

## Celebrating Success – Shining Light Awards

*Covid-19 shifted our world in a way no-one could have anticipated. Businesses have closed; jobs have been lost; people have had to dig deep to find their competitive edge both personally and for their businesses. Through this process some have managed to rise up and stand out- ADAPTING, EVOLVING, PIVOTING – keeping their businesses afloat.*

*Staffwise was excited to have the opportunity to host, together with OrtJet Cape Town, an awards ceremony to shine some light on these businesses and celebrate their courage, resilience and success. Read about those who made it to the top 10.*

### 1. Ajay Apparel: Winners of the 2020 Shining Light Award



AJAY Apparel Company pivoted their business within 3 days, turning an apparel line into a mask making factory, producing over 1 million masks, and keeping 3 factories open. Passionate about empowering women and producing locally, they managed to retain all their staff and learn "that no matter what obstacles you are faced with, you have to be as agile as possible and take on the challenges, as you never know where they will lead to". The speed of their reaction to lockdown, meeting the demand for masks locally and internationally, dedication to their staff, plus their ability to build new sustainable business relationships, impressed the judges and earned them their place as winners of the Shining Light Award.

### 2. Repatriation Flight Specialists: 2<sup>nd</sup> place in the Shining Light Awards



Vanessa Frankal's business V-Travel, came to a standstill when lockdown was announced. While exploring other opportunities for income, she was tapped on the shoulder by an old client who needed to get from Cape Town to the USA. This set the wheels in motion for a repatriation service that would ensure she survived the challenging period. Vanessa worked tirelessly to make connections; securing direct lines of contact with Home Affairs and airlines to ensure families made it across oceans to be with loved ones during lockdown. [Repatriation Flight Specialists - Vtravel gets you there!](#), continues to repatriate people. Vanessa intends to evolve her travel business with a new focus on immigration/emigration, partnering with other organisations to make this process seamless, with the same love, dedication and sensitivity she has always show her customers.

### 3. Health Island: 3rd Place in the Shining Light Awards 2020



When people were forced to work from home, the human traffic in the corridors of offices blocks, schools, universities and hospital waiting rooms ceased; the silence was felt at [@Health Island](#). From thousands of vending machine sales a month, to nothing, they had to reinvent themselves. One call from a loyal and thoughtful customer, and business transformed itself. [Health Island](#) delivered over 3000 packs to corporate customers, helping to connect with their staff, creating a personal touchpoint that was sorely missing. The message was [#stayathome](#) and the undertone was [#stayhealthy](#). New product lines were added, a website was launched, online orders and package offerings created, couriers co-opted, and Health Island made it!

**4. Sisters Act: Finalist in The Shining Light Awards 2020**



2020 looked like a year of promise with a full calendar of bookings. Then came lockdown, social distancing rules, travel restrictions, alcohol bans and curfews. And all events vanished for the foreseeable future. Tenacious sisters, Sarit and Elanit Judes, had to think out-the-box. Their vision: to create new, riveting online events experiences. Instinctively they knew that THEY are their brand so by placing Sarit centre-stage they created a compelling video to sell their new technology-driven offering, showcasing their transition and ability to deliver events virtually. [@Sisters Act](#) are now successfully producing virtual experiences and a blended offering, giving clients the best of both live events and virtual events.

**5. Ruby Accessories: Finalist in The Shining Light Awards 2020**



Ruby is a social enterprise focused on the use of traditional skills and relies completely on local production. Pre-Covid, owner Robyn Lidsky designed and manufactured jewellery, fashion accessories and clothing for the luxury and tourist market. Her business had to innovate!

While staying true to its brand ethic and zero-waste policy, Ruby brought unique designer masks packaged in a matching pouch to customers. Ruby also remained committed to its vision as a job creation SME in township communities. The result: manufacturing designs in-house and shifting sales to new retail outlets, such as pharmacies. Part of the innovation for her business was realizing that stockists don't only have to be fashion stores.

**6. Petals and The Flower Cafe: Finalist in The Shining Light Awards 2020**



@The Flower Café was born out of the [Petals](#) Group, when lockdown changed this flourishing business from a fully-fledged events agency into an empty space. With decades of experience putting together bespoke events and florals arrangements for local and international clients, @Veronica Yankelowitz and her team worked hard to reimagine their future. But with a passion to stay alive @The Flower Café bloomed with customers creating bouquets and “gardens” in a variety of forms, whilst enjoying homemade treats and barista made coffee.

**7. Platinum Promotions: Finalist in The Shining Light Awards 2020**



Terri Frankental jumped into action when Covid-19 hit SA. She pivoted her corporate clothing and promotional gift business into a mask manufacturing operation. Sourcing as much fabric, elastic and bags as she could afford, she designed and created a mask through trial and error. Her focus was 2-fold: keep her business going and meet demand, as well as retain her +/- 80 machinists. Her sales drive kicked in and she approached a pharmaceutical distribution company who ordered masks, ensuring continued supply to pharmacies nationwide. Later she secured supply to several Spar Supermarkets and moved her sales online through Takealot & Loot, using Facebook to market her masks direct to the public.

Knowing that she has also been able to empower many people during these challenging times Terri said, “Although challenging and exhausting, the experience has been humbling”.

### 8. Noapop: Finalist in The Shining Light Awards 2020



Turning a side-hustle into a business, [Noapop](#) worked tirelessly to meet the increasing demand of the locked-down, eco-conscious South African customer. Chiropractor, Tamsyn Dixon was aware of the neck and back strain caused by being in front of a screen (more than ever before), and [Monique Bermeister](#)'s hands-on creative flair, prompted the design of the original ergonomic, adjustable laptop stands. With WFH becoming the new norm, business started booming.

They created two new workstation stands for phones and tablets to meet the new demand and went from selling stands exclusively through the chiro practice, to moving all sales online, allowing for future business growth. They remained true to their mission over lockdown, with all products locally made, ethical and 100% plastic free.

### 9. Coffeeright: Viewers Choice Winner for 2020 Shining Light Award



[CoffeeRight](#) was a successful business supplying coffee bars for corporate and private functions. After experiencing her busiest month ever in February with 37 functions providing work for 22 baristas, suddenly Ilana Kahn had to close her doors.

Within a few days she had to come up with ideas how to keep her staff, save her business and pay her bills and wages without taking a loan. Webinar after webinar told her to pivot her business, but she didn't know how to take [CoffeeRight](#) online - which seemed to be the only way.

For Ilana, the main goal was how to get her business out to the customers once lockdown eased. With perseverance and tenacity, she opened the first coffee drive through in SA at the beginning of June after securing a vacant petrol station, arranging permission from the City Council, meeting all the Covid compliance regulations. And it was an instant hit!

### 10. Gorgeous Gourmet: Finalist in The Shining Light Awards 2020



At the start of lockdown with all events and functions cancelled, [Gorgeous Gourmet](#), [Lee Jaffe](#), saw her catering business come to a standstill and an end to her income.

Faced with this challenge, plus home schooling her children, long afternoons with no extra murals, she decided to kill two birds with one stone: she took her kids into the kitchen to make dinner for the family and engage them in an activity. Lee then conceptualised the idea to open up to the public, networking through friends and family around the world, and launching interactive, child-friendly Zoom cooking demos. Featuring menus of 3 course meals, Gorgeous Gourmet delivered an engaging programme where children learnt life skills in the kitchen. Kids were kept busy while parents were working, and Lee empowered the kids to add value to their families by preparing healthy, home-cooked meals.