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## PRESS RELEASE

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Hamanskraal (Gauteng – South Africa),

24 November 2016

### **BREAKING GROUND AT MOTSHEGOFADIWA PRIMARY SCHOOL**

The culmination of an architectural awards programme with long term impact



**Saint-Gobain, the world leader in the habitat and construction market, celebrated its 350<sup>th</sup> Anniversary last year and to mark this noteworthy milestone, sponsored an architectural awards programme in Mexico, India and South Africa – The Architecture for Social Gain Awards. These awards were conceptualized by Saint-Gobain to recognize and reward talent**

**in the design of spaces that promote learning and development.**

The awards promoted and celebrated architecture that positively effects the integration of community and environment for the long term benefit of both people and planet. In South Africa, an impressive 38 entries were received across the three categories, namely FUTURE, BUILT & ADOPT-a-School. The Adopt-a-School Foundation is a non-profit organization that supports the creation and enhancement of a conducive learning and teaching environment in disadvantaged schools. In this category, entrants chose a school from a supplied list and submitted a design



proposal, with a commitment from Saint-Gobain in association with Adopt-a-School to start the building of the winning project in 2016.

The winner in the ADOPT-a-School category was Johannesburg based Kate Otten Architects with their proposed three step strategy to restructure Motshegofadiwa Primary School to greatly enhance its purpose as an education facility for the community of Hamanskraal.

Last week saw the official groundbreaking ceremony at the school.

“Being reminded of Nelson Mandela’s words ‘Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world’, the decision was made to focus on education. After some investigation, we knew that the Adopt-a-School Foundation, with their expert advice and well researched support, would be the perfect partner to get this done,” explains Saint-Gobain’s CEO for African development, Richard Napier. “In South Africa we realised that we wanted these awards to have a long term impact. We wanted to commemorate our illustrious past by investing in the future,” he said at the groundbreaking ceremony last week with guests in attendance including the school principal Ms Matshaba, Kate Otten Architects and representatives from Adopt-a-School and Saint-Gobain.

The work of Kate Otten Architects, based in Parkhurst Johannesburg, has won awards from several bodies and has been exhibited and published locally and internationally.

The Architecture for Social Gain Awards proved such a success that Saint-Gobain has continued and expanded the competition to the rest of the African continent. The Africa Architecture Awards is set to become Africa’s largest architecture awards programme with the





aim of celebrating design excellence and promoting an increased awareness of the role and importance of architecture across Africa.

“We would like the teachers and learners of Motshegofadiwa to know that we are here to stay – our commitment is long term. We look forward to our continued involvement with this school” says Napier.

Motshegofadiwa is classified as a primary school (Grade R – 7) that accommodates 960 learners. Located in Stinkwater, 58km north of Pretoria in Gauteng, the school community is characterised by extreme poverty and high levels of unemployment. Despite the lack of physical and educational resources, the school is run by an excellent management team and enthusiastic and passionate educators.

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