



Hillcrest AIDS Centre Trust

Mid-year greetings from the Hillcrest AIDS Centre Trust!

The past 2 months have seen a number of volunteer groups investing tremendous amounts of time and effort into our services, complete with the culmination of Mandela Day on July 18th which you can read about below.

A few highlights include the annual group of Grade 12 students from Malvern Boys Preparatory School (Pennsylvania, USA) who came for a service project at HACT in early July. This year's group once again ran a week-long Holiday Camp for Grade 5 learners, spending each day in a different area of the Valley in collaboration with our Children's Department team. The boys prepared, fund-raised and travelled with all of their teaching, craft and game supplies, planning initially for 60 children a day but on a few days actually doubled that number. The week was full of educational lessons, fun, laughter, new friendships, cultural exchange and changed lives of young people from both sides of the Atlantic.

GAGA (Goodwill & Growth for Africa) UK brought a group of nutrition students from the University of Leeds who volunteered their time doing various odds and ends jobs around the Centre, but also conducted a nutritional analysis at our Respite Unit and gave a fun-filled nutrition and exercise lesson at one of our Gogo (grandmother) parenting courses. They left behind for us a number of lesson and activity plans focused on healthy eating and nutrition which can be adapted for either children or adults in our programmes.

Last week we had a group of 19 business students from Paris drop by for a tour and an interactive cultural tutorial. It didn't take long before the group was on their feet and singing in Zulu under the energetic tutelage of Sbu, our Education Manager.

From local students who want to fulfil their service hours to the artists from Germany making a film documentary about craft and social enterprise, from young moms with their little ones paying a visit to our used Book Store to the tour company enquiring about the Cultural Tours offered by our Gogo groups, and from our regular shoppers looking for a new creative piece of beaded artwork at Woza Moya to the neighbour popping by our nursery for their aloe garden....HACT's doors remain open for visitors from near and far. So if you are in the area or it's been awhile since you've paid us a visit, we welcome you to stop in and see the busy hive of the Centre in action.

At HACT we can only do what we do with your ongoing support and involvement. Together we can continue to make a difference and witness lives changed. Please consider joining our Hope Club for a monthly donation to keep our doors open and services operating. On behalf of our staff and beneficiaries, we thank you for journeying with HACT to provide unconditional love and to work toward our vision of an AIDS-free Valley of 1000 Hills!

**With Thanks,
The HACT Team**



Youth Month Celebrations! Or Youth Month Awareness Campaigns!

June was youth month in South Africa and our Education Department ran a packed programme throughout the month with various awareness campaigns.

It kicked off with High School Peer Educators running awareness campaigns in three schools using various art forms to portray positive life style messages. The pupils had an opportunity to use drama, music, dance and poetry to convey messages of hope through education and a fight against social ills including HIV/AIDS. Collectively, 2 043 high school learners were impacted by these events. A grade 9 learner from Siyajabula High school, who participated in the drama performance at the Awareness Event said, "Our participation in this event made us realise not only our talent but our potential. We can make an impact and have a positive change in our school!"

Career guidance sessions were also held across seven schools in the Valley, where our education team partnered with volunteer students from the University of KwaZulu-Natal from different fields of study. 983 pupils were equipped with information about how to prepare themselves not only academically but also emotionally and mentally for higher education, presented with career options and which potential doors to knock on for bursary opportunities. Students were also walked through the process of completing forms for the Central Applications Office (CAO) which is the channelling office for tertiary studies in KwaZulu-Natal. Of the career expo events, one bright learner who has excelled in his matric studies but hasn't had much exposure to possible career paths said, "I am so pleased to know that my passion of working with technical materials will be fulfilled. I never thought there was an area of study called mechanical engineering".

Our education team was also invited to the city's Youth Indaba that took place in Durban on June 14-15. This event featured different organisations across various sectors, all of which focus on servicing and developing the youth of Durban. Our team was one of the organisations invited to present our services to youth which include health screening, HIV counselling and testing, and volunteering. The team also used this opportunity to address the youth and motivated them to forge ahead, despite the challenges faced, and to be committed to working hard, developing themselves and playing their part for a better South Africa!



67 Minutes for HACT!

Mandela Day (July 18th) is a day which honours Nelson Mandela's birthday and his tremendous legacy of a lifetime of service and is a day on which everyone is encouraged to spend at least 67 minutes in service to others.

This year's Mandela Day was themed #ActionAgainstPoverty and HACT had a Mandela Day sticker campaign leading up to the actual day during which many individuals and companies took up the call to sell stickers to their family, friends and colleagues to raise much needed funds for our Respite Unit.

The day itself was busy at HACT with a generous outpouring of support, love and care from our local community and businesses. St Dominic's Church and Resource Recruitment were our first visitors of the day and both groups dropped off toiletry hampers for our Respite patients. Woolworths (Hillcrest Corner) was a force to be reckoned with as they rolled up their sleeves to bead a Mandela Face art project, creatively decorated a piece of our fence with their logo, delivered 30 food hampers for our patients and also pounded the pavement to sell an additional 50 stickers in 67 minutes! A team from Marriott brought 24 beautifully wrapped toiletry hampers for those admitted in our Respite Unit as well as cupcakes for all HACT staff and patients. Digital Lab and Top Carpets and Floors brought in assorted goods for our White Elephant shop and clothing scheme. Our nursery staff also enjoyed a training session with Tanya Visser from the Gardeners Magazine which focused on improving germinating methods. The magazine also donated lily bulbs that are currently on sale from our plant nursery.

Constantia Afripak, together with our own Nhlanhla from Woza Moya, created our Mandela Day art work which became the hotspot to take pictures for the rest of the Mandela Month. You can still pop in if you missed out on the day to take pictures with this beautiful art pictured on the right. A number of other big-hearted folks and families also stopped by and brought various items! Thank you to everyone who supported us with Mandela Day in one way or another!

"What counts in life is not the mere fact that we have lived. It is what difference we have made to the lives of others that will determine the significance of the life we lead." – Nelson Mandela



HACT featured at the 8th Annual South African AIDS Conference

The 8th Annual SA AIDS conference took place in Durban (June 13-15) and we were thrilled to have three team members selected to present.

Our Woza Moya Manager, Paula Thomson, took the stage to share the journey and lessons learned by our Economic Empowerment project. Woza Moya, which has grown from humble beginnings over 15 years ago with only two plastic buckets of beaded ribbons and an overhead of merely R3000 per year to now consisting of three shops, hundreds of products and over R4 million returning to the community as crafter's income.

Our Granny Support Groups Deputy Manager, Phindiwe Mashioane, gave a presentation on HACT's dynamic, holistic and health promotion approach using the Gogo support groups and Gogolympics as models of community engagement. She also described how the programme has also gone from humble beginnings with the community's expectation of 'hand-outs' and evolving to its current structure of a rural development project with self-sufficient, confident Gogos leading their own projects.

Toward the closing of the conference, our CEO Candace Davidson presented findings from a community-based research project in the neighbouring health district of uMgungundlovu (KwaZulu-Natal) which is part of her doctoral studies. She presented data on contraceptive methods, pregnancies and HIV/STIs among adolescents and young people and gave recommendations for more comprehensive sexual and reproductive health services contextualized for the local context.

HACT celebrates the opportunity to have shared our team's experience and expertise on such a national and regional platform!



Nation Changers Campaign 2017

We are delighted to once again be a beneficiary for the Nation Changers campaign for 2017.

This wonderful initiative is the brainchild of City Hill Church (Hillcrest), which they describe as a loud call to Christians to get out of their comfort zone and pick a challenge to make a difference in our lovely nation!

The campaign runs between July and August, and for us at HACT it started with a Recruitment Day workshop conducted by Forbes Consulting and Carmen Tubaro for 23 of our beneficiaries across all programmes. The group of young hopefuls benefited from an intensive three hour session which was aimed at arming them with the right tools and skills needed for this competitive job market. The training consisted of training and information about CV writing, interview skills, and where to search for jobs. The young people also had email accounts created and profile pictures taken.

HACT would like to congratulate these individuals for taking this critical step in their job hunting journey. We wish them the very best and look forward to hearing success stories of secured employment! The Nation Changers events continue over the next couple weeks with various social and supportive events in our Respite Unit.



Hillcrest AIDS Centre Trust
Registered Non-Profit Organisation 005-800

26 Old Main Road, Hillcrest, KwaZulu-Natal, 3610,
South Africa

Tel: +27 (0)31 765 5866 | Fax: +27 (0)31 765 8781
www.hillcrestaids.org.za
info@hillaids.org.za