

## Music school in Mitchell's Plain gets SBA support

Trevino Isaacs (26) opened a music school in Mitchell's Plain to teach children, as young as seven, the appreciation and love for music. Isaacs is one of 19 small business owners in the areas of Khayelitsha, Langa, Mitchell's Plain and Gugulethu selected to take part in the sponsored Small Business Academy (SBA) programme, offered by the University of Stellenbosch Business School (USB).



Flanking Trevino Isaacs are music students from left to right, Randall Norrnan (bass guitar), Bradley Kerspuy (bass guitar), Jesse Warnick (electric guitar) and Garneth Warnick (Piano).

With its main sponsors, Absa and the Distell Foundation, the SBA provides a platform for small business owners to gain business, financial and operational knowledge over nine months to grow and strengthen the businesses. The SBA creates networking opportunities and offers a mentorship programme, whereby each participant is matched with a USB MBA alumnus.

Isaacs taught himself to play piano at nine and became professional at 15. Apart from playing the piano, he also taught himself the drums, guitar, bass-guitar, accordion and banjo.

The demand for music lessons was such that he started offering lessons from his mother's living room. "The interest grew to such an extent that when I approached two of my friends who studied music, with the idea of opening a music school, my dream of teaching others became a successful business, now celebrating its fourth year," explains Isaacs.

"Music has been and still is the only work I know. There are many students in the Woodlands and Mitchells Plain area who cannot afford to study music and our quality affordable training is giving them the chance to master instruments and grow their natural talent."

"The Mitchells Plain Music Academy offers a safe environment where children can live a life free of violence, drugs and alcohol. For many it is a way out of poverty and uncertainty by developing their natural talent into

something with purpose.

“Our drive has always been to offer a service to the community and, without funding or resource support, we are in a position to sponsor students who show the potential but cannot afford the cost.

“Our growth has been organic to where we currently teach 40 students. My selection to the SBA programme has had a major impact on how I structure and market the business. The knowledge I am gaining will assist us to grow the business significantly and help us achieve our ultimate goal whereby we are in a financial position to assist more students who have talent but cannot pay fees.”

The music school follows the Trinity College London syllabus, which is recognised by all the major universities in South Africa and the UK. The classes are offered at the Woodville Primary School in Mitchell's Plain and they teach pre-grade 1 up to grade 8 to learners aged 7 to 45.

“I have big dreams for the school and my long term goal is to offer music certificates, diplomas and degrees in addition to offering other subjects such as finance and computer literacy. In a world where knowledge is power, we would like to support the community in enriching themselves and their families,” concludes Isaacs.

He will graduate from the SBA programme in November 2017, the same month that he will complete his first year of an advanced certificate in music.

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