

## **SPEECH BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF THE W&RSETA, MR TOM MKHWANAZI AT THE OCCASION OF THE PACK N STACK LEARNERSHIP GRADUATION CEREMONY**

7 December 2021, Pretoria

The CEO, Glen Brauns, the Management and staff of Pack n Stack

Our guests of honour, the graduates

Programme Director

Good morning

Thank you to the CEO for this kind invitation. Graduations are the most humbling and gratifying experiences in the work that we do as a SETA in partnership with companies like Pack n Stack. I bring with me greetings and hearty congratulations from the entire W&RSETA – our Board, management team, and staff, to the 75 learners who are graduating today.

Seeing you in your graduation regalia brings us such great pride. We see the evidence of lives changed and bright futures. Thank you for staying the course during a very difficult and challenging time in the world because of the COVID-19 which has changed our lives; the way we work, socialise, and learn.

We hope that you will continue this journey of learning – education is a lifelong journey. Through the SETA system and Pack n Stack, you can study up to NQF level 6 on learnerships which is at store manager level. You can then study other qualifications related to wholesale and retail up to NQF level 10, which is commonly known as a doctorate. There are W&RSETA-funded bursaries to support you. We want you to know that this sector has many opportunities that you can grow in. Companies like Pack n Stack offer many opportunities – you may start at the bottom, but you can work your way up. That is the beauty about retail – you can also move around different jobs. We are now living in a technological world with the Fourth Industrial Revolution becoming a big part of everything that we do. This has opened even more exciting opportunities, especially for young people. You can be ecommerce managers, data analysts, digital marketers, and ICT specialists – all these in the retail space.

Glen and Michelle, a challenge to us is how do we integrate digital skills into our existing programmes to provide opportunities for our current learners and attract talented young people into our industry.

The W&RSETA also has management development programmes for supervisors, team leaders and junior managers to help them become effective managers. When you are at an executive level, you can participate in our international leadership programme which includes travel overseas to learn about best practice in retail. These are programmes we want you to aspire and work hard for.

As the W&RSETA we are truly humbled by the contribution of Pack n Stack in helping us and the country at large to fight unemployment and poverty. We are amazed at the work that the company is doing, most of which is not funded by the SETA.

I had the pleasure of meeting the CEO about two months ago and I was very encouraged about the company's investment in skills development. Today I am witnessing the tangible evidence of that investment and it is a beautiful sight.

We commend you for adapting to the changes that we have gone through to ensure that these do not impact on learning by delivering over 1000 programmes through the Pack n Stack Virtual Academy. The digital future is here, and we must adapt because life as we know it will never be the same again.

Today ignites so much hope that the future is in good hands.

Investing in skills development is building a bright future of many possibilities particularly for our young people.

May our partnership grow in strength to benefit many more young people.

I wish our graduates well for the future.

I look forward to returning to celebrate with you as you achieve more in your journey of developing yourselves. I also look forward to success stories of you moving through the levels in the company and being developed as future leaders.

Not only should you focus on being employees, but also start thinking about how you can create jobs for yourselves and your communities. We need more Pack n Stacks to provide opportunities for other young people to get training and employment.

Congratulations once again and well done. We celebrate you!

Thank you!

Issued by:

Marketing & Communications department