

Newsletter

Together

FOR TRANSFORMATION

A Message from our CEO

More Than a Finalist. A Community on the Move.

Did you know that the average person forms a first impression of a town in less than 10 seconds? Before they've met the people or heard the stories, they have already begun deciding what they think.

This month, South Africa has taken a second look at uMngeni.

Being named the KwaZulu-Natal finalist for Kwela Dorp van die Jaar 2026 is more than a title, it is a signal that something special is happening here. Across our towns, people are choosing to build rather than complain, to partner rather than work alone, and to believe that communities really can shape their own future.

This recognition belongs to every person who has played a part. The resident who keeps their street clean. The business that backs local initiatives. The teacher who inspires young minds. The volunteer who gives up a Saturday. The municipal worker, community leader, church, and organisation that chooses action over apathy.

At Love uMngeni, we've always believed that great communities aren't built by a few extraordinary people, they're built by thousands of ordinary people doing extraordinary things together.

Now we have an opportunity to show the rest of South Africa what makes uMngeni different.

When voting opens from 12-17 July, let's rally behind our towns with the same pride that has brought us this far. Every vote via SMS to 33157 is more than support for a competition; it's a vote of confidence in our community, our economy and our future.

Thank you for helping make uMngeni a place people are proud to call home.

Let's bring this title home, together!

SMS Howick to 33157. Each number can vote up to 30 times, but no SMS bundles or free SMS will work; you must use airtime. Each SMS costs R1.50.

Matt Hogarty



FOUNDER & CEO

www.loveumngeni.org.za

LOVE
UMNGENI

Social Development

Place Development

Skills Development

Economic Development

Narrative Development

Place Your Ad Here

Social Development News

FROM SURVIVAL TO AGENCY



Our Social Development work starts with listening: through community surveys, door-to-door engagement, and Innovation Hubs. We then move to action: meeting immediate needs through the **Street Store**, reducing social ills through prevention campaigns, and empowering communities to take ownership of their own future.

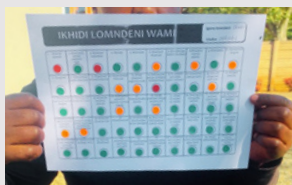
The Green Legacy

We planted 49 indigenous and fruit trees at schools, clinics, and public facilities. Each planting was also an opportunity for environmental education.



Innovation Hub | Shiyabazali

We hosted an Innovation Hub, bringing together 30 community members, local leaders, NGOs, businesses, churches, and government stakeholders. Following a three-month Greenlight Survey process, participants reviewed findings, mapped community assets, and developed practical action plans. Community action teams were elected and are now driving implementation.



Greenlight Surveys | Teapots Valley

In partnership with Hilton College, we completed the Greenlight Survey process in Teapots Valley: engaging residents over three months to understand strengths, challenges, and opportunities. The findings will now inform the next phase of community-led development.

Building Leaders Through Sport

We partnered with KFC Mini-Cricket, KZN Inland Cricket Union, and uMngeni Municipality to launch Mini-Cricket at Qhamukile Primary School. In June, history was made in Mpophomeni when over 300 learners from seven local primary schools took part in the community's first-ever KFC Mini-Cricket Festival: celebrating the International Day of Play. This is more than cricket: it's coaching coaches, building leadership, and creating safe spaces for play and growth.



STREET STORE MAY & JUNE

- 16** Street Store beneficiaries enrolled in Agriculture Training
- 231** Food items distributed
- 1091** Black bags of recycling collected
- 216** Street Store beneficiaries received support

Winter Warmer Drive

Our team distributed blankets, beanies, and jerseys to families in Jabavu: made possible by donations from our community and a partnership with **JAM Clothing**. One recipient shared: "We are very happy to know that there are people who care for us, who bring us warm blankets in this cold winter. Our children got jerseys and beanies to keep warm."



Fire Relief

A devastating fire destroyed 10 homes in Shiyas. We partnered with **Angels Care Centre** to distribute clothing, shoes, and houseware to affected families.



How you can help: Volunteer, sponsor a student, donate, host a collection bin

Contact: info@loveumngeni.org.za

Place Development News

REVIVING PUBLIC SPACES & CREATING A GREENER FUTURE



**7 894
m²**

BRUSHCUT

**19 118
m**

**PAVEMENTS
CLEARED**

**5.5
HA**

**ALIEN INVASIVES
PLANTS REMOVED**

74

TREES PLANTED

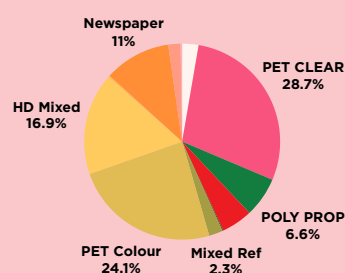
ENVIRO-WASTE

Our Enviro-Waste team works across two interconnected programs: GL2E (Green Learn to Earn): a 150-learner green economy learnership and the Renoverge Project: a coordinated effort with businesses, government, and the community to restore pride and beauty to uMngeni's CBD, entrances, and public spaces.

ENVIRO-WASTE RECYCLING

Waste Item Recycled:

- K4: 12,114 kg
- PET Clear: 1,018 kg
- PET Colour: 856 kg
- HD Mixed: 599 kg
- Newspaper 390 kg
- Other: 698 kg



14 ILLEGAL DUMPSITES CLEARED

The Enviro-Waste teams cleared and rehabilitated 14 illegal dumpsites in Mpophomeni, Howick West, Shiyasi, and other hotspots: turning polluted, neglected spaces into clean, safe areas that communities can be proud of.



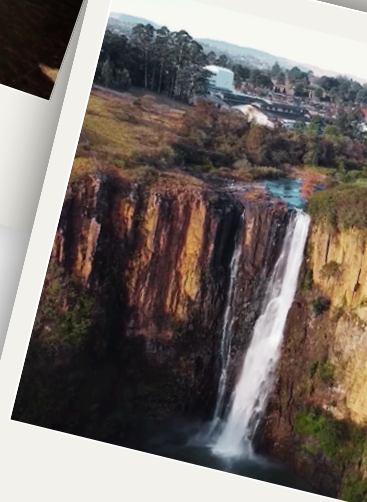
How you can help:

Opportunity	Details	Cost
Recycled Glass Pavers	Durable paving bricks from recycled glass. Fix curbs, enhance parks. Supports local jobs.	From R20 per paver
Small Appliance Repairs	We repair kettles, toasters, air fryers, irons, sandwich presses, microwaves, fans, hairdryers, and blenders.	R150 per item
Donate Indigenous Trees	Olea, Ilex, Rhus Lancea, Dombeya, Kiggelaria, Vepris, Celtis, Harpephyllum, Chionanthus, and Combretum	Donation in kind
MySpace Campaign	Adopt a public spot: park, flower bed, or traffic island. Keep it clean and beautiful.	Free (time and commitment)
Sponsor a Waste Bike	Your logo on a waste bike/trailer. Includes manufacture, set-up, signage, and collection. 12-month commitment.	R8,000 once-off + R890/month
Bin It Campaign	Sponsor a branded concrete bin in uMngeni. Covers supply, installation, and sleeve.	R2,700 once-off + R1,000 annual

To partner or find out more: email info@loveumngeni.org.za

Place Development News

REVIVING PUBLIC SPACES & CREATING A GREENER FUTURE



Howick

**IS THE KZN FINALIST FOR
DORP VAN DIE JAAR 2026!**

Voting opens 12–17 July.
SMS HOWICK to 33157.
Let's bring this home!

Important:

Max 30 SMSes per number.

R1.50 per SMS.

SMS bundles and free SMSes
do not work, you must have airtime.



WATCH VIDEO



Edu-Project Update - Improving the quality of learning in underresourced schools



Led by our Occupational Therapist, **Casey Beningfield**, the Edu-Project continues to strengthen early childhood education across the uMngeni area. Through the **Play to Learn** program we are equipping teachers in low-fee and no-fee schools with practical tools that build literacy, numeracy, and social-emotional skills through play.



The young men of **Hilton College** spent a day serving the uMngeni community: *painting jungle gyms, landscaping the police station garden, handcrafting learning materials, and clearing blocked stormwater channels.*

Want to partner for a service day?
Email info@loveumngeni.org.za.

EDU-PROJECT MAY & JUNE HIGHLIGHTS

- 6** New educators trained from Thrive Christian Academy and Mount Carmel Christian School.
- 31** School leaders from 14 local schools attended the Stronger Leaders, Stronger Schools workshop.
- 9** In-class demonstrations at Isibongo Primary, supporting teachers to integrate Six Bricks into daily lessons.
- 222** Learners impacted by the program.
- 433** Pairs of school shoes distributed to learners across 13 schools and crèches.
- 15** Student-designed swings planned for installation through the new Swing into Play initiative with St Anne's.



Grade R educator, Nonhlanhla Sikhakhane, from Thrive Christian Academy, reflected:



"I now understand that when children are playing with purpose, they are learning with purpose."

Since using Six Bricks, she has observed real improvements in learners' concentration, social skills, fine motor development, and pencil control.

WHAT'S NEXT

Term 3 will focus on deepening classroom implementation, launching a Six Bricks participation challenge, and expanding in-class support. The team is also developing pocket-sized activity booklets for teachers.

Dream Centre

The Dream Centre is the heart of Love uMngeni's skills development work: offering practical, market-relevant training that moves people from survival to a job or a business. Our three-phase pathway (Work Ready → Professional Skills → Job Centre & Entrepreneurship) ensures that every learner is equipped, supported, and connected to opportunity.



DREAM CENTRE MAY & JUNE HIGHLIGHTS

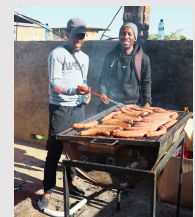
- 72** Learners enrolled in courses.
- 3** Home-Based Care students **employed** at Greendale House.
- 10** Learners currently gaining hands-on experience in Hospitality at Anew Hotel Hilton.
- 26** Learners graduated from Work Ready (now equipped with CV writing, interview skills, and workplace professionalism).
- 24** Active Work Ready students building foundational workplace skills.

Learners are not just sitting in classrooms: they are gaining real workplace experience through partnerships with **Greendale House, Anew Hotel, Pick n Pay, RJCO, Giovision, The Hall Cafe, J-Leslie Smith, Lewis Furniture**, and more.

Dream Centre Community Engagement



Our **Alumni Day** (12 June) brought past graduates back for practical advice on CV writing, mental health, and financial literacy.



We also participated in the uMngeni Municipality's **Youth Day Expo** (19 June), sharing course information with over 100 young people.

How you can help: Sponsor a student through the Work Ready course for just R950 (a life-changing investment in one person's future) | Contact: info@loveumngeni.org.za

Economic Development News

GROWING LOCAL STRONGER ECONOMIES



BUILDING BUSINESSES THAT BUILD COMMUNITIES

Through our Green Learn to Earn (GL2E) program, we are turning unemployed individuals into entrepreneurs. The program combines environmental work, skills training, and business development: with a clear focus on helping participants launch and grow their own micro-enterprises.

THE GL2E BUSINESS JOURNEY

150 participants entered the program. Through a structured, hands-on curriculum, they have learned:

01

What Is a Business and How to Spot Opportunities

02

The Mindset of a Successful Entrepreneur

03

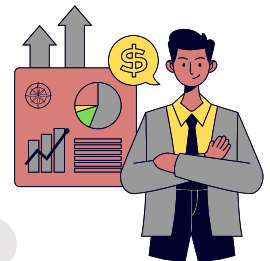
Key Ingredients for Starting a Micro-Business

04

Step-by-Step Business Planning, Marketing, Branding, and Digital Marketing

05

Sales and Customer Service Skills



Real Businesses, Real Impact: Participants have now launched **over 50 fully operational businesses**: ranging from baking and catering to hair salons, cleaning services, vegetable gardens, and construction.

Here is a snapshot of what our entrepreneurs are building: Amahle's Scents, Whisked Nobbles, Thobile Enterprise, Joyful Laundry, Mandisa's Hair Salon, Brights & Style, M.V.B. Farm, Ntombie Hair Therapy, Imbomodo Reliable Cleaning Detergents, Smangele Vegetables and Seedlings, Mdu's Construction, Hlalabethokoza Fast Food, Sindiswa Home Made Bakes, Royal Bakery, Siyazama Hotdogs, and many many more.

Nomvelo Zuma | From Baker to Business Owner



Before joining GL2E, Nomvelo had graduated from baking school but did not know how to start her own business. Through the program, she gained direction, support, and practical skills: including the Micro Business course. Today, she runs **Nibbles Bakery** with confidence and is building a brand that is growing every day.

16 July 2026 -This Mandela Day, we are calling on business professionals to spend their 67 minutes investing in the next generation of entrepreneurs. **How your can help:** serve on the business pitch panel, provide business coaching, sponsor prizes, contribute to the seed capital fund. To get involved: email marketing@loveumngeni.org.za

Narrative Development News

CRAFTING STORIES THAT SHAPE OUR FUTURE



We believe that the story of uMngeni should be told by the people who live here. This pillar is about amplifying those voices and shaping a new, uplifting narrative.

Listen

Connect

Share

Create

Thank You, Harvard House

For hosting a fantastic Golf Day and raising funds for Love uMngeni and Singakwenza. Your partnership makes a real difference.



Starting Real Conversations | Red Socks

In May, Love uMngeni launched our **Red Socks Campaign** for Mental Health Awareness Month. A simple pair of red socks became a powerful sign: *"I see you. I'll listen. You don't have to walk alone."*

Businesses ordered socks for their teams, showing their staff that mental health matters. But the impact went beyond offices. Members of our community reached out to us, not just to buy socks, but to ask for help. Some shared their own stories of struggle. Others asked where to find support for loved ones.

Every pair of socks sold carried a **CARE card**: a simple guide to starting a safe conversation: **C**heck in, **A**cknowledge, **R**efers, **E**ncourage.

This was never just about socks. It was about breaking the silence. It was about letting people know that their feelings are valid, and that help is available.



Our Growing Reach



Please subscribe to our YouTube channel: www.youtube.com/@loveumngeni

Our message of hope and transformation is spreading! Across our digital platforms, we reached over **451,200 people on Facebook alone**. We invite you to join the conversation and see the heartbeat of our community. Exciting new video projects are launching!



Coming up: Every event is a story we choose to tell: about creativity, courage, and community.



Market Day, Thursday, 2 July | 10am–3pm | Shoprite Centre Entrance, Howick

Pre-loved clothing, home decor, shoes, and more. Free entrance. Every purchase supports new business startups and funds the Street Store.



Mandela Day 2026 | 16–22 July

Spend your 67 minutes with Love uMngeni. Choose from 5 activities: mentor young entrepreneurs, sponsor meals, walk/run for school shoes, build a community park, or play with children. Sign up: marketing@loveumngeni.org.za

Thank You, Ashleigh Wegener

For your beautiful photography



Donate Funds: www.loveumngeni.org.za/get-involved/

Contact us: info@loveumngeni.org.za



MANDELA DAY 2026

LOVE
UMNGENI

SPEND YOUR 67 MINUTES WITH US

THURSDAY 16 JULY | PITCH67

INVEST IN THE ENTREPRENEURS OF TOMORROW

Young entrepreneurs will pitch their businesses to a panel of business leaders. We are looking for corporate professionals to listen, mentor, advise, and invest in promising local enterprises for **67 minutes**.

How your company can help:

- ✓ Serve on the Mandela Day Business Pitch Panel
- ✓ Provide business coaching and feedback on the day
- ✓ Sponsor prizes and business equipment for Pitch Day winners
- ✓ Contribute to the Seed Capital Fund to sponsor future micro-businesses

Impact: Your contribution could help launch a business, create jobs, and transform a family's future.

FRIDAY 17 JULY | FEED67

R67 = 20 NUTRITIOUS MEALS FOR THOSE IN NEED

For many families, hunger remains a daily reality. Through FEED67, every R67 donation provides a 1kg bag of nutritious fortified porridge or one-pot meal that can feed up to 20 people.

How your company can help:

- ✓ Sponsor porridge/one-pot meal bags for vulnerable families
- ✓ Match employee donations as a company
- ✓ Spend 67 minutes serving hot meals at the Love uMngeni Park

Impact: Just R67 can provide dignity, nutrition, and hope to those who need it most.

67 Rand. 20 Meals. Countless lives impacted.

SAT. 18 JULY | WALK/RUN67

EVERY STEP HELPS FUND SCHOOL SHOES FOR STUDENTS

Many children walk to school each day without proper school shoes. Together with EMERIS (Pietermaritzburg), we are running/walking to change this.

How your company can help:

- ✓ Enter a corporate team, R100 per individual entry
- ✓ Sponsor event costs or water points
- ✓ Volunteer on event day

Impact: Every registration and donation helps put school shoes on the feet of vulnerable learners, giving them dignity and a better chance to succeed at school. Contact marketing@loveumngeni.org.za to register your team.

TUESDAY 21 JULY | BUILD67

TRANSFORM A DUMPSITE INTO A COMMUNITY LANDMARK

Behind our local police station, a neglected illegal dumpsite area next to a school is being transformed into a vibrant community park space.

How your company can help:

- ✓ Donate and help plant gardens and beautify the land
- ✓ Sponsor concrete benches and concrete outdoor furniture
- ✓ Build play equipment and jungle gyms
- ✓ Construct pillars, pathways, and community features

Impact: Together we can reclaim a forgotten space and create a lasting community asset for generations to enjoy. From dumpsite to a safe play park. Help us build hope from the ground up.

WEDNESDAY 22 JULY | PLAY67

PLAY TODAY. THRIVE TOMORROW. INVEST IN EDUCATION

Spend 67 minutes engaging learners in fun, facilitator-led, play-based activities while helping to equip schools with resources that support healthy development.

How your company can help:

- ✓ Volunteer 67 minutes to play and learn alongside children through interactive Six Bricks and movement-based activities.
- ✓ Donate gross motor development equipment such as: skipping ropes, balls, cones, hula hoops, beanbags, and pool noodles.
- ✓ Sponsor a Gross Motor Play Kit for Foundation Phase learners.

Impact: Help to resource schools to enable more play-based learning.

**SCAN TO
SIGN UP**



Sponsor the MIDLANDS MAGIC 'I AM HOME' Video Series

We are launching a premium four-part video series: 'Midlands Magic: I Am Home' to position the KZN Midlands as a top destination for investment, relocation, and long-term living.

Each cinematic film will showcase:

- Where the next generation thrives: education, safety, community
- Confidence you can build on: service delivery, leadership, clean towns
- Well cared for, for life: healthcare, retirement living, wellbeing
- Live well outdoors: nature, movement, mental reset

WHY SPONSOR?

Your brand will be associated with trust, quality of life, and sustainable growth, reaching families, entrepreneurs, and investors who are choosing the Midlands.

Only 6 sponsorship places available | R30,000 per corporate partner.

Includes logo placement in all 4 videos, brand presence across media releases, access to video assets, and visibility at key launch events.

Contact Matt Hogarty
matt@loveumngeni.org.za
082 882 2019

Previous Sponsors





iOS
(App Store)



Get the uMngeni Community Hub App Today!



Android
(Google Play)

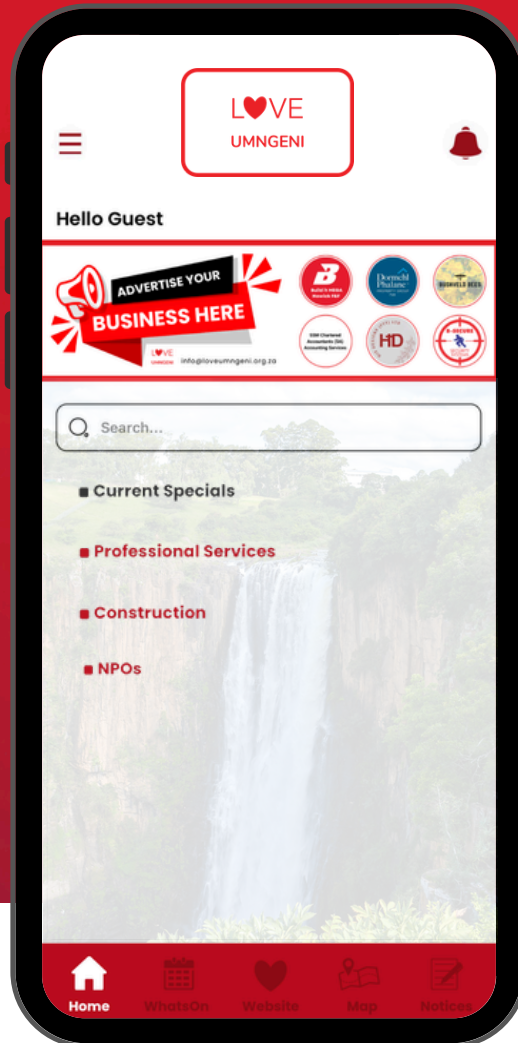
SCAN. DOWNLOAD. CONNECT

FREE to download and FREE to use for every community member.

 Municipal and public notices delivered straight to your phone.

 Call councillors, emergency services, or local shops instantly.

 Interactive map, What's On calendar, and all key contacts in one place.



List your business on the app, starting from R275 per month

- ✓ Update your hours, prices, and specials anytime from your phone
- ✓ Track engagement with your own dashboard
- ✓ Customers contact you directly
- ✓ Featured in the events calendar and interactive map

Local Brand Visibility

Instant Customer Connections

Build Trust, Do Good

Free listings for NGOs and faith communities.

www.loveumngeni.org.za

MIDLANDS SAFETY & HYGIENE

Your One Stop Shop for health, hygiene, protective, chef & safety wear.



5 Ogilvie Street Ext,
Merrivale Industrial Park



033 330 5341 | midlands@hubers.co.za

Ideal for manufacturers, hotels, garages, farmers, sawmills, retail & wholesale.

✓ Competitive pricing ✓ Local deliveries ✓ Logos & embroidery on request



Support local,
buy local



Help South Africa's learners step into greatness with My Walk @ Emeris

Join us for a 5km walk or run as we come together to make every step count.

This initiative brings together staff, students, schools, and the wider community to run or walk in support of a meaningful cause.

Our aim is to raise funds to provide school shoes for under resourced communities.

Date: 18 July 2026 **Time:** 8 am

Venue: St Charles College, Harwin Road, Scottsville, Pietermaritzburg

Tickets cost R100

In partnership with Emeris, My Walk, Run/Walk for Life, and Love Cities

Emeris



RUN/WALK FOR LIFE

LOVE CITIES

INDEPENDENT INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

Emeris is an educational brand of The Independent Institute of Education (Pty) Ltd which is registered with the Department of Higher Education and Training as a private higher education institution under the Higher Education Act, 1997 (reg. no. 2007HE07002). Company registration number: 1987004754/07



Thrift store!

- Baby Items
- Bags
- Shoes
- Clothes
- Homeware
- Toiletries
- Bargains



OPEN TO PUBLIC | 9AM - 2PM WEEKDAYS | 19 MORLING ST, HOWICK

All proceeds support the purchase of food parcels and training programs for the unemployed.

PLACE YOUR AD HERE

✉ MARKETING@LOVEUMNGENI.ORG.ZA

📈 **R350 ¼ PAGE**

👥 **REACH = 3500 BUSINESSES, ORGANISATIONS, COMMUNITY MEMBERS**

CONTACT US TODAY