

Youth with a vision

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KENAKO

It's time to feel it...it is here.

BY: AKHONA NKALITSHANE

The count down had come to the end, the world had all its focus on South Africa. The time has come for all South Africans and people from all over the world to feel, it has arrived, it is here.

The mascot had been chosen, the stadiums had been finished weeks and some months in advance to the Kick-off day.

Everything had been ready, all the preparations had been finished, it was time for South Africa to prove to the world that it can and will hold a successful world cup.

11 June 2010, it was the Kick-off day. The pressure was high, the fans were feeling, the excitement drawn on everyone's faces, it was time for the South African team to play Mexico in the opening game.

The boys had so much pressure on them because losing was not an option for them as the hosting country and of course playing at home. The players were on fire, Bafana Bafana



really wanted to win this one and to show to the rest of the world that they can do this and beat Mexico because many people from around the world were confident that Mexico will win.

Simphiwe Tshabalala scored the first goal and the excitement on all South Africans was flaring up high, it was just like the day the South African rugby team won the world cup. Mexico scored an equalizer and that is how the game ended, with a one all draw.

The boys made South Africans proud and with the opening game such a great success, everyone was confident that S.A will go to the second round, little did they know that the game of soccer is not predictable. S.A lost to Uruguay and couldn't go to the 2nd round even though they beat France 2-1 because they scored less goals when compared to the other teams in the group.

The Inspiring journey – being listed with one of the best in the world



In the dusty fields of Cape Town in the mid 1980's, a young teenage boy, Jerome Damon, decides to referee a game of football after the appointed referee failed to arrive.

He quite enjoyed the experience and having abandoned the idea of playing the game himself, he decided to pursue refereeing on a more formal basis. Refereeing was nothing new to the Damon family as Jerome's father and many of his father's friends were referees.

The difference was that his father's refereeing occurred in the era of apartheid with all the consequent limitations while Jerome's career has been largely in the post-apartheid era. As Jerome committed himself to the journey of becoming a top referee, he began to treasure a dream of one day being in official in the World Cup. Little did he know that this dream would be fulfilled in his home country.

Hard work and dedication saw him move through the ranks and by 1996, at the tender age of 22; he was operating in the top flight under the banner of the Premier Soccer League. The cornerstone and the foundation rock of his career has been his faith in God. He has committed this gift of refereeing to God and always gives praise when new horizons open up for him.

In the midst of constant rumours of corruption and bribes in the world of football, Jerome has been an exemplary example of integrity and honesty in his journey. A key factor has been the strong support system which he has enjoyed. His wife, Bronwyn, children Asher and Kai, his extended family, broader Christian community and his school staff – he is a high school teacher and a referee. This support base has enabled him to journey effectively.

True to his character, Jerome is humbled by the fact that he will be part of the first Soccer World Cup on African soil. In 2006 he was a linesman at the World Cup in Germany, but this time he will referee and his assistants will be another South African, Enock Molefe, and a Rwandan Celestin Ntugangira. He sees the fulfillment of his dream as a celebration of all the people who have walked this journey with him. Dreams are sacred, but teenage dreams are even more sacred as they develop and are treasured in our hearts at a time of innocence in our lives. In 1988 a young teenager began to treasure a most unusual dream in his heart, being a referee on the biggest stage. Jerome is standing on the brink of fulfilling that dream and as South Africans we wish him every Godly blessing as he represents all South Africans at the 2010 World Cup on the African continent.

Y-Zone Moments at St Augustine Primary School

Since Durban YMCA began its Y-Zone after-care program at St. Augustine, a fresh impetus has been brought into the school. About 25 learners joined the program and the enthusiasm they have demonstrated is enviable. The aftercare program is holistic in its approach, combining educational



lifeskills sessions with a variety of games. "We have learnt how to say sorry, thank you, please and to respect", some of the learners said.

The homework supervision is one of the program's activities. It has helped learners to improve in their school work.

"The after care teachers help us to do our homework, this helps us than doing it all by ourselves" another learner remarked. The atmosphere in which the program is conducted enhances their learning capabilities.



The parents on the other hand, have been very happy to have people who educate their children more about life. One of the learners said "my mother is very happy I come home with my homework done and about the improvement of my school work".

The Long journey has come to an end.

It has been a long journey for Hakizimana Juma Pili, Niyangabo Azarie, Nise Ngiyumva and Ali Shaban. The learners have finally reached one of their dreams, to be able to write and speak proper English.

They enrolled for the course for two reasons, namely for learning the language and for improving their chances for employment. They say that the literacy class gave them the opportunity of learning the language and it will open doors for them.

The literacy class offered by the YMCA organization has built self confidence within them because they are now able to communicate to other people confidently in English, a remarkable improvement compared to the time they enrolled for the class in September 2009.

They give thanks to their teacher Hlengiwe Pela, who has made it possible for them to learn so much within a short space of time. The CEO of the organization Mr. Ian Booth together with Pastor Georg, from Evangelical Lutheran Church, awarded them with certificates of achievement. In the ceremony Mr. Booth thanked their teacher, Ms Pela, for making a difference and encouraging the students to learn more and continue practicing the skills they have acquired from the training, *“now we can walk and talk”*, he said to them.



On his part, Pastor Georg congratulated the students together with their teacher, for persevering in the course and achieving their goal. He encouraged everyone to continue improving on what they have learnt by enrolling for an advanced literacy course and hailed the on-going partnership with Durban YMCA in this initiative. Afterwards, group photos were taken as memorial symbols of a great endeavor that is promoting integration of African immigrants in society in the spirit of Ubuntu.

Y-Zone gives dancers a chance to show case their talent

Durban group dancers show cased their talents on stage at the Durban YMCA, demonstrating their various abilities and passion for art. This event took place on 29 May 2010. Organized by the Y-Zone Programme Coordinator Bongwiwe Khumalo and her volunteers, the dance competition began at 9am and ended at 4 pm. Different groups from all parts of Durban joined in this wonderful event that showcases art to compete and at the end have a group that will go back home victorious. Amongst that groups that participated are the City Boys, Ghetto Boys, Wrong Bottoms, Total Force, Crazy Players and many more. After competing and showing different skills on the dance floor, three groups tied, all on 92 points and judges had to decide which group will win. The three groups had to perform once again to break the tie and finally Total Force won and were announced champions on the day. The aim of the competition was to bring together the inner city kids and youths as well as providing entertainment for them while promoting Y-Zone program. The message of the day was *‘life is still cool without alcohol and drugs’*. Durban YMCA programs and values were also explained to the audience who were also encouraged to join them for their own personal growth. The event was a huge success and kudos to the Y-Zone team for their hard work and coordinated efforts, Y-Zone kids and teens and members of the community who turned up in numbers for the day. The next dance competition will be organized after the world cup. It is envisaged to draw many performance arts and dance groups than the previous competition.

The Importance of Continuing with Education....by Dr. Norman Hudson



It seems many refugees and other people from different countries who are living legally in South Africa find it very important to continue their education. Many of them make use of the facilities available in South Africa. Well done to them. The sad thing though is that not so many people can do so. Those who were born in SA, do not make use of these same opportunities. What a pity.

Yes, you must have money in order to live. And the usual way to get money is through finding a job. But that has its difficulties because many people are unemployed and looking for work. Jobs are not easily available, especially if you are unskilled and uneducated. So you must obtain useful skills to make it easier to find work. This all means study or hard work, or both.

'Where should I start?' you ask. May I suggest you spend time thinking carefully about the kind of work you would like to do in your life. What job would you choose? Remember you only have one life, and you want to make the best use of it.

You might like to think of the greatest impact you could make upon the world, or the greatest benefit you can bring to the people of the world, during your life. Be careful not to think that the more money you can earn the happier you will be.

Remember that we are taught in the Bible that "the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil". Money is not evil, it's the love of money that often devalues the quality of the one life that you have been given.

What would be your best choice of a job?

Is your choice attainable through study and practical experience? How passionate are you to improve your position in life? Are you prepared to study hard in order to advance, or are you lazy? What opportunities are available for you to study the job of your choice? Speak to members of the staff team at the YMCA, and ask for their guidance and advice. Find out about the possibility of loans to pay for your studies, which you can repay after you complete your courses and qualify for the job you want, or the job of your dreams.

Remember you can make a valuable contribution to this wonderful country in which we must all live together in peace and harmony.

INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS OF THE DURBAN YMCA

The Emma B. Howe Family YMCA summer programs.

Emma B. Howe Family YMCA in the United States of America will be conducting exciting children programs this summer (winter in South Africa). One of the programs is known as 'Summer Power Kindergarten' program, a program available to children who are entering or just completed Grade K. This program will be activity based and geared towards the participants' age and development level.

Weekly themes and field trips bring new adventures as zoos, museums and parks become a part of the child's classroom. The program offers a full-day enrichment program where kids enjoy their day in small, age-appropriate groups and participate in activities like arts and crafts, group games, sports and weekly field trips under the guidance of our trained YMCA staff. Each week features a different theme and field trips as they explore nature, science, sports, technology, and more. Water parks, zoos, museums and regional and local parks are just a few of the field trip adventures. This approach helps children to continue their preparation for school in the fall. Responsible and secure supervision is provided at all times as well as smaller groups sizes to fit each child's needs. The program attracts children from kindergarten through 6th Grade.

Summer Up roar is another program for children in grades 6-8 and provides an exciting combination of spirited adventures and growth opportunities that challenge the mind and stretch the body! Exciting field trips, group activities, and local amusement and water parks are among the many fun things to do at Up-roar. Staff counselors provide character development opportunities to encourage independence and responsibility. In addition to these programs, Day Camp Guy Robinson program is being offered for children between 4-14 years. Children will go to Camp Guy Robinson to experience a week full of exciting outdoor adventure including hiking, canoeing, kayaking, fishing, horseback riding, archery, climbing wall, arts, crafts and more! Specialty camps are also offered throughout the summer including fun themes such as "Dragons, Fairies and Princesses Camp" and "Planes, Trains and Automobiles Camp".



The camp is also able to offer Teen specialty camps and camps for Leaders-In-Training. Campers participate in small, age-appropriate groups as they build self-esteem, learn new skills, and practice the YMCA's core values of caring, honesty, respect and responsibility. Through the Emma B. Howe Family YMCA's annual fundraising campaign, YMCA-Partners, we are able to provide scholarships to children and families to participate in summer programs and camps, who may otherwise not be able to. This ensures that every child is able to be a part of fulfilling our mission of building strong kids, strong families and strong

communities! For more information, please visit our website at <http://www.ymcatwincities.org>.

THE LYNN YMCA

Gather Pursue Achieve Study Group

BY MEAGHAN CASEY

By definition, homework is an exercise in learning, at home. But for some local students, the Lynn YMCA is providing a more desirable setting to complete their nightly assignments. The GPA Study Group (Gather, Pursue, Achieve) meets every Tuesday from 6 to 7:30 and every Thursday from 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. in the computer lab. Free to members, it is part of the Lynn YMCA's drop-in youth program, The Core.

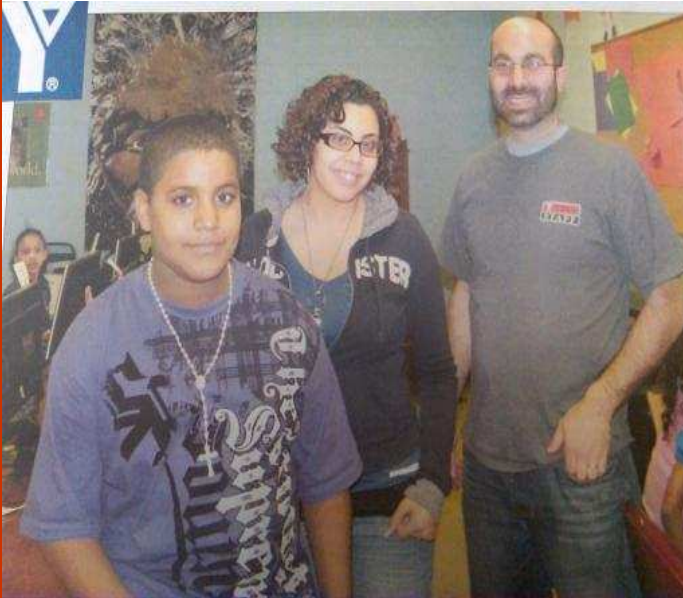
Participants in grades 3-12 have the opportunity to work on homework, brush up on grammar and hone their creative writing skills.

“Overall, the students want to participate and they’re more open to learning,” said Iris Rivas, study group and Computer Center Coordinator. “We mix it up, usually spending the first 45 minutes on homework before moving on to the lessons I’ve put together for them. They also have journals for their writing blogs.”

Rivas, a business major at UMass Boston, hopes to encourage participants to work independently outside of the classroom, applying and practicing the skills they learned.

“It’s reinforcing what’s going on at school,” said Lynn YMCA Youth and Teen Director Gregg Ellenberg. “Hopefully it provides an early foundation for lifelong study and work habits.”

Ellenberg considers Rivas a valuable resource particularly for students in homes where English is not the primary language spoken.



from the left: Gilbert Minaya, Iris Rivas and Gregg Ellenberg

“As a parent, it is difficult to help reinforce English grammar skills if that is not your primary language,” Ellenberg said. “If the students aren’t getting the reinforcement at home, we know they’re getting it here.”

The study group, which was re-launched last year, typically attracts up to 15 students per week. Lynn resident Gilbert Minaya, 11, is a regular. A fifth-grader at Drewicz Elementary School, Minaya is in his second year in the study group. Thanks to the structured environment, he is not only completing his assignments, but excelling in the classroom. His grades have significantly improved.

“It’s nice having the time to finish my homework and get my grades up,” said Minaya. “And I like writing more now.”

Minaya has been going to the YMCA daily for the past five years and is an active member of The Core program. “I have a place to go,” he said. “I’m not just sitting around at home.”

For more information about the Lynn YMCA and its youth programs, visit www.lynnymca.org

The Durban YMCA soccer mentorship programme.

The program coordinator for Durban YMCA soccer development has introduced a new program, the mentorship program. This programme which started on 11 of May 2010 runs every fortnight each month.

The coordinator is running this program with the Open and U13 teams, on separate days of the mentorship week. Its aim is to teach the players how to behave and to be positively minded. It also aims to boost self esteem within the players, change their behavior in and out the field and to build self motivation and confidence. It teaches them on conflict management between themselves and in the field and includes topics such as vision, purpose in life and importance of nutrition in sports.

The main reason for goal setting is to help the players make goals that will help them while they are still playing soccer and life after soccer. The coordinator runs this program by facilitating the sessions using participatory techniques such as sharing their thoughts openly and asks questions which help the players to bond and build mutual relationships other than just playing soccer. This initiative is fully supported by Durban YMCA management, parents and staff.