

Collaborative event helps SA's youth get work ready

[MySchool MyVillage MyPlanet](#) recently partnered with [Better SA](#) to host a collaborative volunteer event to help address youth unemployment in SA. Celebrating what would have been Nelson Mandela's 100th birthday, the partnership went beyond the traditional 67 minutes of volunteerism, gathering 72 volunteers to help youths from local development organisations change their stars.



In line with the Nelson Mandela Foundation's theme 'Be the legacy', the project highlighted there's far more that South Africans can contribute through volunteerism than just their 'sweat equity'. In the fight against poverty your skills, life experience and abilities to coach and mentor can make a significant difference, especially when it comes to preparing the youth for the world of work.

Vital steps to becoming work ready

The 67 beneficiaries of the volunteer experience came from local youth programmes [Ikamva Youth](#), [YES Youth Employment Service](#), [Refilwe Community Project](#) and the [Emdeni Youth Programme](#), and were transported to Wanderers through the BetterSA minibus system. There they encountered the volunteers manning three different stations and, over a three-hour process, they took vital steps to becoming work ready.



Firstly, their handwritten CVs were transformed into professional, typed profiles, and they learnt the importance of organising and presenting their information for optimum impact. Next, they went through role-modelling interviews with intensive coaching that helped to prepare them for the rigours of job interviews, build their confidence and help them prepare for a successful interview. To cap their work-ready experience, the third station was wardrobe-fitting. Volunteers helped them get fitted with a quality collared shirt and pants or skirt provided by Clothing Bank, plus a jacket and a tie, while sharing advice on the importance of a professional appearance.

Leaving a sustainable legacy



“Many young South Africans struggle to get into the job market,” says Helene Brand, MySchool’s CSI manager, “This is not because they don’t have the education or the aptitude to do the job, but rather they lack the resources they need to get noticed, secure an interview and present themselves effectively. A professional CV, coupled with some work experience and a recommendation letter, improves a young person’s chances of entering the work environment. This year’s celebration of Mandela’s centenary was a particularly heart-warming volunteer experience, where those with work experience and a desire to help the youth came together to help these 67 promising young people to at least get up on that first rung of the ladder.”

In the interests of leaving a sustainable legacy like Mandela, the MySchool MyVillage MyPlanet programme and its partner organisations will now work to connect the 2018 Mandela Day beneficiaries with organisations that can help to facilitate their first forays into the job market.

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