

# Absa partners with GIBS on the 2019 Spirit of Youth leadership development programme

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Absa has partnered with the Gordon Institute of Business Science (GIBS) to roll out the Spirit of Youth (SOY) leadership development programme. The one-year partnership which commenced on 4 May 2019, will see the development of 100 high school students across the Gauteng province. The SOY programme is a forum that aims to create and facilitate a high-impact and innovative peer-to-peer learning platform for learners to define and voice their vision of South Africa.

The youth programme brings together 11th grade learners from diverse socio-economic backgrounds to engage with policymakers in creating a unique leadership experience aimed at positively impacting South African youth and the communities they reside in. Learners are selected on the basis of academic excellence, demonstrable leadership qualities and commitment to their communities.

This year-long programme which caters for rural, urban, township and independent schools, has developed over 3,000 learners in the past 13 years since its inception. Classes, which will take place every Saturday, are aimed at channeling youth energy for personal development and creating a spirit of active citizenship.

Absa seeks to positively and significantly make a real difference by alleviating some of the key challenges facing youth and society today. "Collaboration is integral to our shared value approach and we engage like-minded organisations if we believe that solutions cannot be adequately addressed by our business alone," says Sazini Mojapelo, Absa Head of Citizenship and Community Investment.

"We are contributing to systemic structural change in the education eco-system by creating platforms to address knowledge gaps, providing opportunities to increase the employability prospects of young people, and supporting institutions and administrators with technical assistance to improve the delivery of quality education."

Nicola Kleyn, GIBS dean, said: "We are, as an organisation are philosophically close to business and the development of Africa and its youth, and this deep relationship is reflected in everything we do. This partnership with Absa is true testament to this and will go a long way in developing tomorrow's leaders."

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