

ENDEAVOR ENTREPRENEUR, SHONA MCDONALD WINS WOMEN OF THE YEAR 2011 AWARD

The title winners of the Shoprite Checkers Women of the Year Award which searched for exceptional and visionary women achievers who with determination and foresight are making an impact on the future of fellow South Africans were announced this weekend (Saturday, 23 July 2011) in Johannesburg. At this event, Endeavor South Africa Entrepreneur, Shona McDonald was announced as the winner in the Socio-Economic Business Developers Category.



The 2011 Shoprite Checkers Women of the Year

From left to right: Dr Brigalia Bam (Lifetime Achiever Award), Shona McDonald (Winner: Socio-Economic Business Developers Category), Ednah Molly Zulu (Winner: Educators Category), Whitey Basson (CEO: Shoprite), Rosie Mashale (Winner: Youth Mover Category), Dr Nobs Mwanda (Winner: Good Neighbours Against Crime Category), and Dr Elmi Muller (Winner: Health Care-Givers Category).

Ms Shona McDonald has built a business from nothing into a multi-million enterprise which has received numerous national and international awards for the impact it has had on the lives of people with disabilities in South Africa, enabling them to take their rightful place as part of society.

This visionary businesswoman manufactured her first South African appropriate modular posture support buggy nearly 20 years ago to improve the quality of life of children living with severe disabilities and then went on to build a successful business around it.

Receiving the Socio-Economic Business Developers Award Ms McDonald said: "Over 500 000 children and young adults with mobility disabilities living in South Africa do not have access to appropriate wheelchairs and accessible community based seating support services.

"This shortage of appropriate wheelchairs results in unnecessary, costly and devastating health and social outcomes for both the wheelchair users and their families who support them.

"Having received this coveted Award will help us raise awareness and increase our ability to provide more training for parents, caregivers, teachers and rehabilitation workers, making sure that both the public and our health care professionals know that without the right type of wheelchair, one that fits the child correctly, and suits the environment in which it will be used will ensure equal access to opportunities for people with mobility disabilities.

"Having spent over 20 years building Shonaquip, a social enterprise, as a tool to drive positive change in the field of appropriate wheelchair provision in under resourced regions, I now realise that I need to reach further.

“I need to explore ways to shift the historical contravention of human rights of people living with disabilities from its entrenchment in charitable giving and pity to become part of the moral concerns of mainstream society and establish an inclusive footprint across the globe.

“And for this reason I am delighted that Shoprite Checkers has recognised the impact that a social enterprise can have as a powerful driver of sustainable social change” .