

## Swimming the Extra Mile

**Open water swimmer Jill Hanass-Hancock challenged swimmers in 2012 to go the extra mile.**

Giving to people in need is not always easy for ordinary people with busy schedules. The researcher and mother of two, was out to challenge this conviction by swimming in the 2012 Midmar Mile. Confronted daily with challenging stories of disability, Jill found it increasingly difficult to conduct her



research without giving back to the very people whose lives touched hers. Instead of focusing on the doom and gloom, the Hancock family decided to start fundraising through sport, something they and many others love so much.

Jill trained for this event and won the ladies 30 and older division (event 5) of the 2012 Midmar Mile, collecting 170 mile dedications of swimmers at the event and much needed funds for the two charities. The Midmar Mile is the biggest swimming event in the world (by numbers) and close to home. Anyone can participate, with no limits of age or disability status. It seems to be the perfect event for the Extra Mile. Therefore the funders of the initiative have developed the Extra Mile initiative which takes the spirit of Jill's swim into new dimensions.



In 2012 the initiative raised funds for 4 wheelchairs as well as for the Khetiwe center. The center provides the therapy for children with disabilities and is regarded as a therapy center of excellence for those who cannot afford the limited rehabilitative services in KwaZulu-Natal. It is a place where children with Cerebral Palsy and other neurological impairments can go for treatment. It also serves as a safe haven for mothers and families to learn the skills they need to support their children in the best possible way. The 2012 Extra Mile funds went towards the employment of the first physiotherapy assistant of the center, which reaches now about 65 children per month.