



## MARIANA'S STORY

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Mariana grew up on Villiera wine farm where her father works. She attended the Pebbles Project After School Club: "My friends and I were so excited when we heard that an After School Club was going to open on Villiera." Little did she know that the Pebbles Project After School Club would change her life forever...

One of the recreational activities that were offered at the After School Club as part of the Pebbles Project School Enrichment Programme was drama lessons. Mariana attended drama lessons and discovered her love for the performing arts: "I never knew that I had a passion for the arts, but after I started taking lessons, I knew that it was my calling."

After she matriculated, Mariana was employed by the Pebbles Project as a fantasy play coordinator as part of the First Thousand Days Programme: "I loved to dress up and play different characters and to interact with the children!" It was then that Mariana came to realise that she could incorporate her passion for the performing arts into her work. She was inspired to obtain a diploma in performing arts.

Villiera Wines provided funding for Mariana to study a BTech Performing Arts Diploma at Northlink College as well as arranged for transport to the college. One of Mariana's proudest moments was when Northlink College phoned to inform her that she had been accepted to study there. Mariana obtained her diploma and was employed as a Grade R Facilitator and Puppeteer at the Pebbles Project.

The children are in awe of Mariana's talent. Her puppet named "Samantha" is an all-time favourite! Mariana loves to see the children's faces light up every time she introduces them to the puppet. When Mariana fell pregnant, she was the first mother to be a part of the Pebbles Project Baby Box Programme which provides pregnant mothers with antenatal and postnatal support to promote healthy pregnancies.

With support from the Pebbles Project, Mariana was able to discover her passion and incorporate her passion into her work. Mariana would like to inspire others to do the same: "If an organisation like Pebbles offers you an opportunity, grab it with both hands. It will benefit your life in a big way. I am very grateful to Pebbles."

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

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*For more information or to contribute to this programme, please visit our website: [www.pebblesproject.co.za](http://www.pebblesproject.co.za)*