Excellence in Special Needs Teaching

Nominee: **Ms Hazel Human**
School: **Olympia School of Skills**
Cluster: **Eden and Central Karoo**
District: **Eden and Central Karoo Education District**

Ms Human is a young, dedicated and passionate teacher who started her teaching career in 2011 at Haarlem Secondary School as a learning support teacher. Her responsibilities were to support teachers with the identification, screening and placement of learners within a normal school setting. She wrote individual education plans for learners with behavioural challenges to assist fellow teachers to teach more effectively. With her newly found passion for the special needs child and armed with new knowledge and mainstream experience of special needs, Ms Human was appointed at the Olympia School of Skills in 2018 where she became a teacher. At this school she was hopeful about all her dreams, could dare to be different and could live her passion for and dedication towards special needs learners hailing from disadvantaged areas.

Ms Human believes that teaching should come from the heart, especially where learners with special needs are concerned. She acknowledges and respects each and every learner as an individual, despite age, race, gender, ethnicity or language and is a passionate teacher who has made a commitment to not exclude anybody from the opportunity of getting quality education. Ms Human is achieving great success in using alternative and adapted teaching methods in class, working with learners on an individual basis. She uses eLearning methodologies in class with great success. Her holistic approach towards the individual learner is dear to her heart and she invests her time and energy in coaching sport as part of her extramural program at school.

As an enthusiastic and driven special needs teacher, Ms Human has studied further to strengthen her knowledge of the special needs learner. Apart from having a teaching qualification, BEd (Intermediate Phase), she also completed an honours degree in learner support and is currently studying for a BA in psychological counselling. She regularly attends workshops in various applicable specialised fields of education, such as HIV and AIDS, teenage pregnancy and grief and loss programs.

With her positive attitude towards the teaching profession, she endeavours to motivate and support her learners. Her initiatives has resulted in turning challenged learners with severe barriers to performing and adapting into positive individuals with new hope for the future. She believes that the attitudes and actions of a dedicated special needs teacher can determine the future of a special needs learner in a very positive way and is therefore nominated as a worthy recipient of this award.