

## THE METHODIST CHURCH OF SOUTHERN AFRICA\_EXCELLENCE IN MISSION AWARDS SUBMISSIONS

### -JOHANNESBURG CIRCUIT-902-ALEXANDRA SECTION

#### PROFILE of MR LINDA TWALA 2<sup>ND</sup> AVENUE ALEXENDRA

Have been doing community work for 48 years. He got the passion from his mother who did voluntary community work and died at the age of 100. Mr Linda Twala came from a warm and inclusive family where visitors and mostly destitute people who had no accommodation in Johannesburg would always be accommodated and fed ,sometimes at the expense of the children as their food would be given to visitors and they would have to be content with eating bread and tea.

He is the founder of a Community Center at Njabulweni called **PHUTHADITSHABA** . **this centre came into** being as a blessing in disguise. The apartheid system had noted him as an influential community -activist who also played a key role in the resistance against government- designed removals of Alex people to newly- established alternate locations/townships such as Soweto.

He worked along Rev Sam Bhuti and established the **“SAVE ALEXANDRA PARTY”**in 1979 As a township which was due to be demolished due to it being too close to the government’s super upmarket suburb and richest square in SA called Sandton. Then the forceful removal started but their mobilized community resisted. Rev Buti supported them, churches and churches leaders and other organisations.

It was during this period that, during his absence, his house was razed down to ashes by fire leaving his family and tenants who were there stranded This was clearly the common practice by the then apartheid system’s security arm when they wanted to scare or even kill targeted activists. He was fortunate that on the said night he was out of Alexandra and was only called by community members to make him aware of what was happening to his house where he had left his children alone, but were fortunately taken to safety by neighbours.

With the assistance of the Sandton Rotary Club & MAfrica Tikkum,whose members knew him through the community work he was doing in Alex he got sponsors to rebuild his house. He was offered a new stand which he in turn gave up and convinced his sponsors that instead they build **PHUTHADITSHABA Multipurpose** -Centre of Excellence for the development of the youth of Alex. He then went to rebuild his parents’ home at 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue opposite the Alexandra Methodist Church and stayed there and still stays there to this day. His home is a home to all even the church is allowed to use his premises should need arises. The centre houses a number of programs ranging from library, gymnasium centre, a best-practice Early childhood Education centre,recreational Hall, community Feeding scheme mostly for elderly ,people with disabilities and the unemployed

#### OTHER COMMUNITY PROJECTS

- He highly motivated the Alex community to join hands and embark on the “SELF-HELP HOUSING PROJECT”
- Established Ntokozweni Youth Centre for skills training
- Has put a number of graduates from Alex through University
- Built houses for a number of orphans in the community
- Linked local ECD centers to professional training for their teachers
- Invited Community to start cleaning the community Cemetery and this practice spilled over to schools
- Has, in partnership with Sandton Philharmonic Band Foundation ,exposed Alex youth to philharmonic music .As a result the foundation bought instruments for the Alex youth to get philharmonic music lessons whereby the youth is collected on Saturdays by a combi that goes around Alex teaching music. The tutors stay at his house in Alex.
- He mobilizes resources to hold the yearly Alex Elderly’s and people living with disabilities’-mas party

Through his voluntary community work he caught the eyes of a number of influential figures and journalists whom he has drawn to assist in development of Alex such as Bishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu,Oprah Winfrey,US Past- President Jimmy Carter .The Phutaditshaba Centre of Excellence attests to his role in this community as its walls tell a story worth reading and emulating on its walls through the pictures that depict Mr Twala’s life activities and encounters

**ACHIEVEMENTS**

<b>ESTABLISHED ORGANISATIONS</b>	<b>ESTABLISHED BUSINESSES</b>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Help find Save Alexandra led by Rev Buti</li> <li>➤ Alexandra Society for Care and aged - PHUTHADITSHABA Centre</li> <li>➤ - Soup kitchens: Ntokozweni Youth Centre - Phuthaditshaba Multi Purpose Centre - Zakheli Care of The Aged - Disabled Children Centre - Single teenage mother for distribution of pumpers - Linked Local Crèches for training with white service providers who also built ablution for some of these ECDs</li> <li>➤ Philharmonic Band Foundation – Sandton. Out of his concern about children this foundation brought instruments and a vehicle which goes around Alexandra teaching music and the tutors stay at his house.</li> </ul>	<p><b>AWARDS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Best Business Funeral 2017</li> <li>➤ Greater Alexandra Development Forum</li> <li>➤ Rotary – Sandton</li> <li>➤ Alexandra Senior Citizens</li> <li>➤ Male Role Model in SA – Government Provider</li> <li>➤ Rotary International Highest Rotarians</li> <li>➤ Paul Harris fellow award.</li> </ul>
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No document can fully tell the story of this community servant of Alexandra-Gauteng.