

RISING SUN (Overport)
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Generating warmth this Winter

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Seeing the plight of impoverished communities in South Africa, engineering company, Gibb, has taken the initiative to make a difference in the lives of others, through their continuous corporate social investment campaign.

The organisation, donated blankets and food hampers to the underprivileged, residents at Phumelela Community Health Care Centre in Cato Manor last Wednesday. The residents, formerly of Cato Crest informal settlement, sought shelter at the centre after they lost their homes in a fire recently.

According to media liaison for the multi-disciplinary consulting engineering and science company, Randall September, the company has always been involved in such initiatives with its primary focus being skills development where learnerships programmes and bursaries are offered to individuals from previously disadvantaged communities. Candidates are then enrolled in a mentorship programme in the company.

September said, "Our secondary impetus is humanitarian aid. We work with NGO's across South Africa, with our primary goal being displaced women and children who are most vulnerable in the community. We partnered ourselves with Christian NGO, Metro Evangelistic Services in Johannesburg, and started a Winter drive in July last year after seeing the dire need for blankets. We, together with Christian counsellors handed out blankets and provided hot soup and bread for the underprivileged in strategic in Johannesburg. The humanitarian pay-off was excellent and we decided to extend our reach to other areas in South

Africa this Winter. Gibb has 15 offices in the country and we asked staff to donate to a legitimate NGO in their respective areas." He said staff in Durban donated dozens of blankets, food and fruit hampers to the homeless on Brickfield Road and at a care centre in Cato Manor. "I urge others who are able to give back to the community, to do so, it is truly rewarding to see a smile on the face of a child who may never know where his next meal is coming from," said September.

Fundraiser and community health worker at Phumelela Community Health Care Centre, Wiseman Gumede said the residents were extremely grateful. Gumede said, "We rely solely on donations to feed and care for the 200 people living at the centre. Without constant financial help, it is a constant struggle to think of how we are going to feed and clothe the people. However, we are fortunate that good samaritans in the community come to our aid. Media coverage has also helped inform corporates of our plight. Residents were thrilled to receive blankets to keep warm and food to fill their hungry stomachs, that they sang a song thanking Gibb for their donation." Gumede said although he does his best, a lack of resources is a constant battle. "We lack important tools, a computer, e-mail and a fax facility to draw up proposals to ask businesses for assistance. Using an internet cafe is expensive. This money can be used to assist the people," said Gumede.

Gibb also donated blankets and clothes to Mayville SAPF which will be donated to the impoverished at Puntans Hills and Jadu Place creches.



Staff members of engineering company, Gibb together with Mayville and Cato Manor SAPF handed out blankets and food hampers to the underprivileged.

