Dear Friends of Lalela,

The past few months have been action-packed for Lalela and our students, celebrating many key events and engaging in exciting group activities. From Youth Day to Career week and the July holiday programme; to a wonderful Women’s Day Tea with our Female empowerment group, culminating on the 18th of July with Lalela celebrating Mandela Day in each of our centres around South Africa. As always, we thank you for your ongoing support of what we do!

Warmest regards and appreciation,
CAT RIEPER, LALELA COO

NYC Fundraiser

Lalela held our Annual Fundraiser in New York in May this year. With the aid of much appreciated sponsorship, we were able to send over Lalela Facilitator, Tony Mhayi and Lalela learners, Pozisa Nqenqa & Simphiwe Bendle to attend the gala dinner. “New York was a life changing experience for me and I am forever grateful to Lalela. Being part of the project, has opened many doors for me and my peers around me. At the fundraising dinner, I had the privilege of seeing Wyclef Jean perform live. Never once did I think I would ever get to meet him, and it made me realise that in life anything is possible.”

SIMPHIWE BENDLE, GRADE 12

Wyclef Jean provided great entertainment for the evening.

Artists who inspire

Zanele Muholi recently gave an inspirational presentation to the Lalela learners at Silikamva High School about being proud of who you are and having goals. Zanele is a South African photographer and artist who tries to bring light to the importance & struggle of black lesbian women in South Africa. Through her art, she hopes to document the journey of the African queer community as a record for future generations.

Right: CEO and Lalela founder, Andrea Kerner with Lalela learners, Pozisa Nqenqa, Simphiwe Bendle and Facilitator Tony Mhayi at our New York fundraiser.

Above Right: Zanele Muholi with Silikamva Lalela learners, Violet & Lusizo (featured above with new partners: Keep a Child Alive & Zoe Life)
This Mandela Day, our Lalela team and learners around the country united to pay tribute to Madiba by beautifying schools and areas in our communities, on what would have been his 98th birthday.

"There can be no greater gift than that of giving of one’s time and energy to help others without expecting anything in return". NELSON MANDELA

We also partnered with Relate Bracelets for their #my67beads campaign. Bead packs were available for free nationwide, with South Africans being called on to thread 67 beads at Bead & Go stations. A group of elderly members from the community (affectionately referred to as “gogo’s “ which means grandmother) were joined by our Lalela learners to create a beaded mural in honour of Nelson Mandela using these individual threads. The mural is now a permanent fixture at the V&A Waterfront in Cape Town. It was a special moment for our Lalela learners to work side by side with respected elders from other communities.

"The #67beads was really great! I loved spending time with the gogos and learnt a lot about joining all kinds of people together to make us equal. The #my67 beads was an amazing project.” RYAN LOTS, GRADE 9

As part of the beautification project, our Lalela Maboneng team & learners created a Mandela Mural at Metro College in Johannesburg:

“I was not sure what they were making us do in the beginning, and now Mr. Mandela is smiling at me everyday when I come to school. And I like looking at him.” TERRY SINGO, GRADE 4

Lalela COO, Cat Rieper, is joined by Princess Nandi Zulu of Zululand as she adds colour to the Mandela Day Mural at the Blue Roof Centre in Wentworth, Durban.

“We joined Afrika Tikkun in Mfuleni to transform the walls with inspirational art and colour in honour of Mandela Day.” TONY MHAYI, LALELA FACILITATOR
This year our July holiday programme theme was ‘I am the Star of my Life’. Focusing on our learners being the captains of their own lives and being in control of their own destinies. Lalela Curriculum head, Firdous Hendricks said: “Our curriculum was designed around our learners and them telling their stories. We aimed to reinforce confidence and self-belief through the activities and of course, make sure great fun was had by all.”

The July holiday programme also saw the launch of the relationship between Lalela & Keep a Child Alive & Zoe Life at the Blue Roof Centre in Wentworth, Durban. Lalela Facilitator Lance, (featured above right) shared his experience: “We had just moved in and this was our very first Lalela holiday programme at the Blue Roof Centre. We started with 10 learners on day one and by the end of the week we had 100 learners join us.”

“July holiday programme with “I am the star of my life” as our theme helped us as Lalela youth to stay out of the streets and have something to do during the holidays such as drama, drawing, painting and singing in the Lalela choir. If you are not a Lalela member, then you are missing out on big things.” YOLANDA GQETYWA, GRADE 12

“...Maboneng Lalela learners were taken to the Johannesburg Zoo to draw inspiration from the super powers of the animals & then had to do sketches of each animal in order to create their own superheros and supervillains.

Alex, Lalela Volunteer

“A letter from a Lalela volunteer...

“It has been just a few days after my return to New York and I already miss my involvement with such a special organization and especially the social and educational benefits that I derived from sharing close to 3 weeks with such a driven, compassionate, and selfless group of people. I want to thank each one of you for making my experience so meaningful and memorable. My initial nerves felt upon meeting the kids on that first Monday were immediately wiped away when I saw them embrace the fun-loving and nurturing Lalela environment during the morning games. Each of the students were exceptional in so many ways, despite the daily challenges confronting so many of these children and their love and appreciation for Lalela was evident throughout the duration of the holiday program.I feel so proud to have taken part in a program that clearly makes an impact on each of its students.”

Alex, Lalela Volunteer
Youth Day, 16 June

This year marked the 40th anniversary of Youth Day in South Africa. So in celebration, our Lalela Leadership learners hosted a Youth day “TEDx style” event at Hout Bay High School, where a few of our learners addressed the question: “What does it mean to be a youth in South Africa today?” We also invited 3 well-known inspirational speakers to address the same question. They were:

Local actor, one-man comedian, MC, motivational speaker Sivuyile Ngesi – from the township Gugulethu, in Cape Town.
Female Artist Tony Gum (right) – named by Vogue as the “coolest girl in Cape Town”, she is an artist in learning, a Storyteller in grooming and a Filmmaker in training.
Entrepreneur Sizwe Nzima - After spending many hours in queues waiting to get his sickly grandfather’s medication, he started his company, iyeza Express, which now delivers medication to the community.

Career Week

saw the kickstart of our Year 13 Programme with a career expo hosted by the One&Only Cape Town Hotel. Amongst the 21 tertiary institutions exhibiting on the day, were the HCI Foundation, and University of Cape Town Humanities, who presented valuable information to the learners regarding the process of enrolment at university, and obtaining bursaries.

Women’s Day Tea

On the 9th of August, our Female Empowerment girls hosted a Women’s Day Tea for the most important female role models in their lives. A chance for them to show love and appreciation to all of these special women. Lalela invited three inspirational speakers to join us on the day: Casey B Dolan, actress, singer, tv presenter, model, disc jockey, and entrepreneur.(featured above with the Lalela girls)
Ann Nurock, Advertising expert, writer & business consultant.
Nwabisa Mayema, female entrepreneur and Executive Director of ‘nnfinity’.
Entertainment was kindly offered by the talented musician, writer and photographer, Fiona Hare.

Female Empowerment Learner, KEYSHA, GRADE 8, says:
“I invited my sister Roxy, who is a teacher at a crèche. She is the most important person in my life and my role model because she is always there for me no matter what. It was very special to share the day with her.”