



Media Release

Celebrating the Class of 2024: SAPOA's flagship Property Development Programme (PDP)

The 2024 class of SAPOA's flagship Property Development Programme (PDP) recently celebrated its graduation at an intimate dinner at The Table Bay Hotel.

In its 53rd year, the PDP, sponsored by Growthpoint Properties, has been a long-standing partnership between SAPOA and UCT's Graduate Business School and over the years, it has trained approximately 2 800 professionals including SAPOA's CEO, Neil Gopal (1998) and SAPOA's President and MD of Vukile Property Fund, Itumeleng Mothibeli (2014).

Designed to sharpen skills, broaden knowledge, and to inspire leadership, 2024's cohort, comprised 40 individuals including six international students from Saudi Arabia, Botswana, Nigeria, and Zimbabwe while also marking the highest number of female participants in PDP history.

In addressing 2024's graduates, Itumeleng Mothibeli touched on his experience with the PDP and his reflections in the years that followed:

"Courses like SAPOA's PDP are crucial, particularly in the current juncture where SA finds itself. The only way forward for our country, in my opinion, is to have a high return on potential by focusing on people, communities, and end users. One of the critical things that we need to factor is that the world around us is constantly changing and with property, we are not only creating spaces for a rapidly changing world, but it must be timeless. The graduates sitting in this room understand how people move and change and if merged with their expertise, we can come up with creative ways that will enable communities to thrive and to form the bedrock of a successful country," he said.

"Over the past ten years, I have done business with about six professionals who were part of my PDP cohort in 2014. PDP is multi-disciplinary, and you interact with other professionals that you wouldn't normally liaise with. In addition, the level of work involved is at such a level that it exposes you to what's happening in the outside world. Identify the different industries among yourselves and keep in touch to build relationships that will really make a difference in what you do."

The course, which ran between the 7th of October 2024 to the 1st of November 2024, was predominantly held online with the last week spent at UCT GSB in Cape Town.

For their final project, the students were grouped and tasked with a Strategic Development Vision (SDV) for one of the City of Cape Town's inner-city sites earmarked for affordable housing, on the corner of Buitengracht and Strand Streets.

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“Many of us have been involved with the PDP for many years and what is interesting to see is how this course is able to change with the property market. Apart from the numerous opportunities in Cape Town, things have changed,” said Professor Francois Viruly, Associate Professor: Department of Construction Economics and Management: UCT and one of the PDP lecturers.

“70% of Cape Town’s households earn R22 000 per month (or less) which means that they cannot buy property for more than R1 million. Of Cape Town’s 4.7 million population, 1.7 million live in informality. We often use the term ‘affordable housing market’ or ‘social housing market’ and of the 7 million title deeds we have, 70% of those are below R1 million. These markets are not a side show – they are the SA property market.”

“Previously when reviewing sites for the PDP, we would assess residual land value. Now, City Council are not asking developers for the highest residual land value but for social housing or affordable housing in lieu of the residual land value which is fundamental in the way in which we move forward,” he said.

“The site for 2024’s project was a collaboration between the PDP and the City of Cape Town, and we needed to carefully balance the social objectives with financial viability as well as what the municipality would require from the development.”

Group 3 won first prize, sponsored by Growthpoint Properties; **Group 4** won second prize, sponsored by VMQ Properties and **Group 1** won third prize, sponsored by SAPOA.

“While the winning group received an award this evening, it is not about the building and its functionality, it is about how the building integrates with the urban fabric and how it creates authentic experiences for the end users,” commented Pieter Engelbrecht, Head of Development at Growthpoint Properties and one of the PDP lecturers.

“The real challenge is how to create a sense of place and an emotional connection. I believe all this year’s graduates will create spaces where memories are made. In Melissa McDowell’s words: “Nothing is more rewarding than seeing the manifestation of your vision.”

“The one ask that I have for this year’s graduates is that SA needs to create enabling and inclusive spaces. As you start thinking about design and interactions, the context of those structures and where the land is, must always be at the forefront of development as well as how to build on the history and the legacy in what we do and how this differentiates us. This is what is going to make people interact with the spaces that we build while driving authenticity,” said Itumeleng.



“Property is cyclical, and the reality is, that over the past ten years (minus the regulatory challenges), macro and globally, we are seeing the greatest amount of possible green shoots. I look forward to witnessing you all design and develop something special.”

Property Development Programme Prize winners:

Group 3 - first prize winners: Neo Matheba, Paul Reyburn, Ross Dyer, Sireena Ramparsad, Lefa Mukwevho, Sarah Swaybey-Nicholson, Tshegofatso Molefe, Michael Isaacs, sponsored by Growthpoint Properties

Group 4 - second prize winners: Bongani Stig-Arne Zulu, Cecil Nkosikhona Gumbi, Aderinola Oluwakorede Ade-Adedeji, Sarah Jane Alexander, Pravina Samuel, Megan Daniell, Sindiso Hleza, Jeffrey Rodgerson, sponsored by VMQ Properties

Group 1 - third prize winners: Prevashnee Peter, Wendy Maclons, Michelle Flaatten, Kegomoditswe Chibizhe, Pumla Mlondo, Lizanne Evangelou, Khumo Moabi Mokale, Sindiswa Majjja, Hilton Morgan sponsored by SAPOA.