

African Bank Limited press release

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Learners in mentorship programme pass with flying colours

The future looks bright for all 11 learners who were taken under the wing of African Bank as part of a mentorship programme in 2016. All had big dreams of a higher University education. Today they are celebrating their achievement - All of the girls passed Matric with a Bachelor's admission averaging 70% and they have all been accepted into University for 2018. Significantly Jessica Sehlabelo, one of our girls from Inqayizivele Secondary School, was the top student in Ekurhuleni North, achieving 100% in Accounting and Physical Science.

African Bank's Hanri Nel, together with her colleagues Bibi Tilly who drove the project, said it has been an exhilarating 24 months. "When we first started the programme in 2016 we identified top achievers in the three schools African Bank had selected as part of its mentorship programme. The schools included Umqhele Comprehensive and Inqayizivele Secondary school in Ivory Park and Thuko Ke Maatla Secondary in Tembisa.

"We never dreamt our girls would do so well. The programme was all about equipping our learners to survive 'life after Grade 12'. The journey was not always easy and we have learnt so much along the way. The programme included providing the girls with weekly extra lessons in Maths, Accounting, and Science and this has really paid off. We also needed to provide the girls with laptops, study guides, calculators and stationery. To ensure they were on track we held regular career guidance workshops which included Psychometric testing. This year we also introduced work readiness programmes with external stakeholders and hosted one-on-one mentoring," says Nel.

Nel comments, “Being part of this journey has been such a blessing. These girls have demonstrated that sheer guts, determination and loads of hard work pay off!”

African Bank will continue to support the girls this year helping them with payment of registration fees, bursary and National Student Financial Aid Scheme applications, groceries, data and toiletries and the like. The bank is also looking into assisting the girls with part time work over weekends and evenings to give them some career experience and placing each girl with an African banker to act as her personal mentor. “Once again we realise how tough it still is for our girls. Many of them still have to wait for payment of grants and bursaries and can’t organise their accommodation until then. For the first month or so they need to get to Varsity and can’t afford the travelling costs - the R31 per day to get to Wits is a problem and we have some students who have to travel to Pretoria. These are just some of the many hurdles our girls need to overcome,” says Nel.

Kennedy Dembetembe, who heads up the bank’s national CSI drive concludes, “As an organisation we would like to encourage other organisations to embark on similar projects. The high dropout rate amongst first year university students is alarming and this has a lot to do with readiness. If corporate SA could get behind more initiatives of this nature I feel we would definitely see an improvement. It’s all about starting small, aiming big and laying the ground for success.”

Add box

African Bank's shining stars

Name	Surname	Institution
Puseletso	Thobejane	University of Pretoria
Mpho	Magabe	HC Lawrence Nursing College
Montsheng	Madonsela	Da Vinci Institute
Lerato	Mohlafase	Medunsa
Sindiswa	Khosa	University of Johannesburg
Phetang	Maleka	Tshwane University of Technology
Tsebo	Nchabelang	University of Pretoria
Kgotlelo	Nonyane	University of Johannesburg
Jessica	Sehlabelo	University of Witwatersrand
Ellen	Mhlongo	University of Johannesburg
Lisbeth	Sehodi	Ann Lasky Nursing College

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