

Age of Hope

Nazeema Isaacs rewarded

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During mid-October 2006 members of the public were invited to nominate a public library most involved in the community for the 2006 Age of Hope Trophy, a Western Cape Arts, Culture, Heritage, Library and Archives Services Award.

After a thorough and transparent nomination process, the selection panel identified the Nazeema Isaacs Library in Makhaza, Khayelitsha for their role in building the community at large through hope and perseverance and to inspire the community to overcome the daily challenges and constraints they are faced with for service excellence.

Theresa Bergsma (librarian-in-charge) and Dorothy Bothman (district manager) accepted the award during the awards ceremony held on 24 November 2006.

Key achievements

The library opened its doors to the community in November 2001 and fast became a hub of activity within the Makhaza Community hosting a range of community events and programmes that led to a steady run-up to earning this prestigious award. Some of these activities after the library started circulating library material to the public in November 2001 were:

- ◆ September 2002: the library joined forces with Ajax Cape Town Soccer club and the community to celebrate Heritage Day
- ◆ September 2003: IkamvaYouth (a non-profit organisation run by volunteers based at the library) became a major partner in connecting the library to the community and building it into a community centre

- ◆ May 2004: a group of scholars from the Nazeema Isaacs Library/ IkamvaYouth Partnership participated in the Ford Programmes Global Education Initiative Project (an e-learning initiative) and won first prize for their compilation and live VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol) presentation on an e-cyclopedia on South Africa's history to a panel of educational experts
- ◆ March 2005: the library hosted a South African Library Week launch with the active participation of library patrons, schools, elders, youth and traditional healers
- ◆ September 2005: the library provided the venue for a workshop for the Mother City Book Festival encouraging collaboration between famous South African poets and budding local poets - the result was the establishment of a Writer's Circle at the library
- ◆ September/November 2005: youth from the community partnered with Summer Academy learners from the United States of America to exchange ideas and experiences during a holiday programme held at the library
- ◆ May 2006: the Nazeema Isaacs/ IkamvaYouth Computer Tuxlab was launched



Left: Dorothy Bothman, district manager, Theresa Bergsma, librarian Nazeema Isaacs Library, Ashiah Isaacs, Assistant director Cape Metropole Library Service, Johan Swiegelaar, Director Library Service

Below: The first e-learning computer class held in May 2006

- ◆ July 2006: *Through my eyes* - an art and photography exhibition exhibiting local art and photography was hosted by the library
- ◆ September 2006: hosted the IkamvaYouth/ Community Talent Show highlighting the talent of poets, writers and performers in the community. This event was filmed by the Media and Expression Group started at the library by the IkamvaYouth Volunteers.



Age of Hope Trophy

The Age of Hope Trophy was designed by Guillaume T du Toit who was inspired by the traditional staff and the knob-kierrie. The symbolism behind the trophy is as follows:

Every great leader the world over has used a staff - whether it be for guiding a nation or fighting a battle. It has served, supported and helped them well in difficult times to lead and inspire with Hope. The forefathers of our country fought, led and inspired Hope with a staff or the traditional knob-kierrie.

A staff can support and guide one through difficult and testing terrains. With it one can overcome the high mountains of challenge and the wide plains of doubt. Without it one can stumble, falter, fall and fail.

A wooden staff - as with Hope - can only support and inspire us for as long as it is nourished and kept in good condition, for without essential oils or positive thought both can break down and lead to despair.



The fusion cut-glass crown symbolises the top of a traditional knob-kierrie. It represents dreams and inspirations which characterise Hope. The patterning is reminiscent of the king Protea - indigenous to the Western Cape, and the patterns found on our national parliamentary emblem.

The kiaat wooden shaft is indigenous to South Africa. It symbolises both the strength and fragility of Hope. Hope can be such a courageous quality in difficult times, but it can also falter and lead to despair if it is not nourished with faith, dedication and optimism. If the wood is left uncared for, it will eventually crack and weaken. But, if it is cared for and regularly treated, its strength will remain and support the individual into and past any difficulties on this path of life.

The granite base of the Age of Hope Trophy symbolises grounding the loftiness of Hope and maintaining a rational mind when all else is wavering.

(See http://www.capegateway.gov.za/culture_sport)