

2019 WPN Leadership Conference encourages women to think collaboratively

The Women's Property Network (WPN) Gauteng Chapter hosted its annual Leadership Conference on Friday, 8 March, aimed at women working across South Africa's real estate industry. This year's conference coincided with International Women's Day.



Jackline Okeyo, WPN Gauteng Chapter chairperson and Nthwese Development business development and operations manager

The theme, “BeUnshakable”, encouraged women to remain resilient during tough and uncertain economic times which were prevalent in the listed property and construction sector last year. This year’s conference encouraged women to think more collaboratively in positioning themselves and pursuing opportunities.

“Over the years, WPN’s focus on creating a professional networking platform for women in the sector and raising funding to provide bursaries to women studying towards property-related degrees has proven to be beneficial as we have seen an increased number of female entrants actively participating in the sector”, says Jackline Okeyo, chairperson of WPN’s Gauteng Chapter. “Going forward we are seeking opportunities to create greater impact and further empower women in the sector. We are working on some exciting new initiatives that we will announce during the course of the year.



Disebo Mbebhuli, head of corporate and investment banking at Standard Bank with host Cathy Mohlahlana

Strong speaker lineup

Seasoned journalist and news anchor Cathy Mohlahlana hosted the event with the lineup of speakers including Kundayi Munzara, co-founder and executive director at Sesfikile Capital; founder of Be-Clear, Tanya Stevens; Jean Chawapiwa, country director of WEConnect International (SA); Tshepiso Kobile, commercial manager executive: infrastructure, Tongaat Hulett Developments; Charmaine Schwenn, director, Schwenn Incorporated; Somaya Joshua, executive relationship manager, Standard Bank; Nonhlanhla Mayisela, CEO of Izandla Property; and keynote speaker Irene Charnley, founder of Pan-African telecoms group Smile Telecoms. The various discussions shared insights into developing a strong sense of self-awareness to perform at one's peak as well as how women can use their achievements and roles to further build on the legacy of women empowerment in the sector.

Since 2008, WPN has awarded over 70 bursaries worth R4.3m to previously disadvantaged female students studying towards a property-related degree or diploma at various institutions around the country.

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