





Mission

The mission of ArtWorks for Youth is to provide free visual art instruction, academic support, and mentoring to students in Port Elizabeth, South Africa. We support all forms of education, especially the transformative power of creativity.

History

While ArtWorks for Youth's mission has remained the same since being founded in 2000, we have added some programming in order to further support more needs of our students.

In 2002, a Middle School where ArtWorks for Youth had after school classes established a relationship with a school in Port Elizabeth, South Africa. Through another non-profit organization, a cultural exchange took place between the American and South African schools.

ArtWorks for Youth was asked to assist in designing art projects that would enable the two groups of students to get to know one another prior to meeting in person. As a result of the exchange, ArtWorks for Youth shifted all programming to South Africa beginning spring 2003.

ArtWorks for Youth began traveling to South Africa three times annually for periods of two to six weeks at a time, teaching art instruction during and after school and working with teachers to expand their curriculum to include visual arts projects. In 2009, ArtWorks for Youth began running year-round art classes at two primary schools in Port Elizabeth during school and after school hours.

Volunteers

Since 2005, ArtWorks for Youth has been accepting student and adult volunteers who travel from the US to Port Elizabeth each spring and summer. Volunteers are with ArtWorks for Youth for periods of one to six weeks. Volunteer trips are fashioned around the passions, experiences, and interests of the volunteers.

While present, volunteers teach art, math, photography reading, creative writing, health, crafts, run girl and boy groups, play sports, and paint murals.

To date, over 400 volunteers have travelled to South Africa with ArtWorks for Youth

Program Components

Art Instruction/Expression

ArtWorks for Youth uses art instruction as a way for students to reflect on who they are, the people around them, and how they fit into this world. While teaching the basic elements of art, (line, color, space, design, value, shape, and texture,) we also encourage our students to use various media as a means of expression. Many of ArtWorks for Youth's art projects include portraiture, self-portraiture, body and brain mapping, as well as theme, tone, and emotion and how to show them in their artwork

Our biannual procession is an example of how we use art as a form of self-expression. Approximately sixty students are asked to come up with a theme related to something they either want to celebrate or something about which they are unhappy..



Once a theme is chosen, students are challenged to express their concerns via visual images and performance. We make large-scale puppets, masks, and other props through which they can express their joy or unhappiness. Since ArtWorks for Youth began, its students have expressed themselves around various issues in their own lives. When preparing for a procession, students work together around a common concern and work on ways in which to best express themselves as a group.

Sister's Keeper

The Girls Group was initially formed in order to support our most vulnerable students. The statistics involving the rape and abuse of girls and women in the Eastern Cape are staggering. We have several students who have been abused, and a few who are HIV+ as a result; we wanted to give these young women a forum to discuss these and the other issues they face as women in Port Elizabeth.

Academic Support

Academic Support is the ArtWorks for Youth program that has grown the most. The graduation rate in the Eastern Cape is near 70%, though approximately 55% in the areas where our students attend school. This rate is actually close to that of the NYC public school graduation rate, but there is another issue at play here in South Africa. Students in grades ten and eleven are encouraged to leave school if it is assumed they are not going to graduate in 12th grade.

There are currently three separate Academic Support classes at ArtWorks for Youth. Our Literacy Program for students in grades 2 – 5 includes just over twenty students. We have a program for twenty students in grades 7-10 who struggle with writing and reading in English. Finally, we have an advanced class of twenty-five students from grades 7-11. Our two older student groups are with us for up to four hours each day after school. We provide lessons in reading, writing, math, and Xhosa (their home language.) Students are



expected to read two books a month from our library, as well as to write one essay a week. While the standards of the South African curriculum are actually quite high, the schools our students attend do not follow the guidelines and they expect very little from students in the way of daily reading and writing.

Library

Not one of the schools our students attend has a lending library. The closest public libraries in the areas where our students reside are nearly an hour walk and obtaining a library card is very difficult. Further, while high school students in Port Elizabeth have short story reading within the curriculum, few schools read novels until grade eleven or twelve. We began a library a year ago and have about 1,500 books for students in grades K – 12

Book collection is a year-round endeavor. Many books in South Africa are imported and all books are given a “luxury tax.” Because books are so expensive, we ask American volunteers to transport books to us when they volunteer with ArtWorks for Youth.

Feeding Program

ArtWorks for Youth provides a warm meal for students in all programs. Aside from this late-day meal, we provide breakfast and lunch for our students most in need and run an emergency program that puts emergency food in many homes. Because all of our students are lacking with appropriate food and nutrition, we spend a large portion of our budget is reserved for feeding our students.

(See our separate brochure on our feeding program that is taking place during lockdown.)

Collaborations

The pARTners Project

We paired students aged 10 -19 with artists from PE as well as visiting artists from New York City over July and August of this year. The pARTners met to learn from one another and the pairs collaborated on works that we exhibited and auctioned off at GFI Gallery in Port Elizabeth

While this was initially a plan to raise funds, the relationships that were formed became the greatest part of the project. It meant so much to our students to have one-on-one time with artists. Many of the students worked with media they had no previous experience with (clay, collage, textiles, embroidery, metal, glass, painting, and photography,) and all learned different methods with some art forms they had previous knowledge of through our program.

We have plans to run The pARTners project annually and are investigating ways in which to expand the program to involve artists from other parts of South Africa as well as other parts of the world.



Screenplay Program

In 2018, our students begin writing screenplays. AWFY students are asked to do very little writing. In effort to have students write more, and in a way that is more effective and exciting than a weekly essay assignment.

Students first sat in groups and identified the larger issues faced by them and members of their communities. We were not thinking, initially, that the screenplays would be made into films but we had an opportunity through a group of volunteers from the Latin School of Chicago.

Sela (drink) was the first film to be made. It is a 26-minute film that has thus far been accepted into 45 film festivals around the world. *Sela* tells the story of young boy who takes on the burden of his family due to the heavy drinking of his mother. *Sela* was written by three students aged 12-15.

Sela can be viewed at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0h27Lcp9O_Y

It is our hope that Sela will be the first of many films, as the making of the film has so lifted our students, who are incredibly pleased that people are interested in their stories. It has also given the Joe Slovo community pride in those involved with the filming and production of the film.



The writers of Sela: Iphelele Baxana, Ibanathi Buga and Lulama Duda



Siyakha - Our Own Site

AWFY ran programming out of Joe Slovo Primary School in Joe Slovo Township but was expelled from the school due to a protest we held at the local Department of Education in . We are now at our second site after leaving Joe Slovo Township and sharing space with Silindokuhle creche in the Nkandla section of Joe Slovo Township.

About a quarter of Joe Slovo Township is owned by the people and the Joe Slovo Communal Property Association has granted us land and are raising funds to build our own site. We have raised approximately a third of the required thus far.

The temporary facilities are great in that we are able to once again run weeklong programming, but less than ideal in terms of security. We are unable to keep anything of any value (including pencils and drawing paper,) on site, and are currently mobile. We have to take everything back to storage each day we run programming. This also prevents us from using our library, which is home to about 1,500 books that we lend to our students and some of their parents.

ArtWorks for Youth has employed Hardman Architects to design a facility to meet our needs. There are three phases to the building project and our hope is to carry out all three phases by 2021.

Phase I:

Phase one of the Siyakha (isiXhosa for “We are Building!” is meant to make up for the space we had access to at Joe Solve School, or our space needs to carry out and continue our current work. The 220 square meter facility will include:

- One large classroom
- Two small classrooms
- Conversation pit
- Vegetable garden

The Eastern Cape tops other provinces in terms of food scarcity (Steenkamp et al.; 2018.) Section 27 of the South African Constitution not only grants the right to sufficient food and water, it goes on to say that “The state must take reasonable legislative and other measures, within its available resources, to achieve the progressive realization of each of these rights.”

One way in which the state takes measures to feed its citizens is via feeding programs within schools. Because of the inaccuracy of records regarding enrollment as well as the queueing of teachers in food lines, the reliance of school governing bodies to manage funding for school feeding programs, the per student rations are quite low and a full meal is not provided to all students.

As in many parts of the world where food is scarce, the issue in South Africa is access, not actual food supply (Fakuda-Parr, & Taylor; 2015.)

AWFY's vegetable garden will supplement our feeding program. Students will be responsible for planning and harvesting, as well as preparing the food for the woman who cook breakfast and lunch.

Kitchen

The majority of AWFY students:

- * Do not eat breakfast.
- * Rely on school feeding programs for lunch.
- * Eat rice or another starch for supper.
- * Live in food-insecure households.

The AWFY kitchen will serve breakfast to neighborhood students and lunch to all AWFY after school students on a daily basis.

Library

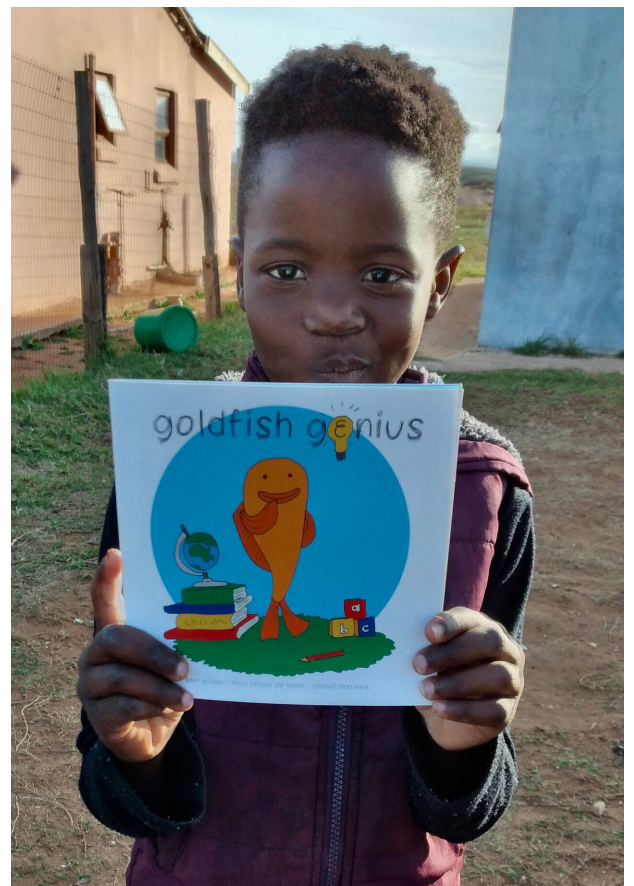
While twelve libraries that recently closed in the Eastern Cape (Pijoos; 2019,) were not located in Port Elizabeth, the few libraries here face the same funding challenges as those that closed and are constantly in danger of the same fate.

Not one of the schools our students attend has a lending library. The closest public libraries in the areas where our students reside are nearly an hour walk and obtaining a library card is very difficult. Further, while high school students in Port Elizabeth have short story reading within the curriculum, few schools read novels until grade eleven or twelve. We began a library two years ago and have about 1,500 books for students in grades K – 12.

There are only a handful of AWFY students who own books, and those are provided by our academic support program. There are very few publishing houses in South Africa, and they are quite small. The majority of books sold in bookstores in South Africa are imported and quite expensive. In addition to the import tax placed on books, South Africa also imposes a luxury tax. These taxes together mean a 100% or more mark up on books sold in South Africa. The exorbitant cost of books makes them inaccessible to AWFY students. The AWFY library is our students' single point of access to texts.

Medical Facility

AWFY students only see a doctor when they are in pain or in an emergency situation. When finally present at a dentist's office, it is usually too late to save a tooth. Not a single of my students has the luxury of a medical checkup. Our students have no access to any type of medical care beyond the emergency room of a public hospital or a mediocre clinic.





Phase II:
Large Hall

Phase III
A four-classroom School

A complete budget for phases one and two is attached here, along with a site plan for all three phases.

While some building decisions are based on wind patterns, many components of the plan herein are flexible and were meant as a point to begin a discussion. Further, this is a mere concept and does not include planned green components including rain water recycling and solar and wind power.)

It is our hope to build Phase I and II simultaneously, as the hall is a crucial component regarding our relationship with the community. We would like for the hall to be used for functions by the immediate community that we deem appropriate for the space. If the community feels connected to the structure, they will also feel ownership for the space.



While South Africa boasts a 74% matric rate, the rate counts only those 12th grade students who sat and wrote the year-end matriculation exams. If one were to look at the 2018 graduation class as first graders, they would find twice the number of students. While the Democratic Alliance, South Africa's second leading political party, claims that the actual pass rate is 37.6% when factoring in the drop outs, (Ngqakamba; 2019,) it is lower still in township schools.

ArtWorks for Youth Executive Director, John V. Lombardo, is currently in a Doctorol in Education program, as we hope to open a school in Port Elizabeth by January, 2022. To avoid being part of a tremendously flawed public education system, the school will be independent and include grades 4 - 7. Our idea is that the school will become a feeder to better academic options for students in Joe Slovo Township. There are some excellent private schools in PE, as well as some private schools with higher school fees that protect them some from the ills of the Department of Education. Our students do not, at this point, have a strong enough knowledge base from their schools that would enable them to be admitted to these schools.

The school will have a sliding scale tuition and will operate as a cooperative. Parents who are unable to pay the nominal fee will have a range of opportunities to help with tasks involved in running and maintaining the school.

The (yet-to-be-named) school connected to AWFY will have empathy as a key component of its ethos. The lack of overall teaching in South Africa coupled with the lack of positive interaction of any kind between teachers and students at all levels of education results in almost no empathy education of students and adds to an already chaotic school community.

Aside from our plans to run a full school, we are in partnership with Valentre Institute, a new online school based in Cape Town. We registered three students at the school in January 2020 and they are doing remarkably well. They are proof that students will rise to the level of expectations that teachers have for them. (They recently received their first term reports and did remarkably well, passing every course and receiving grades above 75% in most subjects.)

While Valentre is a private school consisting mostly of students white and privileged, they have a hybrid program at a school in Mitchell's Plain, Cape Town. They received funding for 30 students to receive online courses within their school as well as a mentor who sees them through the work and counsels them with necessary. Valentre has already raised R 1 million to create another satellite of their program in Joe Slovo Township with our students beginning in January of 2021. They plan to raise the remainder of the funds necessary to support us in our building site.

Architectural Rendering - Phases 1-3

