Programme Pioneers

Programme Pioneers are individuals who will actively promote the programme and help deliver the vision and goal. These are individuals who have committed to contribute their professional and personal influence as well as their strategic thinking to achieve the goals of Nelson Mandela – The Champion Within.

Dr. Reuel Khoza

Dr. Khoza is currently Chairman of Aka Capital (Pty) Limited, Nedbank Group Ltd, Director: Nampak Ltd. and Old Mutual plc. Co-author of the Power of Governance. Author of Let Africa Lead. Deputy Chairman of the Nepad Business Foundation (NBF). He is also currently Fellow and President of the Institute of Directors in Southern Africa. In addition Dr Khoza is also visiting Professor at Rhodes Investec Business School, Rhodes University; Professor Extraordinaire Emeritus of the University of Stellenbosch Business School and Chancellor – University of Limpopo.

Dr. Khoza is a Life Champion / Mentor at Life College.

Santie Botha

Santie Botha is currently Chancellor: Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, PE. She also maintains her connection to the corporate world as Non Executive Director: Tiger Brands and Non Executive Director: Imperial Holdings. Her previous corporate experience includes Executive Director: Marketing at the MTN Group. Previous to that she was Executive Director: ABSA Bank and before that Commercial Sales Director: VdB Foodservice, Unilever, U.K.

Some of her awards include Marketer of the Year 2002 (Marketing Federation of South Africa) and Business Woman of the Year 2010.

Santie is a Life Champion / Mentor at Life College.

Wendy Lucas-Bull

Wendy Lucas-Bull is one of the four Founders of Peotona Group Holdings. Until October 2004, Wendy was CEO of the retail business of FirstRand. Prior to that, Wendy was an Executive Director of Rand Merchant Bank. She was founding chairman of Business Against Crime (“BAC”). She was previously a member of the council of University of South Africa (UNISA). Some previous board positions include: Eskom, Telkom, Aveng (Deputy Chair), Dimension Data PLC and Lafarge Industries (chairman). She was also a Panel Member of the Minister of Housing Advisory Panel. Her current board positions include Development Bank of Southern Africa, Anglo American Platinum Limited, Nedbank Group and the IQ Business Group. She is a Member of the Millennium Labour Council and was appointed during 2010 by President Zuma to serve on the President’s BEE Advisory Council.

Wendy is a Life Champion / Mentor at Life College.

Dr. Reuel Khoza’s message of support

“The champion mind-set is a ‘sine qua non’ to any achievement of substance. Those with champion mind-sets dream wakeful dreams, articulate these to themselves and those around them and pursue those visions doggedly.”

Santie Botha’s message of support

“Our leaders of tomorrow are the youth. It is our responsibility as the leaders of today that our youth inherit the Nelson Mandela champion mentality to ensure a sustainable future.”

Wendy Lucas-Bull’s message of support

“Beyond the boardroom and matters of national concern, as a mother I know that the greatest gift we can give our children is a strong self-concept that is values-aligned, purpose-centred and engaged. This programme will inspire a generation of future leaders.”

1 ‘sine qua non’ – an essential condition
Jabulane Albert Mabuza

Jabu Mabuza is Group CE of Tsogo Sun Holdings (Pty) Ltd. He has held directorships for various companies including: Amalgamated Retailis Ltd, HCI, New Seasons Investments (Pty) Ltd (NSI), Boymans Ltd, Marconi Communications, ABSA, OK Bazaars, African Renaissance Holdings (ARH) and ABI. Jabu served as Chairman of Mpumalanga Development Corporation, Future Bank Ltd, and was Chief Executive of the South African Black Taxi Association (SABTA) and Chief Executive of the Foundation for African Business and Consumer Services (FABCOS). Jabu was Chairman of the Marketing Federation of Southern Africa (MFSA). Jabu has presented several papers around the world on Black Economic Empowerment Investment in SA.

Jabu was the recipient of the 2004 Impumelelo, Top 300 Empowerment Awards as a Top Black Business Personality of the Year. In 2009 Jabu was the recipient of the University of Limpopo “Excellence Award in Business 2009”, an award that was conferred on him by his alma mater, the University of Limpopo.

Jabu is a Life Champion / Mentor at Life College.

Jabu Mabuza’s message of support

“Every child and every student deserves the opportunity to learn from and be inspired by Madiba’s great example. Nelson Mandela – The Champion Within provides that opportunity. As a businessman and a father I feel we must commit ourselves to building a nation of champions.”

Pregs Govender

An activist against Apartheid since 1974, Pregs Govender began working as a teacher at schools and at university. In the 80’s she joined the trade union movement, serving as National Educator before heading the Workers College. Pregs managed the Women’s National Coalition, which mobilised women’s impact on SA’s Constitution.

She was elected MP in 1994 during the Mandela-era. She initiated SA’s gender budgeting, which influenced SA’s National Budget and inspired similar initiatives globally. She was elected Chair of Parliament’s Committee on Women and ensured that 80% of its legislative priorities were enacted. During the Mbeki era, she chaired public hearings on HIV/AIDS. After being the only MP to register opposition to the arms deal in the Defence Budget Vote itself, Pregs resigned in 2002. She is a member of the global Panel on Human Dignity. Her awards include honorary doctorates in Law and Philosophy, the Ruth First Fellowship and the Fulbright New Century Scholarship. Pregs is the author of Love and Courage: A Story of Insubordination. She was the Chair of the Independent Panel Review of Parliament (08-09). Parliament voted unanimously for her appointment as SAHRC Commissioner where she currently serves as its Deputy Chair.

Pregs is a Life Champion / Mentor at Life College.

Pregs Govender’s message of support

“One million youth inspired by the values and personal discipline of Madiba, will seed a revolution of love and social justice by millions more.”
Doug Smollan

Doug is chairman of the Smollan Group, a family business 80 years young, 3rd generation, that employs 30000 people and operates in 5 continents. Doug has been involved in fighting crime since 1997 as initiator and chairman of Business Against Crime (BAC) from 1997 to 2000 and the Consumer Goods Council of South Africa Anti-Crime Initiative.

Doug is a Life Champion / Mentor at Life College.

Doug Smollan’s message of support

“Great leadership builds winning nations. The dream of developing one million Life Champions by 2020, seeded through the Nelson Mandela – The Champion Within programme, will align SA’s talent on a course toward a moral, courageous and productive nation.”

Joel Khathutshelo Netshitenzhe

Joel is Vice Chairperson and Executive Director of the Mapungubwe Institute for Strategic Reflection (MISTRA).

Before 1994, he served in various capacities within the ANC: Radio Freedom, Editor Mayibuye, member of the ANC Politico-Military Council and Deputy Head of the Department of Information and Publicity and as part of the ANC negotiating team. He has been a member of the National Executive Committee (NEC) of the ANC since 1991. Before joining the Government Communication and Information System (GCIS) as CEO in 1998, he was Head of Communication in President Nelson Mandela’s office. In addition he was appointed in 2001 to Head of the Policy Co-ordination and Advisory Services (PCAS) in The Presidency. He headed the PCAS on a full-time basis from 2006 until his retirement in 2009. He was a member of the Advisory Board of the Nelson Mandela Trust. He now works as an independent researcher. He is a member of the National Planning Commission of the South African government, and serves on the board of CEEF Africa (a section 21 company dealing with tertiary education opportunities). He was recently appointed as a non-executive Director to the Board of Nedbank.

Joel is a Life Champion / Mentor at Life College.

Joel Netshitenzhe’s message of support

“Nelson Mandela – The Champion Within provides a unique opportunity to build networks that have the potential to awaken the giant in each of our young people and stir the genius that lies suppressed by self-doubt... for each to realise that in their individual uniqueness, lies the potential to take forward Mandela’s endeavours, so we can assert our humanity and forge a spirit of social solidarity.”