

Top graduate employers announced, as voted for by tertiary students in the largest survey of its kind

On 2 December 2022 the country's top 66 graduate employers in 22 industry categories were recognised in a glittering, exclusive invite-only ceremony.

A total of 3 120 students from 52 different tertiary learning institutions participated in this annual employment choices survey, making this event truly representative of the voice of tertiary-level students. To enhance this vision, the GradStar Top 100 students of 2022 were present to announce the awards and network with the top employers – resulting in more than one employment offer being made from that evening alone! It was a truly mind-blowing, rarely encountered mix of top employers and top students.

The contribution to inclusivity this event makes cannot be ignored, as it is a unique occasion where representatives from 19 tertiary institutions (the Top 100 students) are given the opportunity to mingle with so many top employers. Usually only the top five varsity careers fairs boast this level of employer participation. This ensures that the GradStar Students' Choice Programme is truly a life-changing initiative, making a valuable contribution to the creation of a more inclusive and equitable employment landscape for our talented youth.

GradStar has further demonstrated its commitment to inclusivity with the creation of the GradStar App, a unique student networking and employment application that combines the concepts of LinkedIn and dating apps, while limiting the platform to a student and recruiter-only employment space.

The timing of this event – as referenced by BlackBark Productions CEO Laura Barker – is also significant; it took place right in the middle of 16 Days of Activism against Violence Against Women and Children. It is the youth who are the catalysts for change, and a pledge was made by the organisers and the students to align with this initiative.

Another highlight of the event was the GradStar Showcase, featuring three GradStar alumni: Daisy Thobakgale, (Technology Delivery Lead Specialist, Accenture); Shanti Khosa, (Graduate Finance Programme, bp Southern Africa); and Tshifhiwa Munzhelele, (Associate, Norfund). This was an incredible insight into the relevance of and legacy left by the GradStar programme. Thobakgale said that due to her attendance at the GradStar Top 100 2018 event, she was recruited by Accenture and is now thriving there – she's received two promotions in the past two years.

Khosa said GradStar prepared her for the world of work through various workshops and webinars hosted by some of the country's top employers. GradStar



GradStar Top 100 alumni deliver presentations. Daisy Thobakgale has been recruited by Accenture and is now a Technology Delivery Lead Specialist at the company.

Tshifhiwa Munzhelele runs the Bono Foundation, a non-profit organisation that helps high school students access higher education and related funding.

Shanti Khosa was recruited by bp Southern Africa via the GradStar App for her current placement within the organisation's Graduate Finance Programme.

helped nurture her presentation and communication skills through the many opportunities presented, including being a panellist at the 2021 Rising Star Summit. She was also recruited by bp Southern Africa via the GradStar App for her current placement within the organisation's Graduate Finance Programme, where she continues to excel.

Munzhelele said GradStar inspired him with confidence and opened up networks for him, from which he grew his NPO Bono Foundation. This non-profit organisation creates bridges for high school

students to access higher education and related funding, and mentors them throughout their career choice journey by exposing them to different fields and industries.

These three accounts were amazing first-hand testimonies and really set the scene for the recruiters in the room, as well as inspiring the GradStar cohort of 2022.

How did this come together?

For the past seven years, BlackBark Productions has

operated the GradStar Awards Programme (www.gradstar.com), successfully identifying the most employable and talented tertiary-level students from thousands of entries, and this year was no exception. GradStar recognised the Top 100 students and announced the "10 of the Finest" on the evening of 1 December 2022.

During the GradStar Awards Entry Process, thousands of applying students answer a set of questions relating to their employer of choice, salary, expectations, and other pertinent research into graduate job-seeking. There are no prompts for which companies to choose; students name their Top 5 employers to work for based on their own perceptions and experiences of the employment landscape. Thereafter, once the thousands of answers were filtered, the GradStar Team sorted the data into industry categories and the Top 3 companies in each category were invited as finalists to the 2022 Momentum Metropolitan Students' Choice Awards.

The results, based on the employment perceptions of tertiary level students, were sometimes predictable and sometimes surprising.

Laura Barker, founder of the GradStar Awards and CEO of BlackBark Productions, said: "We are over the moon to be hosting the Momentum Metropolitan Students' Choice Awards. These young people are our future and are here to take the country forward; their opinions matter, and we need to hear what they think [about]. We developed the Momentum Metropolitan Students' Choice Awards as a demonstration of our commitment to our future leaders and corporate South Africa, which has developed some amazing innovations in the workplace during extremely challenging economic conditions. Congratulations to all the winners."

Annette Breetzke from Momentum Metropolitan said they chose to support the awards as a commitment to South Africa and its talent. "Many organisations are experiencing a competition for talent. We need to increase the talent pool overall and not compete for the same talent."

Results:

In addition to announcing the Top 3 organisations in the industry sectors, an overall count was conducted, resulting in the big winners of the evening – the overall Top 5 Employers. These were recognised as:

1. Absa
2. Deloitte
3. FNB
4. DHL
5. PwC

Top 3 announced, as voted for by tertiary students in the largest survey of its kind:

Category	First Place	Second Place	Third Place
Accounting & Auditing	Deloitte	PwC	KPMG
Automotive	Mercedes Benz	BMW	Toyota
Banking & Financial Services	Absa	FNB	Standard Bank
Broadcasting & Media	Multichoice	SABC	Media24
Consulting	Deloitte	PwC	KPMG
Consulting Engineering	Zutari	Hatch	Aecom
Energy, Chemicals & Heavy Engineering	Sasol	Total	bp SA
FMCG	Unilever	Coca-Cola	Tiger Brands
Healthcare	Lancet Laboratories	Netcare	Pathcare
Healthcare Insurance	Discovery	Momentum Metropolitan	Liberty
ICT	Accenture	Google	Amazon

Category	First Place	Second Place	Third Place
Industrial Technologies	Siemens	ABB	Tesla
Insurance	Old Mutual	Sanlam	Santam
Legal	Bowmans	Webber Wentzel	CDH
Leisure, Travel & Hospitality	SAA	Southern Sun	Marriott
Mining & Minerals	Anglo American Platinum	Exxaro	Epiroc
Pharmaceutical	Aspen	Johnson & Johnson	Cipla
Property & Construction	WBHO	Concor	Motheo Construction
Retail	Shoprite	Woolworths	Massmart
State-owned Enterprises	Transnet	SARB	Eskom
Telecommunications	Vodacom	MTN	Telkom
Transport & Logistics	DHL	Imperial	DSV

The full report provides insights into students' preferences in grad programmes and their content as well as announcing the preferred employers, making it a must-read for all those involved in the graduate recruitment space. The questions were formulated by forming

a steering group of graduate recruiters from organisations such as McKinsey, Old Mutual, Absa and bp, ensuring the content is up to date, valid and relevant.

The research report is available for download from the GradStar website www.gradstar.com

