

Redefine wins Development Award for CSI initiative

Supported by Redefine Properties, the Buskaid Soweto String Project equips young black musicians in South African townships, for which they won the Development Award at the 17th Annual Business Day BASA Awards in Johannesburg on Monday, 25 August.



The awards are presented by Business and Arts South Africa (NPC) in partnership with Business Day and Hollard, and recognise and promote excellence and innovation in business support for the arts.

There are currently around 115 children and young people enrolled in the Buskaid music academy and many more who dream of joining. In addition to providing a musical education, it promotes life skills and knowledge transfer, as well as full- and part-time employment to 35 dedicated performers and teachers.

Providing so much more than a music education

"We are thrilled that Buskaid's incredible work has earned such an esteemed recognition," says Marijke Coetzee, Redefine Properties' Head of Marketing and Communications. "Buskaid provides so much more than a music education; it shares life skills and opportunities for disadvantaged children to become tomorrow's leaders. It gives its young members a brighter future. We are proud to be associated with Buskaid."

This far-reaching partnership supports Buskaid's vision that all township children will be given the opportunities to channel their creative energies and talents through learning and playing classical music to the highest international standards. Redefine, Buskaid's major sponsor, has played a key role in supporting its teaching and its growth.

The seeds for Buskaid were first planted when British viola player Rosemary Nalden, MBE, Founder of Buskaid and Director of the Buskaid Music Academy in Soweto, heard a BBC radio interview in 1992 highlighting the difficult plight of young string players in Diepkloof. Compelled to take action, she enlisted a support of 120 of her professional colleagues who took part in a simultaneous 'busk' at 16 British Rail stations to raise money.



She had no idea that by doing this she would come spend so much time in South Africa to pursue her passion. Unfolding from Buskaid, Nalden responded to requests from the local Diepkloof community and established the Buskaid Soweto String Project in 1997 to develop musical talent and the gift to perform in disadvantaged children from the area.

Providing an ongoing, sustainable and growing development programme

"Buskaid has enjoyed a fruitful partnership with Redefine over several years. Even when the company went through a major merger and changes, their support has been steadfast, generous and grown," says Rosemary. "This continued sponsorship has allowed Buskaid to provide an ongoing, sustainable and growing development programme. Redefine is at the heart of the project's collaborative community of sponsors."

Coetzee, who oversees the Redefine's CSI initiatives, believes it's important to have a good idea of the real needs of a project, and has gained a greater understanding of how Redefine can support Buskaid by visiting the school and connecting with its young musicians.

From these visits and discussions, several exciting projects and new focuses have emerged, including Buskaid's successful 10-day UK tour in July 2014, with sold-out performances and standing ovations wherever they went. Redefine sponsored a tour of the UK for the young musicians of The Buskaid Soweto String Ensemble. Coetzee says, "This sponsorship was a

natural extension of our continuing support of Buskaid."

Under the Redefine banner, these young ambassadors showcased the talent and potential of our country and their flair for performing on an international stage in five concerts, delighting audiences with classical pieces, pop songs and township jives. The tour culminated in a flash-mob performance in London's bustling Trafalgar Square on Nelson Mandela International Day on 18 July, making international news headlines.

"Through Redefine's sponsorship of, and work with, Buskaid, we actively make a positive contribution to our communities and the arts, for now and for the future," says Coetzee. "By creating new horizons for its members, Buskaid inspires residents of Soweto, music lovers from across South Africa and audiences around the world."

Buskaid's annual concert, sponsored by Redefine, takes place on Saturday, 6 September at the Linder Auditorium, St Andrews Road, Parktown at 7.30 pm, and is set to inspire, delight and move audiences with a musical and visual showcase bursting with talent and featuring a wide range of music. Tickets are available from Computicket. For more info, please contact Anne Bull at Buskaid on 011 442 9676 or www.buskaid.org.za.

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