

TransUnion[®] 

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RISING STAR
AWARDS

RECOGNISING *Professionals*

MOST TALENTED YOUNG PROFESSIONALS UNDER 40

25 \ 10 \ 2023
The Hilton, Sandton

BLACK
PRODUCTIONS



accenture



Sage

momentum
METROPOLITAN

TRACE
ACADEMIA



Duke^{CE}
THE FUTURE OF LEADERSHIP, NOW



Trust in the Future of Work

As headline sponsor of the 2023 Rising Star Awards, we're proud to recognise, reward and recruit talented individuals from all walks of life to help us build trust and achieve great things in Africa.

As a Top Employer, we support flexibility; offer a powerful purpose that resonates with the new generation of leaders; and actively assess candidates based on skills, abilities and cultural fit– not just credentials and experience.

We offer hybrid work environments where employees trust they'll be treated fairly regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation or age. This is not a soft issue for us; it's a business imperative. According to research, a diverse and inclusive culture makes employees 9.8 times more likely to look forward to going to work; 6.3 times more likely to take pride in their work; and 5.4 times more likely to want to stay for a long time.¹

We believe our diverse leadership team brings a wide range of perspectives that help drive our innovation

and profitability. And again, research backs us up: According to McKinsey, organisations with a more diverse workforce are 33% more likely to outperform competitors financially, and executive teams with higher gender diversity are 25% more likely to earn higher profits.²

Which brings us to our partnership with the Rising Star Awards. By recognising and celebrating the achievements of emerging leaders across sectors, we shine a light on exceptional individuals with the personal perspectives and professional aptitudes to lead Africa to a brighter future.

We're excited to follow their progress.

¹ [Why Is Diversity and Inclusion in the Workplace Important?](#)

² [Why Diversity Matters](#)

WELCOME

Welcome everyone, and thank you for joining us and supporting the 12th Anniversary TransUnion Rising Star Awards!

It's absolutely incredible to think that we have been doing this, with the support of SA business and the HR community, for over a decade and I am blown away when I look at the support and loyalty we have gained from some of the country's greatest and brightest.

Judges - I would like to extend my thanks to all of you, who came together to grade the semifinalist video interviews and then gave your precious time for a full day of in person interviews, all with the commitment to give back to our future leaders. Many of you have loyally participated year after year, judging, sponsoring, entering your young people into the programme, supporting Rising Star initiatives; we are honoured to recognise you over the next few pages. A shout out also goes to Bedelia Theunissen for your tireless hours in grading the first batch of entries.

To the sponsors: TransUnion, Lee Naik a Rising Star alumni himself, thank you, we are honoured to be partnering with an organisation that leads by example, with a leader that truly walks the talk, and we cannot wait to see this partnership evolve. Rand Refinery – and Terance Nksoi, another alumni, thank you. Accenture, Absa, Gautrain Management Agency and a new and very welcome addition the list, Sage, thank you all – we could not do this without you. My team, a big shout out to you, putting in the hours and demonstrating your commitment to our shared vision of recognising and inspiring talent: Tanya, Charmaine, Richard, Ibtishaam, Nina, Carla, Chris, Nicholas, Vusi, Tendai, Alister and Cheryl – thank you.

And onto what we have ahead of us this evening – the Stars of 2023. You are all winners tonight, you made it here to the Recognition Dinner, you are the very best and tonight we honour you. Sit back and enjoy the show - you deserve it. Remember we are all here because of you! On that note, let's begin the evening, good luck to all and most of all enjoy yourselves!

With gratitude

Laura Barker, CEO, BlackBark Productions



RECOGNISING PROFESSIONALS

WELCOME



UNLEASH YOUR UNIQUE ADVANTAGE BY INNOCENTIA MAHLANGU

A GUIDE FOR WOMEN IN ENGINEERING & OTHER
STEM CAREERS

AVAILABLE ON:



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THIS BOOK IS FOR THE PHENOMENAL WOMEN WHO WORK IN THE FIELDS OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING, AND MATHEMATICS (STEM). IT IS FOR THOSE WHO HAVE CHOSEN THIS FIELD AS THEIR OWN BUT ARE UNSURE OF HOW TO CARVE THEIR OWN UNIQUE PATH, THOSE WHO ARE ON THE VERGE OF GIVING UP AND IN NEED OF A DOSE OF INSPIRATION, AND THOSE ENTERING THE INDUSTRY AND IN NEED OF A TORCH BEARER TO LIGHT THE WAY.



**BMW GROUP
SOUTH AFRICA**
50 YEARS AN ICON



BMW Group celebrates 50 years in South Africa and achieved Top Employer certification.

Fifty years ago, in March 1973, a key automotive, economic, and societal player in South Africa was founded: The newly established plant of BMW South Africa started to produce the first BMW vehicles, laying the foundation for a South African icon. Located in Rosslyn, outside the capital city of Pretoria, this was the first BMW production site outside of Germany.

Five decades later, in addition to BMW Plant Rosslyn, the BMW Group South Africa business includes a National Sales Company that sells and distributes BMW, MINI and BMW Motorrad; a Financial Services company established in 1990; and a software company (or IT Hub) servicing more than 70 countries.

The passion we have for our people is reflected in our recent recognition as a top employer by Top Employers Institute. This certification demonstrates our commitment to shaping a better work environment through excellent HR policies and people practices. We're not just an engaged corporate citizen contributing to our country's success, but through our people and our vehicles, we'll be part of the fabric of South African society for many years to come.

#WeBuildMoreThanJustCars

EVENT AGENDA

Reception and networking

Starters served

Introduction by MC, Siv Ngesi

Word of thanks by Laura Barker, CEO, BlackBark Productions

Welcome by Lee Naik, CEO and Regional President, TransUnion Africa

Inspirational Leader Award presentation

Dinner

Presentation of TransUnion Rising Star Awards:

Banking & Financial Services supported by TransUnion

Energy & Environment

Entrepreneur supported by Sage

ICT supported by Absa

Manufacturing & FMCG

Media & Advertising

Mining & Minerals supported by Rand Refinery

Professional Services supported by Accenture

Service: Public & Private

Tourism, Retail & Hospitality

Transport, Logistics & Security supported by Gautrain Management Agency

Winners Gift Presentation by Duke CE

Entertainment by J'Something

Dessert and dancing

MENU

STARTER

Roasted beetroot, beetroot hummus, goats cheese, radish shoots, pecan nuts, radish

MAIN

Fillet of seabass with a risotto cake, seasonal vegetables and a lemon cream sauce

VEGETARIAN MAIN

Ricotta and spinach ravioli in a Napolitana sauce

DESSERT

Lemon baked cheesecake with a berry compote

Served with red and white wine at the table

J'SOMETHING



J'Something is an award-winning musician, TV star, and a foodie/restaurateur of note, and one of the nicest guys you'll ever meet. As a frontman of the mega-selling group Mi Casa, he's responsible for some of the biggest dance-pop smash hits of the past ten years - 'These Streets', 'Mamela', 'Nana', 'Heavenly Sent' and so many more. His real name is Joao da Fonseca, and he's of Portuguese and SA origin. He has collaborated with the likes of Hugh Masekela, Amanda Black, Ghana's Sarkodie, Kanya's Sauti Sol, Timo ODV, Baddhi Satva, AKA and many more. On top of the multiple gold albums, J has appeared on the M-Net TV show My Kitchen Rules SA (#MKRSA) for five seasons, as well as shows Something's Cooking and Something's Food and Drink. He's also opened two restaurants, Something's Cooking by J in Pretoria and Artistry in Joburg. And there's his gin too, Jin Gin.

Something's going on, and it probably starts with a J.

EDWARD SNELL & CO.

AN INDEPENDENT SPIRITS BUSINESS FOUNDED IN 1848

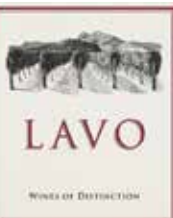
With a history dating back more than 170 years, Edward Snell & Co. is South Africa's largest independent spirits group. We produce, distribute, sell, and market award-winning local and international brands. Our success comes from empowering people who seek to achieve great things - just like us. Together, we pursue greatness for good.



NOT FOR PERSONS UNDER THE AGE OF 18.



LAVO



WINES

Lavo Wine is about pleasure, enjoyment and connecting people around the world.

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RISING STAR

Criteria and Judging Process

Judging Criteria



- VISION AND ABILITY TO INNOVATE
- PASSION AND IMPACT
- RESPONSIBLE ENGAGEMENT
- AGILITY IN UNCERTAINTY,
ENCOMPASSING DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION
- SYSTEMS THINKING AND SENSE-MAKING

JANET DU PREEZ MANAGING DIRECTOR, ENGAGEMENT DYNAMICS

The quality of the winners of the TransUnion Rising Star Awards is directly related to how they are adjudicated, and this year they have been evaluated against a rigorous, highly demanding set of future-focused criteria.

In 2021, the Rising Star criteria were reviewed, especially in light of the radically new demands that leaders are facing as the 21st Century gathers momentum. These measures, defined by a core group of seasoned practitioners, focus on critical competencies that will fuel a rapid trajectory for the winners of these prestigious awards. These five criteria cover more than 150 qualities, which demonstrate the extraordinary potential, contribution and achievement we have observed in so many Rising Stars over the last 12 years.

Absolutely core to the realisation of this potential is the capacity to imagine and create new possibilities. When considering the candidates' Vision and Ability to Innovate, we were impressed by those who envision a better future and translate that vision into new products, services or ways of working to solve significant problems. We asked the judges to identify individuals who challenge existing perspectives, take initiative and demonstrate resourcefulness. Candidates needed to show clear awareness of the impact and opportunity in digital and technological transformation and to give evidence of intrapreneurial drive and courage.

Vision is translated into results through Passion and Impact. Our judges were looking for individuals who

set clear goals and whose commitment, optimism and actions inspire, and catalyse the involvement of others. We expected them to manage their personal confidence, messaging and impact and to deliver on promises, achieve optimal performance and enable outcomes, despite obstacles.

Rising Stars are not only expected to deliver outstanding results but to do so through Responsible Engagement. This criterion focuses on the candidate's ability to build trust and credibility through integrity, transparency, humility and ethical responsibility. Over the years, this quality has become a hallmark of a Rising Star, with most of our winners demonstrating a profoundly generous spirit, deep social concern and active societal involvement. This year we focused additional attention on the individual's ability to foster psychological safety and to empower involvement, growth and autonomy.

The candidates' Agility in Uncertainty, Encompassing Digital Transformation speaks of their resilience, perseverance and ability to navigate conflict; to adapt, to learn and to foster growth. We looked for the capacity to take decisive action informed by insight into risk and opportunity. We also took note of entrants who recognised the importance of diverse perspectives when

navigating complexity, ambiguity and risk. This year's Rising Stars showed that they actively explore, embrace and apply emerging technologies, proactively defining, crafting or leading responses to digital transformation.

Finally, this year's entrants needed to show the judges Systems Thinking and Sense-making abilities. We looked for whole person intelligence – spiritual, cultural, social, emotional, and intellectual insight and maturity. We took note of those who were able to step back to make sense of complex and changing circumstances, to see the big picture, and understand the interconnectedness of variables and the forces of cause and effect. These individuals inevitably share and integrate information to support good decision-making, consider a global context and anticipate future opportunities and threats. These perspectives translate into a tangible understanding of business systems and improved process and information flows. The Rising Stars' abilities to listen perceptively, think beyond the obvious and develop awareness and intuition are inevitably rooted in their eagerness to embrace experiences that change perspectives and deepen insight.

Each year the judging process begins with an application in which candidates and their sponsors provide evidence of the assessment criteria. Entries are adjudicated and 10 semi-finalists identified in each judging category. These individuals provide a video response to specific questions focused on the five criteria and judges rate their answers to identify five finalists. In the final round of judging, adjudicators question the candidates based on the criteria, and each finalist delivers a 15-minute presentation in response to a case study.

In this year's case study, the finalists were asked to present an argument directed to their CEO or an industry body in response to the challenge question:

"How might your industry effectively support the South African Small Business community and promote innovation, economic growth and job creation?"

This case encouraged the Rising Stars to think meaningfully and innovatively about how to encourage entrepreneurial development in order to grow the economy. They were invited to demonstrate the integration of the Rising Star qualities through the solutions and approaches which they proposed to address the challenge. The five judging criteria were highlighted in the case and numerous questions were listed, which candidates could choose to address. They could also respond to questions of their own choosing.

Judges were encouraged to observe and explore each candidate's understanding and insight into the problem system and its social and economic impacts. We looked

for evidence of personal interest and investment in the potential solutions, expressions of care and concern for the issues, and personal leadership capacity.

The 2023 Rising Stars demonstrated innovative and problem-solving thinking, coupled with real-world pragmatism, goal-directed activity, awareness of risk and the ability to develop contingency plans. We were especially interested in their proposed use of technology as an enabler and their intentions to collaborate, enrol and empower others, and work with existing social structures.

We were looking particularly for insight into the role of small business in the national economy and the relationship between SMEs and corporate business. We ideally also wanted to see awareness of the systemic impact of their proposal on the most vulnerable. In the end, judges were impressed by the ability of the Rising Stars to enroll them, make them care about the issues and believe in the feasibility of their proposal. ★

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**JUDGES WERE
ENCOURAGED TO
OBSERVE AND EXPLORE
EACH CANDIDATE'S
UNDERSTANDING AND
INSIGHT INTO THE
PROBLEM SYSTEM AND ITS
SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC
IMPACTS**

Level 1 Judges*



STEPHEN DE BLANCHE
CHIEF REVENUE OFFICER, TRANSUNION

Stephen has 15 years’ experience in the financial services industry, having held several roles including Head of Vehicle and Asset Finance at Nedbank and COO for AA Financial Services. Prior to TransUnion, Stephen led the technology consulting practice for financial services at Accenture and performed the role of CIO at Liberty Life. He holds a BCom Honours Degree in Economics and Business Information Systems and is currently the Chief Revenue Officer at TransUnion.



INNOCENTIA MAHLANGU
SPECIALIST PROJECT MANAGER & SENIOR CIVIL ENGINEER, HATCH – RISING STAR 2020

Innocentia is a global award-winning Professional Project Manager & Civil Engineer, keynote speaker and author. In her role as a specialist project manager, she oversees projects in the mining, metals and infrastructure sectors. Innocentia is also the founder of a non-profit organisation for women in engineering call SHEngineers and the author of Unleash Your Unique Advantage, a book dedicated to advancing women in male dominated fields of engineering, construction, mining and project management.



OGOTLHE SATHEKGE
EXPERIENCED HR EXECUTIVE

Ogotlhe is a seasoned Human Resources Executive with diverse industry experience, having worked in Senior and Executive roles at AvisBudget, Transnet, Premier Foods, Barloworld, Absa, Eskom and in the Public Sector. She holds an Executive MBA, a Post Graduate Diploma in Business Management and has led Strategic and Transformational Human Resources Management solutions leading to the elevation of talent presence, culture shift, employee experience, organisational effectiveness and improved business and operational performance. Ogotlhe is deeply passionate about nurturing and accelerating the development of talent, leadership development and employee experience.



NOLWAZI TSHIKALA
HR DIRECTOR SOUTH AFRICA, DHL EXPRESS

Nolwazi is a seasoned purpose driven HR Leader with over 20 years’ experience across various industries including mining, manufacturing, financial services and currently logistics. She is passionate about creating a culture of positivity, growth and empowerment that enables everyone to reach their full potential. This can only be achieved by identifying and nurturing strengths and talents and creating and participating in platforms like these to allow talent to shine. She is honoured to be part of this experience in shaping young lives.



ELMARIE FOURIE
HEAD OF HR: NATIONAL SALES COMPANY, FINANCIAL SERVICES & IT, BMW

Elmarie is an experienced HR professional boasting over 17 years of progressive experience in Human Resources Management, Strategic HR, Talent Management and Learning & Development in Automotive, FMCG, Manufacturing and Mining environments. She has successfully planned, designed and implemented people strategies including organizational design, restructuring processes and business transfers and acquisitions. Her experience is backed by a BCom Honours, Human Resources Management and Services from North-West University.



JULIA MODISE
GROUP HR DIRECTOR, BMW

Julia is a seasoned HR Professional with 24 years’ experience and has held HR leadership roles at an Executive level for over 14 years. She gained experience from working in South Africa and in the USA, supporting operations in other countries in Sub-Sahara for Multinational and South African Organisations. Her experience is backed by a Post-Graduate Diploma in Leadership, a Bachelor of Science Management and a Diploma in Human Resources.

Level 2 Judges*

ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT

Level 1 Judges*



MERCY CHIGOMA
HEAD OF TALENT ACQUISITION, ZUTARI

Mercy’s exceptional ability to drive transformative resourcing practices and advocate for change has been instrumental in the success of numerous initiatives. A forward-thinking and innovative mind, Mercy’s broad-based proficiency extends to integrated Talent Management practices, operational efficiency and inspirational leadership in people-centric initiatives. Mercy’s influence extended across 23 countries in the SADC, East & West Africa, Middle East & Europe regions. Her innate talent lies in identifying, mentoring and empowering exceptional individuals to unlock their full potential.



DR JERRY GULE
EXECUTIVE COACH, GULE EXECUTIVE COACHING

Jerry is a passionate businessman with deep interests in leadership, coaching, disability and inclusion and creating high quality education opportunities for children from underserved communities. Jerry holds a Doctor of and a Master of Education from Harvard University and a Master of Education from the University of Pittsburgh. He has also completed his Bachelor of Arts and a Diploma in Education. He is the chairman of a non-profit organization and charity, The Love Trust, which focuses on education for vulnerable children.



HUGO LAMBRECHTS
DIRECTOR OF HR SERVICES, SOUTHERN SUN GROUP

A graduate of the University of Stellenbosch, Hugo has extensive experience working within the Hospitality, Tourism and Gaming industries. As HR Director for Southern Sun Hotels he headed the team responsible for developing and implementing some of their creative strategies in response to the challenges of the 90’s. He later established shared HR services for the broader Southern Sun Group, aligning HR strategy, policy and systems as the Group expanded. One of the founding directors and legal co-ordinator for the Psychological Assessment Initiative, Hugo also serves on numerous boards and interest groups.

* Level 1 Judges: Participated in semi-finalist video interview grading and finalist in-person interviews
Level 2 Judges: Participated in one of the two judging phases

Level 1 Judge*



TAMARA PARKER, CEO, MERCER AFRICA
In a career spanning over 27 years, Tamara has established herself as a Human Capital Strategist and has experience at both executive and management levels engaging with clients in the public and private sectors. Tamara has experience in working with clients to solve organisational issues across Africa, UK, UAE and Indonesia. Prior to joining Mercer, Tamara was the Human Capital Strategy Executive at Consolidated Infrastructure Group with operations in Africa and the Middle East. Tamara has a Bachelor’s degree in Social Science (Psychology); a Higher Diploma in Education (HDE); and an MBA all from the University of Cape Town.

Level 2 Judges*



**ZIMKHITA BUWA
REGIONAL CEO, QUINTICA SA, QUINTICA GROUP BOARD MEMBER – RISING STAR 2019**
For almost 20 years, Zimkhita has been a trailblazer in the innovation and digital space, working her way up from SAP Business Intelligence Analyst at an African-based energy group to Chief Operating Officer at a well-known software development house, and later becoming Head of Intelligent Business Applications Core Practice at a global systems integrator and managed services provider for hybrid IT. Zimkhita is also a board member at Siliconcape and a member of the non-executive advisory board at Rogerwilco. Her numerous accolades include participating in the Techwomen Programme and winning the MTN Outstanding Women in ICT award and the ICT Rising Star Award in 2019.



**CHRISTINA SWARTZ
HEAD OF LEARNING, OLD MUTUAL**
Christina is a qualified Learning Practitioner with over 15 years’ experience and is a strong leader of people. In her role, she assists Old Mutual to enable close to 5000 employees with personalised learning journeys to help them pivot in their careers. Christina is passionate about people that prioritise lifelong learning and she believes that an agile way of working will enhance execution and delivery. On a personal note, she is an avid reader and a proud Mom of two.



**CANDICE NAICKER
HEAD OF HUMAN CAPITAL IT, OLD MUTUAL**
Candice has lived in 5 of the 9 provinces in South Africa but is originally from Sunny Durban. As a “Mutualite” for the past 2 years, she has led woman in Tech events, spearheaded successful digital transformation projects, and raised the employer Brand and talent pools across Old Mutual. She previously held HC and Talent roles across Fintech, Banking and consulting industries for organisations including Sasol, Standard Bank, Accenture, Absa, KPMG UK and Media24. Candice holds a Bachelor of Social Science Industrial Organisational and Labour Studies from the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal, a Post Grad in Industrial Psychology, and certifications from Harvard Manage Mentor as well as Disruption in 4IR.

MANUFACTURING

Level 1 Judges*



**LERATO RADEBE
HEAD: FACULTY OF LEADERSHIP AND FUNCTIONAL DEVELOPMENT, TRANSNET SOC**
Lerato is responsible for leading the end-to-end Talent Management value chain for Transnet with a focus on Strategic Workforce Planning, Talent Acquisition, Onboarding and Exit Management, Career Development and Retention, Psychometric and Competency Assessments, Performance Management, Leadership Development, Youth Development as well as Functional Development across Transnet. Lerato has over 15 years’ experience in various functional leadership roles within the Banking, Telecommunications and Manufacturing industries, having worked for companies including Standard Bank Group, Coca-Cola Beverages South Africa and Siemens.



**SAMANTHA WEINREICH
HEAD: TALENT ACQUISITION BUSINESS AND COMMERCIAL BANKING, STANDARD BANK**
Samantha holds a BCom degree (Economics and Business Finance) from Wits, completed her Postgraduate studies at Wits Business School, is a certified Life and Business Master Coach with ICF and COMENSA accreditation and is a certified Employer Branding professional. For 20 years, talent acquisition has provided a platform for her to live her core purpose: to impact positively the lives of individuals and the impact they have on a company’s performance, culture, vision and strategy.

Level 2 Judges*



**MALISHA AWUNOR
HR DIRECTOR, EOH**
Malisha has over 25 years’ experience in the field of People and Culture across multiple industries in South Africa and internationally and has spent over 16 years in mining operations across Africa and South America. With a passion for diversity, inclusion and belonging partnered with a focus on equitable, performance driven work cultures, Malisha believes in driving change in organisations whereby all people can thrive. In our ever-changing world, she believes that by leveraging technology we can drive some of the most meaningful changes in organisations.



**MANTSIE HLAKUDI
CHIEF ENGINEER, ESKOM – RISING STAR 2021**
Mantsie is a professionally registered (ECSA) and certificated (GCC) Electrical Engineer with over 13 years’ experience in Distribution and Transmission specializing in Specialised Plant Equipment Failure Investigations, Renewable Energy, Transformers and Reactors. She has been recognised in the following ways: Young Professional to represent South Africa in South Korea at the 82nd IEC General meeting, Best Student in Leadership and Management and Best Naval Engineering Student, Eskom Inspiring Women Award 2021 - 1st runner up, and she was the winner of the Energy & Environment sector of the 2021 Rising Star Awards.



**VENETIA VAN WYK
VICE PRESIDENT SERVICE & ALLIANCES, EOH**
Venetia’s heart lies in the realms of transformation and community development. She is a staunch advocate for gender equality. These passions are not just theoretical; they drive her actions and commitments. Throughout her career, she has held roles that closely align with her values. Actively promoting workplace inclusivity and championing gender equality has been a pivotal aspect of her professional journey. Venetia holds a Bachelor’s degree in Humanities from Potchefstroom University and a post-graduate qualification in Management from Regent University.

Level 1 Judges*



SCOTT GIBSON
CHAIRMAN, CONTACTABLE

Scott is an experienced executive who has been exposed to numerous entrepreneurial roles and opportunities throughout his career of which 23 years has been in the tech and digital space. He was the founding CEO of Britehouse which was sold to Dimension Data in 2017 and he became the Global Head of Digital. In July 2019, he left Dimension Data/NTT and is now an angel investor in a number of technology start-ups.



THABO MOGOBE
HR PRINCIPAL, ANGLO AMERICAN

Thabo graduated from UCT with a BA degree in 1995 and gained a Postgraduate Diploma in Organisation and Management in 1996. He also completed a Programme in Industrial and Organizational Psychology from Unisa in 2008. Before his current role in Anglo American, Thabo was Senior Talent & Learning Manager at Sasol. Prior to that he was Group Head of People Planning and Sourcing at Sasol, and before that he was Head of Business Planning & Performance at Standard Bank Data Services.



PERCY MOLEKE
CEO, GAUTENG CITY REGION ACADEMY

Percy holds a Master's Degree in Economics from Georgia State University in the US, an Honours Degree in Economics from Wits and a BA Degree from Vista (University of Johannesburg). Previously Percy was the Programme Manager for the National Planning Commission Secretariat in the Presidency which supported the National Planning Commission. In addition, she is also responsible for driving the coordination of SDGs domestication in South Africa and has worked for the NPC Secretariat for over 5 years.



NOMPUMELELO MOKOU
MANAGING DIRECTOR: SOUTHERN AFRICA, DIMENSION DATA

Nompumelelo joined Dimension Data in 2016 as the Senior Finance Manager for the Gauteng Managed Services business before heading up Dimension Data's Intelligent Customer Experience Go-to-Market for the Middle East and Africa, where she achieved significant market share, revenue, and profitable growth. She believes that everything great comes from hard work, long hours, pushing through challenges, working together and helping one another. Nompumelelo holds a Bachelor of Accountancy, CA (SA) from Wits University and an MBA through the University of Stellenbosch Business School.



LEE NAIK
CEO AND REGIONAL PRESIDENT, TRANSUNION AFRICA – RISING STAR 2015

Lee is the CEO of TransUnion Africa and recognized as one of Africa's leading digital and technology transformation experts. Lee leads a portfolio of TransUnion's businesses across the continent that uses information and insight services to help consumers make more informed decisions and help businesses uncover economic opportunities and deliver great consumer experiences. Lee is passionate about Africa and about solving problems that matter. Lee is highly recognized for the work he does, which includes his recognition as a global Top Voice on the LinkedIn platform, his award winning Elewa newsletter and as one of the top Inclusive Leaders in Africa through the Gender Mainstream Awards.



LYNDA PEFILE
EXECUTIVE COACH: TEAM COACHING & FACILITATION, TAWA CONSULTING

Lynda began her career as a Clinical Psychologist in mental health and wellness before transitioning into Human Resources where she has worked for various global corporates, spanning several industries. She has developed deep expertise in understanding how business strategy can be supported by Talent with the right capabilities and potential to deliver on the organisation's strategic objectives. Lynda has been accredited as a business psychologist by the Association of Business Psychology (UK) in recognition of her contribution towards applying psychological principles and practices to promote best practices in Talent Management within organisations.

RETAIL & FMCG

Level 1 Judges*



NTSAKO BALOYI
HEAD OF SUSTAINABILITY, COCA-COLA BEVERAGES SOUTH AFRICA – RISING STAR 2021

Ntsako has vast experience in the FMCG, manufacturing, mining, and energy sector where he has served over 12 years as consultant and project manager. Ntsako is the Past President of SA affiliate of the International Association for Impact Assessment and was featured in the prestigious Mail & Guardian Top 200 Young South Africans to watch in 2015 under the Environment Category. He is also a self-taught chef who appeared on Season 2 of BBC's Come Dine With Me programme.



EVA CRUZ
SENIOR MANAGER: LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT, OLD MUTUAL INSURE

Eva has over 30 years' experience within the Learning and Development space and has had the opportunity to gain experience and deep insights across all aspects of the L&D value chain. In addition to this, Eva has experience with overall People management (HR generalist) practices where she has successfully managed and led some amazing people and teams. Eva's strength lies in consulting, engaging, and collaborating with business leaders to support performance improvement and achieve desired business results.



TSHEPO KGOBE
COO, GAUTRAIN MANAGEMENT AGENCY

Tshepo has more than 23 years' extensive experience in managing complex projects and operations with diverse technical requirements in infrastructure, energy and mining; predominantly in the railway environment. Tshepo has been in the railway industry since the beginning of his career and although he went into consulting for a while, he ended up back in the railway sector: "You could say I have trains in my veins." Tshepo's international experience gives him the edge to perform on a global scale. He has worked on a series of large-scale multi-disciplinary projects.



HELLEN LEBONE
REGIONAL HR DIRECTOR (AFRICA & INDIAN OCEAN), HILTON

Hellen has 20 years' experience in human resources in both generalist and specialist roles, and has expertise in areas including change management, compensation and benefits as well as diversity and inclusion. Hellen is passionate about helping people and businesses realise their full potential, and she believes that Africa is truly the next frontier. Her work experience in the continent continues to fuel this passion. She is a graduate of Wits University and Wits Business School where she obtained her Bachelor of Arts degree and a Post-Graduate Diploma in Human Resource Management.

TOURISM, LEISURE & HOSPITALITY (continued)



MISIWE XOLO **BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT MANAGER, TELKOM – RISING STAR 2020**

For over 15 years, Misiwe has been an experienced leader in the sales, marketing and communications space both in the public and private sector through practically managing new and existing markets for local and multinational businesses. She holds multiple qualifications majoring in marketing, communications, and leadership management. She has a keen interest in developing young women by intentionally building on the power of collaboration. In her downtime she enjoys sinking into adult colouring and nights out in the city. Bold, passionate, and unique are the brand words she lives by.



XOLANI MAWANDE **CEO, SABPP**

Xolani is a strong supporter of youth emancipation through quality education and continues challenging HR professionals to be professional and competent and to master Digital HR, HR Analytics and Metrics in order to add greater financial value to their organisations. Xolani is registered with SABPP as a Master HRP and is a member of the Institute of Directors in SA. Previously he was the SABPP COO for five years and before then he worked in the financial and people development sectors for over 18 years, in both public and private organisations.

TRANSPORT, LOGISTICS & SECURITY Supported by Gautrain Management Agency



TSHIDI DABULA **FOUNDER & MANAGING DIRECTOR, DABS PROFESSIONAL SERVICES**

Tshidi is an accomplished Human Resources Director with over 20 years' working experience in industries including Retail, Mining, Energy, Manufacturing and Construction, in both local and multinational organisations. She is an experienced Member of various Boards and Board sub-committees from the private sector and NPOs. Tshidi is highly driven, innovative, ethical, resilient and a visionary. She has been instrumental in various organizational strategy alignment, corporate governance and results driven initiatives. She is Founder and Managing Director of DABS Professional Services providing services in Professional Business Consulting, including Human Resources and Transformation Consulting.



JACQUES GREEFF **CHIEF EXCELLENCE OFFICER, UNITRANS – RISING STAR 2019**

Jacques' passion for the supply chain industry has led him to develop a comprehensive understanding of the internal frameworks and processes that drive organizational success. With his analytical problem-solving capabilities and keen sense of reviewing operations, he is able to identify areas for improvement and implement solutions that increase efficiencies and profitability. Jacques' superpower is creating high-performance work teams, fostering an environment of collaboration and open communication, and he believes in leading by example and embodying the company's core values.



KESHNIE MARTIN **FORMER HR LEAD FOR ACCENTURE AFRICA & ASSURANCE HR DIRECTOR FOR PWC AFRICA**

With over 22 years in HR, Keshnie has played pivotal roles at Accenture Africa and PwC Africa, driving HR strategies and transformation. She is known for aligning talent with the organisation's growth strategies and her expertise spans strategy development, business partnering and HR transformation and digitisation. Keshnie's approach to cultivating high-performing teams is underpinned by her innovative perspective on HR and people practices. Her breadth of experience, covering multiple industries and countries, has cemented her reputation for developing strategies that achieve business objectives. Celebrated for her leadership and dedication to enhancing employee experiences, Keshnie is a respected figure in the HR realm. Keshnie is passionate about her family (especially their new puppy); socialising with friends; travelling; reading; and is a wannabe keyboard player.



ELSIE PULE **GROUP EXECUTIVE HUMAN RESOURCES, ESKOM**

Elsie spent most of her career at Eskom during which she fulfilled various roles that spanned the entire HR value chain but left in March 2010 to become the Chief Officer Human Resources at the South African Revenue Services. In 2012, Elsie returned to Eskom as the Senior General Manager, she acted as the Group Executive Human Resources from November 2014 until she was officially appointed as the Group Executive Human Resources in June 2016, the role she currently occupies.



SIVAN PILLAY **CEO, TRACE MEDIA**

Sivan has over 27 years' experience in the Music and Television industry. Sivan's career started in a music store in La Lucia, Durban and he was very quickly drafted into EMI Music South Africa, more recently he was the CEO of 360 Degrees South before becoming the CEO for Trace Media. Sivan has worked with an array of international artists in SA including Roxette, Vanessa Mae, Simple Minds, Foo Fighters, Radiohead, Blur and Lynden David Hall amongst others.



MICHELE SEROKE **CHIEF PEOPLE OFFICER, MOTUS**

Michele's career began in Eskom after obtaining her BSocSci from the University of Cape Town. She has held strategic senior management and executive positions in Human Resources, both locally and internationally, at several organisations including Eskom, Productivity SA, ArcelorMittal and General Electric. She joined Imperial Holdings Limited as Human Resources Director for the Imperial Vehicle Retail, Rental and Aftermarket Parts division in August 2016, and was appointed as the Chief People Officer of Motus effective 1 July 2017.



MELANIE VAN DER MERWE **HR EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT, MOTUS**

Melanie's career began in May 2011, when she stepped into the world of HR as a Training Specialist at Cargo Commercial, a subsidiary of Motus. On the 1st of October 2022, she was appointed as the HR Executive Assistant at Motus. Her overall career spans 12 years. She holds a Management Development Programme (MDP) and Skills Development Facilitator (SDF) certificate. She is passionate about helping individuals grow and develop within their roles.

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Bedelia Theunissen, Group Talent Executive, AECI



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ELKA DU PIESANIE
OPERATIONS AND CAMPAIGN MANAGER, HOLLARD INSURANCE

As an Operations and Campaign Manager at Hollard Risk Services, a division of Hollard Trucking, Elka is passionate about driving positive change in the insurance industry by ensuring smooth operations and implementing impactful campaigns. She has over 12 years' experience in the transport and logistics sector, nine gained at Hollard. One of her proudest achievements at Hollard Trucking has been spearheading the Hollard Highway Heroes competition as Campaign Manager. It is one of her key responsibilities to oversee this annual competition for truck drivers (and, since 2023, bus drivers). This transformative initiative rewards participants for responsible driving and improves safety for all road users. The Hollard Highway Heroes initiative has had a massive impact on the insurance industry as it highlights exceptional drivers who prioritise safety and promotes a culture of responsible driving, leading to fewer accidents and claims.



ERIN FERGUSON ORMOND
CHIEF PEOPLE OFFICER, CORPORATE FUNCTIONS, ABSA

Erin currently leads the human resources portfolio for Corporate Functions at Absa (formerly Barclays Africa) Group Limited, one of Africa's largest diversified financial services groups with a presence in 12 countries. An HR Executive, qualified with postgraduate qualifications in both business and psychology, she previously led the talent management agenda for 25 countries across the African region for secure solutions and facilities management multinational G4S. Well-versed in leveraging organizational design to drive digital transformation and change, Erin has a proven track record of developing strategic and scalable people solutions in complex, multicultural environments, for both unionized and non-unionized workforces, resulting in cost efficiencies, increased engagement, and improved business profitability. Erin has lived in Africa, the Middle East and North America, developing a broad working experience with diverse cultures in both developed and emerging markets.



ANDISA LIBA
CHIEF PEOPLE OFFICER, FLOATPAYS

Andisa is a remarkable force in the world of human potential development and organizational transformation. With over 15 years' experience spanning diverse industries including financial services, consulting, digital media, music and fintech startups across the African continent, Andisa has consistently driven innovation and change. As the Chief People Officer at Floatpays, she plays a pivotal role in shaping the company's human capital strategies, aligning them with business objectives and fostering a high-performance culture. Her influence extends beyond the corporate realm as she actively contributes to the advancement of women in technology through her co-founding of Women's Tech Connection, a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing opportunities and learning resources. Andisa is not only a leader in her field but also a true pioneer in driving social change through innovation and empowerment.



RUFARO DARING MAPANDA
HEAD OF EQUITY TRADING, ABSA

Rufaro is a multi-faceted professional with over 17 years' experience in fintech, private equity, investment banking, and global markets. Rufaro works at ABSA in Trading but pursues multiple endeavours there in the name of knowledge sharing and human development. He has worked across the globe in Western Europe and the US but is most at home in Africa, the land of eternal promise. He is an entrepreneur and a creative soul at heart demonstrated by his passion for raising the stakes in Africa and bringing about financial inclusion through dream and job creation. He co-founded both eDikeni (curated restaurant chain) and cGrate International (African payment solutions provider). He is an avid technologist, a professed fire element, and was a finalist in Forty under 40 South Africa Awards in the Technology category. Rufaro identifies as a philomath and a philosopher - and revels in banter and the company of all people.



JORDACHELIN MOODLEY
IT SERVICE MANAGER, OLD MUTUAL

Jordachelin is a passionate tech enthusiast from Durban, KwaZulu-Natal, who lives with an insatiable curiosity for all things digital. His journey into the world of technology began at an early age, tinkering with gadgets and exploring the world of technology. With a strong foundation in Information Technology, Jordachelin has delved into the various facets of technology merged with banking and financial services. This allows him to use his skills as an IT Service Manager for Old Mutual SA. As a constant advocate for change and innovation, Jordachelin envisions the potential to use what he has to impart digital and financial literacy to improve lives and carve Africa into a powerhouse. Selected as the Trailblazer of the year, his commitment to lifelong learning and living a life of service is what makes him a phenomenal leader. As a major contributor to the growth of STEM in South Africa, Jordachelin strives to look for ways to change mirrors to windows.

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Duke CE Africa also provides formal, accredited management and leadership development programmes with the relevant quality councils. Our unique curriculum design approach extends beyond content knowledge to deepen contextual application focused on enhancing the learner experience.

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The programmes are designed to develop the leadership skills of female middle, senior and executive managers and support their career development. The unique designs incorporate academic learning modules with thought leaders and practitioners, dialogue with experts, group coaching and individual mentoring.

Duke CE Africa's vision for leadership development is to build force multipliers for good, creating a movement for collective awareness and action that drives change and challenges leadership paradigms across the African continent.

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ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT



MOGALE MODISANE ENGINEERING & TECHNICAL SUPPORT LEAD, ENGIE

Mogale is a registered professional engineer (Pr.Eng) with the Engineering Council of South Africa and a recipient of the Mail and Guardian Top 200 Young People award in 2023. Internationally he is part of the Global Future Energy Leaders (FEL -100) programme within the World Energy Council, as part of the 2023 cohort. Mogale is currently employed at ENGIE as a member of the technical team in the Renewable Global Business Unit (RGBU) based out of Johannesburg, South Africa. He has also served a board member of the South African National Energy Association (SANEA) since 2023, specifically being actively involved within the Youth Task Team. Mogale is a vibrant energy leader with a proven record of contributing to the energy challenges, opportunities and debates at a national and global level. Furthermore, he was a panellist at the recent BRICS Youth Energy Summit 2023 amongst many other public engagements.



SANGEETHA NAIDOO IM PRODUCT MANAGER, SASOL

Sangeetha is a well-seasoned IT and Supply Chain professional. She became renowned in both the Information Technology and Supply Chain fields for being a disruptor and purposeful leader, having held several positions in both domains. She has created significant value by leading various Cost optimisation projects, streamlining business processes to gain efficiencies and effectiveness together with incorporating digital innovation. She has led various delivery teams both onshore and offshore. Sangeetha has become an invaluable asset through her steadfast dedication and relentless pursuit to ensure excellence in all she does.



ZINTLE NXADI PROJECT PLANNER BENELUX & GERMANY WEST, VESTAS

With almost a decade's experience working in the construction industry, Zinte is a project planner for Vestas. She has held various roles including EME/SMME manager, site engineer, construction manager and now her current role. She holds a Bachelor of Technology from Nelson Mandela University (NMU), where she accomplished achievements from institutions including Konica Minolta for innovative ideas and UCT Hasso Plattner School of Design Thinking. She is the founder of the Education Incubator, an NPO that started in 2017, tutoring high school learners from Gqeberha and working in partnership with the NMU Civil Engineering Department and young professionals in the STEM fields. At work, Zintle collaborates with colleagues in search for new efficient and innovative ways to improve productivity. During her leisure time, she enjoys time with loved ones, creative work or exploring new cities and hidden gems.



MAITE SAKO CHIEF ENGINEER: GRID CODE MANAGEMENT, ESKOM

Maite is registered as a Professional Engineer with the Engineering Council of South Africa (ECSA). She volunteers as a peer assessor at ECSA, assisting with the registration process of professional engineers. She holds a Masters's degree in Engineering Management, BEng Electrical Engineering, and a Certificate in Business Management. Some of the highlights in her career include: Winning the Eskom Women Advancement Programme Millennial Leader Award in 2020 and attending a training course on clean energy in China (Beijing) in 2015. She attended a study tour on grid integration for renewable energy in Germany (Berlin) in 2013 and IEEE WIE award for community service in 2009. Maite has been a member of SAIEE since 2016 and is currently the Chairperson for the SAIEE Women in Engineering chapter. Maite is passionate about serving and community engagement activities. She is also passionate about women empowerment and mentoring young girls in township high schools.



PITSO SEKHOTO SENIOR CONTROL, AUTOMATION & OT CYBERSECURITY ENGINEER, ESKOM

Pitso is a passionate young professional who strives to make a positive impact and encourage young people to pursue careers in STEM fields. He has been actively involved in youth development, mentorship, and outreach programs. In 2022, Pitso represented South Africa at the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) Young Professional program in San Francisco where he participated in and contributed to the engineering standards globally. The IEC is an international standards organization that prepares and publishes international standards for all electrical, electronic and related technologies. Pitso has been appointed to multiple committees in 2022, including the South African National Committee (SANC) for the IEC, the IEC Technical Committee, and the South African Bureau of Standards (SABS). He is also a representative for South Africa at the African Electrotechnical Standardization Commission (AFSEC).



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MASONWABE FUMA
FOUNDER & MANAGING DIRECTOR, SAKHULUTSHA EAFRIKA

Masonwabe is a Johannesburg-based Marketing Maven, Global Business Speaker, Multi Award Winning Entrepreneur, Investor, Activist and Leader. He is the Managing Director of Sakhulutsha eAfrika, a social enterprise for youth development, advisory, local enterprise and research. Masonwabe hosts leadership talks aimed at reprogramming teenage boys' mind-sets and moulding them into excelling 21st-century young men. In 2019, Stepping Stone Junior School (His Alma Mater) introduced the Masonwabe Fuma Excellence Award, awarded to a grade 7 pupil who has achieved excellence throughout their junior school life. He has established the Masonwabe Fuma Bursary Fund aimed at assisting academically deserving youth from poor backgrounds to access tertiary education. He has represented African youth on international platforms staged in many countries including India, Indonesia, Malaysia and Ghana. Masonwabe is widely regarded as one of the most influential young Africans of contemporary times.



NOLUVUYO GQADU
FOUNDER & MANAGING DIRECTOR, CODENGWANA

Noluvuyo is an award-winning technology professional, a TEDx speaker and an international conference speaker. She is a Founder for CodeNgwana, an organisation focused on teaching kids how to code. Her main objective is to help the African child go digital by teaching computational thinking and coding to kids. She has a huge passion for solving social issues through technology and has had the privilege to contribute and expand her knowledge in disciplines including the mental health space for children, EdTech communities and social entrepreneurship spaces across the globe to help alleviate poverty in Africa. She is a young mom who is passionate about education and a children's book author. She has written stories about technology for kids and has published three books including a coding encyclopaedia that has been translated into isiXhosa and Setswana. She believes when children are empowered a whole new world of possibilities is possible.



HARDLIFE MUHAMBA
FOUNDER, HARDY THE COACH

Hardlife, a 2023 Mandela Washington Fellow, stands out for his outstanding leadership, entrepreneurial prowess and unwavering dedication to promoting financial inclusion. As the Founder and Managing Director of Capernaum Financial Services, an accredited Credit Provider authorized by the South African National Credit Regulator, he has overseen remarkable growth, disbursing over R10 million to benefit more than 1850 SMEs and individuals. This substantial contribution has significantly bolstered economic growth and stability in various communities, from townships to rural and urban areas. Hardlife's impact transcends entrepreneurship. Through his Career and Business Coaching efforts, he has positively influenced over 7000 professionals and 50+ companies across 25 countries, including prominent organizations including Tesla, UNDP, Liquid Intelligent Technologies, World Bank, African Development Bank and USAID. His exceptional leadership and commitment to financial inclusion continue to drive positive change, making him an inspirational figure in the realms of economic empowerment and professional development.



ANCILLAR NOMBEWU
FOUNDER, RALLINCA MEDIA

Ancillar's journey in journalism began at a young age, driven by a passion for the transformative power of storytelling captivated by the narratives shaping our world. She pursued her dream, earning an Honours degree in Journalism from the University of Johannesburg. Her career took off at Caxton Community Newspapers before she was headhunted by Forbes Africa magazine, where she spent three and a half years profiling Africa's business titans and curating its prestigious 30 under 30 list. In 2017, Ancillar founded Rallinca Media, a PR and marketing firm that's now a force across five countries, serving esteemed clients such as Sibanye Stillwater, Native Child and more. In 2023, she launched Access Genie, an entrepreneurship podcast, and Entrepreneurs Anonymous, a supportive community for fellow entrepreneurs. Ancillar is a true advocate for change through media, entrepreneurship, and humanitarian efforts. As a UNHCR Ambassador, Ancillar tirelessly works to reshape the narrative of African refugees.



LERATO SOLOMON
FOUNDER, MENTAL MATTERS WITH LERATO SOLOMON

Lerato, a passionate mental health advocate and award-winning social entrepreneur and community development practitioner, has dedicated her life to fostering positive societal change. Her passion is fueled by living with chronic depression and having survived four suicide attempts from age 10. With a deep-seated commitment to mental health, Lerato has championed the cause and breaking down barriers. A distinguished social entrepreneur, Lerato founded Mental Matters and led initiatives that have generated remarkable impact and garnered awards and recognition. Her innovative projects have empowered communities, creating sustainable solutions to pressing social issues. With hands-on experience as a community development practitioner, Lerato honed her skills in fostering inclusivity, empowering marginalised groups, and driving local initiatives that create lasting social change. Lerato's unwavering dedication to mental health, entrepreneurship and community development continues to uplift individuals and communities, leaving a profound and enduring legacy of positive change.



Making a positive impact in Africa

At Absa, we invest in people and projects that boost environmental, social and economic development on the African continent. During 2022, we invested R267 million to support communities. Of that, over R196 million was allocated to bolstering youth education, employability and skills development.

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- Investing in 94 future Africa leaders in our Absa Fellowship Programme.
- Collaborating with the National Business Initiative on a General Repairer Programme to equip young students with the skills to enter the infrastructure maintenance industry.
- Working with WeThinkCode to address the shortage of software developers by building a bespoke digital curriculum that is used by 1 132 learners to date.
- Upskilling 389 unemployed youths to move into in-demand, entry-level jobs in the Global Business Services (GBS) growth sector - bringing R14 million in salaries to community families. A second cohort of an additional 524 youth were upskilled and employed in the GBS sector, potentially unlocking about R20 million in additional salaries into the communities.

And as a company, we reaped the benefits of putting our people first by nurturing a diverse workforce with a culture of inclusivity. These accolades include, among others, being awarded a Top Employer in Africa and being named as one of the World's Top Female-Friendly Companies by Forbes.

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HILTON BAARTMAN EXECUTIVE HEAD OF RURAL & MINING, HALL CORE WATER

Hilton is a proven executive leader with a technology, software, energy, power system, water and infrastructure engineering services background who is passionate about business development, business strategy and creating exciting solutions to solve real customer problems. He is a firm believer in transformation and people. He believes that our future leaders must have as much EQ as they have IQ, if not more. Hilton holds a Bachelor's degree in Electrical Engineering from UCT and has a total of 15 years' experience in various roles across multiple sectors. He has led 3 business units in the EOH group and has since taken up an MD role at Hall Core Water which is a business delivering much-needed drinking water to rural communities in Limpopo, the Northern Cape and North West. He is passionate about mentorship, public speaking and doing business whilst doing good.



CHANIQUE DODO COUNTRY HR LEADER, ORACLE

Chanique is a wife, a mom and a fur mom to the most amazing family. She was born in Cape Town, raised on the Cape Flats by a single mom, and has been residing in Johannesburg for the last decade pursuing a career that she is very passionate about. Professionally, she is an experienced Human Resources Leader with a demonstrated history of working in the ICT, Oil and Gas, Automotive and Financial Services industries. Skilled in managing the entire employee life cycle and driving the organization's Transformation agenda, Chanique is an Executive Committee member who holds a Master of Commerce in Industrial and Organizational Psychology from the University of the Western Cape and is currently pursuing an MBA through Henley Business School.



GARY GOSSMANN DELIVERY MANAGER: FINANCIAL TRANSACTIONS, BMW SOUTH AFRICA

With over 18 years' experience in SAP, Business and Digital Transformation, and having worked internationally, Gary is able to innovate, maintain an agile mindset, and deliver. He is a firm believer in culture and values and strives to make a positive contribution not only at BMW but beyond. Gary is an IT Delivery Manager at BMW South Africa with a focus on Financial Transactions, leading a department comprising of 90+ colleagues and 4 products across Cloud Enterprise Architecture, Business Partner and Accounts Payable. Friends, family and colleagues would describe him as authentic, people-centric, collaborative and introspective. Outside of the workplace, Gary enjoys time with his wife and newborn son, long walks with his bulldogs and traveling.



MIRRIAM MATHEBULA GROWTH MARKETING LEAD, HOMEPLUS, SANTAM

With an illustrious career spanning the financial and telecommunications sectors, Mirriam honed her skills in segment marketing at both MTN and Nedbank. Mirriam's trajectory is marked by a wealth of work experience, underpinned by her academic achievements—an Honours degree in Financial Management from the University of Johannesburg and a distinguished MBA from the Gordon Institute of Business Science. This unique blend of financial acumen and strategic vision positions her as a formidable force in the realm of growth marketing. Beyond her corporate role, Mirriam is also a trailblazer in entrepreneurship. She is the founder of The Corporate Athlete. Additionally, her entrepreneurial spirit led her to establish the Azande Coffee brand, showcasing her versatility and commitment to innovation in various domains. Before joining Santam, Mirriam was Acting Youth Head at MTN South Africa.



SINDISIWE SANTI ENTERPRISE BUSINESS CX & DIGITAL INNOVATION MANAGER, MTN GROUP

Sindi boasts over eight years' corporate experience in telecommunications and finance where her unwavering motivation and problem-solving prowess have garnered numerous accolades. Presently, she serves as the Manager for Enterprise Business CEX and Digital Innovation at MTN Group, overseeing all 23 MTN opcos worldwide. Her expertise spans diverse domains, encompassing business analysis, product management, agile methodologies (Scrum, Kanban, SAFe 5.1), and digital innovation and adoption. Proficient in data analysis, design thinking and continuous improvement, she proves invaluable in any project. Beyond her corporate endeavours, Sindi is the Founder and Director of Charis Charity Foundation demonstrating her commitment to social responsibility. With numerous certifications including Scaled Agile Framework (SAFe 5.1), Design Thinking, Agile Project Management, and Certified Process Professional, Sindi earned a National Diploma in Information Technology with Cum Laude Honours. Her career underscores a resolute dedication to excellence, consistently making a positive impact in various organisations.



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MANUFACTURING



RAEESA LALA
SPECIALIST TECHNICAL & VOCATIONAL TRAINING, BMW SOUTH AFRICA

Raeesa holds a Bachelor's Degree in Electrical Engineering (Heavy Current) and has extensive experience as a legally-appointed engineer, managing engineering teams and supervising electrical and mechanical machinery. Her career began in the Mining Industry where she completed the Government Certificate of Competency for Electrical Engineers (Mines and Works) and thereafter occupied GCC Engineer positions carrying various legal appointments. She then obtained her Government Certificate of Competency for Electrical Engineers (Factories) and joined the Automotive Manufacturing Industry as the Plant Engineer at BMW Group South Africa focussing on ensuring machinery was both safe for operation and compliant with legal prescriptions. Raeesa has a keen interest in the organisation and the sector which led to her undertaking the role of Specialist Technical and Vocational Training with a core focus on skills development for the next generation of engineering artisans and technicians.



SANERA MAHARAJ
HEAD OF OPERATIONS, MAHLE

In 2022, Sanera was recognised as one of the Top 200 Young South Africans by the Mail and Guardian. She aspires to make a significant contribution towards promoting STEM careers and make inroads in the career development of various students in her care. She is deeply passionate about the CSI programmes she is involved in: Science2Go and SuperScientists. She was recently honoured by the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal as one of the Top 100 Females in STEM for the academic year 2022 and more recently in 2023 she was appointed as the NEF (Next Einstein Forum) Ambassador for South Africa, an honour bestowed on those that have been earmarked as a changemaker in the field of STEM! Sanera is an Industrial Engineer and currently works as an Engineering and Process Optimisation manager in the Automotive Industry and is transitioning into a Head of Operations role.



MICHAEL MOGARAMEDI
SPECIALIST: VALIDATION & INTEGRATION, BMW SOUTH AFRICA

Michael is a passionate and goal-oriented professional who holds a Bachelor's Degree in Industrial Engineering and a Master's Degree in Engineering Management. Throughout his career, which now spans just over a decade, he has held various specialist roles in manufacturing, quality and in projects. In his previous roles, he has facilitated various lean workshops, led numerous efficiency improvement and problem-solving projects, led the quality control team in the Bodyshop and is now responsible for the launch capability validation and integration for the next vehicle model at BMW Group SA. This requires a focus on both the product buildability on production line and product functionality after it is produced. This challenge requires collaboration, planning and leading teams, which enables his skills and experience to be best represented to achieve business results. This is a task he undertakes with great humility and excitement.



TANJA OTTERMANN
PLANNING SPECIALIST, BMW SOUTH AFRICA

Tanja was born in Pretoria and grew up on a farm in Kroondal, North West. After completing her NSC, she moved to Pretoria to study Mechanical Engineering at the University of Pretoria. In 2016, she started at BMW SA as a student whilst completing her Master's Degree in Mechanical Engineering. With her permanent employment in 2017, she started working as a maintenance planner in the paint shop before moving on to product and structure planning. After completing a 3 year expat assignment in product planning and development at the BMW research and innovation centre in Germany, she moved back to South Africa to lead the paint shop product and structure planning. She is grateful for all the opportunities she has been blessed with to make a difference in her community and the people around her. She is excited for the future of South Africa and the contribution that she can make to this future.



XOLANI PHAKATHI
ACTING FLEET MAINTENANCE MANAGER, TRANSNET ENGINEERING

With extensive experience in maintenance and manufacturing, Xolani is very passionate about leadership development and valuable strategy formulation. He is currently enrolled for a Master's in Technology and Innovation Management and with the theory gathered during the course as well as increased technology application and systems thinking, he has noticed a gap in specialized technology and the slow pace of new product introduction and therefore has started leading the digital drive within his functional area. With digital transformation being the current drive and constant use of big data, Xolani is eager to learn and develop his skills in an innovative organization to increase business performance, efficiency and customer satisfaction. He currently forms part of local strategic planning sessions in line with the Transnet growth and renewal strategy. Xolani is currently acting as a Fleet Maintenance Engineer at Transnet in Richards Bay, where he looks after the North Corridor Rolling Stock.

MEDIA & ADVERTISING



MMANAKEDI CHRIZELDA KEKANA
EDITOR, MEDIA24

Chrizelda is from the village of Bakenberg in Limpopo and this 29-year-old is one of the youngest section editors at News24, in her position as Lifestyle Editor. As a journalist, she has written for some of the biggest publishers in South Africa including Independent Media's The Star and Sunday Independence as well as Arena Holding's TimesLIVE, Sowetan and Sunday Times amongst others. Having travelled to countries far and near to tell compelling stories and document unforgettable journeys, Chrizelda has interviewed iconic stars including John Legend, Angelique Kidjo and legendary stars, the late Oliver Mtukudzi and Hugh Masekela. Chrizelda holds a BA in Media Studies, a BA Honours in Strategic Communications, a Postgraduate Diploma in Management and is currently enrolled for a Bachelor of Laws. She carries an undeniable light and shines it in different spaces including the Tswelopele Youth Empowerment (NGO) where she mentors young men and women from her community.



CALEB SHEPARD
MEDIA DIRECTOR, THE DIGITAL MEDIA COLLECTIVE

Encouraged to think and live creatively as a child, Caleb's time outside the confines of the classroom was spent pursuing his passion for wildlife photography which earned him several prestigious awards from a young age. Acknowledging that creativity requires direction, he studied a BCom Digital Marketing while serving an internship at TDMC. TDMC gave Caleb a platform from which he propelled himself into the dynamic world of digital marketing, immersing himself in all facets of the business and reaching the ranks of directorship at the remarkable age of 23. Caleb's career is a testament to his conviction that personal and professional growth is a function of hard work and versatility. Today his enviable and diverse client base includes local and global SMEs and listed corporates. Spearheading the launch of TDMC Cape is Caleb's current challenge which exemplifies Caleb's commitment to nurturing talent and driving success in the digital marketing landscape.



LUZUKO TENA
SOCIAL MEDIA LEAD, ACCENTURE

Luzuko is a Gqeberha born and raised Award-winning Digital Marketer at Accenture. Throughout his career, Luzuko has had the pleasure to work on a range of brands, local and international, in a number of industries including Viacom Africa, KFC Africa, Huawei, The International Olympic Committee, Pernod Ricard and more recently, The Coca-Cola Company. An advocate for the development of young talent from underrepresented groups, Luzuko holds various industry positions, namely: Head of the IAB Youth Action Council, IAB SA Transformation Council Member, IAB SA MANCO Member and more recently served as a member of the Loeries Youth Committee. In 2021, Luzuko's efforts for Transformation in Digital Media and the Marketing industry were recognised when he was fortunate enough to be awarded the 2021 Bookmark Award for the best contribution to Transformation in the Digital Industry.



NKULULEKO ZILIBOKWE
DIRECTOR, TRIPLE DOUBLE MEDIA

Nkululeko has worked as a journalist and in communications for the past eight years. His time in the upper echelons has given him a bird's eye view of the African showbiz scene. Nkululeko's dedication to his craft is evident through his unwavering enthusiasm for the entertainment industry. His ambitious nature is driven solely by his passion and determination to continually grow and adapt, constantly seeking new experiences and knowledge. Nkululeko was recently acknowledged as one of the 2023 top 200 young South Africans by the Mail and Guardian. This recognition highlights his significant impact and influence within his industry and his commitment to pushing boundaries and making a difference. Nkululeko possesses an unquenchable enthusiasm for his industry and the individuals he works with. His ambitious nature is fuelled only by his passion and determination to constantly evolve by empowering himself through his experiences, which he then imparts onto others.



CYRIL ZUMA
DIRECTOR, COLOR SPACE PTY LTD

Cyril is a South African-born entrepreneur, photographer and creative director based in Johannesburg. Specializing in commercial, studio, events, wedding, portrait and lifestyle photography, Cyril is also a seasoned videographer with over 5 years' experience. His interest in photography truly blossomed while working at a marketing agency, where he identified a gap in the industry and initiated the creation of a stock photo agency featuring images of South African black people. Cyril's notable achievements are featured in publications including MarkLives, The Plug, B-Kool Media and YoMzansi, recognizing his exceptional work with Color Space. In 2022, he had the privilege of working as a camera operator on a music TV show for Mzansi Magic and a Netflix production based in Nigeria. In 2023, Cyril partnered with Standard Bank to be on the cover of a magazine, a first for both. He also had the privilege of photographing for a US based magazine.

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DONETT LARKENS
MANAGER SURFACE RIGHTS & LAND USE, ANGLO AMERICAN PLATINUM

Donett is an admitted non-practicing attorney with a passion for sustainable development, spatial planning, land reform and innovation. She holds a Master's degree in Environmental Law and Governance from North West University, Potchefstroom, with a special focus on Spatial Planning Law. Donett is currently the Surface Rights and Land Use Manager at Anglo American Platinum, where her team oversees all of the company's landholdings. Her purpose is to provide strategic guidance and support to optimize the use and management of the company's property portfolio, with a strong emphasis on operational excellence and sustainable land use. As a firm believer in Ernest Hemingway's words, 'Live the full life of the mind, exhilarated by new ideas, intoxicated by the Romance of the unusual,' Donett is continually motivated to explore new frontiers and drive positive change in the realm of land management and sustainable development.



MATHEWS MADIKANA MOTSWI
SUPPLY CHAIN INVENTORY MANAGER, EXXARO

Mathews is an Industrial Engineer and a well-rounded Supply Chain Management professional. He has worked within the mining and minerals industry with a proven record of leveraging digital tools and systems to enhance supply chain processes to enable data-driven decision-making in multi-disciplinary teams. He holds a BSc Hons (Applied Science) Industrial Systems (University of Pretoria), and he is a Master of Engineering (MEng) Candidate at Wits. During his time at Exxaro, he led a team responsible for optimising the materials supply base of the business unit, focusing on the engineering commodities category. He drove the strategic intent, derived from the overarching Exxaro strategy of Sustainable Growth and Impact, which involved identifying, qualifying and creating opportunities for small and medium-sized enterprises for reconditionable spares. Mathews believes supply chain management can unlock latent value for businesses.



POGISO MTHIMUNYE
DIGITAL VALUE CHAIN LEAD, EXXARO

Pogiso is an Industrial Engineer with a Btech(Eng) from the University of Johannesburg, a BSc(Hons) from the University of Pretoria and is an MBA candidate at the University of Cape Town. He is an emerging technology, innovation, and strategy leader with more than 12 years' exposure across the full spectrum of business functions in the mining value chain. In his current role, he is leading the digital transformation of the mining industry through innovative technologies and practices at Exxaro. Pogiso has developed a digital strategy to make mining safer, more efficient and more productive. Pogiso has developed technology roadmaps for the core business and services sectors to transform Exxaro into a fully digital operation by the end of 2027. He was named among the top 200 Young People in South Africa in 2023 by the Anglo American Mail & Guardian Top 200 Awards.



THEMBISILE NDLOVU
SAFETY OFFICER, DE BEERS MARINE

Thembisile, a dynamic individual from Kwa-Zulu Natal, has a passion for storytelling and innovation. With exceptional public speaking, she has built a successful early career in environmental consulting and auditing in the construction industry. She now works in the mining industry as a Safety Officer, backed up by her Bachelor's degree in Geography and Environmental Management. Thembisile is committed to continuous learning and is currently pursuing a Post Graduate Diploma in Sustainable Development. Thembisile seamlessly integrates her Environmental, Occupational Health and Safety skills with her sustainability efforts, showcasing her dedication to making a positive impact on the environment and society. She is actively involved in volunteering and leadership roles in social impact programs, contributing to sustainable communities and the UN's SDGs. Her unwavering commitment to excellence and drive for success serve as an inspiration to others. Thembisile consistently makes meaningful contributions to her organisation and community, leaving a positive mark wherever she goes.



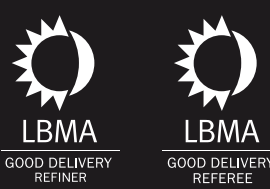
KATLEGO SEGOE
TECHNICAL SERVICES MANAGER, GLENCORE OPERATIONS SOUTH AFRICA

Katlego holds a Bachelor of Science in Engineering (Mining) Honours Degree from the University of the Witwatersrand and has received several awards, including the Glencore Phenomenal Woman for the Year 2022 award, the Best Services Department for the year 2022, and the Top Student award at Wits Business School for the Senior Leaders Development Program in 2022. With extensive experience in both underground and opencast coal mining, Katlego currently serves as Technical Services Manager for Glencore Coal South Africa, having served in various production, process control, and mine planning roles. She is dedicated to professional development and growth, evident in her current pursuit of a Masters of Business Administration at Wits Business School and her recent completion of a certificate in Data Analysis with the University of Cape Town. Katlego is a highly accomplished mining engineer with over a decade of experience and a Mine Manager's Certificate of Competency from the Department of Mineral Resources.



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KAYEMBE ILUNGA
DIRECTOR, PWC SA

Kayembe is an accomplished director with 14 years' professional working expertise in consulting, digital & data analytics, financial services, FMCG and telecoms. Kayembe is well known for his ability to meet and exceed company and project objectives. Armed with a fierce passion for tackling the impossible in order to find the right solutions for an ever-increasingly complex user, strong leadership qualities, business development experience and post-grad qualifications from Wits Business School, he is in a position to create exciting and memorable experiences with material business outcomes.



SIYABONGA KUDUMELA
NATIONAL FACILITIES MANAGER, TRANSNET PROPERTY

Siyabonga is a seasoned and executive multidisciplinary professional in the building infrastructure management, engineering, and project management fields with extensive experience in delivering successful improvements for business operations. She is currently a National Head of Facilities Management at one of the largest property firms responsible for the technical operational performance of the portfolio including engineering, maintenance and capital projects. Over the years, Siyabonga occupied various roles in surveying, construction management, civil engineering and ESG reporting. Siyabonga takes great pride in consistently producing high standard quality of work. Some of her accolades include being the recipient of two awards by the South African Facilities Management Association (SAFMA) in 2021. Siyabonga has been previously awarded as The "Facilities Manager of the year" well as The "Chairman's Award", a merit-based honour given to individuals who serve as exemplary models in the Facilities Management industry.



LESEDI MATLALA
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, GO-GETTERS BRAND

Lesedi holds a Master's Degree in Public Policy, Monitoring and Evaluation; a Postgraduate Diploma (PGD) in Labour Law from the University of Johannesburg (UJ); and a PGD in Research Methods and Skills. He is also a Doctorate candidate at the UJ. His main research areas are Evaluations of Educational/Learnership Programmes, Policy Impact Assessment Studies; Socio-Economic Research and Surveys; Programme Monitoring and Evaluations (M&E), and Feasibility Studies. He has authored and co-authored a number of publications including academic journals and conference papers and has presented at many conferences. Lesedi is presently a Researcher, Social Entrepreneur, Education Activist and Executive Director for a Research Consultancy named Go-Getters Brand.



DUMISANI NDIWENI
PARTNER, WEBBER WENTZEL

Dumisani is an advocate for a harmonious and transformed working environment and industry that permits everyone to demonstrate their skills. He appreciates the importance of consistency and reliability in the legal fraternity, however, these values must be considered in light of our ethical duties to those who are not as privileged as we are. He is a sociable and approachable individual who avails himself to everyone. Dumisani has been recently promoted to partner at Webber Wentzel where he has developed a love for labour law over the years. He looks forward to the development of the law in our country but also to the possibility of opening the doors wider for everybody who may access the law through the development of technology. He looks forward to accessing opportunities to represent new clients as this would place him in a position where he can influence the industry and society in general.



THANDIWE NHLAPHO
SENIOR ASSOCIATE, CLIFFE DEKKER HOFMEYR

Thandiwe has 8 years' experience in mergers and acquisitions, equity capital markets and general corporate commercial matters locally and internationally. She is also a Non-Executive Director at YHA Non-Profit Company. Thandiwe is passionate about making legal services and education freely accessible. She has been extensively involved in conducting and/or managing training programmes for junior lawyers. She also conducts webinars with external organisations. Thandiwe is a PhD student focusing on overcoming unnecessary legislative over-regulation and red-tape in respect of dividends, particularly for SMMEs. In 2022, she completed a secondment flagship programme in London as one of the 8 up and coming African lawyers selected by the International Lawyers for Africa. She was recognised by the Mail & Guardian in 2023 as one of the Top 200 young South African visionaries and trailblazers. Thandiwe is a Senior Associate at Cliffe Dekker Hofmeyr Inc. in the corporate and commercial practice.

RETAIL & FMCG



LARA BRAUN
SENIOR MANAGER: ISM COE ANALYTICS & INTELLIGENCE, MASSMART

Lara leverages people, processes and technology to deliver value and drive efficiency and transformation. With a broad background in education within the Sciences and Entrepreneurship and an MBA (Cum Laude), Lara's career spans across telecommunications and retail industries offering a unique perspective to problem-solving. Her passion for learning and growth is reflected in her approach to tackling challenges and fostering innovation in cross-functional teams. Outside of her professional life, Lara cherishes quality time with family and friends and immerses herself in outdoor activities, from running to her newfound passion for golf. Lara is a senior manager in Massmart's Indirect Spend Management Team Center of Excellence.



AMARIS BUCKHAM
TALENT ACQUISITION ADVISOR, MONDELEZ INTERNATIONAL

Amaris is a purpose-driven human resources professional whose passions align with Aesop's fable "The Lion and the Mouse", what fuels her is the belief that no matter how small you think you are, you can always make a big impact in someone else's life. She is passionate about creating positive change in the workplace and in her personal circles. Amaris has held different roles within human resources, specifically in the FMCG industry. Her ultimate goal as an HR professional is to be at the very core of driving company culture and change. Her desire is to ensure a diverse, inclusive and equitable workplace and she exercises this boldly in her current role at Mondelez International as a Talent Acquisition Specialist.



SIVENA MANIKAM
HR EXECUTIVE, RCL FOODS

Sivena joined RCL FOODS in 2015 as part of the Management Trainee Programme. In her eight year journey at RCL FOODS, she has gained experience in both a unionized and corporate head office environment, having worked in two Centres of Excellence (Reward and more recently, Talent), three different provinces and four factories/depots. Her passion lies in delivering a proactive HR service, centred around customer service, innovation, analytics and strategy. Sivena was recently promoted to HR Executive: Talent, where she is now leading and driving the strategy for Talent Acquisition and Talent Management at RCL FOODS.



TSHEGOFATSO NNDUVHENI
SUPPLY CHAIN PLANNING & TRANSFORMATION, UNILEVER SOUTH AFRICA

Tshegofatso was born and bred in Lebowakgomo, a township in Limpopo Province. She studied chemical engineering at Wits University and has been employed at Unilever South Africa since she graduated in 2019. She has served in numerous roles in the Supply Chain function of the business including Process Engineer, Logistics Coordinator and Supply Planner. She has been awarded for her impact in the business and for serving passionately and purposefully. Over the years, Tshegofatso has developed a strong passion for youth development and empowerment which has led her to volunteering for Non-Profit Organisations, becoming a part of the Unilever Global Change Makers Programme, a One Young World Ambassador, and the youth ministry leader in her home church. Tshegofatso is an advocate for resilience, with a strong belief that young people filled with hope and a strong sense of resilience can always bounce back from adversity and overcome challenges, positively contributing to a better South Africa.



MARCELLINO ROBERTS
SENIOR HUMAN CAPITAL BUSINESS PARTNER, AMARO FOODS

Prior to joining Amaro Foods, Marcellino worked within the Pharmaceutical Industry starting out as a Learning and Development Intern and ended his tenure as a Global Business Change Manager. He managed the end-to-end change management for 6 sites worldwide, working across 4 time zones. Within the next 5 years, Marcellino aspires to move into a Group Human Capital Manager role within FMCG.

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DYLAN BENYON MANAGING DIRECTOR, COGNITION & CO

Dylan is an Intern Counselling Psychologist and the Managing Director of the South African Psychology Student Network, Cognition & Co. Passionate about fostering growth and collaboration within the psychology student community, Dylan's aim in Cognition & Co is to bridge the gap between psychology students and professionals. Under Dylan's visionary leadership, Cognition & Co has become a vital platform, hosting numerous networking events including conferences, workshops and individual training sessions over the past 5 years. Dylan's commitment to transparency in the field is exemplified through the creation of an annual mentorship programme reaching aspiring psychologists across South Africa. Beyond his work with Cognition & Co, Dylan is a passionate mental health advocate. He envisions a future where mental health policies are comprehensive and effective. Through research, Dylan is actively working towards his goal of contributing to policy development and implementation, striving to make mental health support accessible to all.



KEITH KATYORA OUTCOME 3 DEPUTY LEAD & ENGINEERING TEAM LEAD, USAID SOUTHERN AFRICA ENERGY PROGRAM

Keith is a senior electrical engineer, advisor and project manager, with experience in the energy sectors across Southern, Western and Eastern Africa. Notably, he served as the Outcome 3 Deputy Lead for the Southern Africa Energy Program, playing a pivotal role in enhancing regional harmonization in Southern Africa. Presently, Keith serves as an Energy Advisor, championing the Just Energy Transition-Investment Plan and promoting sustainable energy landscapes. His remarkable achievements have been celebrated both locally and globally, including prestigious accolades including being named the top engineering graduate of 2017 at Aurecon and recognition in the 2019 Mail & Guardian Top 200 Young South Africans (Science & Technology Category). Keith's leadership extends to his role as Chairperson of the Consulting Engineers of South Africa's Young Professionals Forum (CESA-YPF) and as previous Chairperson of the Technology and Innovation Forum. He is a Certified Energy Manager and a Project Management Professional.



MDUDUZI MDUNGE SENIOR LEGAL ADVISOR, ETHEKWINI MUNICIPALITY

Mduduzi is an admitted attorney of the High Court of South Africa specialising in Legislative Drafting, Local Government Law, Commercial Law, Corporate Law, Regulatory Compliance, Employment Law and Civil Litigation. Mduduzi is a University of Pretoria Alumni, where he obtained his LLB. He further obtained his qualification in Legislative Drafting at the University of Johannesburg. He is currently pursuing studies in Artificial Intelligence in the 4th Industrial Revolution with the University of Johannesburg. He has also worked for one of KwaZulu Natal's biggest law firms, Shephstone & Wylie Attorneys, where he completed his articles and was an Associate in the Litigation and Local Government Department. Furthermore, he is the founder and chairman of the MFG for Hope Foundation, a non-profit organisation established to address the inequalities experienced by our youth and communities, with a special focus on community upliftment projects and youth development initiatives.



SAMUEL MOFOKENG LECTURER, CENTURION ACADEMY

Samuel's main function is to connect academia to the engineering industry and build relationships between academia and industry to close the gaps that exist between tertiary education and the competence requirements of construction. The collaborations facilitated by Samuel result in student exposure to the working world as well as employment opportunities for successful learners and the exposure of High School Students to the construction field and career prospects therein. Samuel is an active member in the community who is involved in a number of initiatives that advocate for Social Justice & Youth Development. His advocacy involves being an active mentor through Primestars South Africa to Grades 10 - 12 boys, where he educates them about issues including Gender-based violence, the importance of career exposure and entrepreneurship. Samuel believes that it is the collaborative efforts of changemakers that will contribute to the advancement of South Africa. He is a leader that is driven by purpose and passion.



KAPIL MOOTHI ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, UNIVERSITY OF JOHANNESBURG

Prof Kapil obtained a BSc in Chemical Engineering (2007), MSc in Chemical Engineering (2010) and PhD in Chemical Engineering (2014) from Wits as well as a Postgraduate Diploma in Higher Education (PGDipHE) with distinction in 2017, from UJ. From January 2013 - December 2015, he was a chemical engineer at Sasol (Sasolburg). Since January 2016, he has been employed in Department of Chemical Engineering at UJ. From September 2018 until November 2021, he served as Head of Department (HoD). As Associate Professor and "Nanotechnology and Environmental Engineering" research group leader, he is investigating the role of nanotechnology in environmental engineering for treatment of air, water and wastewater. He has several academic achievements/awards and in 2019 recognized in the "Education" category by Mail & Guardian Top 200 Young South Africans. He has authored/co-authored publications in international journals including Langmuir, Journal of Environmental Management, Nature Scientific Reports, Carbon and Science of the Total Environment.



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The Hilton Sandton's pool and pool gazebo bar are true hidden gems, where guests can feel like they're at an oasis in the middle of Sandton. The hotel also has a gym and sauna available, and its shebeen, with big screen and bar, is the perfect place to watch all the latest sport.

The Hilton Sandton is conveniently located close to the Sandton Convention Centre, Nelson Mandela Square, Sandton City, and the Marc, and it offers a complimentary shuttle service to make it easy for guests to get around.

Whether you're in Sandton for business or pleasure, the Hilton Sandton is the perfect place to stay. With its vibrant atmosphere, wide range of amenities, and convenient location, the hotel has something to offer everyone.



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KYASHA BHOOLA
DIRECTOR, AFRICANLINK

A skilled project manager with specialist experience in localizing global projects (+7 years' experience managing the deployment of new business operations from global operators in South Africa), Kyasha's key strengths involve gathering and decomposing business requirements and developing actionable plans with clear focus on local dependencies. Kyasha has strong experience and skill in engaging local and international stakeholders and managing expectations as well as an advanced insight and expertise in the travel industry.



ANDREW DE BLOQ
AVITOURISM PROJECT MANAGER, BIRDLIFE SOUTH AFRICA

Andrew's position at Birdlife South Africa falls within the Empowering People Programme and has the dual functions of promoting and developing avitourism as well as using birds to empower communities. The Community Bird Guide Project, for example, has trained over 250 people from rural, underprivileged communities to be bird guides and conservation ambassadors. This project recently won a Gold Award in the Responsible Tourism Awards. Andrew launched and now administrates the premier online portal for avitourism, GoBirding, and regularly promotes birding in print and online media including African Birdlife and Getaway. Andrew also facilitates the South African Names for South African Birds Project, which is breaking down language barriers by ensuring all birds have names in South Africa's official languages. Andrew brings his experience as an ex-professional guide and his training as a biologist together with his passion for people into this unique role to ensure that South Africa's natural heritage is both appreciated and protected.



LULLAR MALAMLELA
KEY ACCOUNT MANAGER, PPLE HOSPITALITY

Lullar is a father of one to a beautiful 17-year-old. He is from the Eastern Cape, born and bred where he completed his studies. Lullar started his career as a waiter in the hospitality industry and worked his way up to where he is today. He learned that there is no shortcut but hard work. He plays in the corporate sandbox now and works for an amazing company that does fantastic work, bridging the gap between those who cannot find work and those who give work. Lullar has been fortunate to work for some great hotel groups including Sun International, The Radisson Hotel Group, Accor, Guvon Hotels and Faircity Hotels. Due to his line of work, Lullar has had the privilege to live in 8 towns/cities in 5 provinces of our beautiful nation and is thankful for the experiences.



TSHUKUDU MOEPADIRA
MANAGING DIRECTOR, NEO STAR CAR RENTALS & TRAVEL TOURS

Tshukudu aka Rhino is a gentleman born in Qwa Qwa, Eastern Free State, and currently residing in Durban. He is an employee at the multi-award-winning Neo Star Car Rentals. Tshukudu is very passionate about people and tourism. He is currently the Chairman of DBN West Tourism and Vice Chair of KZNGALTA. Affectionately known as the CEO (Chief Excitement Officer), this young man is a changemaker and one who loves to give a helping hand wherever he can.



NIKITA RICHARDS
MARKETING AGENT, HILTON GARDEN INN UMHLANGA ARCH

Nikita, a dedicated Hospitality Professional, boasts a remarkable 14-year tenure in the Hotel Industry. Her journey began at the Sandton International Hotel School where she earned a Diploma in Hotel Management. Nikita's career with the Hilton International Hotel Group spans an impressive 11 years. Her Hilton career commenced in 2012 as a Front Desk Guest Service Agent at Hilton Hotel Durban, KZN. Over the years, she advanced through various roles and successfully completed elevate/leadership courses offered by Hilton. Presently, Nikita holds the role of Marketing Coordinator at Hilton Garden Inn Umhlanga Arch. Beyond her professional endeavours, she embraces the roles of a joyful wife and mother. Additionally, her enthusiasm for continuous learning is evident through her dedication to online courses through LinkedIn Learning and others including Hilton University, which she actively employs to enrich her team with her acquired knowledge.

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NTOMB'ZENHLANZEKO CELE
OPERATIONS MANAGER, TRANSNET PORT TERMINALS

Ntomb'zenhlanzeko has been in a leadership position for the past 15 years and is very passionate about women's empowerment. Her career with Transnet started in the container sector at the Durban Terminal where she implemented the Navis Computer system, the first of its use in South Africa, and she was part of the team that pioneered its successful implementation. Ntomb'zenhlanzeko holds a Master's Degree in Management Sciences specializing in Business Administration. She has recently been awarded with an Alumni status at the University of Stellenbosch Business School. Ntomb'zenhlanzeko is also a proud founder of Funda Usebenza Mtomusha Initiative (FUMI) aimed at empowering underprivileged youth by harnessing their entrepreneurial skills in the rural community. Ntomb'zenhlanzeko is a proud mother of 2 boys. She believes in learning both formal and informal to be able to navigate through life's challenges. Her drive to provide a bright future for her kids is what motivates her to give her best every day.



JARED GRAY
EXECUTIVE MANAGER: BUSINESS PLANNING, GAUTRAIN MANAGEMENT AGENCY

With over 12 years' experience in Professional Services and rail-related projects, Jared has gained substantial knowledge and expertise in leading major projects across the Transport & Logistics environment. Prior to joining the GMA, Jared led the Strategy and Enablement practice of a local professional services firm which specialises in strategic formulation, transaction advisory, turnarounds as well as technology consulting. Jared's role was primarily focused on new business development, talent management and development, and customer engagement and management. Jared has a keen interest in marrying the digital world with the business world having published literature on Blockchain in Financial Services as well as the Service Quality of Mobility on Demand Services. Jared currently holds a degree in Economics, a PGDip in Business Administration, a Master's in Business Administration (MBA) and a Master's in Digital Business. Jared is also fellow of the Young African Leadership Initiative.



KERSHIN NAIDOO
BUSINESS SOLUTIONS ANALYST, IMPERIAL (A DP WORLD COMPANY)

Living by the great Albert Einstein's words "Strive not to be a success, but to be of value", Kershin is a mechanical engineer presently holding the position of Senior Manager at Imperial Health Sciences, now DP World. Having chosen the path of engineering to better understand the world we live in, he consistently aims to improve the lives of those he touches. Coming from humble beginnings in a small town in Durban, he has grown from a young boy playing soccer on the streets with neighbourhood kids to playing the art of war in corporate boardrooms. In his leisure time, you would find him finding new hiking spots with his fiancé, hitting the gym or absorbed in a book. He is grateful for everyone that has played a part in helping him achieve what he has thus far, and aims to keep pushing, adapting and overcoming whatever obstacles come his way in order to make sure his success is the value he has left behind.



SIYAMTHANDA NDLAKUSE
EXECUTIVE MANAGER: COMMERCIAL & CONTRACT MANAGEMENT, GAUTRAIN MANAGEMENT AGENCY

Siyamthanda's portfolio includes providing assurance over the concession contract as well as oversight on the socio-economic development achievements of the Gautrain Project. Siyamthanda has a degree in Construction Economics and BSc(Hons) in Quantity Surveying. She previously worked as a Cost Manager at Turner and Townsend delivering on key strategic projects for the GMA, including enhancements to various parking facilities at the stations, the extension of the platform at Gautrain's O.R. Tambo International Airport station as well as the Gautrain's procurement of additional rolling stock project. Siyamthanda is currently leading the project concerned with closing out the Gautrain Concession Agreement. Siyamthanda is very passionate about all things leadership as well as the empowerment & development of youth and young women. Her hobbies include reading, working out and spending time with family.



NYIKO NKUNA
EXECUTIVE MANAGER: DIGITAL PRODUCTS & MOBILITY AS A SERVICE, GAUTRAIN MANAGEMENT AGENCY

Nyiko holds a Bachelor's Degree in Computer Science and Mathematics, an MBA and is a certified PMP practitioner. Nyiko has over 15 years' experience in technology and the telecoms industry. Prior to his time at the Gautrain Management Agency, Nyiko held various technology related roles at of MTN Business, Vodacom Business, Ericsson and Cell C. Nyiko's current roles and responsibilities at the GMA include the development and implementation of smart technology products on the Gautrain system to enable an efficient and effective transport ecosystem. Nyiko joined the GMA in 2018 as the Senior Manager of Intelligent Transport Systems, responsible for integrating transport technology products into the Gautrain system.

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