



SPECIAL EDITION – THE CHAIR’S YOUTH PROJECT

The W&R Seta Leadership Chair: Gauteng proudly announces the launch of a unique new youth empowerment pilot project, funded by the W&R Seta and in partnership with UJ!





Project partners and sponsors

The following are our strategic partners and sponsors for this youth empowerment project.



Our recruitment partner, *Konke Business Solutions*, spent a few weeks advertising, and then interviewing and selecting our 100 youth, and have proven to be a phenomenal partner and great support in this process thus far – to both the Chair and the youth. Over 400 applications were received, and *Konke worked day and night to secure the top candidates*.

Our partner, *Batho Pele Sales and Merchandising (Pty) Ltd*, will employ 100 youth as field marketers in fast moving consumer goods (FMCG) stores across Gauteng. Batho Pele is a respected industry leader in retail merchandising.

Of the recruited 100 students, 80 are enrolled for the online UJ Retail Business Management Certificate. As the students are studying completely online, they receive 20 gigabytes of data per month for the year, courtesy of *Telkom*. This vital sponsorship will go a long way to allow our students to access online resources and study effectively without worrying about data costs.

The *Youth Owned Brands Awards (YOBAs)* have partnered with us to give away six tickets to South Africa's second annual YOBA awards, taking place on 15 June 2023. These tickets will be presented to the top performers in our academic and employment programmes. We are grateful for YOBAs' support in recognising and celebrating excellence and hard work, and trust that the youth attending this event will be inspired by the entrepreneurial spirit and achievements of other youth.

The remaining 20 of the 100 selected youth do not have matric, or have a poor matric, and are enrolled for a matric completion or rewrite at the *Star School's* campus in Braamfontein. *Star Schools* have a great pass rate and reputation, and we have high expectations of this partnership.





About the project

Uplifting the retail sector

Millions of people are employed in the retail sector in South Africa, which contributes a significant amount to the country's gross domestic product. Historically, retail has not been associated with professional careers in South Africa. The principal objective of this youth empowerment project is to introduce, educate, inspire, and equip 100 young people with sales, marketing, business, and merchandising skills. The programme also seeks to provide them with a broader perspective on the multiple careers they could pursue when they choose to work in retail and focus on growing in it. Among the careers that could be pursued are store manager, marketer, buyer, and logistics – to name just a few. Others could also start their own business.

What is this initiative about?

By providing valuable training and employment opportunities in the thriving retail sector, this initiative will empower and uplift 100 young people. It is expected that the training and skills development programme will equip these young people with new skills and knowledge that will enable them to be more successful in the retail work space in the future. They might even feel confident enough from their learning to establish and run their own business, thereby making a huge difference to their future success.

Why is this project unique?

University studies. Over the last few years, many young people have entered the retail sector via learnerships. Given this, the Chair has identified an excellent opportunity to provide young people with a chance to obtain practical work experience in the workplace while studying at university. Those who perform well in their UJ qualification can apply for the UJ's Diploma in Retail Business Management the following year, and continue studying. If they are accepted, they will also get credits for three modules in the first year of the Diploma.

Completing a matric. The Chair has realised that many young people have encountered real difficulties that keep them from completing their matric. Twenty of them are therefore given a second chance to write the National Senior Certificate at the end of the year.

The long-awaited W&R Seta Leadership Chair: Gauteng youth development project launch was a major event!

We are thrilled to share with you the highlights from the launch of the W&R Seta Leadership Chair: Gauteng youth development programme, which took place on 13 February at the UJ's Kingsway Library. The event was graced by esteemed industry and academic guests who delivered inspiring speeches to motivate and empower the youth. Our MC, Ms Nonto Mokoena, set the tone for the event. Dr Beate Stiehler-Mulder, W&R Seta Leadership Chair: Gauteng, Prof. Mercy Mpinganjira, director of SCiiS, and Mr Tom Mkhwanazi, the CEO of the Seta, were among the speakers who shared their rich insights, motivation, and knowledge.

The occasion also featured entertaining and inspiring speeches by Mr Manfree Maake, an experienced managing director who started his career as a till packer at Pick n Pay and rose to the top level of management. He has also studied for an MBA. Another presentation was given by Mr Patrick Mahlangu, a successful entrepreneur, the founder of South Africa's first Youth Owned Brands Awards (YOBA), and CEO of Lerato Agency. Marketer and word poet Ms Mo Malele entertained the youth with a profound poem entitled 'Why I write'. UJ's exceptionally talented arts students also treated the audience to two poem presentations and a stunning dance routine.

Our strategic partners, Mr Grant Jooste from Batho Pele and Mrs Wendy Baloyi from Telkom, also gave powerful and inspiring speeches at the event. Sir Jephrey Nene, W&R Seta Provincial Manager: Gauteng, gave the closing remarks as an employer representative, and even got the youth to sing. We cannot wait to see this project's impact on the lives of these young people!





With this innovative pilot project, we are giving it our all to pave the way for a brighter future for the next generation of retail professionals!



Ms Nonto Mokoena, SCiS Marketing Manager and MC, welcomed guests to the launch





Mr Patrick Mahlangu of YOBA and Lerato Agency telling his personal story

While narrating his personal story, Patrick told the delegates that education is the only way up. Those who are going to succeed in this programme are those who will go the extra mile. He added that the level of determination you give to this programme will determine how far you go.



Mr Grant Jooste of Batho Pele, a strategic partner, giving his remarks during the launch

Mr Jooste said that it was essential to understand that there is no gain without sacrifice. Without sacrifice, there is no success – and success is uphill all the way.





Mrs Wendy Baloyi, strategic partner and Business Development Manager (Public Sector), Telkom

Mrs Baloyi said: “As Telkom, we are delighted to be part of the programme. Development, employment, and upliftment of young people is a priority for Telkom.” She announced that the project participants would receive a total of 20 gigabytes of data monthly.



Motivational talk... Mr Manfree Maake, an employer representative, gave his motivational talk to the gathering. “There is every position you can think of in this industry. All you need is work hard, study, read your books. Ask questions, read, study, and build relationships.”



Closing remarks... Sir Jephrey Nene, the W&R Seta Provincial Manager: Gauteng

Sir Jephrey, here giving the closing remarks at the event, called upon the young people to stay the course and work hard in their studies and at work.





In the picture... Some of the young people, together with the Seta CEO, Mr Tom Mkhwanazi (fifth from left) and Dr Beate Stiehler-Mulder, the W&R Seta Leadership Chair: Gauteng (fourth from right)



*Dr Beate Stiehler-Mulder,
W&R Seta Leadership Chair:
Gauteng*

While giving her opening remarks, Dr Beate Stiehler-Mulder, the W&R Seta Leadership Chair: Gauteng, remarked that work experience is a critical part of career growth. She mentioned that education helps young people to develop problem-solving skills and to be innovative and creative in how they view the world, its different challenges, and how to tackle them.





Mr Tom Mkhwanazi, W&R Seta CEO

A key point from Mr Mkhwanazi's speech: "Out of the seven strategy priorities we have as Seta, one of them is youth development focusing on employment. We have various forms of bursaries that young people in retail can explore. The world of work is fast evolving, and the W&R sector is adapting to these changes. It is imperative that W&R respond with agility."



Prof. Mercy Mpinganjira, Director of SCiS: "We are about global stature. We are making sure that the training and skills we provide is something that will make you stand wherever you may be, not only in South Africa."



Some of the young people who attended the skills development launch



Poet Mo Malele providing entertainment during the launch



Dance, music, poetry... Members of the UJ Art School providing entertainment during the launch of the youth empowerment programme

