



**GAUTENG**  
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

## **MEDIA STATEMENT**

3 December 2024

### **Disability Rights Excellence Awards 2024 recipients lauded for resilience, and determination in breaking the barriers**

The Gauteng Provincial Government on Tuesday 3 December 2024 hosted the Gauteng Disability Rights Excellence Awards in Houghton, Johannesburg to recognise and celebrate the contributions of people with disabilities, organisations, and individuals in the disability sector.

The awards recognise individuals across various categories which include the Social Transformation Award, Disability Rights Equity Award, Disability Business Award, Media and Communications Award, Disability Research and Development Excellence Award, Disability Rights Best Practice Award, Disability Rights Lifetime Achiever Award, and Premier's Special Award for Excellence.

The Premier's Special Award for Excellence constitutes a special distinction for the dedication, contributions, and service to support persons with disabilities during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"This awards ceremony celebrates diversity, removes barriers, and promotes inclusive communities where everyone has a chance to thrive. The disability rights campaign holds special significance in Gauteng as it serves as a powerful reminder of our commitment to inclusivity, empowerment, and progress for people with disabilities.

Over the past few decades, Gauteng has made important strides in recognising and protecting the rights of these individuals, thanks to a combination of legislative action, advocacy, and public policy efforts. Our commitment to disability rights extends beyond December. It is a continuous journey towards a more accessible and compassionate society", said Acting Premier Lebogang Maile.

He added that whilst Gauteng has made noticeable strides in championing the rights of people with disability, challenges remain, key among these in the need for the implementation and monitoring of existing policies.

"To businesses and the private sector, let us work together to create environments that accommodate and celebrate diversity. Equally to communities and families, please note that inclusion begins at home.

Let us teach our children to value empathy, to embrace diversity as a strength. To persons with disability, we say you are not defined by your disability, but by your resilience, talent, and determination”, added Maile.

Also in attendance at the awards ceremony was the Vice Chancellor of the University of Johannesburg, Professor Letlhokwa Mpedi,

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**Issued by the Gauteng Provincial Government**

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