

Service Leaders return to facilitating their ASP...

Three weeks of Public Servants strike also took its toll on the City Year After School Programme (ASP), as the majority of schools were closed during this time.

As a result, Service Leaders spent a number of weeks at headquarters in-



Photo: City Year South Africa Service Leaders return to Service. Huw McDonald

stead of on site in the different schools where they facilitate after school programmes.

"It is difficult to go back after such a long break," said Programme Coordinator Daylene van Buuren. "It has affected our planning and even the relationship between the Service Leaders and the learners in the programme. It is really a matter of doing the best with what you have and working together with the

school to create a contingency plan that works best for the learners".

Despite the break, schools are once again functioning and the majority of City Year teams are back, working together with our service partners to help make up for some of the time lost.

Depending on the school and the programming within the school, a number of teams are working closely with the teachers inside the classrooms.

A peek at Advance Training Academy

Service Leaders returned to City Year after a brief week off to rest in preparation for an intense week of training around the theme of "Being the Change". Through the course of the year, Service Leaders often find themselves so busy with Service and Training that they seldom have time to reconnect and deal with some of the challenges they have experienced along the way.

Advanced Training Academy provides week-long training aimed at reminding Service Leaders why they joined City Year and to equip them to improve the programmes they are currently implementing. "ATA was an eye opener for me. I was starting to get comfortable with the way things were even though we were faced with a lot of challenges, I didn't have a strategy to deal

with it. ATA reminded me to put my attention on my intentions" said Service Leader Rachel Mondlane. "ATA taught me to shift my attention to the most important tasks at hand and to focus on people's strengths rather than criticising their weaknesses, added Service Leader Chrystal Pillay. ATA is an important component of City Year's training and happens mid-year.

City Year South Africa EVENTS

GRADUATION - NOVEMBER 30, 2007

CITYYEAR SOUTH AFRICA FOUNDING LEAD SPONSORS



Reconnecting with Clinton



photos: Service Leaders welcome Former US President Clinton to the John Mitchell Primary School, one of the schools in which we facilitate the After School Programme. photos: Huw McDonald

City Year South Africa had the opportunity to reconnect with former US President Clinton at John Mitchell Primary School and share with him how far we have come since opening the doors to the first group of volunteers in 2005. We also had the privilege of showing him and some of our friends the work we do through the After School Programme.

Service Leader Shannah Koert spoke on the occasion, saying, "As a young girl living in South Africa I never thought that an opportunity of giving back to my country will ever present itself in the form of a red jacket. I am glad to be part of a family that dedicates its time to improve the lives of others. A family that

incorporates spirit, discipline, purpose and pride. I found this family at City Year.

Although the work of Service Leaders is often reflected in stories about their learners, this time it was through the testimonial of John Mitchell Primary School learner, Faith Msibi, who said "I am so grateful for having a person like Shannah in my life, because through her I have gained the confidence to be comfortable with who I am, and proudly say that. I now know that there is hope and that when I set my mind to something, I should follow it through and never give up. My wish is that City year reaches many more children out there, like myself, and many

others who are less fortunate than I in terms of not having people like Shannah and other Service Leaders. Thank you City Year!" That summed up the spirit of what City Year is about.

Clinton added his voice saying that what City Year does is to "find the best in young people and bring that out, and when the young people doing City Year model what it means to be good citizens, others will see that, and they too can become better citizens".

"We launched our service programme boldly with 120 young idealists. They did not know what lay ahead but trusted in our promise for an opportunity to make a difference in theirs and

the lives of those around them. At the end of our inaugural year we graduated 109 of them, and have never looked back" added City Year South Africa Executive Director, Teboho Mahuma

We have since graduated another 186 in 2006, and are looking forward to sending out into the world a further 200 at the end of this year. This means a total of 477 young people who will never be referred to as part of the so called "lost generation" added Mahuma. In the future when people of my generation and before tell stories of their part in the struggle against apartheid, these young adults will tell a true story of their part in building our country's democracy.

SLs at Africa Summit - Cape Town

Nazeema Govender
Senior Service Leader 2007

For the past three years, WEF has requested City Year South Africa send a delegation of young people to assist with the event that is currently hosted in Cape Town, and each year City Year sends a group of young, diverse and dynamic individuals.

This year I was privileged to have been selected to experience this great gathering and to represent City Year.

Growing up, I had the opportunity to experience politics first hand as both my parents were for the 'struggle', and as a teenager I decided that I had had enough and needed to find myself in other fields.

Our bright red jackets reminded many of the delegates that they were there to discuss 'our world'. We are constantly reminded that we are the future leaders, and having the chance to mingle with politicians, presidents and business persons, I was able to prove just that. The highlight of the entire event had to be the moment eyes were laid on Trevor Manuel. He had decided to wear the 'red jacket' that had been presented to him the year before at City Year's graduation day.

I sincerely enjoyed the experience of having to discuss issues so openly and sincerely with some of the delegates and hearing their

opinions on some of these issues.

It also pleased me to see that most of the delegates were proud to speak of their humble beginnings, despite how they are portrayed in the media. I sat in on many of the sessions and watched presidents argue in the same manner that I've witnessed teams do when there is a task at hand, and it opened my eyes to the fact that we discuss, resolve, and view many issues in the same manner but on different levels.

I was further reminded that we, as the youth, still have people out there who are passionate about preserving and bettering the future of our world and the existence of every being. City Year played a major part in reminding individuals that they were not 'fighting' a lost cause and that as the youth we were just as focused on and

dedicated to bringing about that change that all want to see.

I now, more than ever, stand firm in my purpose of "being the change that I want to see in the world", expanding my horizons and encouraging other young people to do the same.



PHOTOS: Above - Service Leaders with City Year SA co-chair, Rick Menell outside the CF Conference Centre.

Right: Service Leaders with Finance Minister, Trevor Manuel at the World Economic Forum, Cape Town Summit wearing his City Year jacket.



Service Leaders have the opportunity to travel abroad



Service Leaders taking part in the annual City Year convention held in New Hampshire this past June.

A small delegation of City Year South Africa's Service Leaders had the opportunity to participate in CYZYG, an annual City Year convention that was held in New Hampshire, USA.

This provided an opportunity for them, many of whom were travelling overseas for the first time, to share in their experiences with their US peers. They also had a chance to join in a service day that left a few public facilities looking really good.

In the words of Service Leader Naastasja Kucus, "I learned that the spirit of Service knows no boundaries, it has to ability to connect people and create family.

Small changes, one step at a time

Lydon Press
Service Leader 2007

The children at Eastgate Primary are completely different than I had ever envisioned them to be. Coming to City Year I heard that I would be making a difference, but how? "How am I supposed to make that difference?" "Will I be able to do it?" I doubted that I could make a difference in my own life, albeit someone else's, which seemed like a long shot. Until I met the children and got to know them. A few remarkable children fell under my supervision, called the starfish group (grade 1 - 3).

After facilitating a lesson on "My Body," the learners and I decided to have some fun. A learner by the name of Donovan stood out

from the rest. From the very first day the City Year team stepped in Eastgate Primary School, Donovan was right there. Always wanting to be with us, help us, talk to us, anything really as long as he was with us. He had shared that he was having trouble at home and that obviously affected his performance at school, as Donovan was in a remedial class. Although he was a very special child, he was also very disruptive and at times naughty.

On this particular day Donovan was extremely disruptive and wouldn't listen. I believe that he just wanted attention because no one else would give him that. Things became out of hand when Donovan pushed another learner by the name of Nicolas. Nicolas notified me immediately. "Lydon, Donovan is bullying me and it is lowering my self esteem."

I was left speechless. About a week back I had facilitated a lesson on self esteem.

At that moment I did not know whether to reprimand Donovan or congratulate Nicolas. Donovan apologised for what he did. I didn't even say a word, yet Donovan was able to recognise that he was doing something wrong and that it affected someone else. On that warm afternoon, the two boys ran playing as if nothing had happened. I still stood in amazement. Thus far every little thing that happens I am grateful for. Learner's influencing each other in a positive way. Teaching Bridget, a grade 1 learner, how to spell her name. These moments leave me with a great feeling and two powerful statements, "I am definitely making a difference" and "yes I can do it."

ON A SAD NOTE

Teboho Mahuma
Executive Director, City Year South Africa

July has been a particularly sad month for us at City Year South Africa, with the loss of a staff member and a Service Leader.

Mme Emma Ramokoka had been with City Year since 2005 until illness made it difficult for her to continue working early in the year. She passed away on the 18th of July.

It was sadly on the morning of Mme Emma's burial that we received news of the tragic passing of Jabu Sibisi, a Service Leader serving at John Mitchell Primary school, in a car accident.

We are deeply saddened by the loss of these beloved members of our family, and we ask you please to join us in wishing their natural families STRENGTH.



A Little Understanding

Melanie Naidoo
Service Leader 2007

I saw this young girl standing in the corridor at school talking to her friend, I said "Hi my name is Melanie and I am from City Year and I would love to see you in my class". Little did I know that just by inviting this young girl to my grade seven ASP class, she was going to challenge me to the core.

After few weeks of After School Programme facilitations, Mema, the young girl I invited, became my biggest challenge. She was continually disruptive.

I did not know what was wrong and I felt like there was nothing I could do to control this young girl. I asked myself, "why is it that of all the learners in the class, she is the one to push me to the edge." My team encouraged me to talk to her about her behaviour, telling me that she would listen.

I did not know what to say to her. I was nervous I might say the wrong

thing. Luckily, I did not have to go to her. Instead, she approached me to apologise for her behaviour.

I thought I was dreaming. She thanked me for not giving up on her, for encouraging and motivating her despite of the way she behaved in class. I was surprised as she poured out her heart about her family and the way people treated her in school.

Her life has not been easy and the only way she feels people listen to her is when she is disruptive. Telling me that she felt "unloved," my heart broke for her and I wished that I could take away all of her pain.

I told her that I believed in her and thought she was great, and by the look on her face, it was clear that no one has ever told her that. or taken the time to tell her, "she is special". I feel that she was the reason I joined City Year. Through my experiences with her, I learned that through patience comes virtue.