

JSE and FedEx Express win big at 17th Annual Standard Bank Top Women Awards 2020

Issued by [Topco Media](#)

7 Oct 2020

Topco Media is thrilled to announce the winners for this year's prestigious Standard Bank Top Women Awards. As most businesses had to, the awards pivoted to become a completely virtual experience. Held on Friday evening, the awards honoured those whose unfailing vision and innovative leadership have positively impacted women in South Africa. With over 20 categories, the most coveted awards were Business Woman of The Year, Business of The Year and the Lifetime Achievement Award.



2020 Standard Bank Top Women virtual awards

Business woman of the year was awarded to Natasha Parmanand, Managing Director Legal, Regulatory Affairs and Labour Relations for FedEx Express Sub Saharan Africa, Middle East, India Subcontinent and Africa (MEISA), "This award means so much to me because it wouldn't have been possible without my team," remarked Parmanand. Further she explained that FedEx's comprehensive employee training program is one of the best parts of working with the renowned company.

Recognising a woman whose career is testament to the power of passion, resilience and hard work the Lifetime Achievement Award went to Justice Yvonne Mokgoro. Starting out as a nursing assistant she went to obtain her LLB degree and make a substantial impact in the field, particularly in human rights, customary law and the way in which she highlighted the impact of law on women and children. In December 2015 Justice Mokgoro received the Order of the Baobab in Bronze for "her excellent contribution in the field of law and administration of justice in a democratic South Africa".

Altogether the awards recognise women across a broad spectrum of industries including property, tourism and finance. The Top Woman in Property Award was awarded to Yael Geffen, a powerhouse force in the industry, "when my grandmother, Aïda Geffen, first started out in property, her and Pam Golding changed the way that people perceived women in property. I'm so glad that there's a shift yet again which is bringing female talent to the forefront of the property industry," says Geffen.

Judged by the crème de la crème of corporate South Africa including De Beers Managing Director, Mpumi Zikalala and GirlCode founder, Zandile Mkwanazi the awards consider several criteria including successful policy implementation and representation within the business.

Top Gender-empowered organisation: Business of the Year Award which was the most coveted award of the evening was awarded to the Johannesburg Stock Exchange. As a company that actively promotes women Donald Khumalo, HR Director, further explained, "we don't just have representation in terms of percentages at all levels of the business, we also work to implement programs so that women can thrive in our organisation particularly during these unprecedented times."

Overall the awards were the culmination of the two day conference that saw mavens such as Peggy-Sue Khumalo, CEO Standard Bank Wealth South Africa, Advocate Thuli Madonsela, Saara Kuugongelwa-Amadhila, Prime Minister of Namibia and even Miss Universe Zozibini Tunzi come together to tackle issues around gender empowerment. The keynote address given by Swati Mandela set the tone for the conference and awards where she eloquently explained that power of women coming together drawing on inspiration from her grandmother Winnie Madikizela-Mandela, "I found that women who are strangers to me have also been a source of strength and I think coming around and rallying around each other is something that we all need to do more now than ever. I've found that finding wisdom from the older generation and tapping into a lot of those value systems and those principles has really helped me kind of just reflect on my own personal life and just decide what it is and how do I want to live my life going forward."

The discussions and insights shared set the groundwork for next year's conference and awards. For the full list of 2020 winners click here: <https://bit.ly/3iyg4oP>.

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