



basic education
Department:
Basic Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



National
Teaching
Awards

Remarks and Guest of Honour Introduction by Basic Education Minister Mrs Angie Motshekga at the 2022 National Teaching Awards held at the CSIR in Pretoria

20 October 2022

Programme Director

Deputy Basic Education Minister, Dr Reginah Mhaule

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Mr Mathanzima Mveli: Basic Education Director-General

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The winners, our honoured teachers, who are our VIPs

Distinguished Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen

I am pleased to address the 22nd anniversary of this prestigious Annual National Teaching Awards (NTA).

The Annual National Teaching offers us the rare opportunity to honour the nation's heroes and heroines – our teachers.

Earlier this month, we commemorated UNESCO's World Teachers' Day, a special international occasion to celebrate the exploits of teachers on a global scale.

UNESCO inaugurated 05 October 2021 as a day representing the significant effort to raise awareness, understanding, and appreciation for teachers' critical contribution to basic education and general social development across the globe.

Today, we meet to celebrate our teachers on a national scale.

We do so because we know that our teachers are potent influencers, and they help mould the next layer of scientists, technologists, artists and leaders of our society.

We are mindful that our teachers are the backbone of our recovery efforts as a country following three devastating events such as the Covid-19 pandemic, KZN Floods and the July Riots.

We know that teachers' important work in being the lighthouse of our society is often not recognised or respected enough.

The UNESCO special teachers' day and the NTA are a pushback against the devaluing of the teaching profession.

As Government, we are indebted to the high calibre of our teaching cohort.

Our teachers represent through deeds and honesty what it means to be a quintessential civil servant.

As we have said before, the truth is that our teachers are indispensable in our basic education system.

The last 32 months have tested the resilience of our teachers as we battled the novel SARS-CoV-2 virus strain, July riots and KZN Floods in a matter of months.

Against all the odds, our teachers held a firm line against the virulent pandemic, and we managed to salvage the 2020 and 2021 academic years.

Your contribution to the national cause to educate our people cannot go unnoticed.

Daily you empty yourself for the national cause in a challenging public schooling environment.

As we learn to live with the virus, we must take the lessons learned during the pandemic seriously.

As a country, we can no longer delay the urgent investment required to enable blended learning approaches on a wide scale.

We are on course to provide every school child in South Africa with digital workbooks and textbooks on a tablet device within the next few years, as the President announced in 2019.

We must future-proof our basic education from the uncertain future likely to be tested by another Covid-19 variant or future global pandemics.

It is true as this 2022 World Teachers' Day theme attests that teachers are at the heart of the education system.

We must love them, invest in them and appreciate them.

As always, teachers hold the light and key to our future as a fledgling democracy.

Today is a special occasion to celebrate the teaching profession and take stock of our progress as a country in honouring these gallant agents of change.

All teachers, including those not receiving awards today, are our nation's natural treasure.

You're on the frontline of our collective endeavours to ignite a reading revolution and break the cycle of poverty of ideas while growing an inclusive economy.

We pay tribute to the late education minister, Professor Kader Asmal, who pioneered these awards almost 22 years ago.

We congratulate all the nominees for the Kader Asmal Excellence Award, for they embody the core values that Professor Asmal stood for.

At the same time, we honour Professor Asmal for his contribution to the development of education in this country.

We thank the Asmal family for allowing us to use his name to honour those teachers who fit the profile of this outstanding educationist and struggle stalwart.

Eleven years after his passing, we have come to lament his clarity of thought, integrity, selflessness and unwavering commitment to building a new South Africa.

To build a new South Africa, we chose: based on universal values of non-racialism, non-sexism, democracy, and united in diversity.

Programme director to honour Asmal and his generation of freedom fighters, our schools must continue to offer sanctuary to the orphaned, health to the diseased and comfort to the lost souls.

At the same time, our schools must offer the best available curriculum content in an environment of peace and comradeship among the schooling community.

The classroom shall indeed remain a holy grail of learning and teaching.

Finally, I applaud all NTA nominees, congratulate all the NTA winners and encourage more teachers to enter these awards next year and many years to come, for they symbolise the best teaching ethos.

We thank all our teachers for staying put in the public schooling environment; we honour and love you all.

Introduction of the Guest Speaker

Let me introduce our guest of honour, Minister in the Presidency, Mr Mondli Gungubele.

Minister Gungubele was appointed Minister in the Republic of South Africa Presidency with effect from 05 August 2021.

Previously, Mr Gungubele was the Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee of Social Development and a Convener of the Social Transformation Cluster Committee since the commencement of the 6th Term of Parliament in June 2019.

Prior to that, Mr Gungubele was the Deputy Minister of Finance from February 2018 till May 2019.

Career/Positions/Memberships/Other Activities:

Mr Gungubele has extensive experience in the public sector and is a product of the trade union movement.

He became actively involved in worker struggles in 1973. In 1982, he became a National Union of Mine Workers (NUM) member.

It was during this time that he sharpened his political and negotiation skills.

In 1989, he was elected to the position of Chairperson of COSATU Local.

In 1992, he took up the position of Chairperson of the ANC Vosloorus branch and later became the founding Chairperson of the ANC East Rand Region.

The same year, he was elected to the Provincial Executive Committee (PEC) of the ANC in Gauteng.

Mr Gungubele became a member of the Gauteng Provincial Legislature after the 1994 democratic breakthrough until 1997.

In 1997, he took up the challenging and exciting task of MEC of Health in the Gauteng Provincial Government, a position he held until 1999.

Mr Gungubele played a pivotal role in the transformation of the health sector in Gauteng.

In 1999, he was deployed to lead Gauteng's Sports, Recreation, Arts and Culture agenda.

Mr Gungubele worked tirelessly to unite all sporting codes and contributed immensely to Gauteng's grassroots sports development.

He held the position of Sports MEC until 2004 – the same year – FIFA awarded the 2010 World Cup Soccer showpiece to South Africa.

After the 2004 national and provincial elections, Mr Gungubele became the Chairperson of the Economic Affairs Portfolio Committee in the Gauteng Legislature.

He served in this portfolio until 2007, where he was responsible for political oversight and ensuring the Department of Economic Affairs fulfils its mandate.

In 2009, Mr Gungubele was deployed to Parliament as an ANC MP.

He served as the Whip of the Justice and Constitutional Development Portfolio Committee.

He was then redeployed to the City of Ekurhuleni, serving a full 5-year term as the City's Executive Mayor.

In Ekurhuleni, Mr Gungubele impelled the City's Governance and administrative record to clean audits and other cumulous awards on good governance.

In 2016, he was deployed back to Parliament and served on the Portfolio Committees on Communications and Public Enterprises, respectively.

Mr Gungubele was part of the collective which led the SABC Inquiry and the Eskom Inquiry – both processes which paved the way for the turnaround of these two State Owned Enterprises.

The Honourable Mr Gungubele holds a B Com (Law) Degree and a National Diploma in Nursing with various certificate courses.

He also serves on the National Executive Committee of the African National Congress as elected in December 2017.

I thank you.