

# Shoprite Checkers Women of the Year Award winners, Archbishop honoured

On Saturday 21 July 2012, the 2012 title winners of the Shoprite Checkers Women of the Year Award were announced at a gala event in Johannesburg. They are Shéri Brynard who received the Youth Mover Award; Nyeleti Mushwana the Socio-Economic Business Developers Award, Margi Biggs the Good Neighbours Against Crime Award, Tina Botha the Health Care-Givers Award and Marisa van der Merwe received the Award in the Educators Category.

## Archbishop Tutu donates award to charity

Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu was honoured with the 2012 Shoprite Checkers Women of the Year Lifetime Achievement Award, after the public nominated him this year as the esteemed South African who during his lifetime has inspired generations and has had an impact on the future of many fellow South Africans during his lifetime.



Receiving the award, he said, "I am humbled to share a stage with exceptional South African women who have forged ahead in our society to better the future for us all. I have always believed that women are 'God's greatest invention'. I have also said it is time for the men of the world to stop hogging positions of leadership and power, because women could not fail to do a better job.

"The contribution of South African women to our liberation and our new society makes me very proud. Over many decades, their hard work has often been spectacular, though sometimes taken for granted and unacknowledged.

"I want to thank the South African public who nominated me to receive the award. Your support has always encouraged and spurred me on. I dedicate this Award to all the outstanding women of our country!

"Shoprite has offered me prize money, which I will put to good use by donating it to the Philani Child Health & Nutrition Project; Tygerberg Children's Hospital Trust; Jabulani Rural Health Foundation; the Community Arts Therapy Programme and the Desmond & Leah Tutu Legacy Foundation.

## Winners triumph to achieve dreams



L - R Marisa van der Merwe, Margi Biggs, Nyeleti Mushwana, Brian Weyers (Director, Shoprite Group), Tina Botha, and (front) Shéri Brynard.

[click to enlarge](#)

Brynard is a 30 year-old South African woman from Bloemfontein with Down's Syndrome. She has set new boundaries for people like her by qualifying as an assistant-teacher in a public school and becoming a motivational speaker nationally and internationally.

Receiving the award she said, "I now know that my life has meaning in spite of the fact that I have Down's syndrome. I will thank the Lord that He made me just the way He did. I will show people that everyone who makes the best of their circumstances can be proud of who they are in spite of any disabilities or other problems."

Mushwana is an astute businesswoman who owns and runs a multi-million hotel and conference facility in Tzaneen in Limpopo where tourism is pivotal in creating and sustaining jobs to alleviate poverty.

Receiving the award she said, "I am thrilled and humbled by this honour, it is truly a recognition of the difference South African women are making out there in all socio-economic spheres of our lives to better the lives of all.

"It is flattering to be one of the honoured women and I am grateful to those who came before me, paved the way and

levelled the ground so it is possible for us to dream big, inspire and ignite through focus, dedication, hard work and a positive outlook towards life.

Biggs is the founding chairperson of StreetSmart SA, who has achieved success in helping homeless children of Cape Town not only in aiding beneficiaries that work with them but also by educating the community not to give money to begging children as by doing so it keeps them on the streets.

Receiving the Good Neighbours Against Crime Award Biggs said, "I am most grateful for this recognition of the work we do. This allows a platform from which I can explain to the public, that by giving children money when they are begging on the street, they are keeping these vulnerable children on the streets.

"While children are living on the street they are susceptible to drifting into a life of crime, of being abused and a life of suffering. There are many organisations in most towns, from Graaff-Reinet to Bloemfontein and Somerset West, and many others, which exist especially to assist these children.

Botha, the winner of the Health Care-Givers Award, by turning tragedy into triumph, has built the only organisation in Africa that educates and recruits potential bone marrow stem cell donors onto the South African Bone Marrow Registry (SABMR), which is a state-asset saving the lives of many hundreds of people suffering from leukaemia or other life threatening blood disorders.

Receiving the award she said, "I accept this award as an honour and tribute to the work I have done at The Sunflower Fund, but not done alone. This would not have been possible without the help of an incredibly motivated and passionate team and I really need to thank them all for that support.

"It was through very tragic circumstances that I began this journey 12 years ago, on the loss of my 17 year old son Chris Corlett and I would like to accept the award in recognition of all he went through to make things easier and give hope to future generations of leukaemia sufferers.

Marisa van der Merwe is an accomplished South African chess player and teacher who, with a vision to effect positive change in our society, has undertaken several initiatives to promote chess as a life-changing tool in the lives of people of all ages.

Receiving the Educators Award, she said, "Winning this award is an honour for me and all the teachers, schools, workers and learners in the countrywide MiniChess/Moves for Life chess-educational programs.

"Above all, it will encourage women to get involved in their communities and to persevere, however small the beginnings, because their efforts will ripple-out to empower the next generations.

Each of the category winners received R30 000 in individual prize money while the Shoprite Group will also give R100 000 to the work of each of the winners to impact positively on the future of the country. To ensure sustainability of this work the Award has partnered with the WHEAT Women's Fund to help winners manage their investment.