

Facts

newsletter



FASSET

Make the future count

June 2013

Grants

New funding regulations impact on Fasset grants

The new Seta funding regulations, which came into effect on 1 April 2013 have ushered in far-reaching changes within the Seta landscape; they have also impacted on Fasset grants and Fasset grant application forms.

Two changes in particular will impact on Fasset stakeholders: firstly the decrease in Mandatory Grant payments from 50% of the Skills Development Levy (SDL) contribution to 20%; and secondly, the more detailed information, which employers are now required to include in their Skills Development Plan (previously called Workplace Skills Plan) submissions.

The additional 30% which was previously allocated to Mandatory Grants has now been allocated to discretionary funding (29.5%) and Fasset administration (0.5%). Setas must allocate 80% of this discretionary funding to Pivotal (Professional, Vocational, Technical and Academic Learning) Programmes, which address scarce and critical skills

within the sector. The remaining 20% must be allocated to programmes, to develop the sector in accordance with priorities outlined in the Sector Skills Plan (SSP).

The Mandatory Grant covers any form of training including short courses and non-accredited training. Although applying for the Mandatory Grant is voluntary for levy payers, it is a prerequisite for accessing Fasset's Discretionary Grants.

Even though the Mandatory Grant percentage has been reduced, Fasset levy-payers are still able to access four additional Discretionary Grants: the Pivotal Grant, the Learnership Cash Grant (LCG), the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) Loan Repayment Grant, and the Assessor and Moderator Grant (AMG).

Continued on page 4

Fasset Tip-Off Hotline: 0800 205 054



higher education
& training

Department:
Higher Education and Training
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE





EDITOR'S NOTE

Romaana McKinnon

As Fasset's new Communications Manager, effective 1 April 2013, the FACTS newsletter falls within my ambit. Before commencing the task of editing this newsletter, I sought inspiration from the greats. I have heeded Philip Cosby's advice: "When in doubt delete it," and Henry James' advice: "In art economy is always beauty."

Our CEO's Message is always a must read. Very good news indeed is the fact that we continue to see the fruits of a number of initiatives implemented during the past few years. The long-awaited new funding regulations released in December 2012, have impacted on the Fasset grant scheme, making this an obvious choice for our lead story: "New funding regulations impact on Fasset grants." We urge our readers to read the article very carefully and ensure that they maximise opportunities to apply for Fasset grants.

"Fasset is getting it right," is based on the results from our recent Customer Satisfaction Survey. Given an overall customer satisfaction rating of 83%, I am sure that you will agree that our headline is apt.

We recently received the results of our longitudinal study on the impact of Fasset funded Work Readiness Programmes (now called Bridging Programmes for Access into Employment) have had over the past decade. The article, "Tracer Study confirms that Fasset-funded Work Readiness Programmes adds value," makes for fascinating reading as it provides project beneficiaries and employers' insights.

We aim to profile one of our Board members in every issue. This month the spotlight falls on Prabir Badal, in an article entitled: "Meet Prabir Badal." If you are a keen investor you will find his views on investing in Africa compelling.

We also try to include a profile the Head of one of the professional bodies within our sector in each issue. You get the opportunity to meet Charl van der Walt, President of ADRA in the article: "Meet Charl van der Walt." I am sure you will find his passion for education and training contagious.

The headline: "Fasset project beneficiaries fill 1014 mini bus taxis," caught my attention. The article provides an update on Fasset-funded Development Projects. Our newsletter would be incomplete without a tranche of learner success stories. Do read: "In the business of transforming lives," "Enabling young South Africans to reach their potential," "Making a difference," and "Pilot Business Analyst training programme proves a resounding success." These success stories will brighten your day, they certainly did mine. I have really enjoyed editing the newsletter and I hope you enjoy reading it. In closing, I would like to invite you to write a letter to the editor: we would love to hear your views.

INSIDE

- P1, 4-5** New funding regulations impact on Fasset grants
- P2** Editor's Note
- P3** From the CEO's Desk
- P4** Enthusiastic attendance at 2013 Budget and Tax Update
- P5** Calendar of Lifelong Learning Events 2013/2014

- P6** Meet Prabir Badal
- P7** UJ team wins global business challenge SA leg
- P8** Meet Charl van der Walt
- P9** In the business of transforming lives
- P10** Fasset is getting it right



FROM THE CEO'S DESK

Cheryl James

We have recently received the results of the Fasset Tracer Study. The results confirm that we are seeing the fruits of interventions, which Fasset has invested in over a long period of time coming through. This is very positive. The Tracer Study, which goes back as far as 2003, indicates that more than 86% of the learners, who we have supported over the past 10 years, are still in sustainable employment. These good news stories show the benefit of the kind of work that Fasset is doing.

We had the opportunity recently to meet with the vice Rector of the University of Venda and people from their School of Accounting. One of the lecturers at Venda University, a Chartered Accountant, is the product of a Fasset sponsored initiative. We are seeing more and more, the very close alignment of Fasset identifying scarce and critical skills and making sure that these are aligned to sector needs and the kind of research that we are conducting. The people we are 'bumping into' confirm that we are definitely on the right track.

Part of this alignment is keeping up with changes in legislation, and with the new funding regulations. The release of the new funding regulations in December 2012, has led to a suite of new grants; these are outlined in this issue. The alignment of Pivotal Grants to scarce and critical skills and the need in the sector for formal training bodes well for the grants that we have put in place this year. I would like to encourage all employers to look at those grants very carefully and to apply wherever applicable.

We have had a very successful Budget and Tax Lifelong Learning event, with record attendance. This shows the importance of identifying the absolute needs of the sector.

We have also had some very good feedback from our Customer Satisfaction Survey, covered in depth elsewhere in this issue. The Customer Satisfaction Survey confirms that the interventions, which Fasset is supporting, are aligned to the sector; it also confirms that the Fasset staff are doing a very good job in terms of meeting sector expectations and needs. We have always contended that Fasset is only as strong as the people who work here. The results of our Customer Satisfaction Survey confirm the dedication of our staff to everything that we do.

Going forward, we will continue to see the fruits of earlier initiatives as these are closely aligned to sector needs. We will continue to build on these successes.

- P11** Tax and Financial Markets qualification update
- P11** Fasset invites firms to apply for accreditation
- P12** Enabling young South Africans to reach their potential
- P13** Pilot Business Analyst training programme proves a resounding success

- P14** Fasset project beneficiaries fill 1014 mini bus taxis
- P16** Tracer Study confirms that Fasset-funded Work Readiness Programmes add value
- P18** Making a difference

Continued from cover

It is important to note that for the 2013/2014 financial year, Fasset will fund Black African people and also all people with disabilities on the Learnership Cash Grant, the NSFAS Loan Repayment Grant and the Pivotal Grant. A maximum of 29.5% of the Pivotal Grant and the Assessor and Moderator Grant are the only grants that are open to White, Indian and Coloured learners, as well as non-South Africans.

The entirely new grant, the Pivotal Grant is based on the Strategic Cash Grant offered in the past. The grant is capped at 49.5% of the Skills Development Levy. A maximum of 29.5% can be claimed for Pivotal Programmes implemented with White, Indian and Coloured learners, and non-South Africans. Any unutilised portion of the 29.5% and an additional 20% of SDL may be claimed for Black African learners on Pivotal Programmes.

Fasset stakeholders will recall that Fasset's Board took a decision that for the 2012/2013 funding year, discretionary funding would only be allocated to Black African people and Black African people with disabilities.

Pivotal Programmes include specific learners, who have registered on or completed learnerships; quality-assured and structured workplace experience, where specific learners enter or complete full-time on the job training (non-learnership); and academic and professional study to specific employed and unemployed learners, who have successfully completed a course of study at recognised institutions or professional bodies.

Fasset would like to caution that employers, who are funding qualifications, which are not registered on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF), or overseas-based qualifications, will run into difficulties claiming back the Pivotal Grant as Pivotal Programmes have to be registered on the NQF. Furthermore, companies, who do not fund

learnerships or internships or offer qualifications via an internal staff or external bursary scheme, will not be able to justify the payback of the Pivotal Grant, because they will not have adequate spend, or adequate success. The Pivotal Grant enables employers to claim back a maximum of 49.5% of their Skills Development Levy if they undertake education and training in certain strategic skills priority areas for the 2013 calendar year, commencing 1 January 2013 and ending 31 December 2013.

Fasset offers two types of Learnership Cash Grants, one which supports employers who recruit learners onto learnerships (Entry Grant), and another, which is available to employers, who have assisted learners to successfully complete a learnership (Exit Grant). The entry tariff for a three-year learnership has increased to R20 000 for learners, and to R35 000 for learners with a disability. A total of 20 Exit and Entry Grants are allowed per employer. Black African learners and all learners with disabilities commencing or completing a Fasset learnership during the period 1 January 2013 to 31 December 2013 will be eligible for the grant.

Fasset introduced its NSFAS Loan Repayment Grant in August 2012. This grant seeks to support young learners with NSFAS loans; it also seeks to assist employers, particularly small employers, to increase their retention rate among young learners by offering these learners financial assistance. Available for Black African learners and people with disabilities, the grant is applicable to learners currently commencing, undergoing, or completing a learnership in the 2013 calendar year with a Fasset-registered employer. A salary threshold also applies. The grant is linked to the period of the learnership, not the period of study or the amount outstanding on the loan. The grant will be paid in a maximum of four tranches. The amount paid in each tranche depends on the length of the learnership and how much of the learnership has been completed. These tranche payments will be made directly to NSFAS.

Enthusiastic attendance at 2013 Budget and Tax Update



Fasset hosted its annual half-day Budget & Tax Update in March 2013. It is the tenth year in succession that Fasset has hosted the event.

Offered in nine provinces, the seminars targeted small and medium-sized firms, including tax practitioners, auditors, accountants and learners.

The seminars were delivered by Deloitte School of Tax. The facilitators included Chris Green, Moray Wilson, Sumarie Swanepoel and Alex Brettenny.

Areas covered included an overview of the key proposals in the 2013 Budget; practical explanations of key amendments in the Taxation Laws Amendment Bill, 2012 and the Rates and Monetary Amounts and Amendment of Revenue Laws Act, 2012; the key provisions of the Tax Administration Act, 2011; and developments in tax law, including important cases and rulings issued during the course of 2012 and early 2013.

A flagship event for the Seta, a higher number of delegates (6 632) attended compared to 6 503 in the previous year.

Calendar of Lifelong Learning Events 2013/2014

Fasset's Lifelong Learning events are designed to assist practitioners within the sector to ensure that they remain abreast of all sector developments and topics pertinent to their professional functioning. Delivered by experts in the field, our Lifelong Learning events are informed by training requests from our stakeholders. While our soft skills training events seek to improve learners' soft skills, events at an intermediate level target SDFs, HR Professionals and Middle and Senior Managers.

Period	Topics	Target Occupation
Apr 2013	Change Management	SDFs and HR Professionals
May 2013	Strategy Implementation	SDFs and HR Professionals
May 2013	How to Manage your Business	Middle and Senior Managers
June 2013	Diversity in the Workplace	Learners
July 2013	Project Management	Middle and Senior Managers
Aug 2013	Managing Teams	Middle and Senior Managers
Sep 2013	Compliance with Changes in Legislation 2012	All
Oct 2013	Mentoring and Coaching	SDFs and HR Professionals
Nov 2013	Conflict Management	Middle and Senior Managers
Dec 2013		
Jan 2014		
Feb 2014	Survive and Thrive in the Office Environment	Learners
Mar 2014	Budget & Tax Update 2014	All

The schedule and topics of the Lifelong Learning interventions is subject to change. Only employees who are working for Fasset-registered firms, either levy-paying or non-levy paying, may attend these events. Please consult the Fasset website for the most up-to-date information.

Applications for the Assessor and Moderator Grant can be submitted after the individual has registered with Fasset as an assessor or moderator. Training may take place at any point prior; the assessor must, however be registered as an assessor/moderator in the 2013 calendar year. A maximum of R4 500 may be claimed for assessor training; Fasset will reimburse the cost of training to achieve the assessor or moderator educational outcomes, provided that an assessor/moderator is registered with Fasset. For most qualifications, approval from the relevant professional body is required before an assessor can register with Fasset.

The new funding regulations mandate a grant application form with minimum requirements. Complying with new information required by the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), Fasset has revised the following 2013/2014 grant application forms:

- Mandatory Grant for private sector employers with more than 50 employees;
- Mandatory Grant for private sector employers with less than 50 employees;
- Mandatory Grant for public sector employers;
- Pivotal Grant;
- Learnership Cash Grant;
- NSFAS Loan Repayment Grant; and
- Assessor and Moderator Grant.

A summary of the changes is provided in the document: "Changes to 2013/2014 Grant Applications." The document can be downloaded in the Grants and Benefits section of Fasset's website: www.fasset.org.za

A number of changes to the Mandatory Grant application form have been introduced. New fields have been included such as an Employment Summary; additional fields are now required per employee including: unique identifier, unique identifier type, date of birth, gender, population group, disabled, details of disability, and citizenship.

What was previously known as a Workplace Skills Plan (WSP) is now referred to as a Skills Development Plan. Employers are required to collect training information per employee. Since information pertaining to the educational institution/training provider will be required, we urge employers to collect this information timeously. An additional section, Skills Development Plan – Unemployed 2013/2014 has been added. This section is intended to provide information on a company's efforts in terms of providing Pivotal Programmes to unemployed people, but also includes planned training for staff, who will be recruited in the future.

There have also been changes to a number of submission dates. Submissions for the Mandatory Grant close on 30 June 2013. As from next year, applications will close on 30 April. Applications for Fasset's four Discretionary grants: the Learnership Cash Grant, the Assessor and Moderator Grant, and the NSFAS Loan Repayment Grant and the Pivotal Grant close on 15 February annually.

We would like to encourage our stakeholders to avail themselves fully of the Mandatory Grant and the four Discretionary Grants, which Fasset offers.



Meet Prabir Badal

"I have sacrificed both my career and certain aspects of having a normal life to serve others. I focus a lot on making sure that whatever I do, I make a difference, not for myself, but to the overall society in general. While it might not be an equal society, we want an equitable society where people are treated fairly, justly and are recognised for their contributions in whatever way possible," says NEHAWU Investment Holdings National Treasurer, Government Employees Pension Fund (GEPF) Deputy Chairperson and Fasset Board and Remco member, Prabir Badal.

Prabir grew up in Chatsworth in Durban. Driven by a passion for sport, he was exposed to the South African Council of Sports (SACOS) structures from an early age. Given the discriminatory manner in the way sport was played and practiced during the apartheid era, "We aligned ourselves to anti-apartheid structures for a just cause. I was also a community activist at a very young age by virtue of my father being a teacher, who himself was always willing to assist community members in problems that they experienced" he recalls.

After matriculating from Southlands Secondary, Prabir completed a Diploma in Cost & Management Accounting through ML Sultan Technikon (now part of Durban University of Technology) and the Higher Diploma in Taxation. He joined South African Revenue Services (SARS) in 1997 and has been with SARS ever since. His role has changed, however: he is now a full-time shop steward for the National Education Health and Allied Workers Union (NEHAWU). In June 2004 he was elected into the national leadership of NEHAWU, where he serves as the National Treasurer.

SARS was Prabir's first experience of the public sector. He was involved in changing the organisation from an apartheid era government department to one that reflects the new democratic South Africa. "You see SARS being the foremost of the state entities today, in terms of how it responds to public service delivery. I am glad to be part and parcel of either conceiving or contributing to that," he informs.

Prabir believes trade union representation on Seta Boards is critical for skills development and job creation: "Trade unions are best positioned to

identify and analyse the shortfalls in areas of development and growth within an organisation. Our biggest challenge is people, who have been employed for 10, 15 or 20 years, but do not have mobility because employers have not dedicated any resources towards uplifting the workforce."

A failure to upskill the workforce translates into low productivity where; in turn impacts on service delivery. "A skilled workforce provides the balance between output and input and increases productivity. It creates employment, opportunities for employment, and opportunities for people and organisations to advance for the better. Trade union representation becomes very important cogs on Seta Boards because they can direct Boards to the practicalities of real life situations on the ground, in terms of areas requiring development, not at a macro-level, but at a micro-level, and then direct the skills development programmes and material towards a certain direction as well," Prabir observes.

His appointment to the Fasset Board has proved "an eye-opener": "Unlike my involvement in pension funds, where you can see a tangible difference if you put up a shopping centre in Soweto, or investing in bonds earmarked for building a school in the Eastern Cape or a hospital in a deprived area, with skills development you do not see the results immediately." The value derived from a well-run Seta is intangible but can only be positive and sustainable. A well-educated society translates into an efficient socio economy.

It is gratifying to see how Blacks in general, but Africans in particular, are taking up the opportunities that are presented. "We need to see transformation mirroring the country's demographics. This cannot happen overnight; it has to happen over a sustained period. You cannot take someone from the street, who has to overcome the decades of poverty, inequality and social deprivation and make her a Chartered Accountant, engineer, nurse or medical doctor or teacher. The person needs to go through a development process; focusing the aptitude, acumen, abilities and capabilities for the profession as well as the desire to succeed," he cautions.

Prabir commends Fasset for not only developing the underprivileged, but society in general. To his mind Fasset is a well governed institution, both from an oversight perspective and an executive perspective: "There is proper due care, diligence, and prudence applied in the way we manage public funds. I must compliment Fasset on the way in which the Seta is managed, especially the way in which the Seta applies its strategy in line with the broader objectives outlined in the NSDS. I must also, compliment Fasset for making that difference and allowing the people that ought to benefit to actually benefit across the colour spectrum."

Taking a long-term view, Prabir believes Setas are a primary player in socio-economic development, largely revolving around job creation and the ability to train a skilled work force. "Setas have an important role to play in socio-economic transformation.

His role as GEPF Deputy Chairperson is a career highlight, which enables him to make a difference to society in general: "We are fortunate to be able to direct our some of our funds to developmental investments. We are the first, and currently the only pension fund that has been able to direct its investments to developmental investments.

The GEPF is a signatory to the United Nations Principals for Responsible Investment: "There is a huge focus on trying to change the world from practices that have contributed to the recession and near collapse of many in the global economy. You try to minimise short-termism and profit taking.

We look at the ESG issues – environmental, social, and governance matters. These are principals that drive us. We cannot forget the ethical matters as well” Being associated with NEHAWU Investment Holdings has also proved an eye-opener: “Again, we have developed strategies that steer us away from old style BEE hand-outs but direct investments towards areas where investments have a high impact on the socio-economy and on development. It is not the traditional buying the share on the stock exchange and selling the share and then making money on it. We look at long-term, sustainable, high-impact kind of investments.”

“We are not going to invest overly in the USA or in Europe; we are looking at Africa and the emerging and developing world to be the new creator of wealth to enhance workers’ savings and benefits.” Prabir encourages young people, to become finance and accounting professionals. While a career in the sector is a door-opener locally, one is also able to explore opportunities globally. “Your career must be driven by something you are passionate about. This will enable you to deliver a quality service to the

people that you intend servicing. If you are not passionate, you are going to contribute to the lack of service delivery and not make any difference to change society,” he explains.

Pursuing a career in finance related or accounting or auditing field takes a lot of hard work. This sector requires that you spend the better part of your initial 10 years developing yourself and being mentored so as to enhance your profile, your credibility and your ability to conceptualise the various and diverse practices and standards for careers in the finance sector. The finance sector, and Fasset in particular, has tremendous developmental programs, not through entitlement but through opportunities that require effort and dedication. We have seen many young people advance in society and become very able and capable professionals in their own right and who contribute towards the country’s socio-economic growth. Fasset provides opportunity for young people to be skilled as well as to be gainfully employed. I would not hesitate in recommending young people to follow the career opportunity that the finance sector presents,” Prabir concludes.

UJ team wins global business challenge SA leg

Four young finance students did the University of Johannesburg proud when they won the South African leg of the CIMA Global Business Challenge 2013 on Thursday 16 May. This is the second time that the University of Johannesburg has won the title.

On stage in front of a live audience, SA’s youngest business celebrities battled it out in an idol-type event at The Maslow in Sandton, to be South Africa’s fourth winners to go forward to this annual global business challenge for undergraduates, now in its fifth year worldwide.

The winning team, Simplified Solutions, comprising John Webb (23), Nastaja van der Merwe (22), Marina Mogin (22) and Berdene Sinclair (22), pipped the other teams from University of Johannesburg, University of Pretoria and University of Cape Town. A University of Johannesburg team last won the South Africa winners title in 2011.

The final four teams each presented their business case on this year’s case study, which revolved around a toy production company and answered questions from the panel of judges, which included David Cropper, CIMA Africa Regional Board Chairman and Academic Director, Botswana Accountancy College; Charles Russon, Barclays Africa: Regional Head of Finance; Willem Kellerman, Director of Middle Office CIBW of ABSA; Cheryl James, CEO of Fasset and Prof Appie Pienaar, CFO of Solidarity. The University of Cape Town team, Uhuru, with team leader Dalisu Jwara, and team members Asanda Mahlabela, Loide de Almeida and Thabi Poopedi, were a close second in the competition coming in as runners-up. Sponsored by Barclays and ABSA and organised by CIMA (The Chartered Institute of Management Accountants), the competition was started in China as a way to highlight young business talent and give

undergraduates experience in developing business recommendations on a case study and presenting their findings and recommendations to a panel of judges and in front of a live audience.

As the global final will be hosted by South Africa, the national team will welcome teams from 23 other nations for the culmination of the competition on 28 and 29 August 2013. Participants in the global final include teams from Australia, Bangladesh, China, Ghana, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Malaysia, the Middle East, Myanmar, Nepal, New Zealand, Pakistan, the Philippines, Poland, Russia, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, United Kingdom, Vietnam and Zambia.



Marina Mogin, Natasha van der Merwe, Berdene Sinclair, John Webb, Fasset CEO, Cheryl James



“if we want them to be world-class, we must let them learn from the best. Having said this, sometimes the best is in South Africa.”

Meet Charl van der Walt

Charl van der Walt is the President of ADRA (The Association of Debt Recovery Agents); he is also the CEO of MBD Credit Solutions.

Established in 1988 to facilitate the provision of professional services by debt recovery businesses, to establish ethical standards for the collection industry, and to seek official recognition for the debt recovery industry, ADRA is a national voluntary association of debt collectors. ADRA boasts a membership of 195 organisations.

Potchefstroom born and bred, Charl completed his schooling and compulsory military service in Potchefstroom, he also completed his BCom through the Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education (now known as the University of the North West).

He left Potchefstroom in 1989 to join audit firm Theron du Toit, now part of PWC. “I did not enjoy being part of a large audit firm, so I joined a small auditing firm in Randburg in 1992,” he recalls. MBD became his client. He joined the firm in 2000 as CFO, and was appointed CEO in 2007.

Charl subscribes to the view that if one wants to achieve results in business, one has to focus on people: “Coming from an accountant, this view is most unusual. Accountants tend to focus on the bottom line. However, unless you have the right people, you will not achieve the performance that will ultimately lead to the desired bottom line.”

People development is his passion. When developing people he believes it is important to think out of the box. Illustrating this

approach he explains that they recently sent two of their Customer Service Managers to the Disney Institute, to learn from world leaders in the field: “if we want them to be world-class, we must let them learn from the best. Having said this, sometimes the best is in South Africa.”

Going forward, he would like ADRA to focus a lot more on people development. “We are the relevant role player. We are also the spokesman for the industry. If we can focus more on people development, the difference that this would make to the country as a whole is immense,” he observes.

Developing people has a ripple effect: “People are looking after themselves. By passing matric, we see how people’s lives are changing. More people are studying. These success stories are giving me the greatest reward in business.” Particularly gratifying is the fact that a number of employees, who started as debt collectors seven to nine years ago, are now in senior management positions.

The take up on the Debt Collectors Learnership is excellent: “People who have completed their learnerships are excellent. When compared to their peers, their performance is definitely better.”

Charl urges young South Africans to consider a career in the debt collection industry: “The debt collection industry is a stepping stone for many. If you end up in the right company, it can be a career. Alternatively, it can give you wings to find your niche.”

Married and a husband for nearly 21 years, Charl is the proud father of two daughters aged 17 and 15; he also has a ten year old son.

In the business of transforming lives



Kagiso Skhosana



Lucky Makhubela

Kagiso Skhosana saw the Bonani Work-Readiness Programme as an opportunity to pursue his dreams of becoming an accountant. "I studied at Tshwane University of Technology for a Diploma in Cost and Management Accounting and completed it in record time," Kagiso explains.

Although he believed he was ready for the world of work, he soon changed his mind. "The dictionary course and the communication course were real eye-openers. They taught me so many things that I used to take for granted. From that moment I promised myself that I would learn as much as I could and make the most of my time. I looked forward to that day when I would be placed," he recalls.

Kagiso has since qualified as an accountant: "I was placed at a great accounting practice, where I was groomed and nurtured to become the person I am today. The programme opened doors for me. I am proud of myself. It feels good to be me at this point in my life."

His message to aspiring accountants is to keep going, irrespective of how difficult it gets: "You can make it. The only person that can stop you is yourself. I have done it and I believe that anyone else can do it if they put their mind to it."

Kagiso is very grateful for the opportunity that he was given: "Thank you Fasset and Guarantee Trust. I do not know how my life would have turned out had it not been for the opportunity that you gave me."

Fellow student, Lucky Makhubela grew up in rural Limpopo. "I did not consider myself disadvantaged because of the dreams I had for a great future. I did not know much about what I was going to study at university, but I chose to study commercial subjects because I was good at accounting, economics and business economics," he reveals.

After matriculating, he was offered a bursary. "I enrolled for a degree in accounting. I thought this was the start of great things.

When I completed my degree I was really excited. I thought I would get a job. I was mistaken. I spent a lot of time and money applying for work, but all I received were letters of rejection," he recalls.

A fellow student showed him an advertisement for the Bonani Programme; the programme was looking for recruits. "This advertisement is the reason I am a Financial Accountant at one of the leading banks in South Africa, today," he acknowledges.

Lucky learnt a great deal from the programme: "I cannot begin to explain what this programme has done for me. I have so much confidence, my communication skills are great and I have a great wealth of skills and knowledge."

He was placed at a company where he had an opportunity to prove himself and also showcase skills acquired on the programme. "On my first day of work, I was given one client to work with, but a few weeks later, I had more than 20 clients that I worked with on a daily basis. My employer trusted me with his clients because I was from the Bonani Programme. They knew that graduates from the programme are ready for work."

One year later, Standard Bank approached him with an offer to become a Financial Accountant: "I am amazed at what I have achieved within such a short space of time. I know that I have the Bonani Programme to thank. The programme prepared me for the workplace and for the challenges I would face."

Lucky intends empowering the youth in his community in Limpopo. "They deserve the same opportunity and knowledge that I got from the programme. I am really grateful for the opportunity. I cannot express how happy I am. I am also grateful to Fasset for the funding. This would not have been possible without them. Fasset is in the business of transforming lives," Lucky concludes.



Fasset is getting it right

Sam Watson, the founder of Walmart said: "The goal of a company is to have customer service that is not just best but legendary." Although Fasset's Customer Satisfaction Survey did not have a 'legendary' category, an overall satisfaction rating of 83% suggests that Fasset is getting it right. It also suggests that Fasset staff have embraced the notion that customer service is not a department; it is everyone's job. They have also embraced Mahatma Gandhi's wise words: "A customer is the most important visitor on our premises. He is not dependent on us. We are dependent on him. He is not an interruption in our work. He is the purpose of it. He is not an outsider in our business. He is part of it. We are not doing him a favour by serving him. He is doing us a favour by giving us an opportunity to do so."

John Russell, the President of Harley Davidson said: "The more you engage with customers the clearer things become and the easier it is to determine what you should be doing." Customer perceptions have always been

Fasset's benchmark. As Kate Zabriskie, author of: "Customer Service Excellence: How to Deliver Value to Today's Busy Customer," points out: "The customer's perception is your reality."

Fasset would like to take this opportunity to thank the 162 employers (60 small organisations, 60 medium-sized organisations and 42 large organisations), 12 training providers and 8 professional bodies, who participated in our third Customer Satisfaction Survey. Your input is greatly appreciated. While we strive to be an excellent Seta, as management guru, Tom Peters observes: "Excellent firms do not believe in excellence – only constant improvement and constant change." Your feedback will assist us to raise the bar.

Our Customer Satisfaction Survey sought to establish how experiences and expectations have changed since

our last survey. We wanted to ascertain our customers' and stakeholders' overall satisfaction with our services and delivery

"An overall satisfaction rating of **83%** suggests that Fasset is getting it right."

thereof; we wanted feedback on our products/services and image as well as performance levels for each of these attributes; we also wanted to determine and measure levels of performance for each service and delivery attribute. In addition, we wanted to identify any performance shortfalls or areas of weakness; establish any noteworthy differences in perceptions, which may exist amongst segments; and identify any opportunities, which could have a constructive impact on the way in which Fasset conducts business, so that these can be addressed.

We received an 86% rating for being accessible and supportive; 85% for being performance-driven and effective; 83% for quality of service; 80% for understanding employers business; and 82% for being in regular contact with its customers. We were particularly delighted with Fasset's 85% rating overall for its corporate image: a good corporate image is a very good barometer of the strength of one's brand, services and products.

Our staff are viewed as professional (90%), able to provide advice and a consultative role (88%) and responsive (86%). They are also perceived to be accessible and supportive (86%).

Levy payers expressed 85% overall satisfaction; 87% for quality of service; 85% for quality of training programmes; and 87% for corporate image. Non-levy payers expressed overall satisfaction levels of 77%; in terms of quality of service 80%; quality of training programmes 79% and corporate image, 80%. The difference in perception is to be expected: non-levy payers are unfortunately not able to access all Fasset benefits.

Fasset learnerships were rated very highly: overall perception (88%); the range of learnerships is relevant to my company's needs (86%); enough information is provided for implementation in our company (86%); user-friendliness of the registration process (84%); ease of understanding of documentation required for the process (85%); sufficient communication status of application (86%).

Fasset has always positioned its Lifelong Learning Programme as a flagship initiative: the results confirm that this positioning is justified. Ratings were as follows: overall perception of Lifelong Learning (85%); topic selection is relevant to my company's needs (84%); the frequency of courses meets our needs (82%). It is not surprising therefore, that 99 063 delegates have attended since inception.

Over the past 13 years, Fasset has allocated just over R 474 million to Development Projects/ Bridging Programmes and the perceptions around these programmes are excellent. In terms of overall perception, an 87% rating was obtained; the learners are of a high calibre (93%); learners possess the correct skills levels required by my organisation (88%); we get sufficient support from Fasset when my company takes on a learner (91%). (Do read the article in this issue entitled: "Tracer Study confirms that Fasset-funded Work Readiness Programmes add value," for additional insights.

We are both delighted and humbled by the results from our recent Customer Satisfaction Survey. We remain firmly committed to providing our stakeholders with excellence in terms of products, service and support. Our stakeholders deserve nothing less.

Tax and Financial Markets qualification update

The period for public comment on the Tax qualification closed at the end of March 2013. Fasset awaits feedback from the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO) in terms of areas, which need to be addressed.

Assessment Quality Partners (AQPs) have been appointed: the South African Institute of Tax Practitioners and the South African Institute of Stockbrokers will serve as AQPs for the Tax and Financial Markets qualifications, respectively.

The Tax qualification needs to go through South African Qualification Authority (SAQA's) Qualifications Committee and the SAQA Board, before being placed on the NQF. This is likely to occur towards the end of this year. The QCTO Qualifications Committee wanted some changes made to the Financial Markets, qualification. The qualification is not expected to be presented to SAQA before the end of this financial year.

Fasset invites firms to apply for accreditation

The uptake for internship accreditation has been greater than the uptake for whole firm accreditation. There are many firms in the Fasset sector, which are well-organised and which are offering good training. Fasset would like to invite firms to apply for internship accreditation, or whole firm accreditation.

Internship accreditation recognises an organisation's programme, and formalises the programme's implicit standards. The fact that accredited Internship Programmes may fall into category C of the BEE Learning Programme Matrix, serves as an additional incentive.

Application forms are available from the Quality Assurance and Learnerships Department.



Enabling young South Africans to reach their potential

'Ignite your potential,' is always the central message whenever the Mosaiëk Church is involved in making a difference in the lives of young South Africans. As in the past, this was the central message when the Fasset-funded Phadisa Programme was launched at the Mosaiëk Campus on 23 February 2013. The Mosaiëk Church has previously hosted the Fasset-funded Ithemba Programme.

The Phadisa Programme is being offered by Future Creation and the S & T School of Accounting in partnership with the Open Learning Group. The official launch was preceded by a special service in the Klipkerk.

Addressing learners during the church service, Mosaiëk Church Missional Expressions leader, Jeanetta Basson said: "Today is about igniting your potential. You are at the beginning of a new chapter. This is a day of celebration." Learners were asked to light a candle, symbolising the fact that they had lit their potential.

Fasset Projects Manager, Tania Lee, welcomed learners into the Fasset family. "We hope you will spread the knowledge to others. Remember to pay forward. It is your duty to mentor and guide your siblings," Tania explained.

In order to be successful, Tania said learners needed to do the following: position yourself for success; associate with those who are like-

minded; place a value on yourself; and believe in yourself.

Groups of learners shared what they hoped to get out of the programme. The first group said "they were ready to push the boundaries." The second group promised to deliver "twice what is expected." Having completed the programme a third group said: "we hope that we will no longer be clueless, but able to understand more things." The fourth group said "there was light at the end of the tunnel". When they were not accepted into tertiary education they were at "the lowest of lows." Hopefully, the programme would enable them to become YMCMBs - internet slang for young cash money billionaires. The fifth group had faced challenges, including poverty; they had also experienced hardships. This would be a thing of the past: "we are going to conquer."

An entirely new programme, the seven-month Bridging Programme targets unemployed Grade 12 learners with Mathematics and prepares them for entry into tertiary education in the first year of a BCom or Finance-related study. The programme includes training in first year university modules, student readiness and Grade 12 Mathematics revision.

We wish you every success in "creating your future."

Pilot Business Analyst training programme proves a resounding success

Business Analytics are a scarce and critical skill in South Africa. Responding to the need for more business analysts in 2012, Deloitte Consulting, in partnership with Rhodes University, offered a NQF Level 7 Fasset-funded Business Analyst Certificate qualification worth 44 credits and 440 notional hours. Training was undertaken over a period of 6 months.

Ninety-six candidates were recruited and 90 candidates completed. A 100% pass rate and a 79% placement rate was achieved.

Classroom training commenced in April 2012. The training programme consisted of classroom based modules, workplace experience and case studies and concentrated on students being able to demonstrate practical application of the theory taught as a component of the certification process. Students attended academic blocks in their various regions and then returned to their host employers to put into practice what they had learnt.

Candidates in Gauteng were hosted by SAICA, SARS, Trans Union, the Auditor-General, Standard Bank, Nedbank, and Deloitte; candidates in the Western Cape were hosted by Old Mutual, Frost

& Sullivan, Woolworths, Nedbank, Auditor General, City of Cape Town; candidates in KwaZulu-Natal were hosted by Gcabashe, the Auditor-General, Nedbank, JV Plastics, the Office of the Premier, Deloitte KZN, African Mediums, Mr Price, SAPD Provincial Head Quarters; candidates in the Eastern Cape- Visteon, Sanlam (PE), Sanlam (EL), Coke, Community Chest, Khanyisa. Fasset is very cognisant of the fact that the project would not have been as successful were it not for the strong support that the project enjoyed from these employers. Fasset commends these employers for their commitment to skills development in SA and urges other employers to become involved in these vital skills development initiatives in future.

A top performer was identified in each region. Hearty congratulations to Chanel Naidoo (KwaZulu-Natal), Seageng Senoge (Gauteng), Sandisiwe Mngcita (Western Cape) and Bhelekazi Poni (Eastern Cape). Chanel Naidoo was recognised as the National Top Student.

Fasset has agreed to fund the programme again in 2013: 100 candidates have been recruited.



Chanel Naidoo, top student in KwaZulu-Natal



Sandisiwe Mngcita, top student in Western Cape



Bhelekazi Poni, top student in Eastern Cape



Seageng Senoge, top student in Gauteng

Fasset project beneficiaries fill 1014 mini bus taxis



Over the past 13 years Fasset has allocated over R478 million to projects. Some 16 234 individuals in total have benefited. Project beneficiaries could fill 1 014 mini bus taxis – roughly 0,5% of the 200 000 registered mini bus taxis in South Africa.

In line with Fasset's pipeline approach to skills development, Fasset funds Bridging Programmes for Access into Higher Education (NQF Level 5), Academic Programmes for Access into Employment (NQF Level 6-7) and Academic Programmes (NQF Level 6-8), which lead to the completion of a qualification, and/or a professional designation.

A number of projects funded during the past financial year have been completed. Fasset funded 36 learners on the 2012 SciMathUS Programme, which enables learners to improve their marks in Science, Mathematics and Accounting, so as to gain admission to higher education in Economic and Management Sciences. The programme continues to achieve good results: all 36 learners obtained university exemption; 70% of candidates are expected to pursue their studies through the University of Stellenbosch. Fasset has agreed to fund 70 learners on the 2013 SciMathUS Programme, which commenced on 6 February 2013.

Fasset funded 120 unemployed Grade 12s on the Ithemba Programme, and 50 learners on the U'kuthemba Programme. Identical programmes, where learners complete the AAT Advanced Certificate in Accounting. The Ithemba Programme, which was completed in December 2012, achieved a 90% competence rate, the highest competence rate at this level, globally. Placements are currently being

finalised. The programme is expected to achieve a placement rate of 70%. The Ukuthemba Programme will be completed in December 2013.

Fasset has agreed to fund 55 learners on the Phadisa Bridging Programme launched in February 2013. The academic component of the programme will finish in December 2013; and placements into University will be completed by March 2014. (Do read the article: "Enabling young South Africans to reach their potential"). The programme prepares learners for entry into tertiary education and includes training in first-year university modules, student readiness and Grade 12 Mathematics revision.

Results from Fasset's Tracer study confirm that Fasset-funded Work Readiness Programmes (now referred to as Academic Programmes for Access into Employment) are having a very positive impact on reducing unemployment amongst graduates; they are also proving very successful in terms of placing beneficiaries into sustainable employment. (Do read the article in this issue: "Tracer Study confirms that Fasset-funded Work Readiness Programmes add value").

Fasset funded 600 learners on the Bonani 7 and the Bonani 7 Extra Programme, bringing the total number of learners funded to 3 830. The programme targets unemployed Black African finance graduates with BCom degrees or National Diplomas. Learners are equipped with workplace skills and are then placed on SAICA or SAIPA Learnerships. A placement rate of 73.2% was achieved nationally. Fasset has agreed to fund another 600 learners on the Bonani 8 Programme, which commenced in February 2013. The programme will complete in March 2014.



Fasset funded 200 learners on the Thusanani 6 Programme, which was completed in March 2013. The programme targets unemployed Black African learners and non-accounting graduates. Recruited according to scarce and critical skills within the sector, candidates are equipped with workplace skills, which will enable them to hit the ground running once in the workplace. A 72% placement rate was achieved.

Fasset funded 50 learners on the Madiba Bay Accountancy Training Amathuba Programme. Learners completed a three-month work readiness training period before being placed with employers for an additional three months. While some learners have been placed in full-time employment, others opted to continue with their studies. A 70% placement rate was achieved.

Fifty learners were recruited onto the Boston Lerumo Work Readiness Programme. Graduates were put through three months of work readiness training: 70% of the learners were placed in employment.

Ninety-six candidates were recruited onto the pilot Rhodes Business Analyst Certificate Programme. A 100% pass rate was achieved. The programme has achieved a 79% placement rate. Based on the programme's success, the programme will be offered again in 2013: 100 candidates have been recruited. (Do read the article in this issue entitled: "Pilot Business Analyst Programme proves a resounding success").

Good results were also achieved for Fasset-funded Academic Programmes, which lead to the completion of a professional designation. Fasset funded the Thuthuka QEI Programme (2012-2014),

the Thuthuka QEII Programme for 2012 and an additional programme for 2013, and the IRBA PPE Repeat Programmes for 2012 and an additional programme for 2013, and the Thuthuka University Programme for 2013-2015.

The Thuthuka QE I achieved a 56% pass rate (against a national pass rate of 42%); Thuthuka QEII achieved a 56% pass rate (against a national pass rate of 45%), and the IRBA PPE Programme achieved a 60% pass rate (against a national pass rate of 45%).

Fasset opened two funding windows on 18 January 2013 for Bridging Programmes for Access to Employment and for Academic Programmes for the Completion of a Qualification or a Designation. Four new programmes were approved at Access to Employment level: the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University and Madiba Bay Accountancy Training (NMMU / MMBAT) - Ithemba Bridging Programme, the Future Creations / S&T School of Accounting - Ithemba Bridging Programme, the Bonani 8 (Additional) Bridging Programme, and the Thusanani 7 Bridging Programme; the Thuthuka University Support programme and the Independent Regulatory Board for Auditors (IRBA) PPE support programme were approved in the funding window for Academic Programmes for the Completion of a qualification, and/or a professional designation.

Fasset wishes learners on 2013 Fasset-funded programmes every success. We caution, however that as British hairdresser, businessman and philanthropist Vidal Sassoon observed: "The only place where success comes before work is in the dictionary."

Tracer Study confirms that Fasset-funded Work Readiness Programmes add value

The results of Fasset's Tracer Study: "The value of Fasset-funded Work Readiness Programmes" were released recently. Fasset commissioned the study to obtain project employers' and project beneficiaries views regarding the value of these programmes in terms of preparing candidates for work; to gauge beneficiaries workplace progress; to ascertain whether beneficiaries' earnings have improved; and to ascertain how many project beneficiaries had furthered their qualifications since completing the programme. The study spanned a ten-year period.

Interviews were conducted with 1 508 Thusanani and Bonani Work Readiness Programme beneficiaries and 148 employers. Of the 790 beneficiaries who work in the sector, 57.5% are employed in the Accounting, Bookkeeping, Auditing and Tax Services field; 11.4% work for SARS and 10% work in banking.

The lion's share of employers (74.3%) were based in Gauteng; 11.5% in KwaZulu-Natal; 5.4% in the Western Cape; 2.7% in North West; 2% in Mpumalanga; 2% in Free State; 1.4% in Limpopo; and 0.7% in the Eastern Cape. In terms of employer profile, 73.6% of employers were in the Finance, Real Estate and Business Services sector; 9.5% were in general government; 5.4% in Personal Services; 4.7% in manufacturing, 3.4% in transport storage and communication, 2.7% in the wholesale and retail trade, hotels and restaurants and 0.7% in mining and quarrying.

The research revealed that 89.7% of project beneficiaries (1 353 individuals) are currently still employed. The majority of beneficiaries (88.7%) placed on an internship or learnership found employment on completion of the internship or learnership either at the company where they were placed, or elsewhere. Of the 11.3% of project beneficiaries, who were not placed, 85.4% found employment using the skills gained from the programme.

Employers' views

Most of the employers (90.5%) prefer employing beneficiaries of Fasset-funded programmes as project beneficiaries are equipped with the soft skills needed in the workplace. Employers value the fact that Bonani and Thusanani learners are work-ready: this saves time and money. Preparing employees for the workplace is a costly exercise. Preparing someone for the workplace directly from school, from a FET,

from a university of technology and from a university costs around R76 000; R57 000; R55 000, or R50 000 respectively.

Additional reasons cited included the fact that project beneficiaries not only hold qualifications, they also possess soft and technical skills needed to function efficiently in the organisation; beneficiaries have some basic understanding of the work environment; small businesses benefit from having a pair of hands, which are productive almost immediately and therefore contribute to profits; employers see it as their social responsibility to take on unemployed work-ready graduates to reduce unemployment; employers see it as an opportunity for previously disadvantaged individuals to obtain work experience; employers see it as community service; and it is an easy way to recruit; Fasset has a good track record of skills development initiatives of a high standard and employers eagerly participate to help build capacity in the sector; beneficiaries were employed because some companies had backlogs; employers felt beneficiaries had already shown motivation; employers felt beneficiaries knew what employers expected; some employers recruited beneficiaries as part of a once-off project; employers want to build capacity within the sector.

"89.7% of project beneficiaries (1 353 individuals) are currently still employed."

Employers also value the fact that programme beneficiaries have already been screened. Training providers were seen to provide an important recruitment and placement service.

Employers believe Fasset-funded Work Readiness Programmes enhance programme beneficiaries prospects of finding employment (73%); 68.9% said it enhances the prospects to progress once in employment; and 62.8% said these programmes enhance the prospect of beneficiaries improving their earnings.

Some 93.2% of employers said the Fasset-funded Work Readiness Programmes provided beneficiaries with most of the soft and technical skills

needed in the workplace; 89.2% expressed the same view for technical skills. Employers believe team work skills are imparted best; they concede that networking, critical thinking and decision-making skills may be more difficult to learn. Bonani and Thusanani learners were perceived to have a very positive attitude to work: this is arguably one of the programmes most value-adding elements.

There is, however, scope for improvement in terms of training provision in the following areas: business English and report writing skills; telephone communication skills; decision-making skills; analytical thinking skills, problem solving skills and awareness that time is money. Some employers indicated that stress management, the ability to handle large volumes of work, the importance of assertiveness, strategic thinking, initiative, conflict handling, cultural awareness, building of self-confidence and self-awareness were not covered by the soft skills training. These areas should be included in future programmes.

Project beneficiaries have the necessary internet skills and numeracy proficiency to work efficiently, and either to a large extent or to some extent, the necessary basic bookkeeping or accounting skills, and skills to use MS Office applications. MS PowerPoint skills are not up to scratch; more advanced MS Excel skills are also required.

Some employers indicated that a number of technical skills were not taught including payroll reconciliation, Pastel training, advanced MS Excel, VAT, the New Companies Act, the interpretation of system reports, ICT system linkages, eFiling, structure of bookkeeping in government and basic contract law. It was very clear from the skills cited that some employers were expressing their own needs in terms of their organisation's particular focus.

Beneficiaries' views

Indicative with the high-level of learner satisfaction, 95.6% of project beneficiaries indicated that they would recommend the programme to family and friends.

Project beneficiaries concurred that these programmes enhanced their soft skills to a 'large extent.' The order of value in terms of skills imparted was cited as follows: firstly, communication skills (personal and business); followed by time management; team work; job search strategies; networking; career development (the management of one's own career); critical thinking; problem solving and decision-making. Several beneficiaries mentioned training related to customer care and dictionary skills as particularly useful.

Technical skills were also, enhanced 'to a large extent.' The order of value in terms of technical skills is as follows: numeracy proficiency; use of MS Excel; basic bookkeeping/accounting skills; use of MS Word; use of Pastel; Internet use in general; use of MS PowerPoint and email use. Training relating to project management and Virtual Office were also cited as very useful.

The study revealed that the Bonani and Thusanani Work Readiness Programmes enhanced career prospects by teaching beneficiaries how to take responsibility for their lifelong learning and work. Programme beneficiaries were taught how to plan, how to make informed decisions,

how to search for employment opportunities, how to conduct themselves in interviews and how to conduct themselves in the workplace. There was evidence that these programmes enabled candidates to plan and manage their own careers.

Some 48.6% of programme beneficiaries have progressed to a higher position; 30.5% are still in the same position and 13.4% have been placed as trainee accountants and are still busy with their training. If all trainee accountants complete, the progression figure will increase to 62%.

Only 766 of the 1 082 learners placed in employment or an internship or a learnership divulged salary information. Only 2.1% of candidates earned R10 000 or more per month when they were placed in employment; 32% revealed that they are now earning R10 000 per month or more. This represents a 29.9% increase in earnings. It is interesting to note that 58.1% of project beneficiaries earned less than R5 000 per month when they started working; currently only 19.8% earn less than R5 000 per month.

"Most of the employers (90.5%) prefer employing beneficiaries of Fasset-funded programmes as project beneficiaries are equipped with the soft skills needed in the workplace."

Particularly gratifying was the fact that 165 project beneficiaries have since obtained a further qualification; 155 of these qualifications are at a higher level. Four beneficiaries held certificates: 3 have since attained diplomas; 1 has attained another certificate. Of the 840 beneficiaries, who held diplomas, 106 have since obtained a first degree or higher diploma; 11 have attained an Honours degree; and one has attained a certificate. Of the 634 beneficiaries, who held a first degree or higher diploma, 28 have obtained honours degrees; 5 have attained Master's degree; 7 have obtained national diplomas and 1 has attained a certificate. Of the 30 beneficiaries who held Honours degrees, 2 have since completed a Master's degree.

The results of the Fasset Tracer study: "The value of Work Readiness Programmes", confirms that Fasset-funded work-readiness interventions have had a very positive impact on learners' lives. The Bonani and Thusanani Work Readiness Programmes have enhanced employability, provide better skilled entrants to the workplace, have facilitated gainful, sustainable employment, and are welcomed by employers. It is not surprising therefore, that the researchers have recommended that Fasset continues to fund Work Readiness Programmes.

Making a difference

American anthropologist, philanthropist, educator, philosopher and natural science writer, Loren Eiseley recounts how he was walking along a deserted beach at dawn when he saw a young man pick up small objects and throw them into the sea. When he enquired what the young man was doing, the young man told him he was picking up star fish and throwing them back into the sea. The sun would soon be up, the tide was going out and unless he threw the starfish into the sea they would die. Loren reminded him that there were miles and miles of beach. Since there were starfish along every mile, the young man could not really make a difference. The young man bent down, picked up another starfish, threw it into the sea and replied: "It made a difference to that one."

The Fasset-funded Thuthuka QE Programme is about making a difference: it is about finding future accounting stars, and supporting them so that they can realize their true potential and qualify as Chartered Accountants.

SAICA received a tranche of e-mails from project beneficiaries. These emails, to Gugu Makhanya (Project Director) and Chantyl Mulder (Senior Executive: Professional Development) at SAICA: Transformation & Growth, remind us that just as the young man was making a difference in the lives of individual star fish, so Fasset, together with SAICA and UJ is making a difference in individual Thuthuka learners' lives.

Hi Gugu

I really appreciate the efforts of all who played their part in facilitating the programme. It helped me a lot to pass through PPE. I cherish your efforts in contributing towards my success as a CA (SA). Not forgetting Chantyl with her words of encouragement, really appreciated.

Thank you

Regards

Donny Moah Mampa
Assistant Audit Manager • Gauteng Business Unit • Auditor-General of
South Africa

Dear Gugu,

I've been meaning to send an email to you and to the lecturers. But in all honesty, I have been unable to put my gratitude into words. I have not been able to express how grateful I truly am for having been given the opportunity to be a part of the Thuthuka program. Being able to call myself a CA(SA) is truly a privilege and is something I owe to a number of factors. The Thuthuka program is one of the biggest contributing factors to me being a CA.

Firstly a big thank you to you and to Chantyl Mulder for putting this program together. I remember the first meeting we had where you and Prof Ben were introducing the program and encouraging us

all for the year ahead. I also remember the day that Chantyl came to visit us in class. It was a few weeks before board and she was just encouraging us as a class. I cannot begin to explain to you how encouraged and how motivated I was after she spoke. I was ready to take this exam. I'll always remember one of the things she said. She said that when we write the exam, we should be able to put our hands on our hearts and say that we did our very best. She also told us to pray and to trust God. That is exactly what I did. When I wrote my exam, I knew that there was absolutely nothing that I could have done more and nothing I could have done differently. I worked very hard and all my trust was in God.

Secondly, a very big thank you to our lecturers, Prof Ben, Prof Alex and Lyndsay. Wow. Each and every single day that we had class, you could see the passion in their eyes and in the manner in which they taught us. Their passion really encouraged me even more. It made me work harder. They were so dedicated to this cause, so much so, that I felt that if I did not do my very best I would be doing them such a disservice.

They were always available to assist with any audit-related matter. They always responded to emails promptly. They were always also so encouraging. I remember different consultations that I had with them on different occasions. Firstly, when we went over my 2011 PPE exam paper, I remember Prof Ben telling me what I should do. He also told me he liked my determination and finally said to me that he had no doubt that I was going to pass. On one occasion I had a consultation with Lyndsay after my first test. He was so encouraging. When I got there, he was so

prepared. I could tell that he had spent some time preparing for our consultation. I really was so encouraged and so humbled by the amount of time and effort that was put into that consultation. Not forgetting Prof Alex, he always taught with such precision and always had such encouraging stories to tell us about what to do to pass PPE. Gugu, these lecturers are all champions hey. They really, really, put a lot into lecturing us. For that, I will always be so grateful.

The following aspects of the program were really helpful for me:

- 1. Having lectures often was helpful because that kept me up to date with the program.*
- 2. Having to hand some homework in was good because that provided feedback on whether I was answering the questions well enough.*
- 3. The lectures were very interactive. I really liked that because that kept us all involved.*
- 4. The format and content of the lectures was also great. It was understandable and the pace of the lectures was also good.*
- 5. Writing the APT tests was also good for assessing our progress and where we are. It also helped because it simulated that exam environment.*

Thank you again for this project. I know that it will continue to change the lives of many aspiring Chartered Accountants.

*Take Care,
Vuyo Lusu*

Thank you very much Gugu.

I started off Thuthuka with a lot of sadness and disappointment. However, throughout the year, Thuthuka was the vital force that I needed to pass. It was the program that made me realise that I was not alone through this journey and that ultimately, with hard work and determination, I was going to make it!

The lecturers were committed whole-heartedly to us. The extra lessons were extremely helpful and the mock exam sessions helped me to slowly, but surely, gain confidence.

Thank you to all the sponsors, coordinators and lecturers of the program! We, the class of 2012, salute you!

Kind regards,
Ayanda Sepamla, Assistant Manager Assurance,
Ernst & Young Inc.

Dear Gugu

First of all, let me take this opportunity to say thank you very much for the Programme.

It almost still feels unreal that it is all over and now one can get their life back on track.

The Programme was excellent. The type of excellence you could only expect from the remarkable lecturers of UJ, being the likes of Prof Ben Marx and Prof Alex van der Watt, not forgetting the inspiration Lindsay Maseko and forever entertaining and practical Prof Peter Bourne(UCT) - a truly world class team. Let me not forget Chantyl from SAICA - a remarkable woman indeed. God bless her.

These guys are really a special bunch, always willing to help and going out of their way to make sure you get the best possible service there is: their contribution to my success invaluable. Not forgetting Prof Alex, who always responded to my sms' when I couldn't reach him on phone. I had attended a support Programme the year before but nothing compares to what these guys offer. Well done to them.

Perhaps it is worthwhile sharing a brief story (which has been subsequently declassified :-)

For one of the tests we had during the year (mid-August), I think it was APT 2, I was not prepared enough so I ended up only writing the morning session. I felt so bad (something I never done before - "throwing in the towel". The following Monday I wrote an e-mail to Prof Ben Marx crowing foul and saying I'm ready to quit because I feel hopeless. He simply said,

"it's only 3 months to go, put your head down and study hard and smart, you've got all the resources you need and you can always call for help or motivation. Study should take preference over everything else now. "Obvious words you may say but ones I need to hear from someone else at the time and whose impact was lasting and I will forever be grateful.

See you at the celebration party.

*Take Care,
Malesela*

Dear Gugu

Yes, you did tell us it was only a few months of sacrifice.

I must admit, this was my third attempt at PPE and when you spoke to us in the beginning, I was not motivated at all.

Your program worked very well for me. The reasons being that there was focus on quality, not quantity. It really helped to have to go through my script from the year before and discuss with the lecturers. It was a real eye-opener, and the manner in which it was done as well, really forced me to thoroughly review the script and get a better understanding of what had gone wrong. Again, something I realised I never did right the first time around.

The UJ lecturers were also amazing. Prof Alex in particular, because I did my script review with him, was so helpful. I only had one session with him while reviewing my script but that was time well spent. He did not make me feel like a failure. Instead, he showed me I had no reason to be repeating and that I knew my work, I just need to change a few things and I was home free.

Another thing that motivated me and just at the right time, was the talk Chantyl gave us. I did not want to be the reason the program was stopped and I did not want her to get embarrassed and have fingers pointed at her by people telling her 'they told her we wouldn't make it!' It was very motivating at that time she came to speak to us and made me realise just how many people are behind us and would like to see us succeed.

Thank you again to you and your team for the opportunity.

Regards
Pheto

Hi Gugu,

Thank you very much.

I would like to say a big thank you to everyone involved with the Thuthuka programme.

*I found the following aspects of the programme to be very beneficial:
One on one PPE 2011 feedback session which made me realise what I was doing wrong*

The homework we got from the Lecturers that kept us up to date with our studies

The advantage of attending a smaller class where you are able to pay attention and its more interactive.

I'm very grateful that I was selected to be part of this programme.

Regards
Masego

Hello Chantyl

I am one of the Thuthuka 2012 students and it is with great joy to announce that I have made it. I would like to thank you, Fasset, SAICA, UJ people and everyone involved for the classes and support you gave us. One thing that shines out was the encouraging words you gave us in our class. You made me realise and understand that here there is God, there is light.

I really appreciate everything.

Thanks and regards
Masibulele IDT