresh vegetables, herbs and sauces through her company, Mnguni strives to be an example for young South African farmers working to alleviate hunger, poverty and unemployment.

In 2020, the African Farmers Association of South Africa elected Mnguni as its National Youth Chairperson to advocate for youth in agriculture across the value chain and to help young people overcome challenges through developing programmes to improve growth and production.

Mnguni's efforts play an important role in socioeconomic development by creating employment and building a greener South Africa. She's working to be a game-changer in the agricultural sector through skills development for locals as well as advocacy for youth and women transformation. — Daniël de Jager



NOKWANDA MATHENJWA, 35

Industrial development researcher: University of Johannesburg

Nokwanda Mathenjwa is an industrial development researcher at the University of Johannesburg, busy completing her master's in industrial policy. Her passion lies with grassroots rural community development projects.

She believes that South Africa could revolutionise its economic growth and youth unemployment rates by using an improved industrial policy that reforms disparities of the past and makes resources available.

Mathenjwa aims for her projects to have positive and sustainable impacts on communities, particularly in terms of job opportunities for women and youth. She fosters economic independence for the communities she works with.

She was recently selected to participate in the 2022 Mandela Washington Fellowship, an academic fellowship opportunity in the United States. Mathenjwa firmly believes that everyone has a divine life purpose; she encourages young people to embrace their uniqueness and follow their paths to success.

— Laura du Toit



IKARABELE LEGAE, 27

Junior trader: Lona Group

Ikarabele Legae is adding fresh zest to the fruit industry. As a junior trader with Lona Group, Legae creates farm-to-fork market strategies for accounts such as Woolworths, and advises on farm production practices, among other responsibilities. Less than a year after joining the Fresh Produce Exporters' Forum, one of the fruit industry's biggest global forums, Legae was selected as South Africa's transformation representative.

Before joining Lona Group, Legae owned the only black-owned fruit export company in South Africa at the time. Legae hopes to leave a legacy of opportunity for future generations of South Africans, and to create a space for black exporters to grow their businesses.

Lona Group enables him to pursue this dream: the company works with roughly 50% of the previously disadvantaged citrus growers in South Africa, investing and developing their potential for sustainable profits. Every day, he strives to offer something positive to the world. By working hard, he is pursuing his dreams.

— Laura du Toit



TEBOSO RATSOMA, 24

Student and founder: Loving Little Feet foundation

The aphorism "it takes a village to raise a child" is the backbone of Tebogso Ratsoma's foundation, Loving Little Feet (LLF). Ratsoma started the foundation in 2021 after witnessing the effects of Covid-19 on impoverished families. LLF collects donations of old and new children's clothing, and then distributes these across South Africa.

Ratsoma is currently studying medicine at the University of Cape Town. As a medical student, she is constantly learning about the struggles that communities of low socioeconomic status face, and the importance of treating her patients with maximum care.

She explains that the various leadership positions she took up at university taught her to care deeply for others. "It taught me servitude — I live to serve others," she says. "If it wasn't for this experience, I don't think I would have thought of the Loving Little Feet foundation."

— Georgia Satchwell



MOKGADI MORAPI, 30

Systems analyst and chairperson: FNB and WeCan Foundation

Mokgadi Morapi is the founder of the WeCan Foundation, an NPO with a vision of educating and empowering young people to make informed decisions about their careers.

Morapi began working as a systems analyst at FNB after achieving a BSc in information technology from the University of Johannesburg. She saw the need to give back to the community by identifying and bridging gaps in the transition from school to university.

As the chairperson of WeCan, Morapi leads the executive team, with each executive member mentoring a share of the 80 mentees. Since 2014, the foundation has launched several community development programmes to promote prosperity through education.

Her efforts with WeCan have seen reduced dropout rates and year-on-year improvements in the matric pass rates at nine schools in Limpopo.

— Daniël de Jager



BONGINKOSI KALIPA, 29

Trainee auditor & agricultural entrepreneur: Auditor-General South Africa

Growing up in poverty put Bonginkosi Kalipa on a mission to uplift his community and find practical solutions to hunger.

While studying accounting at the University of Johannesburg, he learned that business knowledge and strategic planning can contribute to better managed food sources.

Kalipa started implementing these skills at home, with a small farming project that provided fresh vegetables to his mother and the surrounding community. Since then, the project has grown to a five-hectare space, with plans to expand to 100-hectares by 2030.

"This project has brought multiple solutions to the community — jobs for unemployed youth, rental income for land owners and dividends for investors," Kalipa says. He believes that if managed correctly, agricultural projects like this one could uplift communities for centuries to come.

In 2019 Kalipa won the top spot at the South African Institute of Chartered Accountants' Student Leadership Summit for his farming project.

— Luca Hart



Paying It Forward

Structured Capacity Building is aimed at funded beneficiaries to assist them with financial management and other skills to be able to implement their projects successfully and to sustain themselves into the future, and to counter youth unemployment and inequalities.

Through the **Train the Trainer** module, participants are empowered to transfer knowledge, skills and information to other NLC beneficiaries in their vicinity so that they can also benefit from this development initiative.

Train the Trainer is a comprehensive SAQA unit standard-based course intended for all persons who need to facilitate learning using a variety of given methodologies.

Formal recognition will enhance their employability and also provide a means to identify competent learning facilitators in future.



STEPHEN MANTSHO, 33

Transformation coordinator: South African Subtropical Growers' Association

Stephen Mantsho is a transformation manager at the South African Subtropical Growers' Association (Subtrop), which helps emerging farmers become commercially viable in the fruit industry.

The 33-year-old works with emerging black growers to access financing, to expand and improve their farming operations. He also coordinates Subtrop's training of provincial extension officers to ensure that study groups for emerging growers are effective.

The minister of agriculture, land reform and rural development of South Africa, Thoko Didiza, has worked with Mantsho on numerous transformation projects in the fruit farming industry.

Mantsho wants to bridge the scale, race and market attraction gaps between farmers because "all farmers produce food, and the same food is eaten by all people", so all farmers should be considered equal. His proudest moment to date was seeing the produce of one of the farmers he represents being sold in Woolworths.

— Lineo Leteba



FAITH MOKGALAKA, 22

Founder and chief executive: Puno Greenery

Phalaborwa-born Faith Mokgalaka is the founder and chief executive of Puno Greenery. Along with her team, she works to aid the farming community.

Puno is a platform which allows farmers to crowdfund, sell their harvests in advance, or sell shares in their farms. "We spend every day thinking about how we can best be of service to them," she says.

According to Mokgalaka, Puno exists for three main reasons: to motivate Africa's 33-million small-scale farmers to commercialise; to decrease barriers to entry for emerging farmers into the agricultural space; and to make resources accessible to the farming community.

Mokgalaka wants to see the process of getting involved in farming become easier for young, black people, without facing as many barriers to entry. "The stigma around agriculture is one of these barriers," she says.

— Alexander Brand



OXOLO MOFOKENG, 35

Executive director: Siyavuna Abalimi Development Centre

Oxolo Mofokeng is the executive director of the Siyavuna Abalimi Development Centre. Siyavuna empowers rural farmers by providing skills and enterprise development through sustainable and climate change-resilient farming methods. Siyavuna has trained more than 2 000 elderly farmers – 86% of whom were women – and is in the process of initiating 1 000 young people into the agricultural space.

Through this work, they hope to improve food sustainability, address the high levels of youth unemployment, connect young people to the agricultural value chains and facilitate the transfer of indigenous agricultural knowledge from one generation to the next.

Mofokeng's involvement in Siyavuna has been a seven-year journey of progress and growth starting as a personal assistant and rising to the position of executive director. Through hardships and successes, she introspected, evaluated and focused on her goal of helping rural communities attain stable and sustainable livelihoods.

— Anita Makgetla



THUBELIHLE ZOOMA, 31

Founder and director: Sahiba Foundation Charity Organisation

In 2019, as gender-based violence reached new, brutal heights in South Africa and #MenAreTrash outcry dominated conversations, Thubelihle Zooma decided to get involved in changing the circumstances of the survivors.

He founded Johannesburg-based NPO Sahiba Foundation Charity Organisation, which focuses on uplifting and supporting vulnerable, abused women and children through soup kitchens, and food and clothing drives.

Sahiba Foundation supplies survivors with essential food and household items, builds their skills and gives them the tools to stand on their own. The aim is to give them their power back.

Zooma has been recognised for his work by Young Leaders of Africa and the department of social development. Companies such as KPMG, Albany, and Tiger Brands have regularly donated to his cause. Sahiba Foundation also hosts events that encourage networking, contributing to Zooma's vision of creating a "large network of community leaders and building bridges of hope".

— Shereen Goosen



KELETSO KGALEMA, 26

Founder: SHEroine Leads

Working to increase the literacy rate in rural Limpopo is a key goal for SHEroine Leads.

The nonprofit organisation in the Sekhukhune district focuses on helping the youth and young women in particular gain essential skills to cross the digital divide. Founder Keletso Kgalema says her aim is to create a literate society that is ready for the digital world despite the social issues facing rural communities.

Kgalema is committed to changing the fact that your class and location often determine the quality of your education.

The efforts of her organisation mean her community will be able to participate more equally with the whole world, she hopes.

"I believe that life is a relay and we ought to pass the baton – it is your choice as to what kind of baton you pass down and the future of the society you live in. That keeps me pushing more for a better world."

— Lesley Stones



JOHNPEKO MAPHAKELA, 31

Film and TV editor: Blouberg Cinema

Johnpheko Maphakela's love for film and television is bundled up with a heartfelt desire to share it with others. Strong ties to his community underpin the work of Blouberg Cinema, an initiative Maphakela co-founded with friends in 2020. Through this mobile, open-air and drive-through cinema experience, he and his acolytes are making South African films available to audiences across Limpopo.

Maphakela wishes to create opportunities for local filmmakers and to promote film as an agent of development and change. Working his way up the industry ladder, Maphakela says he came to the realisation that he was no longer making films to make money, but rather trying to make money so that he could make more films.

Previously, the University of Johannesburg graduate worked as a camera operator before progressing to editing various television shows for the SABC, e.tv, Mzansi Magic and Showmax.

— Zia Haffejee



Become Part of Africa's Transformation

In Africa, innovation drives growth and advancement in every sector of the economy. From informal markets to major corporations, roadside hawkers to established entrepreneurs, the African tale is one of triumph through adversity. But this growth is threatened by technological disruption and this can only be overcome by narrowing the innovation gap.

According to Accenture's Innovation Maturity Index 2020 report¹, the majority of South African companies are vulnerable because they aren't taking risks. The report goes on to say: The companies that are beating disruption, just 7 per cent of South African companies compared to 14 per cent of companies globally, are innovating, using digital technologies to grow and reshape their core businesses into new businesses.

Vukani Mngxati, Accenture Africa CEO adds, "**Taking the first steps now can help [African businesses] build a foundation that will enable them to grow, compete and thrive in a digital era.**" These steps include embedding innovation into businesses through strategies, culture and architecture.

As the continent's leading university, the University of Cape Town (UCT) is passionate about building the skills and enabling the solutions required to allow individuals and businesses to innovate. Since 2007, UCT has partnered with digital learning expert GetSmarter, a 2U, Inc. brand to take its renowned education online, providing market-relevant content in an accessible and flexible format.

See the selection of courses available to you on <https://www.getsmarter.com/products/universities/university-of-cape-town>.

Register now and get 20% off any UCT course using the promo code **UCT200YOUNG**.

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¹(Feb, 2020). 'Winning in the age of disruption'. Retrieved from Accenture.



BIO AFRICA Convention promotes development of young biotech innovators

"The continent must develop and secure its own biotechnology supplies"

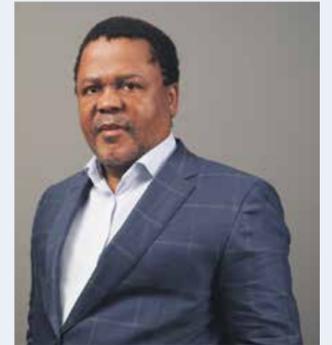
We enter the BIO AFRICA 2022 season in a world that is fundamentally different from the one we had, when we hosted the last physical Convention in 2019. The BIO AFRICA Convention was launched five years ago as a contribution to mobilising society to strive for equity in distributing the fruits of biotechnology innovation. The principles were that a concerted effort of building strategic capital through coalitions of the global progressives, pivoting the latent talent of the marginalised (women and youth), and forging partnerships across the continent would provide a capacity equivalent — if not better — than the imported solutions. The declaration was that where health and food security are concerned, crafting

value alliances, and rethinking innovation strategies, Africa could begin to develop and secure its own supplies.

The founding philosophy of life sciences innovation for Africa's development is as relevant today as it was five years ago. The Covid-19 crisis was a signal of what was to come concerning the injustices of global inequalities, detected when the global North closed its ranks on access to diagnostics and later vaccines. A new term entered our everyday language: vaccine nationalism, which had always been there, but it took the desperate situation of the Covid pandemic to shine a light on it. Unleashing latent intellectual capital was key to the strategy, and inclusivity through women and youth needed priority. On a coalition basis, there

needed to be an acknowledgement that the government could not do it all on its own as it required new, additional partnerships. Fortunately, the pandemic became a pivot for designing a shared future.

It is within this context that the first showcase of what the future of biotechnology could look like is presented here. The four featured innovations are a snippet of what the BIO AFRICA Convention 2022 in Durban will showcase in its first Start-Up Stadium. These companies and many others prove that these "blue sky" ambitions set out a few years ago will be realised. Welcome to the preview of BIO AFRICA 2022, taking place from 27 to 31 August, at the Inkosi Albert Luthuli Durban International Convention Centre.



CERENE RATHILAL, 30

Lecturer: University of Johannesburg

Cerene Rathilal is a mathematician who wants to positively impact the education system by ensuring that educators have the skill sets required to teach maths in engaging ways.

Her pursuit of this is refined by personal lessons concerning career choices and is connected with creativity and compassion through her programme, STEM MentHER. This initiative aims to guide girls pursuing a STEM career and assist in keeping them in the field.



MALOBA TSHEHLA, 33

Head of strategy & growth and spokesperson: ED Platform and South African Photovoltaic Industry Association

ED Platform is a development economic adviser for a range of diverse roleplayers in the renewable energy and mining sectors. It works directly with regulators, corporates and community members to create real, sustainable economic change, and Maloba Tshehla is its head of strategy and growth. This position entails nurturing human capital and positioning the firm as a leading economic development advisory. Tshehla also serves as the spokesperson for the South African Photovoltaic Industry Association. Contributing to mitigating climate change and driving the development of African people is what drives Tshehla to excel. "I want a clean-energy, low-carbon economy that is Afrocentric. The work I do is meaningful and involves a lot of service. Advisory is service to clients, but economic development advisory means we are in service to the objectives of transformation and the betterment of ordinary South African lives," Tshehla says. — Patrick Visser



ABDUL QADIR SOONDKA, 24

Analyst: Cadena Growth Partners

Abdul Qadir Soondka is passionate about digital innovation and the possibilities the field holds for South Africa's future. He works as an analyst at Cadena Growth Partners, where he specialises in digital ledger technologies. This covers strategy and solution development, financial modelling and stakeholder engagements. Soondka and his team develop roadmaps, strategies and programmes for their clients to help them navigate and reach goals.

"Working in digital innovation has allowed me to see so much potential in our beloved country, but it is on us to activate that potential," he said. Soondka dreams of activating South Africa's potential to be a global leader in innovation, technology and economics. His inspiration comes from a promise made to a past school teacher that he would stop wasting his potential and try his hardest in everything he does. Soondka hopes that he will have the same impact on another young person through his work. — Laura du Toit



KHAVHARENDWE RAMBAU, 29

Researcher: Council for Scientific and Industrial Research

Khavharendwe Rambau is a postdoctoral researcher at the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research. Her work focuses on innovative ways of producing green hydrogen that can be used as an energy carrier within the energy generation sector.

She acts as a representative of South Africa to assist the International Partnership for Hydrogen and Fuel Cells in the Economy committee, and is the first black woman in the world to be a member. Rambau's proudest moment was being the first in her family to graduate from university. "This has set an example to my siblings, that you can achieve anything you put your mind to."

Her aspiration? "I want to see a clean and just transition of South Africa to a green hydrogen economy, and to help poor South Africans have clean and affordable energy that has little impact on their health." — Ncumisa Lerato Kunana

WSU

In a ground-breaking innovation, Zanodumo Godlimpi and Siphosethu Mgwili of Walter Sisulu University have collectively invented two separate parts of a prosthetic leg that will provide physical and financial relief for millions of people who have lost limbs below the knee after an amputation. A prosthesis replaces a missing body part that may have been lost through trauma, disease or congenital defects.

Godlimpi is developing a foot that will mimic normal foot movement and Mgwili is developing a pylon (tibia/shin bone) that is adjustable to accommodate the growth of a child. These innovations will among other advantages allow amputees to adjust their own artificial limb(s) in their homes to their comfortable and functional height, and as children and adolescents go through physical changes over their lifetimes, these innovations are expected to save them thousands of rands



on upgrades. Considering the economic conditions in developing countries such as South Africa, Mgwili and Godlimpi have taken it upon themselves to find a solution to ease the experience of having prosthetic legs in rural areas.



CapeBio

Daniel Ndima, Founder and CEO of CapeBio, started the business in 2015 when he saw the need for localised solutions to help deal with and find solutions to global challenges such as the Covid-19 pandemic in Africa. CapeBio is a South African biotechnology firm that manufactures "best-in-class" molecular biology research diagnostics reagents, enzymes and kits. The business leverages its innovative bio-discovery research to the commercial value of unique African microbial diversity.

In 2021, the Minister of Science, Technology and Innovation, Dr Blade Nzimande, announced that the South African Health Products Regulatory Authority (SAHPRA) had authorised CapeBio to manufacture rapid Covid-19 polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test kits. The Covid-19 test kits, co-developed by CapeBio and the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), will help reduce



South Africa's reliance on imports, making it easier for the country and the rest of the continent to gain speedy access to test kits. The company is further expanding its innovative molecular diagnostics portfolio to respond to Africa's reliance on imports during disease outbreaks and epidemics.



KIALAN PILLAY, 21

Software development engineer: Amazon Web Services

Very few can claim to have matriculated at 15, and achieved an honours qualification and been headhunted by Amazon before their 21st birthday, but Kialan Pillay is one such anomaly.

Later this year, he will be studying for his master's in advanced computer science at the University of Oxford. Pillay is a software engineer working on Elastic Compute Cloud, Amazon's flagship cloud service — a tool used by millions across the globe for their computing resource requirements.

Pillay's passion is artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML), two areas he believes can have vast and impactful applications in almost all areas of society. In a low-resource context such as South Africa, cloud technologies combined with AI and ML can create high-impact, scalable solutions that will drastically change the lives of the communities in which they are deployed.

— Tshiamo Seape



GOKUL NAIR, 30

Co-founder: Impulse Biomedical

Gokul Nair is the co-founder of Impulse Biomedical, a team of passionate engineers, scientists, clinicians and academics whose goal is to make healthcare technologies more affordable and accessible. The team has created several innovative products such as the Easy Squeeze, a device designed to help asthmatic children and the elderly by reducing the amount of force required to activate an inhaler.

Another invention is the ZiBiPen, a device due to disrupt the emergency injector industry. The reloadable adrenaline auto-injector is more affordable and effective than what is currently on the market and can be outfitted with patient-specific cartridges rather than other market alternatives. Impulse Biomedical has won several awards, including first place in the Swiss South Africa Venture Programme, Merck Pharmaceuticals Accelerator Competition, and Technology Innovation Agency's Global Cleantech Innovation Programme. Thanks to their hard work, countless South African lives will be saved.

— James Nash



ALICE MOETI, 30

Associate director and quantity surveyor: Nonku Ntshona & Associates Quantity Surveyors (Pty) Ltd

Growing up in the impoverished community of Mahikeng in North West did not stop Alice Moeti from pursuing and achieving her dreams. Having obtained both her BSc and honours in quantity surveying at the University of Pretoria, her career continued to soar. With seven years of experience in the built environment, Moeti is currently the associate director at Nonku Ntshona & Associates Quantity Surveyors. She heads the retail, commercial and residential sector within the company, and the overall business development portfolio within the quantity surveying division. Regarding what inspires her, Moeti says, "The belief that we are on earth at this exact time for a purpose, and the search for that purpose is exhilarating."

She urges the country and specifically the construction industry to take note and acknowledge young women and afford them the necessary platform to grow without negative stigma or prejudice.

— Ncumisa Lerato Kunana

Sawubona Mycelium

Sawubona Mycelium is a biotechnology company that recognises the power of microorganisms and fermentation to transform the process of manufacturing into one that is sustainable and responsible. Neo and Busi Moloi have been working on incorporating mushroom-derived active ingredients into skincare products to produce clean, more effective and safe-to-use beauty products. Founded by the Molois in 2018 with the purpose of combining their passions for fermentation and medicinal mushrooms, the two biotechnologists are producing bio-actives such as mushroom beta-glucan, mycelium lysate and mycelium fermentation filtrate, which are useful in a variety of skincare applications. These ingredients are derived from the mycelium of different mushroom strains such as Split Gill (Schizophyllum commune), Oyster (Pleurotus ostreatus) and Enokitake (Flammulina velutipes).

These ingredients each contain a complex of bioactives that are excellent for hydration, skin soothing, anti-inflammatory, UV protection and aid in skin recovery after sun exposure, as well as supporting the growth of good skin bacteria.

In 2020, for the first time in African



history, Sawubona Mycelium produced 800 litres of mycelium from Enokitake produced via liquid cultivation. The aim was to produce material that can be used as ingredients in cosmetic products, setting them up to be a leader in scaled production of mycelium derived bioactives in Africa. The team used these ingredients to develop a mycelium inspired skincare brand called Bluberly.



KURAI

KURAI® is an agricultural technology company that leverages drone technology, Internet of Things (IoT), Machine Learning and associated technologies to assist farmers eliminate in-season inefficiencies. The organisation comprises highly skilled engineers, agronomists and data scientists, working together to define new efficiency frontiers for farming operations at a micro-economic scale.

"It is this confluence and diversity of skills working together — as if to squeeze water out of a rock, really — that makes new efficiencies that are otherwise not possible with the current structure of technology implementation strategies. What is most important is that farmers are realising better financial performance for their hard work, and that is the one thing that motivates us as a team to keep reinventing how we farm — most of the times in very small improvements here and there, but every few months in significant steps that have defined our competitive advantages as a young technology company," says Clive Mathe, the founding CEO of the three-year-old start-up.

Mathe is an Aerospace Engineer by profession who had half a decade



of aircraft design and development experience before he co-founded KURAI® with his friend Samuel Mathekga, also an Aerospace Engineer. Mathe has an MBA from Wits Business School, and his passion is directed towards the strategic adoption of technology in the continent through both entrepreneurship and policy alignment for effective value definition.





JACQUES VAN APPEL, 34

Lecturer: University of Johannesburg

“Statistics underpin the fourth industrial revolution and it’s exciting to see how it unfolds and evolves through my students,” says Jacques van Appel, lecturer and head of the statistics department at the University of Johannesburg.

The Brakpan native considers his appointment as department head the proudest moment of his career, matched only by the receipt of his PhD degree from the same institution. Van Appel is the youngest

department head in the science faculty. He manages the department’s day-to-day affairs and various teaching responsibilities, while still finding time to pursue other research interests in the fields of computational statistics, mathematical finance and probability theory.

Van Appel and his team are striving to introduce their new actuarial sciences programme, which recently received accreditation from the Actuarial Society of South Africa. It’s aimed at assisting students from previously disadvantaged backgrounds to overcome industry barriers and to expedite their journey towards becoming actuarial professionals.

— Zia Haffjee



ANNE CHISA, 27

Science communicator, podcast host and PhD student: The Root of the Science Podcasts

Anne Chisa is a PhD student at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, a science communicator and host of The Root of Science Podcasts. The podcasts aim to amplify the voices of Africans in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields across the globe. “I want to shift the stereotypes that scientists are white old men in lab coats,” she says. Through her podcasts, Chisa showcases the diversity in the field and challenges preconceptions about STEM careers. The podcasts give African scientists the opportunity to share the work they are doing, in their own voices, and to inspire people to pursue careers in STEM. She believes that sharing inspiring stories of how scientists have overcome difficulties will motivate those already in the field. Her advice to her younger self is to believe in the validity of your vision, because “you are worthy and capable of being even greater than you imagine”. — Afrika Bogatsu



BONGINKOSI THANGO, 29

Engineer, researcher and lecturer: University of Johannesburg

A lecturer and researcher at the University of Johannesburg, Bonginkosi Thango’s career goal is to become the vice-chancellor of a university. His desire to excel is driven by the memory of his mother. A single parent, she passed away before Thango completed his matric year; she never saw her son graduate with a PhD in electrical engineering. The diligent pursuit of his career has already seen Thango publish more than 45 peer-reviewed research papers and two international books; he’s also supervised the theses of nine postgraduate students. With research interests in artificial intelligence, renewable energy, condition monitoring and power quality, Thango would like to contribute solutions to the various techno-economic challenges faced by South Africa in its mass adoption of renewable energy. — Carol Chamberlain



ADVAITA SINGH, 29

Researcher: Council for Scientific and Industrial Research

Survivors of breast cancer, HIV or Covid-19 may have Advaita Singh to thank in the future. As an expert in biopharmaceuticals, Singh seeks natural cures for human ailments and figures out how to perfect them for commercial use. His team at the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research is producing low-cost, life-saving therapies and vaccines from plant proteins. Singh is driven to excel by the knowledge that their work is improving the lives of ordinary South Africans. So far, one of his proudest moments was producing potent plant-based antibodies that could change the lives of HIV patients. He is often “humbled by science”, he says. He wants to cooperate with local universities and biotechnology companies to drive South African innovation in this specialist field. This will create new openings for young scientists and biotechnologists, and make protein-based life-saving treatments more accessible to all. — Lesley Stones



ROBERT WALKER, 35

Director: Jukwaa

Robert Walker is the director of Jukwaa, which manages projects such as the Sasol Solar Challenge and E-mobility Congress of South Africa. His primary role in the company is the conceptualisation of large-scale strategic events. Through his work, he strives to become market-leading, set new standards for the sector and speed up the change towards sustainable mobility. His proudest moment will always be the birth of his two sons, and he believes our youth have the potential to become world leaders in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). He hopes to see young South Africans “believe in a future which is clean, green and driven by STEM”. Walker sees every day as a challenge, with his family driving him to find solutions to the seemingly impossible, but he also knows the power of learning from your mistakes. His motto is: “Don’t take failures too personally; learn from them and grow.” — Neil Büchner Jr



NOMALI NGOBESE, 35

Senior lecturer: University of Johannesburg

A senior lecturer at the University of Johannesburg, Nomali Ngobese combines her expertise in indigenous plants with her interest in social development. She is known for her work in food security, highlighting underutilised crops to alleviate hunger and boost economic development in rural communities. Ngobese is particularly proud of her research into proving the food potential of unconventional plants. Her studies have proven that plants such as monkey oranges and wild mangoes have nutritional value. “Having a scientific record to lobby for their commercialisation is very important, not only for the botany field, but for food processors and food engineers as well,” she says. She addresses malnutrition in rural areas by working with potato farmers to optimise harvests. Ngobese also develops post-harvest strategies for improving the shelf life of popular crops, and creates methods to improve the nutritional profiles of popular local foods, such as steamed bread, by incorporating native plants. — Andie Reeves



VALENTINE SAASA, 31

Postdoctoral research scientist: Council for Scientific and Industrial Research

“When I started university, I thought I’ll go there and after three years, I will be working – only to be fascinated by the world of science, curiosity and discovery,” says Valentine Saasa. Saasa’s research focuses on ways of diagnosing diseases using only the human breath. Early detection of lung cancer and management of diabetes mellitus without needles aren’t her only research priority: Saasa aims to apply her findings to make medical tests affordable to low-income households. Saasa founded a nonprofit organisation called Capricorn Education Resource Centre, which helps learners from disadvantaged communities access tertiary education, aiming to help cultivate the next generation of young scientists. Saasa says her proudest moment was when she found out that a girl she had mentored went on to study in the same field. “I’m proud that I’ve been the right representation to girls from the same rural areas as me,” she says. — Simon Dey



NKANYISO KHUMALO, 32

Director of network processing and real-time payments: Visa

If there’s a way to make processing payments simpler, Nkanyiso Khumalo wants to find it. He’s the director of network processing and real-time payments for Visa, developing and executing processing strategies in southern Africa. This involves working with a global technology team to design solutions fit for African markets. He also focuses on building innovative real-time payment technologies and modernising Africa’s payment infrastructure.

Khumalo has established himself as an innovator who tries to understand the root cause of a problem to find the right solution. He joined Visa’s executive team at age 27, and soon realised he had something valuable to contribute. “This led to me being bold in my submissions and to collaborate with fellow leaders around the table in resolving issues,” he says. His aim is for everyone to have access to and confidence in making digital payments in the most effective way. — Lesley Stones



Build a Team of Innovators

At the heart of business success lies innovation. But innovation isn’t built on old habits – it requires people who are willing to take risks and reinvent the future. Innovation is what sets businesses apart from the competition.

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When employees and leaders are equipped with critical thinking skills and provided the space where ideas can grow, companies become agile and competitive. Accenture’s Innovation Maturity Index 2020 report² supports this, revealing that high-growth companies have one important element in common: a culture of innovation.

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¹(2021). ‘Overcoming the innovation readiness gap’. Retrieved from Boston Consulting Group.
²(Feb, 2020). ‘Winning in the age of disruption’. Retrieved from Accenture.

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CONFIDENCE TSHILANDE, 32

Founder and director: Prestio

An engineer by profession with a master's degree from the University of Cape Town, Confidence Tshilande recognised a need for a social media and networking platform exclusively for women where they could safely interact, connect, inspire and uplift one another.

As nothing of the kind existed globally, she decided to create the first. Prestio was launched in 2021 on International Women's Day,

which Tshilande says is her proudest moment. What really sets Prestio apart are functions such as an SOS panic button, the ability to geolocate essential services such as police stations and hospitals, and the option to engage anonymously.

All its functions are intended to protect the app's users. This ultimately realises her goal to "empower women, address the inequality gap, and improve mentorship and networking opportunities with cross-institutional partners and women's organisations locally and globally". – *Shereen Goosen*



KHANYISA MABALA, 29

Associate quantity surveyor: Aecom (Pty) Ltd

As an associate quantity surveyor at Aecom, Khanyisa Mabala's expertise includes playing the role of a business development leader. She leads the mechanical, electrical, plumbing and fire division, and her role entails carrying out mass quantity surveying services for the construction of smart cities and local hospitals, data centres, universities and malls. As a quantity surveyor, she is generally skilled in spheres of the economy such as construction, property development, government and finance. In her work, she prepares research related to building and property economics, the profitability of commercial investment, professional practice matters, cost-benefit analysis related to building material and construction method selection, and many others. Mabala says quantity surveying is about a whole lot more than counting bricks. "The career is a huge basket of skills. It comprises architecture, maths, science, finance, law, accounting and investments," she says. However, she adds, "It is exceptionally beneficial that we pay close attention to detail." – *Nelisiwe Masango*



KARABO BOIKANYO, 31

Co-founder and chief technology officer: Reslocate

Karabo Boikanyo is the co-founder and chief technology officer of Reslocate, an interactive platform that connects students and property owners, streamlining the process of finding accommodation or tenants. Boikanyo oversees the technological aspects of the company, managing the functionality of the app as well as researching and implementing better machine learning user experience practices that refine the product. Reslocate is active throughout South Africa and Boikanyo wants it to keep growing. "I would say the ultimate vision is to scale internationally," he explains. The app has garnered significant attention; it was a finalist in the 2021 Entrepreneur X Factor and the FOYA Award for Techpreneur of the Year as well as the SAIS BOOST UP Programme. Boikanyo's work stems from understanding how stressful finding accommodation during tertiary education can be for students. With Reslocate, he aims to ensure that it's easy and safe for young South Africans to take that step. – *James Nash*



ADIVHAHO MPHAPHULI, 26

Civil engineer: Gert Sibande District Municipality

A master's student in civil engineering at the University of Johannesburg, Adivhaho Mphaphuli wants to ameliorate South Africa's water scarcity. She grew up in a rural area with little information regarding scarcity and, given the need to avoid wasting water in South Africa and around the world, she wants to change that. Mphaphuli has taken a course in artificial intelligence and is using the Internet of Things and her self-designed wireless sensor network to reduce water leakages. Her projects have been recognised internationally, winning the Falling Walls Lab competition for South Africa in Germany. Using technological opportunities afforded by the fourth industrial revolution to identify water leakages will modernise and improve municipal responses. More than that, Mphaphuli is energised by her transferable knowledge and has recently started a science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) awareness project called STEM-Pro, teaching the next generation about these important disciplines. – *Albert Troost*



NCUMISA HLAPO, 33

Senior specialist (business intelligence lead): Medscheme Holdings

Ncumisa Hlapo is fiercely passionate about promoting data literacy and putting her knowledge to use in activist pursuits. Describing herself as "an advocate for the development of young talent in data careers", Hlapo has worked in business intelligence for more than 10 years and is ardent about sharing her far-reaching experience and knowledge with others, particularly women. As the host of Data Talk Podcast with Ncumisa, she curates content pertaining to data analytics and its possible careers while speaking to experts in the data analytics field. The goal of her podcast is to spark young people's interest in data and analytics careers, offering mentorship, guidance and empowerment along the way. In her capacity as the head of southern Africa at Strategic African Women in Leadership, Hlapo also engages in mentorship, elevation and development programmes for women in leadership roles. "I am passionate about the representation of women in technology and leadership," she explains.

– *Alice Sholto-Douglas*



ZAMA SHABALALA, 30

Founder and researcher: University of Johannesburg

Zama Shabalala, a video director and the founder of Bluemag Pictures Foundation, has come to play a pioneering role in research around the medicinal and recreational potential of cannabis. With a background in both biotechnology and sales, he has spent six years working with the cannabis plant to engineer products for people with unique diagnoses. Shabalala says that he thought he would only have an impact and realise his dreams of helping heal people if he became a medical doctor, but he is now at the forefront of the industrialisation of the hemp industry in South Africa. Shabalala is leading a research team of students from the University of Johannesburg in studying the uses of the cannabis plant. "What drives me every morning is the passion to produce a product that will help a patient or find results that give answers to past problems," he says. – *Georgia Satchwell*



ERIC CHEKWUBE ANIGO, 34

Postdoctoral research fellow: Laser Research Centre, University of Johannesburg

Eric Chekwube Anigo is a postdoctoral fellow at the University of Johannesburg's Laser Research Centre. His research interest is in cancer, cell biology, biotechnology, photobiology and photochemistry with specific reference to multidrug-resistant cancer. His research is primarily concerned with how cancer develops resistance to therapies, and finding ways to prevent this. He's excited about the possibility that he can "somehow use laser to excite and treat cancer cells in a new treatment modality called photodynamic therapy". Anigo's interest in translational medicine – medicine that improves human health through transferring clinical and laboratory research into medical practice – "birthed the zeal to understand why cancer recurs after treatment", Anigo explains. The passion for novel discovery is what fuels his ambition to be a pioneer in his research, while his specialisation in oncology was motivated by his empathetic nature to care for the underprivileged, and desire to make an impact that will benefit people affected by the disease. – *Sarah Irwin*



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PHUTI MINAJ, 32

Chairperson: Phuti Lekoloane Foundation

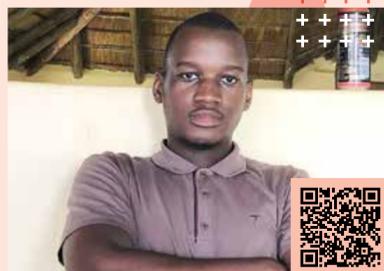
Phuti Minaj is South Africa's first openly gay professional soccer player. Minaj, who plays for the Makapanstad Romans in the ABC Motsepe League, is an advocate for diversity and inclusion in the LGBTQIA+ athlete community.

After talking on national radio about his sexuality, he took ownership of his voice and identity as a gay man. Minaj has since used his platform as a soccer player to raise awareness for the LGBTQIA+ community and the fight for equality.

In 2021, Minaj was named the Sports Personality of the Year at the 13th annual Feather Awards. With the Phuti Lekoloane Foundation, he aims to create a safe space for LGBTQIA+ athletes through campaigns and clinics, sports tournaments and mentorships.

Minaj dreams of a diverse South Africa where LGBTQIA+ people are free to occupy space in their lives and careers without fear of prejudice. At just 32, he is levelling the playing field, one goal at a time.

— Laura du Toit



LODUMO NKALA, 19

Pigeon fancier: Community Lofts

Today pigeon racing is a multimillion-rand sports industry that features big money events, famous competitors such as former world champion boxer Mike Tyson and almost 5 000 pigeon fanciers in South Africa alone.

It's an exclusive universe that's hard to break into. In spite of this, 19-year-old Lodumo Nkala from Pretoria founded Community Lofts, a pigeon racing academy located in the townships of Centurion. The academy educates community members about pigeon racing and provides them with opportunities in the sport.

Last year, Nkala was invited to President Cyril Ramaphosa's farm in Limpopo to attend the opening of the prestigious Million Dollar Pigeon Race. He spent two days on the property learning and networking, and was presented with an award as one of the top 50 pigeon fanciers in the country.

— Patrick Visser



BOKAMOSO NKOMO, 30

Sports agent, app programmer and events coordinator: BSports Agency, Blacklight Design and Jenesequa Events

Bokamoso Nkomo is the founder and head of sponsorship and marketing for BSports Agency, the first and only agency that represents women athletes in South Africa. She also owns the events company Jenesequa Events and is an app programmer for Blacklight Design.

Her passion is women in sports: "They work hard to represent the country but don't have a voice. I am motivated to wake up and be their voice." Nkomo uses her voice as a sports analyst on e.tv and hosts Twitter spaces for the channel. Nkomo has addressed government events to advocate for the LGBTQIA+ community and women in sports.

Her proudest moments include being nominated for the Sports Personality of the Year award at the JHB Women in Sports Awards, and her covers and features in Sibizi Magazine, gsport4girls and iDiski Times. Through her work, Nkomo wants women athletes to get respect and equality, and be supported and heard.

— Shaazia Ebrahim



200 YOUNG SOUTH AFRICANS 2022 TOURISM & HOSPITALITY



AFRIKA MDOLOMBA, 31

Chief travel officer: Travel With Afrika

After transitioning from a professional career in media and journalism to tourism, Afrika Mdolomba surprised himself with how quickly he adapted. "Many of the skills I accumulated during my time in the media industry are coming to good use in the tourism industry too," he says.

Founder and chief travel officer at Travel With Afrika, Mdolomba's company transcends traditional travel agencies. "Thanks to us, our clients are getting their first passport stamps," Afrika explains "being on a plane for the first time, seeing the ocean for the first time. We're exposing Africans to experiences."

A well-travelled career as a journalist saw Mdolomba visit more than 20 countries and now he wants others to enjoy the experience of travelling. "I'd like to see more young black Africans exposed to tourism. People travel and learn more about the world and, ultimately, themselves," he says.

— Nabeel Allie



DINEO ZONKE MADUNA, 33

Founder: Dineo Zonke Travel

Dineo Zonke Maduna is passionate about promoting Mpumalanga as a tourist destination. She has been featured on CNN, BBC and eNCA as the founder of Dineo Zonke Travel. An avid traveller herself, Maduna offers travel consultations and curates group trips to Mpumalanga, Tugela Falls, Cape Town and Zanzibar.

In 2019, she reached one of her travel goals: to visit 30 countries before her 30th birthday. She says travelling has taught her about her capabilities and weaknesses, and she believes others can find joy in it too. Her goal is to see more South Africans travelling our country and the world.

She would also like to see the travel, tourism and hospitality industry becoming more innovative through the use of social media to encourage South Africans to explore the country. "You will never be 100% ready to start any business but it's important to start. Be willing to learn, ask questions and make sacrifices," she says.

— Neo Khanyile



SINOTHANDO ADONISI, 29

Senior associate – research specialist: PricewaterhouseCoopers

Sinothando Adonisi is a senior associate at PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC). His role as a research specialist sees him focus on analysing and collecting data to ensure PwC has the necessary information to make informed decisions regarding its strategic direction.

Adonisi obtained his BTech in tourism management from Walter Sisulu University before he changed career paths. He has, in the past, been mentioned in the Destinations International 30 Under 30 programme. In the history of this acclaimed programme, he is the second African to achieve this honour and he sees it as his proudest moment.

His drive to excel stems from building a foundation for his family members, namely his brothers and daughter, to follow their dreams. A gleaming example of circumstances not determining an individual's future, Adonisi wants his family to have the necessary tools to achieve their dreams, which he didn't have while he was growing up.

— Louise Bell



THEMBA KHUMALO, 26

Professional athlete and coach: Motorsport South Africa

Themba Khumalo is a professional superbike racer and coach. His entrance to motorsport began with a sponsorship in 2008 from Richard Olfson, the chief executive officer of mCubed – despite the then 12-year-old Khumalo not knowing how to ride a motorbike. "I had a dream to race," he says.

"My understanding has always been that he saw my passion, hunger and desire," Khumalo says, explaining Olfson's decision to sponsor him even though he had no racing experience.

Khumalo has rapidly accelerated within motorsport since. "In 2014, my first year on a 600cc bike, I crashed 14 times that year as a rookie," he says. "In 2016, my first year on a 1 000cc bike, I only crashed twice that year, which showed me how much I had learned from my previous errors." At 19, he raced in the 2015 European Junior Cup motorcycling series.

Khumalo encourages all young people to chase after their dreams and not let anything hold them back.

— Sarah Irwin



PHUMELELA MBANDE, 29

SA Hockey co-captain and external audit manager: SA Hockey and PricewaterhouseCoopers

Phumelela Mbande balances the demands of her successful hockey career with a fledgling career in auditing.

After the first three months of her articles at PricewaterhouseCoopers, she knew auditing was for her. Even though it has tough periods and tight deadlines, it offers Mbande the flexibility to be able to pursue her other dream: hockey. She is currently the co-captain and goalkeeper of South Africa's women's hockey team. They competed at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics, where she was also South Africa's flag-bearer. Her week comprises six days of strength and conditioning training, as well as four days of hockey training and matches.

Transformation in South African hockey is one of Mbande's great passions. "I come from very humble beginnings, and hockey funded a big part of my tuition through bursaries. I feel it necessary to continue to advocate that other players should be given such life-changing opportunities," she says.

— Sandiso Ngubane



MARVEL MTHEMBU, 24

Founder: Crushing the Barriers International

Marvel Mthembu is the founder of Crushing the Barriers International, a multinational organisation that sets out to conquer the challenges faced by young people around the world.

Using a platform that engages multiple industries and other changemakers, Mthembu is making an impression. At just 24, he is the youngest African to receive public tributes from the dukes of Sussex and Cambridge, for his contributions to uplifting humanity.

He feels a responsibility to his generation and believes he has a role to play in the creation of opportunities for young Africans. Mthembu's vision is to see young Africans being employed and creating sustainable employment for others, for youth and women in particular.

He believes his biggest mistake was shrinking his vision when he faced challenges, but he's grateful he had the capacity to shift focus and see his plans through.

— Oratile Mashazi



LERATO MAHLAELA, 31

Founder and chief executive: RS Travel Group

Lerato Mahlaela did not anticipate that she would one day be the founder and chief executive of a successful travel company. Taking the leap into entrepreneurship defied an expectation that, like many other graduates, she would be seeking employment. But it didn't happen that way for Mahlaela.

Offering travel solutions for business and individual clients, Mahlaela founded RS Travel Group to employ herself and create employment for others.

Today, she runs its day-to-day operations and, in spite of limited resources, she is making it work by constantly seeking growth opportunities and relieving her customers of the slog of travel admin.

Mahlaela and co-founder Raymond Kekana are currently RS Travel's only employees, with a view to employing other full time staffers in the near future.

The company has managed to survive despite a lack of funding and not qualifying for subsidies. Mahlaela and Kekana have often had to fund the business from their own pockets.

— Sandiso Ngubane



ANDILE SIKHAKHANE, 28

Private chef: Chef Scott

Andile Sikhakhane is Chef Scott, a Durban-based pioneering private chef who's cooked for many of South Africa's elite. Internationally trained, he's travelled extensively for work which, he says, broadened his culinary horizons and helped him develop his skills. To reach new clients, Sikhakhane creates culinary experiences, and has partnered with some impressive names such as Glenfiddich, Remy Martin and Graham Beck when hosting food and beverage pairings.

Sikhakhane is still humbled when people speak highly of him – whether it's a student or one of his previous lecturers – a testament to his hard-working nature. "Being a chef requires a lot of patience, dedication and passion," he says.

"I see a lot of student chefs want to become private chefs right away, but it's important for the younger ones to understand that everything happens in its time.

You need to keep learning and unlearn certain things to grow in the industry."

— Ncumisa Lerato Kunana



CHARMAINE LEHABE, 27

Entrepreneur and private chef: The Squared Experience

Charmaine Lehabe qualified as a chef from Capsicum Culinary Studio and is co-founder of The Squared Experience, a company that creates a private fine-dining experience at your home for you and your guests.

Working in an industry that is notoriously tough, and one that has been hit particularly hard by Covid-19, she says almost giving up on her business at the peak of the pandemic would have been one of her biggest mistakes. But moments like winning business awards from YFM and Sunlight give Lehabe the confidence boost to know she is on the right track.

Through her work and business, Lehabe hopes to have a positive impact on how people are remunerated and how they approach their work.

Through my work, young chefs should be able to realise that to be great, one doesn't need to work for someone else, because greatness starts within oneself," she says.

— Shereen Goosen

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