



■ Recipient of a Lifetime Philanthropy award, James McGregor, right with colleagues Dave and Liz Barnes and Eleanor Lawrence.

■ Constantia resident Victoria Nel, right, chairperson of the Zip Zap Circus School, received an award for Youth Development. With her is Laurence Esteve, founder of Zip Zap.

■ Masidlale Strings Project is part of the Cape Philharmonic Orchestra's Outreach and Education programme.

Residents receive philanthropy awards

KAREN WATKINS

Two residents who live in the Bulletin's circulation area were awarded the 2013 Inyathelo Philanthropy Awards.

The annual gala event, which took place at the City Hall on Tuesday November 5 was initiated by Inyathelo, the South African Institute for Advancement, to acknowledge, celebrate and honour those whose personal giving has contributed towards sustainable social change in the country.

Surrounded by friends and family, James McGregor of Westlake United Church Trust received a Lifetime Philanthropy award for his tireless work over many years to uplift the Westlake community.

And Constantia resident Victoria Nel, chairperson of the Zip Zap Circus School received an award for Youth Development.

Past Inyathelo awardees, former television soap star Refiloe Seseane hosted the awards and Jonathan Schrire was the guest speaker. The 500 guests were also entertained by the Cape Town Philharmonic Youth Orchestra,

the Zip Zap Circus School and a talented group of 40 young violinists from Masidlale Strings Project – which means, "let us play".

Inyathelo's Gabrielle Ritchie said they had over 100 nominations for this year's awards with over 80 philanthropists having so far been honoured, including Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu, the Ackerman family, Jordan van der Walt, 13, whose "Just One Bag" campaign has fed more than a million school children and former car guard Alice Wamundiya, who established an organisation to provide tertiary education for refugees.

Mr McGregor helped set up Westlake United Church Trust in 2002 and it now employs more than 40 full-time staff who work to alleviate the poverty, ill health, unemployment and other social and economic difficulties experienced by the more than 8 000 residents who live in the Westlake Village area.

The Trust runs a number of educational, skills development and capacity building programmes to help local residents improve their quality of life and work towards becoming a self-sustaining, thriving community.

It facilitates access to low cost government housing, oversees the Emmanuel Educare pre-school programme which caters for 210 children, a home-based care programme which supports 350 people and a community advice office which serves about 400 people a month.

As a former financial director of the Board of Executors, Mr McGregor chairs the Trust's management and governing body meetings, and uses his own business and personal networks to raise funds. He has worked hard to develop infrastructure, financial controls as well as monitoring and evaluation tools to ensure that the Trust is able to sustain itself and the work it does. Mr McGregor is adamant that the members of the Westlake community must take charge of their own destiny so he is training a local representative to manage the Trust, which will eventually be left to the residents themselves.

The Zip Zap Circus School uses circus arts as a way of developing young people who are at risk by giving them access to opportunities and skills, which will help them grow into young

leaders, good citizens, valuable employees and ambassadors for South Africa.

Ms Nel has committed time and money to help with the building of a permanent circus dome, which houses the entire school, offices and training venue. Her personal contributions and networks have enabled young people to travel to Spain and France to perform. Ms Nel has also donated prizes to Zip Zap auctions to help raise funds for the school and she has given money to

ensure the school can run a beginners' programme.

She has also paid for a promotional DVD for the school.

Ms Nel uses her resources to generate resources for others and her passion inspires and helps develop trust and respect amongst young people. Above all, Ms Nel has given her time, insight and experience to help change the lives of young people for the better.