PRESS RELEASE FROM GROWTHPOINT PROPERTIES

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**Young achievers shine at the top of the Growthpoint Gems class**

***Life-changing internal education programme produces record number of graduates***

Growthpoint Properties recently celebrated the academic excellence of 21 students supported through its internal education programme, Gems, at two awards ceremonies held in Johannesburg and Cape Town. The events recognised the achievements of the programme’s “Class of 2024” – a group of bright young students from around the country who are realising their potential through access to quality education.

Launched in 2016, Gems provides educational support to the children of employees earning below a certain threshold, covering costs such as school fees, uniforms, stationery and other materials. The initiative also offers academic, psychosocial and personal and leadership growth development support. With students supported from Grade 4 through to tertiary level, the programme is unlocking opportunities and shaping future leaders from within Growthpoint’s own community.

**Recognising excellence, rewarding potential**

Previously, the awards recognised the five highest-performing students in each education phase – primary, secondary, and tertiary – based on academic averages of 70% and above. However, for the 2024 Top Achievers Awards, the number of young achievers recognised increased with higher levels of academic excellence.

Nine of this year’s awardees have consistently held top achiever status since joining the programme, demonstrating commitment to their studies. At the same time, several new achievers emerged, highlighting the transformative power of sustained academic, growth development support.

One student, a Grade 4 learner from Gauteng, earned the national top achiever title with an exceptional 90% average. This clearly demonstrates the value of a programme such as this for smart young learners at the foundational education level.

The achievers received shopping vouchers to be redeemed at various Growthpoint shopping centres and at Exclusive Books.

The awards also celebrated a significant milestone: Gems produced its highest-ever number of tertiary graduates this year, with 11 students completing qualifications in fields ranging from IT and law to hospitality and psychology.

**Class of 2024 Gems tertiary graduate**s:

* **Thato Mmutle:** Advanced Diploma in Transport Management
* **Lutho Kula:** Bachelor of Arts Honours in Live Performance
* **Jordyn Lewis:** Bachelor of Social Science in Psychology & Counselling
* **Lithemba Ngumbela:** BBA in Logistics & Supply Chain Management
* **Lesego Maponyane:** Bachelor of Laws (LLB)
* **Dilshaad October:** National Diploma in Information Technology
* **Keabetswe Moshapo:** National Diploma in IT Software Development
* **Rodale du Plessis:** National Diploma in Hospitality Management
* **Sebenzile Sangweni:** Higher Certificate in Construction & Engineering Drafting
* **Keenen Thwala:** Higher Certificate in Information Technology
* **Kamogelo Mashigo:** Higher Certificate in Information Technology & Support Services

Among the young achievers is Rodale du Plessis, a long-standing Gems participant grew up in the community of Mannenberg in the Cape Flats and is now employed internationally. After nearly a decade in the programme – which she credits for shaping her academic focus, mental resilience and long-term goals – Rodale recently completed her National Diploma in hospitality management and secured her first job abroad at Nobu by the Beach in Dubai.

*“The Gems programme moulded my mind to prioritise my goals. Even when I didn’t meet them, I kept going,”* she said. *“The support I received, especially the tutoring through high school, helped me believe I could dream big. That’s exactly what I did – and here I am.”*

**A long-term investment in people and potential**

Growthpoint’s leadership attended both award events to congratulate learners and reaffirm the business’s commitment to meaningful transformation.

*“Education is one of the greatest gifts we can give. It changes lives and opens doors,”* said Norbert Sasse, Growthpoint Group CEO. *“Our goal with Gems is to support our employees by investing in their children’s futures. When families thrive, so do our communities and our country does too.”*

Gems is one of Growthpoint’s flagship internal programmes and a key part of its broader social responsibility and transformation agenda. It is anchored on three pillars: academic support, psychosocial development, and personal and leadership growth. Growthpoint has invested around R9 million annually in the Gems programme over the past five years, demonstrating the business’s sustained commitment to meaningful impact.

Now nearing its 10-year anniversary, Gems continues to offer real and lasting impact that goes beyond through financial assistanceby helping learners build confidence, explore their aspirations and achieve success on their own terms.

*“We’ve seen learners grow, find their voice and reshape their perspectives on life,”* said Shawn Theunissen, Head of CSR and Transformation at Growthpoint. *“With everything we do, we aim for intentional impact. That’s what makes Gems so powerful.”*

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About Growthpoint Properties

Growthpoint creates space to thrive with innovative and sustainable property solutions in environmentally friendly buildings, while improving the social and material wellbeing of individuals and communities. Growthpoint is South Africa’s largest primary JSE-listed REIT. It is an international property company invested in real estate and communities in South Africa and across the African continent, Australia, the UK and Eastern Europe. Growthpoint is at the forefront of environmental innovation in the property sector in South Africa. Visit [growthpoint.co.za](http://www.growthpoint.co.za/) for more information. Connect with Growthpoint on [Facebook](http://www.facebook.com/Growthpoint), [Twitter](http://www.twitter.com/Growthpoint), [LinkedIn](http://www.linkedin.com/company/growthpoint-properties-ltd) and [YouTube](http://www.youtube.com/GrowthpointBroadcast).

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