

## PRESS RELEASE

### Stainless awards provide welcome boost to local sector

**Johannesburg, 30 October 2018** - The winners of the 2018 Sassda Columbus Stainless Awards have been announced at a glittering banquet in Fourways, Johannesburg with 189 entries from 53 companies resulting in a stellar list of more than 60 finalists.

Speaking at the event, Sassda Executive Director **John Tarboton** said; “This year, perhaps more than ever, awards of this nature are essential as they celebrate the innovation, strength and durability of the South African stainless steel industry, despite the buffeting winds of change that have beset our country in the two years since the last awards event was held.

“Despite these challenges, entries ranged from locally manufactured stainless steel corrugated pipes to world-class architectural masterpieces to feats of engineering and inspiring stories of transformation and growth amongst our members”.

#### Local ingenuity

Ten judges spent an entire day pouring over the entries taking time to analyse each one and were very pleased with the locally originated nature of the submissions.

The judges felt the overall winner ND Engineering was consistently impressive with a variety of projects in a number of different categories. As a result, not only did it achieve winner status in the Manufacturing Innovation and Duplex Stainless Steel categories but also first runner up in the Welding category and merit awards in both the Export and Agro-Processing categories.

ND Engineering MD **Elvis Green** comments; “Over the last two years, we have chosen to be mindful of the external factors that have plagued our industry but to also actively focus on internal improvements to negate the affects. To counteract this, we have invested in new equipment and most importantly, we have created a stable environment in which all team members are comfortable and able to express themselves, without having to shoulder the burden of these tough economic times.

“Overall, we have made a concerted effort to be positive and decided to expand when competitors are downsizing with the intention of filling some noticeable capacity voids.”

## **Architectural acumen**

When looking at the winning entry in the Architecture, Building and Construction category, Antonini Darmon Architects, judges described it as; “An outstanding example of the use of stainless steel to create a beautiful architectural ‘signature’, true to form and function, which makes dramatic use of reflectivity and demonstrates an understanding of stainless steel’s characteristics.”

Commenting on the winner in the Business Excellence category, Fabrinox, the judges said; “This award is justly deserved in light of this company offering sustained high-quality and customised services to the stainless industry for 25 years”, while Runner Up Sello’s Gutters, was seen as a “A great example of how transformation and a willingness to offer better service and to collaborate with fellow local suppliers, installers and service providers can have an all-round positive effect.”

## **Tackling transformation**

A new addition to the awards was the Most Transformed Category which pays homage to those companies that have embraced change within their business structures. Looking at winner Sky Hill Heavy Engineering, the judges commented; “Through training and equity partnerships, the company has transformed from a Level 5 B-BBEE company against the new codes in 2016/2017 to a Level 1 B-BBEE company today. Black females now own 30% and black males 21% of the company. The company is indeed transformed and has achieved this very rapidly”.

Summing up the importance of the awards Tarboton concludes; “What’s clear, is that far from being a nice to have, awards of this kind set a benchmark for local manufacturers and fabricators. They are also the perfect example of the role that 21<sup>st</sup> Century industry associations can play in fostering the growth of the sector that they champion - in this case stainless steel!”

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**About Sassda:** *The Southern Africa Stainless Steel Development Association (Sassda) has been in existence for more than 50 years and is made up of members that distribute, market, manufacture and fabricate products and services relevant to stainless steel. With 400 members in sub-Saharan Africa, the association provides a platform for its members to collectively promote the sustainable growth and development of the industry, with the main emphasis on stainless steel converted within the South African economy.*

