

Saluting and celebrating our clients

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One of the greatest joys of being a PR practitioner is finding clients whose values are aligned with your own. At Grapevine Communications, we're delighted to be able to say that all of our clients tick this box: apart from the day to day operations which make them leaders in their various fields, many support interventions that are making a significant contribution to the South African community.

We'd like to take a moment to celebrate those initiatives.

For instance, lifestyle resort Steyn City – the beautiful 2000 acres in Johannesburg's far north - has established the Steyn City Foundation as a vehicle to drive development in the neighbouring community of Diepsloot, with a special focus on education. The foundation is funded by the company's shareholders, with 0.5% of annual turnover allocated for its projects.

Delivering Happiness to Diepsloot is the foundation's flagship project. Every December, convoys of trucks depart from the lifestyle resort, on a mission to deliver schoolbags filled stationery and spoils to the children in neighbouring Diepsloot. The initiative has become a time-honoured tradition and a way of giving back to the community which supports the resort in so many ways.

Afrika Tikkun was established in 1995 by the late Chief Rabbi Cyril Harris and businessman/philanthropist Bertie Lubner. Since inception, the organisation has focused on upskilling youth in answer to the problem of youth unemployment in South Africa. This means it is uniquely positioned to respond to the call put forward by President Cyril Ramaphosa: Thuma Mina. The organisation has recently revised its approach: although still promoting a model of Cradle to Career development that ensures youth graduating from its programmes are equipped not only with the technical competencies, but also the social skills to excel in any workplace, it is now positioned to source talent for members of the business sector that are serious about job creation and ending youth unemployment. Under this new guise, it holds itself as accountable as any other corporate supplier – and is thus deepening its efforts to help youth not only just find jobs, but create careers.

One of the most exciting voices to have been featured on Beautiful News – a multimedia platform dedicated to promoting inspiring, uplifting South African stories – is that of hip hop rapper, Yugen Blakrok. Blakrok is fast becoming recognised as a warrior for Afrofuturism, a movement countering the dominant narratives that portray Africa as inferior or 'less than'. Her music is not only a celebration of authenticity; it is also a triumphal tribute to South Africa and her people as she strives to make it known that South Africa's story is not one of struggle, but one of overcoming.

Paula Galvao, founder of Eden Life Weight Loss Clinic (a clinic with a unique focus on the impact of biochemical imbalances as a source of weight gain), is gaining a reputation as a champion against discrimination in the workplace, with a special focus on overweight people. Having been overweight up until her mid-twenties, Paula is all too familiar with the challenges that accompany extra kilograms – all the more unjust because these are usually a product of insulin resistance, rather than overeating. Paula therefore fights not only to counter the perception of overweight people as lazy and lacking willpower; she also works alongside them to help create healthier lifestyle patterns and choices that are easily maintained. Her empathy and insight have made her a force for female empowerment, and a role model for many young South African women. She has also partnered with celebrities like Leanne Manas, PJ Powers and Tumisho Masha, guiding them on their weight loss or maintenance journey and helping them address related challenges. In so doing, she has helped to create a host of self-esteem heroes that ordinary South Africans can look up to.

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