



Press Release – Tsogo Sun– 13/09/2017

### **Irini Takes the Green Sash - Miss Earth South Africa 2017 announced**

Irini Moutzouris is a dynamic and determined individual, completing her final year as an education student she says waste and the education around waste and recycling is key and is everyone's responsibility and says that she "believes we all need to be re-educated on waste and our own role in the waste management of the city." Moutzouris who is originally from Klerksdorp in the North West is completing her Bachelor of Education Degree at the University of Pretoria.

"To me, being a Miss Earth South Africa winner, means being a role model to fellow South Africans and an ambassador and voice for the Environment and creating awareness about the environmental problems we face on a daily basis, especially in waste management." Irini Moutzouris.

It has been an intense few months for the finalists who have been hard at work, with a mission to change the perception and understanding of waste through the campaign; #WasteStopsWithME which was launched a year ago, with partners the City of Johannesburg, Pikitup, Tsogo Sun and SANBI. Not only did these young women take to the streets of Johannesburg, Tshwane and Bloemfontein, but they stretched their campaign to Clayville, Durban, Polokwane, East London, Mpumalanga, Randburg, Diepsloot, Soweto, Port Elizabeth and across South Africa. The primary objective being to create awareness and to keep our cities clean, they organised themselves and arranged community clean up's, beach clean up's and extensive educational programmes at a grass roots level in communities, townships and rural areas.

The Runner Ups, for 2017, included; Orielia Egambaram 1<sup>st</sup> Runner Up from Tshwane; Bianca Rungasamy 2<sup>nd</sup> Runner up from Kwa-Zulu Natal and Rose Mantsho 3<sup>rd</sup> Runner up from Limpopo. The two ambassadors announced were Marianna Christophi for the City of Johannesburg and Lebogang Mokoena.

Ella Bella Constantinides Leite, Director of the programme said; "It's rewarding to see the growth and influence of the Miss Earth South Africa programme, over a period of more than fourteen years we can confidentially say we have empowered, educated and encouraged young women from around South Africa to become Environmental ambassadors and role models in their communities."

The Gala Evening was hosted by Tsogo Sun at the Montecasino Ballroom (<https://www.tsogosun.com/montecasino/meetings-conferences/ballroom>) where a very impressive guest list including the Ambassador of Sweden, the Ambassador of the Netherlands; and the Ambassador of France, UN dignitaries, MMC Dr Mpho Phalatse, MEC for Education Mr Panyaza Lesufi, Former Mayor Duma Nkosi, Former Tourism Minister Derek Hanekom, Pikitup Chairman Mr Bheki Shongwe and the MD of Pikitup Mr Lungile Dhlamini. Celebrities like Palesa Masiteng Sports Presenter and International Model, TV personality Zizo Tshwete our very gorgeous Tema Sebopedi. Leanne Mannas, Renowned South African Broadcaster and Anchor of Morning Live along with former Miss Earth winners and ambassadors, graced the judging panel. The Mistress of Ceremony was the beautiful Keabetswe Mashugane, actress and radio personality.

Candy Tohill, Tsogo Sun's GM of Corporate Affairs says, "Tsogo Sun extends hearty congratulations to Irini Moutzouris from North West for winning the 2017 Miss Earth crown, and to her runners up, all of whom demonstrated their great passion for environmental awareness and put in the hours to be worthy winners. We're extremely proud of the important work that the Miss Earth organisation

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and the ambassadors do for environmental education and the environment as a whole throughout the year – and Tsogo Sun is delighted to be a major partner of this effective and hard-working initiative. Just this year alone, Tsogo Sun volunteers have rolled up their sleeves and worked together with Miss Earth volunteers in a range of initiatives, including tree planting, vegetable garden planting, clean ups, and many educational initiatives to impress on the upcoming generation the urgent need to treasure and protect our planet. Tsogo Sun has a strong environmental management policy (<https://www.tsogosun.com/citizenship/environment>) and we're committed to adopting greener behaviour in all our properties. We look forward to continuing to work alongside Miss Earth ambassadors in making a difference to our world in future."

Behind the scenes the young women had their locks taken care of by Bijan Boutique Hairdressing; and the students of the International School of health, hair and skincare. Make Up was sponsored by Halouw Make Up Studio, with hair tools from Mycro Keratin Moyoko, glowing tans by The Tan Lab and eyelash extensions by The Brow Spot, Fourways.

Winners will receive prizes from David Green Eyewear, gifts from Healing Earth, Crystal Forum and Jenni Gault. Coupled with dental care from Sandton Dental Studio, Camelot International treatments and Body20 fitness sessions at Atholl Square Sandton the Miss Earth SA winners and ambassadors will be spoilt from head to toe.

On the green side, Fry's Family Co. and Meat Free Monday will ensure that the ladies reduce their meat intake for the betterment of the environment, Earth Pro-Biotics and Eco Monkey will equip her for a greener lifestyle in her day-to-day living. Wild Route, Gebco and GroMor will provide the best compost and trees in town for her vegetable and tree planting projects. Medavita an eco-friendly hair range, MUD make up studio, Lorna Jane Active Wear and Trichotin, with Samsonite will ensure that she travels in style both locally and internationally. Matsimela and Parco Bags together with other sponsors and contributors like Sorbet Fourways Atholl and SOHO, Dermagen, Harties Horse Riding, Joico Hair products, Xtreme Go Karting in Cedar Square, Groot Constantia, Glam Palm, The CodFather Sandton have all added to the Glam side of this Green platform. With Gebco, Wildroot, Earth Probiotic ensuring that our green is in action.

The Miss Earth programme is proud to work throughout the year with Pikitup and the City of Johannesburg alongside Tsogo Sun, the official home and venue partner of Miss Earth South Africa and strategic partners SAPPI, SANBI, The Department of Environmental Affairs, UN Environment and Newsclip Media Monitoring.

SA's green girl goes home with a very special prize package as mentioned above including a fully paid for international trip to the Philippines next month where she will represent the country and the work of the organisation.

Irini on winning shared the fact that; "The Miss Earth journey has pushed me out of my comfort zone and allowed me to break my own limits and the opportunity to grow, network and make a difference and make beautiful friendships. I am thankful for that and cannot wait to see what the year ahead holds."

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Executive Director of Miss Earth South Africa, Catherine Constantinides says; “Heroes don’t live in story books they live amongst us and we as the Miss Earth have to ensure we empower and inspire these young ladies to be active citizens and be those heroes we need in society to allow us to change the problems we face on the social and the environmental parts of society.”

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