



Philani Shezi from Vumanhlamvu School with his Sports Leaders Award



Ntuli Samkelisiwe receiving the Heather Read Award

Awards recognise and inspire young

By Claire Lomax

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THE Bambisanani Awards continue to recognise, reward and inspire young people in South Africa and the UK.

The awards are given out annually by Menston-based charity The Bambisanani Partnership, which links UK and South African schools through physical education and sport.

At Vumanhlamvu Primary School in South Africa, three Bambisanani Awards were presented in memory of former St Mary's pupil Jordan Sinnott – the Sports Leader of the Year was named as Philani Shezi, the football team captain for 2023; Sportswomen of the Year was Silindokuhle Mvela, who was 100 metres District Champion in Athletics in 2023, and Sportsman of the Year was Simphilele Ngonyama who was the top goal scorer in the local Schools Football Tournament in 2023.

William Vilakazi, principal of Vumanhlamvu, said: "Having Jordan Sinnott Awards in our school inspires learners. The awards help learners from a young age to develop not only sporting skills but also the social skills to work with their teammates, make new friends and learn how rewarding it is to participate in team sports.

"It has also improved self-esteem of most learners in our school, learners are hungry to succeed in all sports activities in order to lift these prestigious awards.

"We thank the Sinnott family and we were so sorry to hear recently of the passing of Jordan's mum, Melanie, who was a great supporter of the Bambisanani Partnership and of our school; may she rest in peace with Jordan."

At Mnyakanya High School eight awards were presented by Miss Charlotte Wood from St Mary's, Menston, during the recent visit to South Africa by student volunteers. They were:



Anna Ciesluk receiving the Sbonelo Magwaza Award for Outstanding Sports Leadership from teachers Mrs Chattoe and Miss Wood

Laurie McCauley Most Improved Footballer Award: Velani Mshali; Laurie McCauley Creative Writing Award: Athandile Gumede; Helping Others Achieve Their Potential Award: Uyabusa Mvubu; True Spirit of Sport Award: Nombulelo Shangase; Sbonelo Magwaza Outstanding Leadership Award: Bayanda Gcaba; Sportswoman of the Year Award: Seluleko Nzuza; and Sportsman of the Year Award: Luthando Mngayi.

A Sbonelo Magwaza Outstanding Leadership Award is also presented at St Mary's, Menston, to a student volunteer from the school who has shown exceptional leadership in South Africa. This was awarded to Anna Ciesluk.

A new annual award has been introduced this year at Mnyakanya School – The Heather Read Award for Outstanding Resilience.

Heather Read was the first female president of Aireborough Rotary Club and a great supporter of the Bambisanani Partnership. The award in her memory was given to Ntuli Samkelisiwe.

Additionally, at Mnyakanya three Bambisanani Awards were presented to educators, Mr SV

Nugubane, Mrs PK Zondi and Miss M Langa for their outstanding contribution to the partnership.

Three Bambisanani Awards were also presented Ntolwane Primary School: Sportswomen of the Year Award: Luyanda Magwaza; Sportsman of the Year Award: Thobani Mhlongo; Sports Leader of the Year Award: Samkelisiwe Geada.

David Geldart, from the partnership, said: "Congratulations to all the recipients of this year's awards. Many thanks also to the teachers in all of our schools that continue to provide learners with the opportunities, encouragement and support that enables them to shine and to be recognised.

"Special thanks to Monsignor Vladimir Felzmann (Father Vlad) for his tremendous support with these awards. We remember especially at this time the awards in memory of Laurie McCauley, Sbonelo Magwaza, Jordan Sinnott and Heather Read; we know that these awards, that motivate and inspire others, bring strength and comfort to their families. What we also know is that many students already have an eye to the awards in 2024."