

TEACH SOUTH AFRICA MAKES AN IMPACT

An exciting new initiative is inspiring children from disadvantaged backgrounds, who have an excellent opportunity to receive quality education in maths, science, technology and English by highly skilled and motivated recent university graduates known as TEACH Ambassadors.

In the words of one of the learners, "They are helping me to get the marks that I deserve."

TEACH South Africa (TEACH) is a highly selective programme that recruits young graduates, who demonstrate exceptional leadership qualities. The programme leverages the talent of recent tertiary graduates from all disciplines who can be applied as educators within rural and urban disadvantaged schools.

Selected graduates (TEACH Ambassadors) commit to a minimum of two years of service to the programme. Before their deployment to schools, graduates are provided with an intensive, accelerated course on teaching techniques. In addition to this initial training period, continuous support over the two years is provided in the form of mentorship, short courses in teaching techniques, leadership, business management as well as life skills. Graduates can also complete a comprehensive teaching course during the initial two years.

TEACH focuses specifically on the educational challenges in the areas of mathematics, science, technology and English. In order to improve in all learning areas, it is important to also enhance the standard of English teaching, the language in which the learners study and write their exams.

The purpose of TEACH is to improve the quality of education in economically disadvantaged communities. Its short-term purpose is to provide learners from previously disadvantaged rural and urban areas with teachers who will enable them to fulfil their potential through quality teaching.

This would be measured through improvements in learner performance.

"The long-term purpose is to build a force of leaders who understand the environment and have the commitment necessary to effect long-term, fundamental changes in education that will make South Africa a more successful and stronger nation," says Futhi Mtoba, Chairman of Deloitte and founder member of TEACH.

The initial rollout to schools in Gauteng started at the beginning of the 2009 academic year. 25 Ambassadors have begun working in 7 schools (2 primary schools and 5 high schools) in the Ekurhuleni South District. Then, in 2010, the programme will be extended to other regions in the country.

"Education changes life opportunities. Allowing our children to experience the quality discrepancies in their education today means perpetuating

those discrepancies in their economic standing for the rest of their lives,” continues Mtoba. “TEACH South Africa and our partners believe that educational disadvantage, and the further disadvantages that stem from it are solvable.”

According to the principals of the initial rollout schools, the TEACH Ambassadors have made a significant difference, they have brought a fresh excitement to learning and teaching. TEACH Ambassador Lerato Mokhatla a B.Com Economics graduate, says that she was employed as a management accountant and business relationships manager prior to joining TEACH.

“Since working in this programme, I have observed such a profound change in attitudes of learners towards life and their work that it has made me realise that teaching is my calling. The learners now have feelings of self-worth and hope when we encourage them and affirm their potential,” says Mokhatla.

Another TEACH Ambassador, Elby Kabamadondo a B.Sc Hons Psychology graduate, comments, “A facilitator and mentor were assigned to me and I receive ongoing support. The management and leadership skills I am gaining will be transferable to business should I decide to pursue a career in that direction at the end of my teaching stint.”

Carrying out this plan will not be easy and TEACH South Africa is, therefore, looking to partner with other organisations from both the private and public sectors, NGOs and academic institutions. To this end, a Gala Dinner will be held at the Sandton Convention Centre on Tuesday, 6th October 2009.

For corporate South Africa, the primary benefits of the TEACH programme are long-term sustainability; attracting and retaining intellectual capital; as well as fulfilling their Corporate Social Responsibility in South Africa. For the Ambassadors, it is an opportunity to develop their character, skills base and work experience. The motto of TEACH South Africa sums up the call well – “Our Future Needs You”.

Prospective partners in this exciting programme are requested to contact Bonnie Moore-Boyle at teachsa@dwcs.co.za, or call 011 804 1485 to book a table.

NOTES FOR EDITORS:

Teach South Africa is in the process of seeking partnerships within the private sector, NGOs, academic institutions and other organisations who are currently engaged in supporting schools in one way or the other. Our core model is based on teaming up with different organisations to have an impact in addressing the different challenges facing the schools. We believe that through teaming up with other players we will have the

fundamental impact that will change the landscape in the schools through improving learner performance.

- TEACH is supported by:
 - Deloitte South Africa
 - Barloworld
 - African Leadership Initiative
 - Various Private Sector Institutions, in a process of finalising agreements
 - Gauteng Provincial Government and the Gauteng Department of Education
 - University of Pretoria

Issued on behalf of TEACH

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