



Eyelites

December 2016

CAPE TOWN SOCIETY FOR THE BLIND



Message from the desk of the CEO – Lizelle van Wyk

"I'm honoured to speak to so many ambitious, bright young minds today. I find that the majority of our students are the most creative, most connected, and most diverse generation of youth that I've come across in a long time. YOU are the ones with the ability to shape our communities in ways that couldn't have been imagined in years.

I'm here today to let our students know that – no matter one's age, your creed, your background, your level of education, your ability or disability – we ALL have a responsibility to take a positive role in shaping the future of our lives, our country and the world.

At CTSB we embark on a journey with our students from day one, offering them the tools and providing them with the assistance and support to change their world, achieving transformative outcomes for themselves and others.

Today you will have the opportunity to celebrate the remarkable stories they have to share, creating change and by making a difference every day.

In partnership with our government and many donors, we can offer our students a safe and conducive environment where they have the time and space to acquire new skills and practice it while frequenting our campus. At CTSB we enable and empower young and old to live their dreams.

I firmly believe, that with our collective goal of inspiring to take action they will be able to build a better and stronger South Africa, especially for Persons with Disabilities.

With the financial support received from government and donors, we are able to create a training curriculum to provide our students with resources and activities to build a better understanding of life skills, business administration, how to start your own business, pub-



lic speaking, computer literacy as well as advanced computer skills, to name a few. Braille training has also been revived and we view this as an imperative tool to master basic reading and writing abilities.

Important to note, we also offer exciting courses in creative, practical artisanship, such as cane and rug weaving, hospitality services, including event management, waitron training, kitchen assistance and, the new kid on the block, Barista training.

It is such an amazing feeling to be here at our own campus today, not only to celebrate

the achievements of our students, but also to show them that they are not alone in their desire for change. Together we fight for their rights. We play an active role in advocacy and lobbying for the rights of PWD and as from next year, I would like us to incorporate the White Paper on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in our curriculum – not only to create awareness, but also to pass on crucial information which forms part of empowerment.

We were very fortunate to partner with DG Murray Trust and Evolve this year, when we had the opportunity to participate in a pilot project where 10 mentees and 10 mentors were hand-picked to learn from each other. This was just the beginning... warming the soil for seeds to germinate, and strong trees to grow.

I am confident that in years to come, together with our students, CTSB will continue to create meaningful impacts not only here in Cape Town, or in South Africa, but globally, creating a better world for a better tomorrow for blind and visually impaired people.

It is such a privilege to hand over the "Jannie Mouton Award" to the top student of the year, Adrian Kleinsmidt. Adrian excelled in all his courses. Not only did he study here at CTSB, but simultaneously, attended classes at Damlin College this year. He is a true example of perseverance and dedication to chasing his dreams.

On behalf of our board, Mr Jannie Mouton and our staff members I want to thank the family members of our students for supporting them, and congratulate our students for taking the first step, for starting and completing the race. And to the Training, Education and Development department staff, under the leadership of Sandra, thank you for taking up the challenge to embrace our students. You are all winners!"



Thank You

We would like to thank all of our loyal donors for your continued support in 2016!

Thank you for your commitment to equipping blind and visually impaired people with valuable skills. Wishing you all a blessed, restful and safe festive season.



CTSB thanks FORMSET for the printing



SA first major model of mentoring that emulated Christopher Reeve-foundation, a success

CAPE TOWN. – Uncertainty surrounds the unemployment ratio of visually impaired persons in South Africa. Roy Silver, director of Evolve Social Enterprise, says between 80 and 85 % of blind South Africans are unemployed.

Silver spoke at the graduation ceremony of a pilot project which is arguably the first of its kind in the history of South Africa and has made waves on social media.

The Cape Town Society for the Blind (CTSB), who partnered with Evolve and the DG Murray Trust to pilot a project aimed at enhancing the job-creation possibilities of visually impaired persons by partnering visually impaired mentors employed in professions with unemployed similarly disabled mentees who have similar career interests, says the unemployment rate could even be in excess of 99%.

That would mean that marginally less than 14 000 of the 1.4 million visually impaired persons in South Africa are in formal employment.

The graduation at the headquarters of CTSB in Salt River aptly took place during Eye-care awareness month in South Africa which aims at making people sensitive to the importance of visual health.

CTSB and Evolve have done extensive research to identify a program that would improve the chances of blind South African students finding jobs. The American Foundation of the Blind and the Christopher Reeve-foundation both use programs that grabbed their attention.

They both utilize professionals who are disabled, to work alongside students with a similar disability and who are yet to find a profession.

Regular mentoring and practical workshops were set up by the mentors to improve the skills, the confidence and the work-ethic of the students.

CTSB and Evolve, with the financial support of the DG Murray Trust, subsequently im-

plemented the American model.

It was the first pilot project of its kind in the history of South Africa. Silver stressed that once a proper assessment and research of the results have been completed, there is every chance of the project being continued and rolled out to other non-governmental organizations that assist disabled persons.

Michelle Botha, the career-development officer at CTSB, declared the four-month pilot project of CTSB and Evolve, a success. Some of the students were employed and there are realistic chances that a few more of the students would be on a company's pay-roll in the foreseeable future.

Both Botha and Silver emphasized the fact that a four-month period was a tad too short and that a six-month stint would be more realistic and rewarding.

Both admitted that there were growth pains, but there were much more positives than negatives.

"Two students have received internships and two other students have applied for jobs," said Botha.

"Ignorance and the fear of how much adjustments are needed in order to employ a visually impaired person are two of the main stumbling blocks which prevents blind persons to be accommodated," said Lizelle van Wyk chief executive officer of the CTSB, a major empowerment hub for visually impaired persons.

Botha, who holds a Master's degree in disability studies, says that corporates wrongly judge that employing a visually impaired person with the necessary skills would be a liability, instead of a great investment.

Silver said the long-term purpose of the pilot project and its continual presentation in different locations and cities in South Africa, is to reverse the 80/20-scenario in order to boast a 20/80-reality (20 % without employment, and 80 % who have jobs).



Canes keep Blind safe

White canes ruled the road on 12th October to create awareness of the needs of long cane users. Long cane users took to Salt River Road and Main Road in Woodstock to observe international White Cane Safety Day. The event started at Cape Town Society for the Blind (CTSB) premises. More than 50 visually impaired participants took a walk in the area with their white canes or guide dogs. The event was hosted to create public awareness of the 1.4m blind people and visually impaired people living South Africa. Some of the visually impaired pedestrians fall victim to drivers who don't demonstrate sufficient care for pedestrian traffic. International White Cane Safety Day (observed on 15th October annually) is an opportunity to increase awareness of the white cane traffic safety laws. It is observed world-wide to recognise the movement of blind people from dependency to full participation in society. Throughout the world, a long white cane is used by people who are blind or visually impaired as a tool for safe and reliable navigation.



Long Cane Rally

Rustenberg Girls Highschool, hosted the Annual Long Cane Rally on 15 October 2016. Persons with Visual Impairment enjoyed a 2.5 km walk along Rondebosch Common, showing off their Mobility skills with their long white canes and guide dogs. This promoted awareness to the public as Visually Impaired persons often struggle to move around freely with many obstacles that may be on the sidewalks and roads. After the walk, the candidates each received a medal and enjoyed a lunch and presentations from Cape Town Society for the Blind and other member organisations.

Thank You

We have participated in a number of exhibitions this year: ... thank you to these organisations for inviting us and providing such great exposure for our work and our products! AND A BIG THANK YOU to all our loyal customers for your valued support!



Business coach takes centre stage at successful annual CTSB women's event

CAPE TOWN. – Realizing your business dreams by doing things that are authentic imprints of yourself, by not necessarily being the first, but the best and by accepting criticism objectively, are part of the prerequisites of a significant career, said Marissa Brendel, an entrepreneurial business coach.

She spoke at a successful fourth popular instalment of the annual Cape Town Society for the Blind (CTSB) women's day at



the headquarters at 45 Salt River Road in Salt River on Saturday 27th August.

Brendel shared the stage with Dr Darren Green, a TV personality and Espresso Show doctor, and Nikki Jane Kyle, a gospel artist.

The master of ceremonies was Cassidy Da Silva Franks, a business owner, entrepreneur and past prominent DJ.



Top student 2016 receives the Jannie Mouton Award



Sandra Dreyer (HOD Training Education Development), Adrian Kleinsmidt (top student 2016 receiving the Jannie Mouton Award), Joan Byamugisha (Guest speaker), Lizelle van Wyk (CTSB CEO), Tim Thabete (KFM Presenter and MC for the morning)

CTSB's barista-training initiative takes shape at Café 45

The international service organization Rotary recently donated a coffee machine which will aid Cape Town Society for the blind (CTSB), an empowerment hub for visually impaired persons in the Western Cape, to enhance their barista-training at Café 45 in Salt River Road. A barista is a person who makes and serves coffee and coffee drinks to customers. The training forms part of the career-development pursuit of CTSB. Annually, 110 students are empowered with entrepreneurial training skills for the private and public labour market. Ian Pursch, district governor of Rotary District 9350 (middle), conducted the official launch of the coffee machine on behalf of the official donors, Rotary Newlands. On hand to receive it, was Thulani



Svelebal (left, student trainee), Samantha Williams (barista-practitioner at CTSB, second from the left), Lizelle van Wyk (second from the right, chief executive officer of CTSB) and Umar Samuels (far right, student trainee). Pursch said Rotary's current three main focus areas are early childhood development, the youth and entrepreneurial development.



Sibongile Mlonyeni Success Story.

My name is Sibongile Mlonyeni. I am 41 years old and a single parent of an eight-year-old daughter.

I have a condition called Retinal Detachment and have had to have numerous surgeries to save my remaining eye as that retina had also started to detach.

I lost the sight in my right eye when I was 12-years-old but only my family and close friends ever knew that. I only started disclosing that I am visually impaired quite recently. I was inspired by an author living with disability who was a guest speaker at a function I attended at my previous job. From then a seed was planted and I let the world know about my disability.

I realised that the more people know and understand my situation, the easier and the better it is for me. Living with hidden disability is the hardest thing, society doesn't know what you are going through and so they won't accommodate you. But if you do eventually let it out of the closet, you see the difference, your life becomes so much easier.

The Cape Town society for the blind played a major role in my life. I enrolled for an ICDL course and a Life skills course, which I started in May 2015 and completed in Nov 2015.

I am currently working as a service consultant within the Clicks Clubcard contact centre. I attend to all clubcard queries from Clicks clubcard members. I also assist our fellow colleagues calling from various Clicks stores across SA and beyond including; Namibia, Botswana and Swaziland. I was recently approached to be a "Disability Role Model" within the company to encourage other employees with disabilities to seek assistance.

CTSB also motivated to my employer the fact that as a Visually impaired person, I will need some aid, i.e. a software application that I will need to use to make my life easy at work. This is a Zoom Text application that CTSB uses with their students and it is amazing. Clicks came on board full force and I am using Zoom text at work.

I couldn't have done this without the help of CTSB. I learnt that possibilities do exist during my stay at CTSB

Thank you very much CTSB you are my beacon of hope.

New braille and magnifying equipment generously donated by Old Mutual Investment Group – Green Hands Trust



7 seater Caddy VW generously donated by The Freemasons from the United Grand Lodge of England, South Africa Western Division

District Grand Master – Jim Duggan (The Freemasons from the United Grand Lodge of England, South Africa Western Division), Elize Marais (Operations Manager of CTSB)



Share the love this Valentine's at the Freemasons Tercentenary Grand Charity Dinner and Auction in aid of the Cape Town Society for the Blind

18:30 FOR 19:00
CASSIA RESTAURANT, NITIDA WINE FARM, DURBANVILLE
DRESS FORMAL
R600 PER PERSON (THIS INCLUDES, CANAPÉS & CHAMPERS ON ARRIVAL, 3 COURSE MEAL, LIVE ENTERTAINMENT AND THE OPPORTUNITY TO BID FOR AMAZING PIECES)
FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT DENA ON 072 654 7109 OR E-MAIL: NICKBRIATORE@MSN.COM

Save the Date
25 FEBRUARY 2017

Thank You

We would like to thank all of our loyal donors for your continued support in 2016! Thank you for your commitment to equipping blind and visually impaired people with valuable skills. Wishing you all a blessed, restful and safe festive season.

CAPE TOWN SOCIETY FOR THE BLIND

You are requested to fill out this Pledge / Donation Form to officially designate your gift to the CAPE TOWN SOCIETY FOR THE BLIND.

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Choose one of the options for your donation—as indicated below:

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