



# MAD ad campaign draws on celebrities to raise funds

Khayelitsha Township, in the Western Cape, is one of the locations for the making of a TV commercial that will highlight the work of the MAD (Make A Difference) Foundation. Due to start filming shortly, thanks to a R1 million airtime donation by DStv, Francois Pienaar, chair of the foundation, says this TV commercial is a milestone in its existence.



However, he explains that though he never wanted any publicity or kudos for his philanthropic efforts, he says Robyn Putter often debated with him, raising the question, "If corporate SA doesn't know what you are doing, how can they help you?"

## MAD roots

Informal banter, in 2003, around a lunch table among business buddies about educating and nurturing SA's future leaders was the start of the MAD Foundation. It was the idea and dream of the late advertising legend, Robyn Putter, who passed the baton to fellow creative Mike Schalit, co-founder of Net#work BBDO and renowned in the advertising industry for his 'goodvertising.'

The Section 21 Company has stayed under wraps for seven years, quietly raising funds through low profile means like charity golf days and other sporting events. R25.3 million raised to date has educated hundreds of disadvantaged children who are academically gifted, one even going on to attend Harvard. However, the foundation is now at a financially crucial tipping point and needs to expand its fundraising efforts if it is to continue its work.

## New drive

In a collaborative fashion and sharing MAD's vision, Net#work BBDO CT involved production house Wishbones, which in turn devoted its talent and time to making the commercial.

Net#work creative team Quentin Arendse and Jabulani Sigee explain that most of the children in the cast were from disadvantaged backgrounds, places of safety or shelters and the balance were the ones the foundation has taken under their wing "You can imagine how excited and awed they were when they met their heroes and role models on set."

The foundation's motto is 'The leaders of tomorrow need our leadership today' and Pienaar only had to ask once and some of SA's best-known celebrities rescheduled their diaries, some flying especially to Cape Town and cutting short overseas trips to make it to the film set. In contrasting settings, they appear as 'guardian angels' to our young, future leaders.



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The celebrities included singer Arno Carstens, comedian Marc Lottering, soccer star Lucas Radebe, TV personality and ex-Miss South Africa Jo-Ann Strauss, lead singer of Freshly Ground Zolani Mahola, couturier Gavin Rajah and well-known Cape Town DJ, Suga from Good Hope FM.

Arno Carstens and Theo Crous composed the song for the commercial called 'Stars Above Us,' which will be released for the first time when the TV commercial flights.

Continuing where Putter left off, Schalit echoes his sentiments on the need to build awareness and couldn't wait to combine the matching DNA of MAD and his agency's foundation MAL (Make A Living / Make A Life) to create an advertising campaign he predicts will inspire corporate South Africa to play their part, to go MAD.

For more on the project go to [www.themadbunch.org.za](http://www.themadbunch.org.za).

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>