

Dear Friends of Bridges

The year has started off with a bang at Bridges. We are feeling blessed coming out of 2023 on good footing thanks to our regular and once off donors, and the team stewarding Bridges.

There have been a few staff changes, and the new team has brought fresh energy, ideas and enthusiasm with them. We said a sad farewell to Matthew and Geraldine, our campus manager and hospitality administrator, as they retired to Villiersdorp. Our Education Manager, Brent du Toit has also left Bridges, and we thank him for playing his part in setting up the Outdoor Education Programme at Bridges over the past 3 years.

God's hand was in the recruitment of our 3 new staff members whose experience and lives are incredibly aligned with their roles at Bridges. We welcome Andrew Rielly as Campus Manager, Shernel Meyer as Education Programme Manager, and Trifena Jefthas as Hospitality and Education Programme Administrator.

Bridges has also been able to create more permanent positions and we have hired a second cook, a second groundsman, and a maintenance supervisor. In 2024 we are looking forward to implementing many maintenance and growth projects around the campus.

We are looking forward to God's plan and provision as we move forward into this new season at Bridges.

Kind regards,

Rigby

Chairman of the Board

Team News

FAREWELL TO THE NEWEYS

At the end of March, we said goodbye to Matthew and Geraldine Newey, who have stepped into retirement. Matthew and Geraldine served Bridges for five years, and invested much of their hearts and lives into the mission of Bridges. We are grateful not only for their knowledge and skills that they sowed into the campus, but for the care that they showed their colleagues at Bridges, and the way that they selflessly served the organisation. We wish them all the best in this new season!

Along with the Neweys retiring, our education manager, Brent du Toit, left the BRC team at the end of February, and so we have three new faces on our team that we're excited to introduce!



Andrew Reilly

CAMPUS MANAGER

Andrew, our new campus manager, originally hails from the Eastern Cape and now lives in Paarl with his wife and two of his four children. They have joined, and are serving in, One Hope Church in Stellenbosch.

Andrew has vast experience in financial, retail and hospitality management. He has directed the NPO called Restore Trust, and its various projects, in East London. He enjoys outdoor adventures, trail running, and spending time with his family and two golden retrievers. Once a year he likes to take his family somewhere they have never been to before. He is excited to contribute towards building Bridges into a world class facility that makes a difference in people's lives.



Trifena Jefthas

HOSPITALITY & EDUCATION ADMINISTRATOR

Trifena is joining us as our new **Hospitality and Education Administrator**. She lives in Franschoek with her family and is actively involved her church. Her passion lies in connecting with people and engaging actively in community initiatives.

With qualifications in Community Development and Human Resource Management, complemented by various courses in Leadership Development, Trifena is excited to make a meaningful and lasting impact through the administration of Bridges' hospitality and education programmes.

Team News

New OEP Manager

Shernel is our new **Outdoor Education Programme (OEP) Manager**. She is originally from the Cape Flats area of Cape Town, lived in Pretoria for 12 years, and now resides in Stellenbosch with her husband and two young children.

With over a decade of experience in the sports, recreation, and outdoor adventure fields, Shernel brings a wealth of knowledge and passion to her role at Bridges. She previously worked as a lecturer at universities like Tshwane University of Technology and North-West University, teaching courses on sport management, coaching, recreation programming, and more.



Shernel Meyer

Shernel also spent several years working aboard cruise ships as a Sport Supervisor, organising tournaments and engaging guests in outdoor activities around the world.

As the OEP Manager at Bridges, Shernel gets to co-create these impactful programmes alongside a dedicated and passionate team of facilitators to provide unforgettable experiences that inspire personal growth bonding, confidence, and appreciation for the great outdoors among the youth. An absolute reward seeing young people disconnect from challenging circumstances and reconnect with nature through team building activities, recreational adventures, and environmental education curricula.



Shernel leads this fantastic team of camp facilitators, who work tirelessly to provide an excellent education programme for the learners attending our OEPs.

Back row (left to right):
Wyatt, Goodwell, AJ, JP

Front row:
Isiphile, Siyabonga, Emily, Anita,
Cliff (kneeling)

FIRST TERM CAMPS

We've had a fantastic first term of building into the lives of Grade 7 learners at our partner schools. Now in the third year of our education programme, Grade 7 camps mark the third and final camp that learners will be attending in our Grade 5-7 OEP cycle. This means that learners attending the camps are familiar and comfortable with the coaches and campus. Learners often arrive especially eager for the camp, filled with the expectancy of another excellent experience of fun activities, beautiful surroundings and delicious food!

Prefect Camp

The term kicked off with our Prefect Camp, where newly appointed prefects from five of our partner schools participated in a programme specifically focused on building leadership skills. Our schools often use the Grade 5 and 6 camps to highlight specific learners with leadership potential for their prefect selection, and getting to come on an extra camp at Bridges is an exciting reward for being elected as a prefect. Our coaches noticed that, on this camp, the prefects participated in the activities with a focused, goal-directed attitude. They were determined to make use of the opportunity for growth and developing new skills.



Grade Camps

The rest of the first term included eight more camps with Grade 7 learners from our partner schools. Our coaches noticed a transformation in the learners from when they last visited Bridges in Grade 6. Not only was there an improvement in behaviour, but learners showed an increased willingness to take responsibility for themselves and their teammates. They demonstrated a solution-oriented approach to the activities on camp, as well as a noticeable growth in character. We wish our Grade 7 learners all the best as they move on to high school, and trust that the life skills that they have developed at Bridges will set them on a positive trajectory for the next step in their journey.



2024 IMPACT TO DATE

9 GRADE CAMPS

656 LEARNERS

29 EDUCATORS

4,795 MEALS SERVED



Thank You!

The Bridges team would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to each individual who has invested in our vision for transforming young lives in the Western Cape. Your support has enabled us to reach 656 learners this term with an experience that will last a lifetime.

Looking ahead to the rest of 2024, we're excited to see our new team members thrive in their roles as we work together to achieve our goal of 31 camps by the end of this year.

We are grateful and eager for all that God has in store for Bridges in 2024!