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**HILLBROW UNPLUGGED BRINGS HOPE TO THE HEART OF URBAN COMMUNITIES  
BRINGING POSITIVE CHANGE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT TO THE DESTITUTE**

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**HILLBROW, JOHANNESBURG – Last night the inner city organisation Mould Empower Serve (MES) celebrated their achievements of the last 32 years and the services they render to challenged communities in South African metropolitan cities at the twelfth MES Hillbrow Unplugged fundraiser event held in the heart of Hillbrow. MES brings value to marginalised and destitute urban communities in Johannesburg, Kempton Park, Port Elizabeth and Cape Town. The evening themed Winder Wander was a hosted feast of award-winning entertainment and inspiration for paying corporate guests. All proceeds go to the work of MES as the entertainment and event services were provided on a pro bono donation basis.**

“We would like to extend a tremendous heartfelt thank you to all our guests, organisers, entertainers and staff who made the evening another exquisite affair and an overwhelming success” says Rev. Alan Childs, CEO of MES. “Hillbrow Unplugged has been a part of the MES events calendar since 2007, and each year it gets more flavourful and colourful!”

The night featured an inspirational talk by special guest speaker and adventurer Deshun Deysel as well as award-winning performances by Samantha Peo and Clifford Cooper in their cabaret-style production *Souffire and Fireflies* and DECA’s striking instrumental arrangements; all contributing to celebrate the life-changing work of MES. Wenzile Madonsela, from the Thuli Madonsela Foundation (Thuma), was the programme director for the night.

A welcome reception hosted at Trap der Jeugd School in Auckland Park, set the tone for the evening before the wander began to the heart of Hillbrow at Ekhaya Park with its staged winter wonderland. “The gala event allows us the opportunity to bring our financial donors and in kind supporters to the home of our operations. Here they experience elements of the city first, meet some of the staff and learn more about our programmes, all of which would not be possible without their involvement,” says Childs. “A special thanks to all our event sponsors who donated not only time and effort, but for going the extra mile to ensure another Hillbrow Unplugged for the history books.”

The theme for this year’s Hillbrow Unplugged was *Winter Wander* as it represented a life journey and the challenges one faces every day. “Our clients come from all walks of life, they seek hope and most are faced with situations that feel impossible to conquer,” says Leona Pienaar, Executive Manager for Fundraising and Marketing at MES. “The night represented the journey through the rough unforgiving perils of life, through the cold and darkness to a fruitful and victorious summit. All performances on the evening showcased personal journeys centred around themes of hope, courage and success,” adds Pienaar.

South African adventurer and businesswoman, Deshun Deysel, offered an inspirational talk about her own personal journey filled with hope and challenges as she prepared to conquer Everest and become the first South African woman to do so. Performances on the night included Samantha Peo and Clifford Cooper presenting their cabaret-style production of *Souffire and Fireflies*, which incorporates themes of love, loss and growth amidst heartbreak and tragedy. DECA provided striking instrumental arrangements, and their up-tempo beats kept everyone warm.

“Hillbrow Unplugged is one of the fundraising events on the MES annual events calendar. All event contributors provided their services on a pro bono basis, ensuring all money from the evening could be



channelled directly to where it is needed most – to the heart of inner city communities,” concludes Pienaar.

For more information on upcoming events, and for more information on how you could become involved, visit [www.mes.org.za](http://www.mes.org.za).

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## MORE ABOUT MES

Since 1986, MES has been developing a unique strategy that addresses the development of the communities it serves. MES follow a holistic approach towards the development of people, while applying resources that ensure the successful and sustainable exit from the different programmes.

- Mould
  - Support and reach out with compassion, love and care
  - Encourage and motivate through positive communication
  - Treat others with respect and fairness irrespective of their religion, race, gender, age, cultural background or sexual orientation
- Empower
  - Accountable and responsible with clear strategy, roles and structure
  - Apply sound corporate governance and financial procedures, as well as effective monitoring and evaluation processes
  - Reflect and enhance integrity, transparency and effective leadership
- Serve
  - Practice Christian disciplines and create a servant and service culture
  - Be a voice of righteousness for the disempowered
  - Serve as integrated team with a common vision and goal

## MORE ABOUT THE MES HILLBROW UNPLUGGED GALA BENEFIT EVENT

- The benefit gala dinner and show was hosted on 17 May 2018
- Tickets sold for R10 000 a table of ten guests or R1000 per individual guest
- All proceeds from the evening goes towards the continuation of MES's work
- Contact Leona Pienaar for more information on 011 725 6531 or e-mail her at [leona@mes.org.za](mailto:leona@mes.org.za)
- Hillbrow Unplugged Winter Wander probono contributors:
  - Idea Lab (event management)
  - AV Tech (sound and stage)
  - Nini Richi Style Studios & Inspire Furniture (decor and furniture)
  - Stone (media liaison)
  - Deca – Douw and Herman Steyn
  - Samantha Peo and Clifford Cooper
  - Creative Concepts Entertainment
  - Dshun Deysel
  - Wenzile Madonsela, (Thuli Madonsela Foundation)
  - DRD Gold (blankets and gifts)
  - CODA – Red Cello Productions
  - Chocoloza
  - Hof's Bite Caterers
  - Bar Motion
  - Inflate SA
  - Debbie Hunter Design
  - Out of Passion (MES beneficiary)
  - Greg da Silva Photography & Liza\_Pics
  - Ekhaya Park
  - Fun FX

## CONTACT FOR MORE INFORMATION OR INTERVIEW REQUESTS

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