



# The South African Suzuki Association

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## **A SUMMARY OF THE WORK OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN SUZUKI ASSOCIATION IN DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES**

Many of our members teach in disadvantaged communities.  
These are their stories:

### **RIKA GERRYTS**

Rika is a Suzuki violin teacher who works at the East Rand School of the Arts which is funded by the Gauteng Department of Education which also pays her salary. She works there on a Monday and Friday and she has about 15 High School pupils to teach. She teaches them individually or in pairs. A lot of these children live in hostels and come from a disadvantaged background. In many cases their care-giver at home is a grandparent as their parents are either dead or work far from home.

On Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays Rika teaches at three different Primary schools in the Daveton area of the East Rand. The East Rand School of the Arts oversees this project in the schools. Rika teaches between 15 to 22 students per day usually in groups of 3-5 pupils at a time and so manages to teach about 60 pupils in the three days. These pupils are charged a nominal fee of about R20.00 per month, if they can afford it. If not, the lessons are free. These children are also from disadvantaged backgrounds and from the local squatter camps.

The violins that the children use were bought by a sponsor Seekers Travel with Flair and from funds raised by giving concerts.

The support that Rika needs is the following:

1. Sponsorship for her fees for the SASA Teacher Training Courses. She feels that her pupils directly benefit from her training as she is inspired with new ideas, especially for

group lessons. This type of sponsorship would be a great help to her as she does not earn a big salary.

2. Sponsorships for her pupils to attend the Group Lessons at our SASA Teacher Training Courses.
3. Sponsorships for transport to the SASA events like the Courses, Concerts and Camps.
4. Sponsorships for her pupils to attend the Annual Suzuki Music Camp.
5. Sponsorship for Karen Kimmet to give these pupils Group Master Classes at their own school.

One of Rika's pupils, Pascali Mokadi, a boy in Grade 10, has done very well. After having mastered Book 5 of the Suzuki method, he attained a place in the Johannesburg Symphony Orchestra (an amateur group) and in the East Rand Youth Orchestra.

### **BETSIE MEYER**

Betsie works at the Kingdom Life Children's Centre two mornings a week. She teaches about 25 children in groups of no more than 10 at a time. At the moment they have 20 violins, 10 of which have been donated by the UNISA Music Foundation, 5 belong to the SASA (having been donated by various people) and 5 belong to Betsie. Betsie is paid for this work by the UNISA Music Foundation.

The orphanage is expanding next year with the building of new shelters and Betsie hopes to teach there 3 mornings a week, building up to 5 mornings eventually.

The children at the orphanage are from various disadvantaged background. Some are orphans, some were abused at home and some were abandoned by their parents. The lady who runs the orphanage is very committed to the idea that the children need music in their education and so is very supportive of everything Betsie does.

Betsie's Ensemble group from the Orphanage won the UNISA Competition prize for Beginner Ensembles.

The support that Betsie needs is the following:

1. More small violins (1/4 and 1/2 size) as there are many small children who would like to learn.
2. Strings and repair work on the violins.
3. Sponsorship for her fees for the SASA Teacher Training Courses. She feels that her pupils directly benefit from her training as she is inspired with new ideas, especially for group lessons. This type of sponsorship would be a great help to her as she does not earn a big salary.
4. Sponsorships for her pupils to attend the Group Lessons at our SASA Teacher Training Courses.
5. Sponsorships for transport to the SASA events like the Courses, Concerts and Camps.
6. Sponsorships for her pupils to attend the Annual Suzuki Music Camp.
7. Sponsorship for Karen Kimmet to give these pupils Group Master Classes at their own school.



These are some of Betsie's pupils from the orphanage who played at our recent concert (above left). As there were not enough violins for all of them to play, some of them sang while the others played a township song on their violins. (Above right) On the right you can see the violinists playing while one of the boys did a street dance. It was great fun!!



## **ANNE NAYLOR**

Anne is also a Suzuki teacher who has made contact with a young man, Isaac da Silva, from Angola. Isaac came to South Africa for the month of October to have lessons with Anne. As a result of this, he will be establishing contacts for Anne to go to Angola to teach the violin to a group of children. We are hoping to start in a 'rich' school that could afford to buy violins for their pupils and to pay Anne a gratuity for her services.

But we would also need:

1. Transport and accommodation costs for Anne.
2. Once this project is established, we would like to invite Karen Kimmet and Christophe Bossuat to give master classes. For this we would need transport, accommodation and gratuity costs covered.

## **ELIZABETH NTSHALI**

Elizabeth is a black lady who came to two of our Teacher Training Courses. She works in the Shoshanguwe township and is doing a very good job. Her Ensemble group won the UNISA competition for Advanced Groups.

Elizabeth is an example of how the training she has received has given her a way to earn her own living.

The support Elizabeth needs is:

1. Sponsorship for her fees for the SASA Teacher Training Courses.

## **CONCLUDING COMMENT**

As the SASA, we would say that our biggest need is sponsorship for the air fare and gratuity of the Suzuki Teachers who come from France (Christophe Bossuat) and Canada (Karen Kimmett). Both these teachers are responsible for our Teacher Training Courses and would love to be able to spend more time teaching in the disadvantaged communities.

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