

Slick

DECEMBER 2004



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The Team

IN BRIEF

Managing director, Paula Wallace, shares her thoughts regarding the fourth and final quarter.

Although I run the risk of sounding clichéd, I must say I can't believe we're at the end of another year! This has certainly been a very busy and dynamic year within the life of OIL. OIL has come to the end of its third year of operation. To remain motivated, passionate and optimistic in the midst of so many unanswered questions, uncertainties and challenges that come with pioneering something, is certainly not easy. The fact that OIL has "survived" amidst the challenges of the past few years is incredible. This is, without a doubt, due to the vision, passion, dedication and commitment of its people – OIL staff, volunteers and, of course, the teenagers. There have been times when we have wondered whether all the blood, sweat and tears are really worth it. In the "people-business", immediate results and quick fixes are unrealistic and highly unlikely – the reality is, behaviour change takes time. At OIL we believe strongly that the key to community transformation begins with the individual – so a deep and real investment into the lives of each young person with whom we work is imperative – there are no short cuts. The team at OIL has been incredible - they have worked tirelessly, remaining committed, steadfast and motivated in the midst of many obstacles and much uncertainty. But the dream set before them has remained clear – to see a generation of Africans uplifting their communities and imparting vision and purpose to others to do the same. This is the vision that's been the thing that gets us out of bed in the morning when things have been hard! A significant aspect of the year was having our first Track Four Peer educators – four teenagers who matriculated in 2003 and who completed the OIL peer education programme at their respective schools. They committed themselves for a year to volunteering at the OIL on a full-time basis. They fulfilled the roles of co-facilitators; co-ordinated and administered OIL events like the Lube Lounge and camps; were called upon a number of times for PR opportunities such as radio interviews, television interviews and talks within the community; presented at Lube Lounge; and contributed and made recommendations to the Peer Education curriculum, ensuring it remains relevant to the teenagers. It has been a privilege having them on the team and we will feel the gap in a big way next year when they will be pursuing their studies. A huge 'thank you' to all of them (as well as to the OIL staff) for their dedication, perseverance and commitment to OIL's vision.

Looking ahead, we feel excited and encouraged for what 2005 holds and are confident that based on the foundation that has been laid this year, next

year will be even more successful than this past one! Have a wonderful festive season and a blessed New Year.

Paula.

FRONTLINES

OIL school's liaisons tell us about the activities of the very busy fourth quarter:

SIMON'S TOWN

We have come to the end of a successful year of delivery at Simon's Town High. The year has been filled with challenges as well as amazing achievements. With the highest attendance rate of all the schools, the Simon's Town peer educators have been some of the most committed pupils in our programme. They have exceeded expectations by performing over and above their required performance standards and giving all their energy towards this programme. Some peer educator's have participated in the shooting of a video for GOLD, a programme for the roll out of peer education across the Western Cape, which shows their commitment to seeing the vision and purpose of OIL spreading through Africa. For the Simon's Town team it has been a privilege to be part of this process, especially seeing the growth in several peer educators. The last term was very short due to exams, but the peer educators still showed outstanding commitment to the programme. We are looking forward to yet another successful year at Simon's Town High!

Shan Prinsloo

FISH HOEK SENIOR HIGH

The fourth term is always the busiest at Fish Hoek Senior High. With the year's final exams nearly written, everyone who is in contact with them is trying to wrap up the year's activities. For OIL this has meant saying goodbye to the Matrics who have finished their final exams and preparing the Grade 10's and 11's for their next year as OIL peer educators. We had a great year at Fish Hoek Senior. We've seen the peer educators grow in their roles. In Track 1 we have strong leaders who are very open with their ideas and thoughts. It has been great to hear how they want to get more practically involved in their communities and local organisations. The Track 2's have been extremely busy, with their school demands increasing as the year went on. Nonetheless, we have had a small group of highly committed peer educators who have grown into strong leaders with dreams and visions not only for themselves, but their community too. A big 'thank you' to the FHSB parents and school staff for your help and support over the past year. We greatly appreciate it!

Michelle Fitzpatrick

MASIPHUMELELE HIGH

During the September holidays all peer educators from Grade 10 to 12 had a day to interact together as a team and build their team skills. This day was also a time where they could enjoy being teenagers and leave their issues at home. One of the Grade 10 teenagers, reporting on the day, said: "I am grateful for OIL as you allow us to be children and say things freely. At home I cannot do that."

At our end-of-year meeting with the headmaster, Mrs Radebe encouraged us to continue doing what we are doing, saying that she could see changes in a lot of the teenagers that are peer educators especially in the academic work but also in general behaviour. We would like to say thank you to the peer educators, Mrs Radebe, Zukiswa (the school secretary; for running around when we need things organised) and Mr Tyali for allowing us to use his room for counselling. A very special "thank you" to Mr Kawambi, the manager of the CWD Siyakhulisa Centre, for allowing OIL to use the hall for skills training.

Siphokazi Mangxa



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OCEANVIEW HIGH

This has been an amazing year for the peer educators in Ocean View. We are proud to say that the passion and commitment that peer educators have for their community was shown by their eager participation and willingness to do more than what was needed on public holidays, such as Youth day and Heritage day. Turning out in full force at the local multipurpose hall, they would arrive enthusiastic and often stay for much longer than was needed. The Track 2's, in particular, have shown why they are considered to be leaders and we have watched the Track 1's begin to blossom into community leaders who are not afraid to share their opinions or to get their hands dirty.

This year, we have witnessed peer education happen in its truest form, as peer educators shared information to multitudes of teenagers and children in the form of skits or through music. Ricardo Hierdien deserves special acknowledgement for his contribution on these days, for his soulful compositions and performances. All in all, 2004 has been amazing and it only promises to get even better!

Lynette Martin

PROFILE

Each issue, we randomly choose an OIL peer educator to be profiled. This quarter we interviewed Passy Bashala, recently matriculated from Fish Hoek Senior High. Passy was an OIL peer educator for 2 years, and during this time, juggled being on the SRC, playing 1st team rugby and learning an eighth subject.

What are your plans now that you've matriculated?
I'll be studying a BCom at UCT next year. I'm originally from DRC and I've been in Cape Town for 11 years. Once I've completed my BCom I'd like to go back to Congo and help build my country towards becoming a more stable place.

So you're going to be the next president of DRC?
Hmmm, we'll see! [We think so!]

What would you like to say to young people?
I would say: "educate yourself". It will give you a platform. Without an education you won't know where to go, what to do or what to think.

Any last words?
Learn well from the past so that you can live a better today and prepare for a better tomorrow.

A LETTER FROM THE LEARNERSHIP

After a year of serving OIL, our four "learnership" peer educators have the final word.

The end of last year meant the end of Matric, of carefree days and exams, but it also meant the beginning of a whole new journey – one into the real world. The four of us, all former peer educators, started our journey on the 13th January 2004 not knowing what to expect. The year started off at an extremely hectic pace with three orientation camps and our first Lube Lounge as the task team.

As learnership we have been exposed to all the areas in the organisation, Bradley was even 'promoted' to events co-ordinator. We have gained so much insight into the working world in this past year: how many teenagers can say they have experience in media, marketing and even the basics of psychology?

OIL saw in us talents we never knew we had. They took what was a whole bunch of ideas and talents and focused them, harnessing them into something that could ultimately make a difference.



Learnership

Yes, there were ups and downs, but through everything that has happened we can walk away knowing that OIL made a difference in us and we made a difference in others.

People constantly ask: "Why? Why is what OIL does so effective? Why do they make such a difference in the lives that go through OIL?" The answer is simple: They go beyond teaching, they go beyond structure – they connect. That connection is what made this year worthwhile.

FUNDRAISING

OIL has hosted three open days for potential overseas funders. This allowed them to examine OIL and get a better understanding of the work we do. Everyone who spoke to our OIL peer educators was touched by their enthusiasm and the hope they hold for their futures. You can help us continue with our work by making donations to the following account (Your donations would be greatly appreciated!):

Account : OIL Reach Out Bank : Standard Bank
Branch : Rondebosch Branch code : 02 5009
Account number : 071477551

HELP!

Interested in how you can help OIL? Here are 5 simple ways you can give us a hand.

1. **Get involved.** Volunteer to assist at a Lube Lounge or community event. We hold two events every quarter and are always looking for people that are willing to give us a few hours of their time to help in various ways.
2. **Talk about us.** stay informed but subscribing to the email newsletter (newsletter subscribe) and reading our monthly article in Full Circle magazine. Then tell someone about us!
3. **Offer your skills.** Can you cater for a camp or another event? Can you help us build a stage set for Lube Lounge? Can you help us with designing or coding our Internet site? These are just 3 areas we could do with help in!
4. **Donate it.** If you have: unused picture frames that we could use to frame peer educators artwork with, old furniture we could use for Lube Lounge, paint to give the OIL building a facelift or a signage company that would be willing to donate their services we'd be extremely grateful!
5. **Finance.** If you would be interested in sponsoring an aspect of the programme or one of the schools we provide delivery to please get in contact. We will be more than willing to provide you with a detailed breakdown of our programme and suggestions of aspects of the programme you could sponsor.

Contact us...

TELEPHONE 021 782 0700
FACSIMILE 021 782 0704
EMAIL info@oil.org.za

Please feel free to contact us at any time. To keep costs down we prefer sending emails, but should you prefer to receive a print version please phone the OIL office on 021 782 0700 or forward your details to info@oil.org.za