

Ukuthasa News

Spring 2019

Helderberg Academy introduces their new coaches for 2019



From left to right: Siboniso, Amy and Giano, the new coaches at the Helderberg Academy.

The Helderberg Academy wouldn't be able to succeed without the relentless and committed coaches that invest their time in training and mentoring young people from disadvantaged communities.

The **Helderberg Academy** Project teaches children and young people from disadvantaged communities life mentoring skills and leadership development through sport. The project is aimed at 11 to 14 year old children who live in the poorer communities of Lwandle, Macassar and Sir Lowry's Pass. The project provides weekly coaching sessions and sports tournaments to expose children to a range of sporting activities and provides opportunities to develop leadership skills and to teach life principles that will encourage them to take responsibility, as well as to act as change agents in their local communities.

The Academy staff is made of **Beth Veenendaal**, the founder, and a group of coaches, most of them helping as volunteers. One of the newest additions is **Siboniso**, a 27-year-old from Paarl. Talking about his experience, he says: "Since 2013, my passion has been youth development and, after taking a course in Sport Science and another in Life Coaching, I decided to use my knowledge and experience to a good use. I joined the Academy because I want to be a positive influence to young people in

the Western Cape. I want to be a vessel of change in this community and I believe youth is the heart of our country. Youth development is not only a career, but my calling, and I believe that, through sport, I can bring hope to the community".

Siboniso's mother tongue is Xhosa and has experience in coaching netball and football. **Beth** says: "He is passionate about young people and has already shown an eagerness to learn. He really understands that the heart of the **Helderberg Academy** is to empower young people through sport and we are very excited to have him as part of the team".

Moreover, the team has recently welcomed two volunteers, **Giano** and **Amy**, both aged 19. **Giano** is currently studying Sports Science at Stellenbosch University and is helping with football coaching in Lwandle one afternoon a week. **Amy** is planning to study next year and is helping with the primary coaching two mornings a week.

Together, they offer weekly coaching sessions and holiday clubs,

The Helderberg Academy is still looking for another international volunteer. If that could be you or someone you know, please contact Beth at beth@helderbergacademy.co.za.

Projects in the Spotlight

Emyezweni School's surprise donations

2019 couldn't have started any better for **Emyezweni**. In February, a local NGO called Foundation for Community Development phoned **Daniela Fredericks**, Emyezweni's Principal, to tell her that they had some donations for the school, including 10 tables, 40 kid sized chairs, 20 mattresses and a first aid kit, all brand new. This was followed, only a few days later, by a new surprise: a local shop was going to give them four boxes full of their leftover Christmas toys. And if that was not enough, they recently received two child friendly computers! It was like having Christmas all over again. All the children and staff were very excited about their new

resources, which help the school deliver a high quality all-round education to the children.

If you would like to support Emyezweni in a very practical way, please visit our gift shop at www.ukuthasa.org/gift-shop, where you can find information on how to fund art material, stationary, books PE equipment and more.



Clockwise, from top to bottom: Truck used by Foundation for Community Development; children receiving leftover Christmas toys from a local shop; the Toddler class showing proudly their new toys; some of the new tables; one of two child friendly computers as part of a personal donation.

Ukuthasa Child Sponsorship Programme

The **Emyezweni School** Grade R classes are looking for sponsors for this year's **Child Sponsorship Programme**. When you join the **Child Sponsorship Programme**, you make the first year at school a remarkable experience for the children. Schools in South Africa do not receive funding for resources in the classroom so parents have to provide their workbooks and stationery. In disadvantaged communities, there is often a compromise between paying for their child's school fees or providing resources and uniforms. This is where the **Child Sponsorship Programme** makes a huge difference in the school experience for these children. The programme funds resources and school trips to enhance their first year at school and provides a solid foundation for their education. Children have been able to visit nature reserves, aquariums and animal centres as part of their curriculum and at times have even been treated to a meal in a restaurant.

The **Child Sponsorship Programme** is a commitment for the full academic year of the class and has partial and full sponsorship available. If you would like to find out more, please contact Laia@ukuthasa.org for more information.

Get a Glimpse...

Choices welcomes a new volunteer from the Netherlands

The Choices Centre, which has been supported by Ukuthasa since its creation, provides services to women in crisis or at risk as a result of pregnancy. Over the years, the staff and volunteers at Choices have been counselling and giving practical help to many women and couples from disadvantaged communities in the Helderberg Basin.

Danielle Davelaar is about to spend 3 months at Choices which we hope may turn into a 2 or 3 year placement. She writes:

"It's been almost 2.5 years since I first walked in to **Choices**. Ever since, **Choices** has a very special place in my heart. Why is that? The way I see it; Choices brings together two extremes. If you take a look at the women and girls in the waiting room, you can see the fear in their eyes. They all come with their own problems, pain and feelings. They are desperate, hurt, damaged, rejected and scared.

I remember being shocked by their stories and at times deep sadness overwhelmed me. But fear is not the only thing you will find at **Choices**. You will also find hope and feel love. I was, and I remain, absolutely impressed by the counsellors. Their calmness, their love and patience for the girls is always evident. They realise that they cannot change situations. But they believe that by listening and supporting women in crisis, they can enable them to make an informed decision that they will be able to live with. It is amazing to see that **Choices** has become a place where fear and love are coming together and even better, where the clients can trade some of their fears and experience love and support in its place.

I feel so blessed that the **Choices** crew welcomed me on board. In 2017 I worked at **Choices** for almost 9 months. I became very passionate about the work which motivated me to finish my Degree in Social Work but to do that I had to go back to Holland.

As soon as I graduated in 2018 I went back to South Africa for two months to make new plans with Choices. I have friends who have asked me: 'Why South Africa? There are loads of people in Holland with similar situations and problems. Why can't you work here?' It is a good question. But I take it for granted that in Holland people in a crisis can rely on the fact that there will be professionals who will provide them with



Danielle in the Choices shop Amasekeni, where they sell nearly new babies and children's clothes and give away baby packs for mums with newborns.

help and support.

It is not the same in South Africa unless you have money. But **Choices** is able to provide free services to clients because of the generosity of those who donate the funds that enable the unit to remain open. No one is asked where they are from, how much money they have or judged in any way for their situation or circumstances. Everyone is treated with the same care and compassion. And that is so important in an emerging economy like South Africa where many communities are still dealing with the effects of poverty, abuse, racism, and gangsterism. The complex situations of the clients are challenging, but as a team, we can bring some light into the darkness and I hope to be able to contribute to that in the coming months."

Would like to support Choices either with a one-off or a regular donation? Please, contact laia@ukuthasa.org.



Get involved...

Ukuthasa celebrates its 25th anniversary next year!

Ukuthasa was founded in 1995 by **Gary and Nicky Welsh** with the goal of building bridges with local communities and making a tangible difference to people's lives.

Next year, we'll be celebrating Ukuthasa's **25th anniversary** and we want it to be an occasion to remember its achievements and successes, as well as thank everyone who has been part of **Ukuthasa** during this time and has made all this possible.

For this, we would like to ask your support and whether you could share with us any pictures, memories, anecdotes, etc. that you might have and send them to laia@ukuthasa.org. We'll then put everything together in form of a video!

We are also hoping to be able to organise a gathering as a one off reunion in the **summer of 2020** and we would love to see as many of you as possible! Whether you have been a long term supporter or supported Ukuthasa for a short period of time, we would like to celebrate this special occasion with you. More information will be available soon, so watch this space!



There are many ways you can support **Ukuthasa**, including using the following fundraising websites:

www.easyfundraising.org.uk:

Shop online from major stores who donate a percentage of each sale to charity.

www.recycle4charity.co.uk:

Recycle your old mobile phones & ink cartridges.

www.give.net:

Make a regular or a one-off donation online or set up your own fundraising page!.

www.everyclick.com:

A search engine that donates to charity 1p for every search you make.

www.virginmoneygiving.com

Make a credit card donation directly to **Ukuthasa**. It is quick, easy and anonymous.

Thank you!

In March, **Ukuthasa** received a grant from the **Southall Trust**, which will go in its entirety to the creation of four holiday clubs run by the **Helderberg Academy**.

Beth Veenendaal is excited about this new opportunity and says "this will help unite 3 completely different communities of different cultural backgrounds, using sport as a vehicle to teach life-skills to young people who would otherwise not have this opportunity".

Thank you, Southall Trust!

Talk to us: For further enquiries, correspondence updates or feedback - please contact Laia Martinez at:

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