



THE BEAT

DECEMBER 2022

Gumboots

www.gumboots.org.za



Alexandra Township, in line with the rest of South Africa, has thankfully settled down from the scourge of the years of Covid. But in its wake the community has been left with increased unemployment, hunger and crime; there has been an increase in the number of immigrants, informal dwellings and shacks; and there is a general feeling of despair. Load shedding adds to the challenges of daily life in Alex.

Gumboots is grateful for the continued support and generous donations without which we would not be able to make a difference to the community we support. For any information please call Jenny Prangley 082 928 8806 or go to www.gumboots.org.za.



Phetoho Education

It is thanks to all the Gumboots donors and supporters that the following students have been able to further their studies, both secondary and tertiary:

Fifi Moyo – has completed 3rd year in his study towards his BSc Electrical Engineering degree and has been admitted into his 4th and final year in 2023 at Wits University.

Matebogo Nxumalo – has completed her 2nd year teaching studies at Unisa while at the same time continuing her student internship at Sacred Heart College.

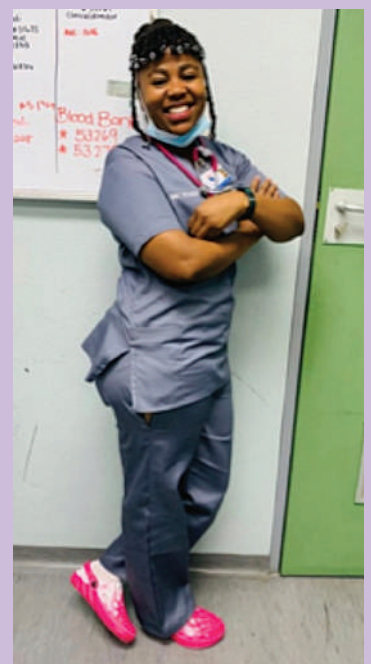
Thatohatsi Makgotla – is studying at Unisa towards a BA in Administration and Human Resource Settlement Management. She has also been assisting with administration and training at the Kidlinks Small Farm Incubator in the Eastern Cape.

Nomsa Mugwai – has a higher certificate in emergency care and is busy studying for her diploma at Steve Biko Hospital, Pretoria.



Thato in the Eastern Cape

United Church School – three learners at UCS are continuing their studies successfully: Mbali Moleko, Lindokuhle Khumalo and Alwabo Dwele.



Nomsa at work!



Leratong Pre-school

WHAT'S UP AT LERATONG?

Dimakatso Aphane, the senior teacher, continues to provide a vital, loving and supportive environment while educating the young children. The five Leratong teachers provide them with a secure and constant base, giving them the building blocks necessary for growth and development, with many of them coming from dysfunctional homes and dire circumstances.

Dimakatso spoke of her continued efforts to *"try my level best to give the children a good education; to encourage parents to be involved and to come to meetings to share their ideas; and to create a good working relationship all round"*.

She spoke of the challenges in the broader education system where the government has recently opened the Alex schools to Grade 0 and 00 pupils. This means that the parents who struggle financially are choosing to send their kids to those (free) schools, instead of the more nurturing environment of Leratong, which provides two meals a day and an aftercare system. Consequently the kids are now roaming the streets in the afternoons and there are many reports of them being hit by cars and involved in misdemeanors.



Restorative after-lunch naps

The school is in need of more blankets for the rest periods and games, particularly puzzles, for 3-6 year olds.



Donated library area



LETATONG'S PRINCIPAL

Peggy Chauke has continued to improve and is fortunately now to be in a much better state of health. She has a full-time carer, Flora, and continues to be the backbone to Leratong pre-school and the children residing in the Kadey Home.

Peggy with Flora, Moss Kadey and Gumboots trustees



Ratang Bana Child Support



Ingrid receiving the Gauteng Community Builder Award for 2022

IMPRESSIVE GROWTH

Towards the end of Covid, Ratang Bana began expanding its space to accommodate 74 staff members who now help to support the **4 400 children** under their umbrella – this number includes 500 children who are vulnerable and live within child-headed households. All of this is enabled through Gumboots and other donors, but funding is always a desperate need.

Against great odds, Ingrid Moloi manages this enormous task with dedication, impressive organisational skills and great positivity. *“As long as the human race exists, children must not be called orphans. We need to make sure that they are treated normally and receive all the basic needs, in the same way as children who have parents.”*

WHAT IS PROVIDED?

A hot midday meal for many children; school uniforms when necessary; some transport; HIV support; social services follow-up; a safe play area; and prolific vegetables gardens.



Pap and chicken feet are one of the staple diets along with daily homegrown produce

THE SAFE HOUSE

Presently there are six vulnerable children housed in the Safe Home, situated in the heart of Alex. There is limited capacity but the doors have to too often be opened to children in desperate situations. One young girl, Philisiwe, who recently arrived, was saved from the abuse of her extended family.

Funding in needed to enable them to buy a property and avoid the high cost of renting.

(L-R) Philisiwe, Precious & Thandi after a school concert





Sigiya Sonke Dance Group

CHAMPIONS!

The South African youth dance championships were recently held in Johannesburg with two of our dance groups selected to go through to the finals ... the Pantsula dancers received **first prize** and the Traditional dancers were **runners-up!** Well done Jack Letsoela and the champion teams!



Pre-action



Far left:
Beauty and
the traditional
dancers

Left: Daily
rehearsals



The Dance Centre and surrounds

THE NEW DANCE CENTRE

The children have settled into their wonderful new premises of the "Phase 1 Sakhimfundo Youth Programme". It has been designed with great inspiration so that while Phase 2 (the Learning Centre) is under construction, the dance area doubles up for after-school education in three adjacent containers.

When study time is over, the centre becomes the vibrant, thrumming, dancing hive of activity for which it was conceived. The children are receiving a stable balance of mental stimulation, physical activity, healthy meals and emotional support... all in beautiful surroundings of lawns, trees and vegetable gardens.

All of this is thanks to the Kadey Family Charity, Gumboots and Kidlinks World.





Sakhimfundo Youth Programme

It's BEGUN!

The concept of a modern, lightweight, steel construction is impressively becoming a reality for the Phase 2 Learning Centre. It has taken years of thought, planning and design to reach this stage and we are grateful to the Kadey Family Charitable Corp for funding this project. The launch is planned for April '23 when there will be a fully functional centre catering for up to 150 learners and providing classrooms, leisure areas, toilets and kitchen, opening out onto lawns and landscaped gardens ... a centre that the community can be proud of!



The dance area converted into a classroom

CURRENT LEARNING AREAS

Over 60 children are currently being tutored in the adjacent dance centre until such time as they can move across. At 3pm each afternoon they arrive for a hot cooked meal, followed by coaching in English and Maths and support with their homework from five tutors. The centre then becomes a quiet, disciplined and safe space, enabling them to uplift their academic achievements.

The Reading-Eggs online programme



changing lives





Newslinks Abroad

US Kidlinks



Kidlinks assists and provides funding for an exchange programme between our projects in Alex and the Kidlinks Small Farm Incubator (KSFI) in the Eastern Cape. This supports our joint regenerative agriculture and food security initiatives. Working with Gumboots youth, KSFI offers them a respite from life in Alex by enabling them to experience life on a working farm. Earlier this year, members of

the KSFI team designed and installed the vegetable gardens in Alex for the Sakhimfundo project. For the launch of KFSI in December, dancers from the Sigiya Sonke project and their facilitators will be travelling down to the Eastern Cape for this youth convening event to learn hands-on about organic vegetable gardening.

UK Gumboots

It's that busy time of year again preparing for the annual Christmas craft fair on 20 November and the Big Give online fundraiser on 29 November to midday 6 December. If you're in the UK and close by, visit the Craft Fair or give your support for the Big Give Christmas Challenge where your donations will be matched.

This year fundraising is to send a group of young people from Alex to spend time on the Kidlinks Small Farm Incubator (KSFI) in the Eastern Cape. They will learn about growing their own organic vegetables and experience life on a farm away from the pressures of urban life. On a return trip, the KSFI students will visit Alex to further develop the vegetable garden at the Sakhimfundo centre.

Homemade items to be displayed at the Craft Fair



Thandi in traditional outfit

THE CAITLIN FUND

The Moleko sisters, Mbali and Thandi, continue to live in the Safe House in Alex supported by Ingrid at Ratang Bana. Thandi attends an Alex school where she enjoys traditional dancing; Mbali goes to the United Church School and is doing well, receiving an award for being part of the SRC this year. The Caitlin Fund will continue to support both girls while funds last.