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RISING HOPE

In February, we introduced you to our new gap year for young women called Masiphakameni, which in English means "Let's rise". This programme holds as its basis the building of hope for the future. During this year, the programme has engaged eight young women who have lots of potential but a lack of opportunities, and we have worked to instil in them some of the life and personal development skills that their formal education in a neglected, deeply rural environment has not equipped them with; the things that their urban, more privileged counterparts at better schools may take for granted.

The programme covers a broad range of training and life skills, as well as new experiences and opportunities, intended to develop the confidence of participants, challenge the way they see the world and themselves, expose them to different career options, and generally prepare them to move on to further education, training or employment, or better equip them for life in the village.

The group recently undertook a visit to East London. They served at a local NGO, playing with the children at the preschool and sewing mattress covers, using their new sewing skills. They also partook in some professional teambuilding on the beach, led by a local company. But the main focus of the week was to expose the young women to different kinds of jobs.

They visited various businesses, all arranged by Destiny Church. Amongst others, the church arranged for our group to visit a dentist, a BnB, Mercedes, a radio station, a fleet solution business, an event planner, and the Industrial Development Zone. These visits really opened the eyes of the young women to what is out there. Furthermore, many of the business hosts were women from similar backgrounds to our group and they shared some of their own personal journeys that have



culminated in where they are today. This was incredibly inspiring and encouraging. We are very grateful to Destiny Church for the effort they put in to supporting our young women and providing them with incredible experiences.

GROWING EXPERIENCE

Siyabonga is 25-year-old and the eldest child in his family. He lives at home with his parents and siblings, who are all unemployed. For some time, Siyabonga has dreamt of getting a job that will not only help him contribute financially to his family, but that will also help him achieve his dreams. However, this dream is not easily achievable; approximately 98% of the population in our area are unemployed and employment opportunities are very scarce. In addition to these challenges, Siyabonga has a physical disability that affects one side of his body.

But the first step in Siyabonga's dream was achieved when he was given an apprenticeship position at nearby Hole in the Wall Hotel. Jabulani's apprenticeship programme, run through the Rural Ability Programme, is aimed at supporting people with disabilities to gain knowledge, skills and experience in a work environment as part of supporting and promoting inclusion in mainstream society. Prior to being placed in an apprenticeship position, any candidates are assessed by Occupational Therapists at Zithulele Hospital, to ensure that they are healthy enough and physically capable of undertaking the position being considered.

In this position, he works as a hotel gardener and groundsman. "Irrespective of the lack of use of one arm, Siyabonga is physically very strong and competes very well with his fellow colleagues", says one of the supervisors. This opportunity has provided an excellent opportunity for Siyabonga and his dream is that he can continue to work after his one year apprenticeship has finished.



AT A GLANCE

CONNECTING

In June, all the NGOs in Zithulele (there are now six!), hosted the Tribal and municipal leaders for our area to our first combined event. The purpose was to share with the local authorities, about the work of the different organisations. Each NGO presented a bit about why they are in Zithulele and what work they are doing here, and then there was time for an open discussion and some questions and answers. Then, because no event out here would be complete without food, we then shared lunch together. We hope to repeat this kind of event on a regular basis in order to improve communication, transparency and general relationships between all of us.



TEACHING EACH OTHER

Our physical places of work are as diverse as the programmes we run, and although we get together as a full Jabulani team on a monthly basis, our time together is short and in between, it is not rare that people may not cross paths with Jabulani staff outside of their own team. We've taken the opportunity at our monthly get-togethers to learn more about what each team does, by being taught by the team members themselves. So far, our Community Disability Workers have told us about what they do on our Rural Ability Programme, and our Pre-school teachers have explained how they invest in the lives and learning of the little ones in our community, including showing us some of the practical activities that children do at the school, which was thoroughly enjoyed by all.

