

StreetSmart SA celebrates 10th anniversary, announces new chairperson

On its 10th anniversary, StreetSmart SA, an organisation dedicated to helping street children rebuild their lives through donations from restaurants in the Western Cape and Gauteng, has announced founding member Melanie Burke as new chairperson...



Melanie Burke, Chairperson of StreetSmart SA.

Former banker and information technology specialist, Burke has been an integral part of StreetSmart SA since its inception in 2005. She has worked across the private, public and civil society sectors as a practitioner of change, bringing her expertise in leadership development, collaboration, innovation, technology and entrepreneurship to the professional world.

"I am delighted to be of further service to StreetSmart SA in my new role as chairperson of the board. I am grateful for the continued support our organisation enjoys and invite all South Africans to build on our collective efforts of contributing to organisations that are helping to create viable lives for vulnerable street children," says Burke.

As a longstanding member of StreetSmart SA, she has been inspired by her predecessors Margi Biggs and Nils Heckscher.

"As StreetSmart SA looks forward to celebrating 10 years in 2015, I will be working to cement all of the commitment and goodwill to this cause and to increase its impact and scale of donations," she adds.

Nationally there are currently 90 restaurants that have embraced StreetSmart's vision to make a real difference to the lives of street children. Funds are raised by adding a R5 donation to each table's bill at the participating restaurants. This donation is voluntary and diners are able to contribute more if they wish to.

During 2014 StreetSmart SA has raised more than R1,040,000 through participating restaurants to the benefit of their

respective communities. Organisations that are actively involved with social development and the rehabilitation of street children with the ultimate goal of family re-unification will benefit from the generosity that StreetSmart SA inspires and encourages.

StreetSmart SA was set up in 2005 by a group of concerned Capetonians under the patronage of Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu and comprises resourceful board members representing business and the hospitality and tourism industries. Similar StreetSmart organisations also run independently in the UK, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, India, USA - San Francisco and The Netherlands.

StreetSmart SA is registered as a public benefit organisation as well as a non-profit organisation and ensures that every cent donated by diners goes towards social and educational upliftment projects for street children. StreetSmart's goal is to be part of the process of social normalisation and to encourage the public not to give money into the hands of a child as this keeps them on the streets. In essence, eating and donating at a StreetSmart restaurant is the responsible way to help a street child.

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