

## Impressive line-up of speakers at Vaal's SMME conference

VANDERBIJLPARK. - The second Annual Vaal Region SMME Conference will take place on September 15 and 16 at the Emerald Resort and Casino.

The two day conference will consist of presentations and workshops on both days, as well as an exhibition area at which various SMME service providers will be on hand to answer questions and inform delegates about the services they provide. The workshops will cover a variety of topics including: compiling business plans, project and time management, HR practices and labour law, finance for non financial managers, understanding BBBEE as well as sales and marketing aimed at both start up and established businesses.

The conference organizers have once again secured a phenomenal line-up of presenters.

Attendees from last year will undoubtedly remember the enthusiastic and passionate Mr Eric Tockell (Founder of the Wimpy Group). Mr Tockell has agreed to be part of the conference again this year and his ease of manner and impassioned approach will no doubt capture the minds of many attendees.

The Verimark range of products is a household name and Mr Willie van Straaten, CEO and founder, will be at the conference to tell delegates how he takes concepts to cash.

Other presenters include Ms Philisiwe Buthelezi (CEO, National Empowerment Fund), Mr Peter Metcalfe (Chairman of The Foundation for the Development of Africa) and Mr André Mellet (ABSA/Beeld Economist 2009).

To reinforce the fact that the potential for great success lies on our doorstep, Mr Mac van der

Merwe (CEO, Zorgvliet Group) and Ms Mankwane Chabedi (owner, Le Looks Hair Salons) will make presentations at the conference.

The Zorgvliet group is a well known national brand consisting of hotels, lodges, spas and numerous other businesses of which the five-star Riviera on Vaal Hotel and the Riviera on Vaal country club is best known to locals of the Vaal region. Mr van der Merwe will share his inspirational story of humble beginnings in Vereeniging and his steely determination to rise above his situation that has led him to become one of the most successful entrepreneurs in South Africa.

Ms Mankwane Chabedi who went from local school teacher to successful business woman will also be at the conference to inspire SMMEs and entrepreneurs to dream big and strive for

service excellence. The conference will also provide an opportunity to give recognition to SMMEs in the Vaal region who do indeed provide excellent service. Entrants will compete in specific categories, namely: Building and construction, Manufacturing and engineering, Technical services, Hospitality and Tourism, Soft services, and Woman Owned Business. A cash prize of R10 000 as well a one year mentorship program sponsored by The Centre of Applied Management Science worth R27 000 will be awarded per category. Competition details can be found on the website: [www.emerald.foundation.co.za](http://www.emerald.foundation.co.za) and closing date for entrants is July 31.

This conference is a must for all small business owners and entrepreneurs. Contact the Vaal Region Community Chest on (016) 976 0933.