

Top retail group doubles support for gender empowerment awards

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Edcon, the leading clothing, footwear and textile retailing group in South Africa is sponsoring not one, but two categories at this year's prestigious 8th Annual Top Women Awards - evidence that the group is taking the issue of gender empowerment seriously.



The Edcon group will sponsor the Public Service Category of the Awards while Edgars, the Group's leading retail brand will sponsor the Top Young Women Entrepreneur Category of the awards.

Jackie Mathebula, Group Executive, Transformation & Corporate Affairs at Edcon says that the Edcon Group will sponsor the Public Service Category of the Awards because as a company, they recognise the contribution and achievements of women in government.

"The Edcon Group has established relationships with government through our partnership programmes and by sponsoring the Public Service Category of the Awards we hope to show our support of the women who make such an important difference in this arena.

"The Edcon Group also believes that supporting and encouraging female entrepreneurs is crucial for a well functioning business environment and it is with this in mind that our leading retail clothing brand Edgars will also sponsor the Top Young Women Entrepreneur Category of the awards."

Mathebula says that Edcon regards the empowerment of women very highly and that some of its core business strategies focus on the needs of women. Edcon has established gender sub-committees within the group which focus on issues that women face in the workplace and give women within the company a voice to drive gender specific initiatives.

"Edcon actively supports transformation at all levels and we believe that initiatives like the Top Women Awards are an excellent platform to recognise women's achievements and their contribution to society.

"As a Good Corporate Citizen, we believe in empowering communities, and especially want to make a difference to the traditionally vulnerable areas of society. Apart from being involved as a sponsor in events like the Top Women Awards, we have aligned all of our internal company strategies to reflect our commitment to the upliftment and empowering of women in the workplace and in the communities we serve."

The **Top Women Awards** takes place at the Gallagher Convention Centre on Thursday, 22 September 2011 and provides companies with a unique platform to showcase their gender empowerment success stories and to award strong women who deserve to be recognised for their professional achievements.

About Edcon

Edcon (Pty) Ltd is the leading clothing, footwear and textiles (CFT) retailing group in South Africa trading through a range of retail formats. The first Edgars store was opened on 6 September 1929 in Joubert Street, Johannesburg. Since then, the Company has grown to ten retail brands trading in over 1000 stores in South Africa, Botswana, Namibia, Swaziland and Lesotho.

Edcon's retail business has, through recent acquisitions, added top stationery and houseware brands as well as general merchandise to its CFT portfolio. Defined by the target markets served, all retail business is structured under two divisions: Department Stores Division, including Edgars, CNA, Boardmans, Prato, Red Square and Temptations, serving middle and upper income markets and Discount Division including Jet,

Jet Mart, Jet Shoes, Legit and Blacksnow, serving middle to lower income markets. Edcon Financial Services provides credit facilities and financial services products to the Group's over 4 million cardholders.

For more information, please visit: www.edcon.co.za.

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