



The South African Institute for
Advancement

Media Statement by Inyathelo-The South African Institute for Advancement
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Cerebral Palsied Chaeli inspires learners

In a moving speech to learners, teachers, and parents at the recent Youth in Philanthropy Programme South Africa (YIPPSA) celebratory lunch, Chaeli Mycroft, a cerebral palsied, 15 year-old girl from Plumstead urged the 47 children on the programme to continue to change perceptions, assumptions and attitudes towards what children can do. The YIPPSA programme is the brainchild of Inyathelo-The South African Institute for Advancement and has been running since 2006.

Chaeli, together with her friends and family have, in a short space of time, raised enough money to help more than 400 disabled children in South Africa. And, through their fund-raising efforts, they are sure to give wheelchairs, support and training to many more.

Using an inspiring video, she showed the grade 10 and 11 learners on the programme from nine Cape Town schools including a few from previously disadvantaged areas how, just as they managed to raise funds in difficult circumstances, she too faced challenges and overcame them in order to help others.

The nine schools on the programme- Cape Town High School, Herzlia High , Langa High, Luhlaza High, Manenberg High , Milnerton High , Oude Molen High , St Andrews High and Zwaanswyk High School – raised over R40,000 in cash and R1,500 worth of goods in kind, all of which has been donated to the various community organisations with which they worked.

She made it clear in her presentation that the assumption that a person with cerebral palsy and generative neuropathy is unable to communicate or contribute to society, and especially to lead a philanthropic activity such as the Chaeli Campaign, was consigned to the realms of the unimaginative when she came along.

“We (children) are referred to as leaders of tomorrow, but we are leaders of today,” says Chaeli.

“We are making a difference. Not many people can say that at our ages they made as much of an impact on their communities as we have.

“Unlike adults who see possibilities but these possibilities are in a box with limits and they can only work within those limits, children see possibilities but there’s no box – we can do anything!”

“We have the ability to not just change one person’s life; but to change an entire family’s world,”

Chaeli challenged the children to continue empowering and inspiring others to do more.

The funds raised this year by the learners are used as the benchmark for the next year, with learners being challenged to equal or better this figure in 2010.

The annual event, hosted by YIPPSA, recognises the sterling efforts of schools and their learners who, through the course of the year, worked with needy organisations in their respective communities. The learners developed a strategy on how best to help the organisation with which they were working, set a fundraising target and set out to meet it. Today's function celebrated their success in contributing to the financial needs of the social service project which they selected.

Since then it has grown in size and impact. It began with three schools from historically disadvantaged communities to the nine today.

It has been faithful in its objective of building a culture of giving and service among high school learners and equipping them with the knowledge and skills to deal with topical social issues.

The YIPPSA programme is based on an intensive schools-based model that requires learners to form a YIPPSA social committee (YSC), which then takes responsibility for attending the programme workshops, identifying their beneficiary organisations, and conducting events and activities to raise funds for the identified beneficiary. The model relies on the active participation and support of school principals and teachers. Inyathelo provides support, training and resources to the schools involved.

For more information on the YIPPSA programme or to find out how to obtain the Youth in Philanthropy Action Guide, please contact Inyathelo-The South African Institute for Advancement on 021 465 6981 or go to www.inyathelo.co.za.

For more information on the Chaeli Campaign, please go to www.chaelicampaign.co.za.