

Reeza Isaacs named CFO of the Year

Reeza Isaacs, group finance director of retailer Woolworths Holdings, has been named South Africa's CFO Of The Year at the 2016 CFO Awards.



The award was announced at the end of a conference and gala event at Summer Place in Hyde Park, Joburg. Dumisani Dlamini (National Arts Council) was named Young CFO Of The Year and Public CFO Of The Year, while Osman Arbee (Imperial) and Walter Leonhardt (ABI) also won two awards each.

The event was chaired by entrepreneur Vusi Thembekwayo and attended by 250 CFOs and prominent leaders from the business and public sectors. During a master class and a series of high-level round-table discussions prior to the awards ceremony, CFOs discussed a variety of burning topics, including strategy execution, technology, transformation, compliance, business opportunities in the rest of Africa, and how to build winning cultures and sustainable leadership.

The gala dinner kicked off with a keynote speech by Chancellor Wiseman Nkuhlu of the University of Pretoria, South Africa's first black chartered accountant and role model for many finance professionals. He spoke about the courage that modern CFOs need and then handed out lifetime achievement awards to Leon Crouse (Remgro) and Simon Ridley (Standard Bank), who recently retired from their long careers as finance leaders.

The winners

Award winners 2016 were:

- CFO Of The Year – Reeza Isaacs (Woolworths);
- Young CFO Of The Year – Dumisani Dlamini (National Arts Council of South Africa);
- Public CFO Of The Year – Dumisani Dlamini (National Arts Council of South Africa);
- Strategy Execution Award – Osman Arbee (Imperial);
- Transformation & Empowerment Award – Reeza Isaacs (Woolworths);
- High Performance Team Award – Osman Arbee (Imperial);
- Compliance & Governance Award – Walter Leonhardt (ABI);
- Moving into Africa Award – Bikash Prasad (Olam International);
- Finance Transformation Award – Walter Leonhardt (ABI); and
- Finance & Technology Award – Christine Ramon (AngloGold Ashanti).

The annual CFO Awards are organised by CFO South Africa, an organisation that connects finance professionals through monthly events, the quarterly CFO Magazine, its website CFO.co.za, and social media channels on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. By helping CFOs share knowledge, exchange interests and open up business opportunities, CFO South Africa

contributes to the growth of the country. Services firm KPMG and Standard Bank are principal sponsors of CFO South Africa in 2016.

Other partners of the 2016 CFO Awards included Old Mutual, Oracle, Thomson Reuters and SizweNtsalubaGobodo, while additional tables were sponsored by Deloitte, the DTI, Pikitup, RMB and Servest. CFO South Africa founders Alex van Groningen and Melle Eijckelhoff were both in attendance, the latter closing the evening with some heartfelt words of thanks.

The CFO Of The Year Award was handed out by KPMG South Africa chairman Ahmed Jaffer, and was accepted on behalf of Reeza Isaacs by Zaid Manjra, group head of planning & reporting of Woolworths. Isaacs himself reacted in a video message sent from Australia, where he was attending board meetings of David Jones, the Australian retailer that was acquired by Woolworths in 2014.

Isaacs received the best scores from a pool of 25 nominated CFOs, all of whom were extensively interviewed by the judging panel as part of the awards process. A full list of nominated CFOs can be found at www.cfoawards.co.za.

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