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**PRESS RELEASE**

**6 February 2016**

**Mastercard scholars at University of Pretoria keep the African dream alive**

The University of Pretoria (UP) is proud to welcome 43 Scholars from all over the African continent as part of the 2016 cohort of The MasterCard Foundation Scholars Program. This Program enables young people from economically disadvantaged communities to complete quality secondary and university education. Following their graduation with knowledge and skills, students are encouraged to give back and make a positive impact to their communities.

The 2016 scholars enrolled at UP are from Nigeria, Malawi, Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, Swaziland and South Africa, and were selected based on their need, academic excellence, leadership potential and a commitment to giving back within their own communities once they have completed their studies. Student beneficiaries for The MasterCard Foundation Scholars Program are pursuing studies in fields of Engineering, Agricultural Sciences and Economic and Management Science studies.

Prof Ana Naidoo, Deputy Director in the Department for Education Innovation at UP, who oversees the Program, says the partnership between The MasterCard Foundation and UP provides comprehensive financial support, as well as academic, social and personal skills building. "This programme will put 347 undergraduate and graduate Scholars through UP over a period of 10 years and is not only committed to producing skilled academics, but also leaders who have a common philosophy of change and ethical leadership which will drive social and economic transformation in their communities."

The MasterCard Foundation launched this Program in 2012 so that deserving young people can successfully complete their secondary and university education. Scholars have the opportunity to learn, be mentored, develop their talent and pursue their aspirations. The Foundation aspires to enable people living in poverty to activate their own agency and change their circumstances.

The Program is implemented by a global network of education institutions and non-profit organisations who together believe that education is a catalyst for social and economic advancement.

For more information about The MasterCard Foundation Scholars Program visit www.mastercardfdnscholars.org.

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