



FIRSTRAND

## THE 2016 FIRSTRAND LAURIE DIPPENAAR AND FIRSTRAND FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIPS FOR POSTGRADUATE INTERNATIONAL STUDY AWARDED

**Four academically gifted South African students with excellent leadership qualities and the potential to be future destiny changers were each awarded R750 000 to pursue postgraduate studies at the internationally recognised university of their choice in the FirstRand Laurie Dippenaar and FirstRand Foundation postgraduate scholarship awards this year.**

2016 is the 10<sup>th</sup> year that these prestigious scholarships have been awarded. The value of the scholarship was increased to R750 000 per year and a total of R3 million was awarded to four students. The scholarship is available to South African citizens for postgraduate study in any discipline at an internationally recognised university of their choice. Excellence is the only criterion for selection.

The scholarship was awarded to four exceptional candidates.

**Russel Daries** was awarded a FirstRand Laurie Dippenaar Scholarship. He has a BSC in Electrical Engineering from the University of Cape Town and will be undertaking an MSc in Machine Learning at University College London.

**Niel van Der Walt** was awarded a FirstRand Laurie Dippenaar Scholarship. He holds a B Eng Honours in Electrical Engineering from the University of Pretoria and will read for a Masters degree in Electrical Engineering (telecommunications and sensing systems) at Delft University., specialising in quantum mechanics.

**Mogwale Motebejane** was awarded a FirstRand Foundation Scholarship. He completed his MBChB at the University of KwaZulu-Natal and is now completing a 12 month fellowship in interventional neuroradiology at Tufts University School of Medicine

**Genna Gardini** has a BA Honours with drama specialisation and an MA in Theatre and Performance from the University of Cape Town. She wishes to pursue a PhD in Drama and English at Queen Mary University of London.

“The panel was again hugely impressed by the quality of all the applicants and, in particular, the last ten who were invited to be interviewed. Any of the ten could have been a worthy recipient of the award. Members of the panel were unanimous in their view that meeting and interviewing the finalists was an inspirational experience. The panel regard themselves as fortunate to be exposed to such amazing talent.” said Laurie Dippenaar, Chairman, FirstRand.

As a result of the growing awareness of this leading scholarship, 194 (an increase of more than 70%) qualifying applications were received in 2016. Applications were received from graduates from all of the major academic universities.

“I would once again like to thank all South African universities for promoting this scholarship among their outstanding postgraduate students. The final adjudication panel was again hugely impressed by

the quality of all the applicants and, in particular, the final 10 who were invited for interviews.” said Beth van Heerden, FirstRand CSI Executive

**Applications for the 2017 FirstRand Laurie Dippenaar Scholarship for Postgraduate International Study will open on Friday 16 December 2016 and close on Thursday 23 February 2017.**

Details and the application form will be available on the FirstRand website, [www.firstrand.co.za](http://www.firstrand.co.za) from end November 2016.

### **Process**

The following factors are taken into account in the awarding of the scholarship:

- academic excellence;
- leadership abilities;
- community involvement;
- potential to be a destiny changer;
- preference is given to applicants under the age of 35; and
- first-time overseas study.

A preliminary evaluation process was followed with at least three people evaluating each application. The preliminary judging panel of 27 members consisted of representatives from FirstRand, RMB, FNB, Tshikululu Social Investments, and prior scholarship recipients. A list of 47 applicants (long list) was selected and interviewed either in person or telephonically by a combination of Beth van Heerden, Jonathan Stilwell, Adrian Arnott and Professor Shireen Hassim from Wits University. A short list of 10 candidates was selected for the final interviews for the FirstRand Laurie Dippenaar scholarship.

The 2016 final adjudication panel was:

- Laurie Dippenaar;
- Estelle Dippenaar;
- Pat Goss;
- Mamokgethi Phakeng;
- Clare Digby;
- Francois Hugo; and
- Sizwe Nxasana.