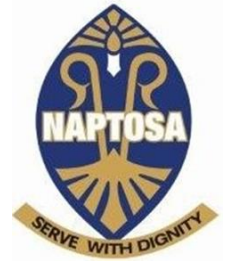


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NAPTOSA WOMEN'S DAY MESSAGE 2021

On Women's Day 2021, the Leadership of NAPTOSA wishes to acknowledge and thank all the female members and staff of our union for their role in, and contribution to, NAPTOSA. You are the backbone of our organization.

While we have come a long way as a society from 9 August 1956 when more than 20 000 women marched to the Union Buildings in protest against the extension of the Pass Laws to women, we can by no means claim that we have reached the levels of equality that will make a 2021 Women's Day theme of "Generation Equality: Realizing Women's Rights for an Equal Future" a redundant exercise.

It is unacceptable that in the twenty-first century we still have to discuss an equal future for women. By now we should long have referred to the years past when equality was achieved. We have a Constitution in South Africa that affords women all the rights that their male counterparts enjoy. We are therefore falling short when it comes to implementation and application of those rights. It is the responsibility of government, all organisations and the male population to ensure that the rights are realised for the women of our country.

As NAPTOSA we have been fortunate to have a number of women take up leadership roles in the organization. We have had a female President and Vice-President and are currently blessed with three female Provincial Chairpersons and three female Provincial Chief Executive Officers.

Over and above these female leaders there are also a number of female members serving in the various structures of our union. The fact, however, remains that we need many more, because our female participation in leadership roles does not reflect the demographics of the organization.

There is no doubt that among our membership there are many women who have the ability, skills and drive to take up leadership positions. We need you to avail yourselves for these positions, whether at site, branch, provincial or national level. There are no constitutional or policy impediments in NAPTOSA that bar female members from rising to any of the leadership positions. If, however, any other obstacles exist, these should be identified and raised to allow them to be addressed and removed.

But it is not only in our organization that women play a significant role. Women also occupy critical positions in the education system of our country. We wish, in this regard, to acknowledge the roles of *inter alia* the Minister of Basic Education, the female MECs of education, the CEOs of SACE, the ETDP SETA and SAQA and the General Secretary of the ELRC, not forgetting each and every female teacher and Education Support Personnel member without whose selfless service and dedication our education system cannot effectively function.

Celebrating Women's Day, without recognising the plight of so many women that still fall prey to gender-based violence, would be to derogate from the importance of this day. NAPTOSA remains resolute in its campaign to combat this scourge, particularly School-related, Gender-based Violence.

We call on all our male members to show their appreciation for their female family members, partners, friends and colleagues, not only on Women's Day, but every day.

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PRESIDENT: NAPTOSA