

Big sponsors collaborate to support the 2011 Top Women Awards

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Topco Media announced today that South Africa's national oil company, PetroSA, has signed on as a major sponsor of the country's leading gender empowerment event - the 8th Annual **Top Women Awards**. Other big business sponsors backing the event include the Airports Company South Africa (ACSA) and Standard Bank.



The **Top Women Awards**, now in its 8th year, celebrates and recognises people and companies who are actively promoting professional women in the workplace.

Karla Fletcher, Associate Publisher for Topco Media, says that the support of high profile companies like PetroSA and Standard Bank is helping to keep the important issue of gender empowerment at the forefront of the South African business agenda.

"Companies are recognising the vital contribution that strong women make to the sustainable growth of the country and are paying more than just lip service to the issue by not only adapting their business strategies to empower women, but by supporting initiatives like the **Top Women Awards**, which work to recognise and uplift women."

Thabo Mabaso, External Communications Manager for PetroSA says that the company is proud to be associated with the **Top Women Awards**.

"PetroSA takes the issue of gender empowerment very seriously. These Awards present us with a wonderful opportunity to support an initiative that publicly celebrates the achievements of women. South Africa has made significant strides when it comes to the advancement of women, but a lot more remains to be done."

Standard Bank, South Africa's largest banking institution is sponsoring the SMME category of the Awards at this year's event. Human Resources Director, Professor Shirley Zinn, says that the company believes that there is a social and economic imperative for transformation in South Africa.

"Standard Bank is an organ of society and is therefore influenced by, and in turn influences, society. We recognise that if transformation is going to enhance the growth strategy of Standard Bank, our attitude and strategy towards achieving meaningful transformation cannot be limited to only meeting compliance targets," explains Professor Zinn.

"Women are the bedrock of our economy and providing access to finance to women-owned businesses, ensuring that we are procuring from women-owned businesses, and supporting skills development initiatives for women, will progress the course of gender equality and alleviate poverty, especially in rural areas, and provide job opportunities for women. Standard Bank is committed to building a non-sexist, democratic society and ensuring a better life for all in South Africa."

This year's **Top Women Awards** is set to be staged at the Gallagher Convention Centre in Johannesburg on Thursday, 22 September 2011.

The VIP guest list for the gala event includes popular radio and television celebrities, top South African businessmen and women, and government officials amongst others.

Companies who would like to enter this year's **Top Women Awards** need to act quickly and submit their entries before the closing date on 19 August 2011. For more information, companies can contact 086 000 9590, email haley.fletcher@topco.co.za or visit www.topwomenawards.com.

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