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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **2012 SEARCH FOR TOP WOMEN ACHIEVERS IN BUSINESS**

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The Businesswomen's Association is calling for entries for its prestigious Regional Business Achievers Awards which commemorates top achieving businesswomen in the Nelson Mandela Bay region each year.

The BWA is the largest and most prominent association of business and professional women in South Africa, and a dynamic forum that continues to inspire and grow women in business.

Through the RBAA competition, the BWA aims to identify, acknowledge and cultivate small businesses and professional practices, many of which are run by previously disadvantaged women. The Awards also serve as a platform for these emerging businesswomen to aspire to be nominated for the Businesswoman of the Year Award, a national accolade run by the Association.

Each year there are 5 categories within the RBAA awards programme, making it accessible for businesswomen in all areas to be nominated, these are:

- **Corporate**
- **Professional**
- **Emerging Entrepreneur**
- **Social Entrepreneur**
- **Entrepreneur**

2011's winners all concur that the competition has opened up doors of opportunity for each of them, including Corporate Category winner, Lize Hayward, Group Public Relations Manager of Goodyear South Africa, "Winning the award in my category was an absolute highlight in my career. It was a great feeling to receive the recognition after many years of hard work. I am grateful to the BWA and my employer Goodyear who has given me development and growth opportunities. I believe it has the credibility to open doors and opportunities for me. It has motivated and inspired me to inspire other women too. I want to encourage other women to join the BWA and to nominate others to participate in the RBAA. It was a great experience! I regard the competition as a great tool to recognize women in the workplace. I was impressed with the professionalism of the selection process, the well represented judging panel and finally the grand dinner where the winners were announced. Indeed a credible event the BWA and PE can be proud of!"

"Being a part of the RBAA for 2011 awards and winning my category has been a confidence booster, as well as assisted me to increase my business profile in the Nelson Mandela Bay area. I learnt a lot about the manner in which so many women are making a difference in the economy and their surrounding community and this really spurs me on to continue to contribute to this great region in which we live," says 2011 Professional Category winner, Carol Batchelor, Director and Audit partner at KPMG Port Elizabeth.

Emerging Entrepreneur Ana de Beer, Business partner of Stanley-on-Bain, highlights the opportunities that winning has given her, "Through the programme's facilitation I have been able to tap into an unlimited resource of mentors affiliated with the BWA, I've also had the opportunity to further my financial business knowledge."

Social Entrepreneur winner, Inge Human, Manager at The Reach For A Dream Foundation in Port Elizabeth acknowledges the credibility RBAA has opened for The Reach For A Dream Foundation, "Most corporates hesitate to get involved with charities as there are so many fly by night organisations, mentioning that I have been a recipient of the RBAA awards has made potential funders realise they are dealing with a professional, credible businesswomen and organisation."

Sanet Mey, Founder and Owner of Miracle Comfrey CC concurs with both de Beer and Human, the RBAA Awards is an exceptional competition that truly inspires existing as well as potential entrepreneurs. "Winning this competition definitely gives you and your business even more

credibility. It has opened opportunities for me for further recognition and I've been able to receive invaluable advice through the BWA's Virtual Board mentoring programme which I can highly recommend."

Michelle Brown, Regional Chairperson of the BWA has only encouragement for those who'd like to nominate or be nominated, "The RBAA is vital to our Association as this is when we acknowledge and salute those Women who are continuing to be business role models. We maintain that Women need to "know their worth" and thus encourage them to step forward and either nominate a colleague or accept their nomination, in good grace! We look forward to our 2012 RBAA initiative and to meeting Women from our Metro who do us proud!"

Besides business and financial success, the judges will assess nominees on how they act as role models and the difference that they make within their communities. The judging process is controlled by outside parties, being key stakeholders in the media and marketing fields, as well as Nedbank, the official sponsor of BWA nationally. Nominees do not need to be a member of the BWA.

The closing date for entries is 27<sup>th</sup> February 2012. BWA would like to encourage all businesswomen to consider entering this awards process, or nominating a colleague who they feel is worthy of the recognition.

For more information contact BWA Branch Co-ordinator, Samantha Bowers on 041 367 1104 or email: [pe@bwasa.co.za](mailto:pe@bwasa.co.za) alternatively visit the website: [www.bwasa.co.za](http://www.bwasa.co.za) to download a nomination form.

**ENDS**

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**FURTHER CRITERIA:**

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### 1. Emerging Entrepreneur

- Need to be a minimum of 26% shareholder in the company that they are operationally involved in for at least one financial year in a managerial capacity.
- The business may not be trading for more than 5 years.
- Only one shareholder from the organisation may be nominated in same fiscal year.
- Need to verify that the business is achieving a minimum of breakeven or profit.
- This includes franchises, micro and small enterprises.

### 2. Entrepreneur

- Need to be a minimum of 26% shareholder in the company that they are operationally involved in for a minimum of 3 years in a managerial capacity.
- Only one shareholder from the organisation may be nominated in same fiscal year.
- Need to verify that the business is profitable.
- This includes Franchises, micro and small enterprises.

### 3. Professional

- Need to be an active practicing professional person belonging to a professional association.
- A professional is defined as "engaged in a profession as a means of livelihood" and have a formal qualification in their industry and a professional body accreditation. , i.e. a doctor, attorney, architect, pharmacist, professional nurse, etc.
- Need to have been in practice, or employed in a professional capacity for 1 year or more as a director or in a management or partnership capacity.
- Could be employed / part of a partnership, corporate, government or NGO.

- Have a direct involvement in the finances of the partnership, corporate division, government division or NGO.
- Need to verify that the practice / division is profitable and / or governed by sound financial practices.
- The nomination endorsement of good standing needs to come from the Managing Partner / Director / CEO or relevant Body (this should accompany the citation).

#### 4. Corporate

- In this category, we accept nominations from registered Pty Ltd, Limited, Educational institutions, Parastatal and Government institutions.
- Need to be with the company for a minimum of 1 financial year.
- Need to be a senior manager /leader (top level position).
- Need to verify control of budget less than R 75 million.
- The nomination endorsement needs to come from the Managing Partner / Director / CEO (this should accompany the citation).
- Need to be a role model and be seen to be actively making a difference within the company / corporation and community – with specific focus on transformation.

#### 5. Social Entrepreneur

- Need to be a member of the company / foundation / NGO / NPO that they work with / for, for a minimum of 1 financial year.
- Need to be controlling or involved in the budget of the organisation, and be able to show a track record of income received and expenditure on projects; and proof that the organization is financially sustainable.
- Need to show evidence of how they have applied practical, innovative and sustainable approaches to benefit society in general. The following additional criteria will be used:-
- Direct social impact
- Innovation
  - Scale of projects and initiatives
  - Sustainability
- Need to demonstrate a unique approach to economic and social problems, to show an approach that cuts across sectors and disciplines, grounded in certain values and processes that are common to each social entrepreneur, independent of what her area of focus has been.