



A warm welcome to all our partners and readers to this latest newsletter.

The year is whizzing by and another term has passed with lots to report and celebrate. I'm continually amazed at the enthusiasm and passion of our Ed team. Their ability to inspire and encourage kids from disadvantaged communities and schools is breathtaking. Recently as I visited the campus with potential sponsors and overseas guests, I was once again reminded of the power and privilege of what we do and what we get to steward. Even in the 'misery' of the Cape winter, we are witnesses to the observable progress in so many of the learners through the various grades. Many are responding with joy and hunger to the different activities. Those who at first appear a little reticent, quickly get caught up in the 'vibe' of the whole experience. Our theory of change with social, emotional and physical development goals, continues to find direct expression in learners and educators who are coming alive to new potential and possibilities. As you read this report I'm hoping that you too will celebrate with us as we collectively give our heartfelt 'yes' to the Bridges project for rest of 2024 and beyond. For those of you who continue to make this possible, I thank you on behalf of the Board, the Ed Team and the thousands of learners who are our primary beneficiaries.

Kind regards,

Rigby

Chairman of the Board



Education Programme Update

During the 2nd term, we had an amazing camp that brought together two schools from different racial backgrounds and languages. Our facilitators provided valuable feedback about the learners' integration and the educators' enthusiastic participation.

We were fortunate to have volunteers which assisted in various duties and released the coaches so they could concentrate on leading their groups effectively.

We have introduced a workshop session into our camp programme, with the purpose of linking the activities with the grade-specific outcomes. These workshop sessions are shaping up wonderfully, providing a platform for learners to reflect and offer input on their learning experiences. The interaction among learners has been remarkable, and the educators' energy has significantly supported the facilitators during these sessions.



Given that we are in the winter season, the weather encourages us to be creative and do something new with the learners. The rain required us to adjust all outdoor activities and the facilitators introduced new activities in line with each grade's theme.

We are grateful to work with the hospitality team who does an excellent job in providing warm meals timeously and makes every effort to cater for special dietary requirements, making the learners feel at home away from home.

This term, in addition to our regular camps, we conducted school visits across the Cape Flats and in the Winelands to implement post-camp feedback assessments. These visits also served to introduce our team to the upcoming grade expected to attend the next camp. The facilitators attended these school visits as a team, maintaining the collaborative approach that has served our team well.

For more updates and information, you can now follow us on Instagram and Facebook! Our social media pages have been recently revived by a member of our team - Wyatt Afrika. Wyatt graduated in Dramatic Arts at Stellenbosch University, and he not only facilitates, makes sure our programme runs on schedule, and coordinates our fashion show, but he now also keeps us trending on Instagram!

We hope this newsletter highlights our dedication to fostering a positive and impactful camp experience for all involved. We look forward to continuing our mission and making a difference in the lives of our learners who experience an outdoor camp with us at Bridges Retreat Centre.

2024 IMPACT TO DATE

13

CAMPS

1,193

LEARNERS

61

EDUCATORS

8,778

MEALS SERVED



OUR AMAZING LEAD COACH
SIYA MDZANGA



TOXIC WASTE OBSTACLE COURSE
- RAINY DAY EDITION



SLIP AND SLIDE FUN!



BOAT BUILDING AND RACING



MARSHMALLOW TOWER BUILDING

Feedback from Volunteers

“I had a great time with the school kids and was placed in the Blue Team. The coaches and leaders at Bridges are well-trained to handle the number of kids. The warm welcome in the morning, with breakfast and lunch, was unexpected but much appreciated.

Despite the cold and wet weather that Cape Town is currently facing this winter, the team-building activities in the hall were very exciting. The place is very neat and well-maintained, and the surrounding nature and mountains provided a serene escape from my day-to-day job.

Thank you once again for the wonderful hospitality.”

– Volunteer from Coast & Country Sales

“I wanted to say a big thank you for letting me be a part of your community service project.

Working with the kids was such an eye-opening and educational experience. I was really impressed by how involved and kind your staff were—it made the whole experience unforgettable. This experience has had a huge impact on me, and I'm seriously thinking about coming back to help out again in the future.

Thanks again for everything you do and for making me feel so welcome.”

– Volunteer from

Rondebosch Boys High School

Feedback from Chatsworth Primary Learners

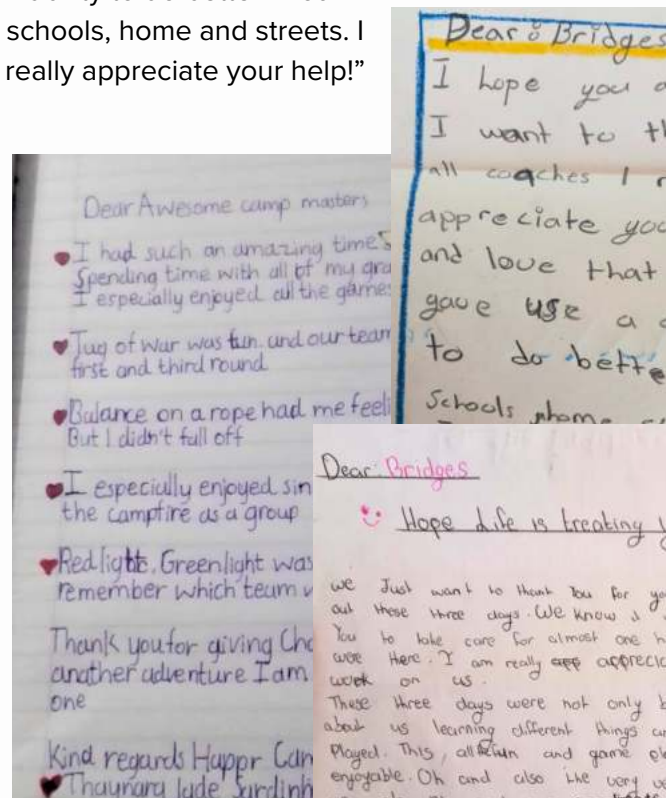
“Dear awesome camp masters, I had such an amazing time will all my friends and especially enjoyed all the games. Tug of war was fun and our team won the first and third round. Balancing on the rope had me feeling a little clumsy. But I didn't fall off!. I especially enjoyed singing and dancing around the campfire as a group. Thank you for giving Chatsworth Primary another adventure. I am looking forward to the next one.

Kind regards,
Happy Camper”

“We just want to thank you for your help throughout these three days. We know if was hard for you to take care of almost one hundred children that were here. I really appreciate your hard work.

These three days were not only fun but also about us learning different thing. All the fun and games were very enjoyable. Oh and also the very very delicious food we ate. Please send our compliments to the kitchen staff. Thank you for your love and help when we thought we couldn't do it. You encouraged us to keep goin. Let God's hand be over your lives in the wonderful name of Jesus.”

“I want to thank you coaches. I really appreciate your guiding and love. You gave us the ability to do better in our schools, home and streets. I really appreciate your help!”



Snapshot of Two Partner Schools

Bonga Primary

Quintile 3

Bonga Primary School is situated in Gugulethu, an area with high unemployment rates, and this has a deep impact on the families of the learners who attend Bonga. Many families are not receiving an income, which means that a 2-night stay at Bridges Retreat Centre is a unique, exciting experience that would not be possible apart from the support of our generous donors. The teaching staff at Bonga Primary have a warm and welcoming demeanour towards their learners. They are determined to assist their learners academically, instil a courageous and determined mindset, and set them on a path towards a future of success. The school strongly believes in extramural participation including soccer, netball, and chess, which is evident with their learners' competing in various school leagues. We are proud of the learners' striving to reach their potential amidst the difficulties in their community.



Wes-Eind Primary

Quintile 1

Located in the Franschhoek Valley, Wes-Eind Primary is a melting pot of learners from different social backgrounds. One of the main challenges that the school is facing at the moment is increased absenteeism during the colder months due to many of the students having to walk to school. Many of the households that the learners come from rely solely on grants to get through the month, which means that paying for transport to school is not feasible. Mrs September, the school principal, has admirably put the needs of her learners above anything else. As far as she is capable, she assists learners' families who are in need and checks in personally on how her learners are doing throughout the day. We have been encouraged by the care and concern that she has sown into the school.

Thank You!

Our team is grateful for the support that we've received from each individual and organisation throughout the second term. Thank you for your generosity and investment into the thousands of young lives that will be impacted by our Outdoor Education Programme in 2024. We couldn't do it without your support!

If you'd like any further information on our programme and how to get involved, please contact Jennifer Crombie at jennifer@bridgesretreat.co.za.

All the best for the term ahead,
The Bridges Team

