

Hope Factory runner-up for award

ELIZABETH Zambonini, founder and director of The Hope Factory, a widely-lauded enterprise development programme, was the runner-up in the Pinnacle Award in the Southern Africa Social Entrepreneurship (SASE) Awards category.

The SASE Awards ceremony was hosted by SASE™ in association with Colloquium for Social Entrepreneurship at the Gordon Institute of Business Science (CSE@GIBS), and Ashoka Southern Africa at the Nelson Mandela Foundation's Promise of Leadership Conference.

SASE awards celebrate the work of outstanding individuals and organisations which illustrate strategies and innovations that, if reflected on and replicated, would revolutionise conventional thinking around development. From humble beginnings - products were initially crafted in a church garage - The Hope Factory now operates from a 700 square metre factory in Port Elizabeth.

Zambonini, Project Director of Enterprise Development and Socio-Economic Development at the South African Institute for Chartered Accountants (SAICA), explains how it all began.

"Armed with a training approach designed to be holistic - great emphasis is laid on developing each person entering the programme - The Hope Factory started by training 10 people. It's a number that has since grown to a phenomenal 500 disadvantaged individuals." Training is provided in:

- Technical skills like sewing, pattern making and bead work;
- Business skills, encompassing entrepreneurship and small business; and life skills such as time management, CV writing and HIV/AIDS.