



# Y-TALK

[www.saymca.org.za](http://www.saymca.org.za)

Empowering Young People for Life, Leadership & Service

## FROM THE NGS



This has been a year to be remembered; a historically significant time. I am convinced it has already entrenched itself amongst the famous age marks of B.C. and A.D; post World War 1 and World War 2. We now have a new time mark, the Post Corona Age.

As the YMCA, we have been in the heat of the pandemic and its impact on the economic, social, economic, religious and political life. These aspects of our lives have changed forever. We can be grateful as the YMCA that when we found ourselves in the heat, we never became only victims or spectators. As we made the Corona Virus age our site of struggle, our resilience emerged strongly. We made efforts to be part of the answers and questions, pain and successes.

I am grateful for National Executive Members (NEC) and Local Board members who rose to the occasion, to position the struggles of their Ys and their communities right in the heart of the fight against Covid-19. The NEC has had more time of engagement than ever before, taking advantage of online communication and digital technology to

ensure resilience at this time.

In this issue of Y-Talk we recognize YMCA staff, local and national staff who have been severely impacted and who have worked tirelessly to support local communities.

This time we note the contribution made by national office staff and the National Staff Leadership Team (general secretaries representing their regions) for applying themselves and consistently engaging during this time. Weekly online meetings and engagements have led to much being accomplished. In many cases we were not able to do things we had planned and hoped for this year, however many more meaningful achievements were realized. We were able to raise more financial resources to support activities at local level than would have been, through several new meaningful partners who have emerged during the past 6 months.

Online interaction has revealed new innovative ways of working, that minimises time taken for travelling. We have also seen levels of trauma as this new way of working has forced continual work to their doorsteps, often invading privacy. In addition, lack of intimate engagement has been stressful, particularly with staff having to deal with their personal tragedies of loss of friends and relatives. While the new normal has shown possibilities of greater efficiency, it takes away a critical element of human life, which is the face to face encounter. By all accounts, staff are struggling to cope without this element of life.

While we mourn the loss of loved ones; loss of lively-hoods for families and people, we rejoice in the new norm, that is ours to embrace.

## COVID 19

### A Defining Moment for the SAYMCA

**"Most of the important things in the world have been accomplished by people who have kept on trying when there seemed to be no hope at all."**

**Dale Carnegie**

The Arrival of the COVID 19 Pandemic onto our shore challenged the SAYMCA as one of the oldest humanitarian organizations in SA. In recent years, one major challenge of a 155-year-old organization has been to re-invent itself within the current context of youth development, to avoid becoming extinct.

The pandemic is forcing us out of our comfort zone and challenged the National Executive Committee to devise a Response Plan. Although it took us a while to get off the mark, when we did, the NEC formulated a COVID 19 Response plan which focused on the following areas;

- Communication and Stakeholder Management
- Youth Leadership and Advocacy
- Care and Relief
- Social Enterprise
- Resource Mobilization

#### Highlights

The Lockdown presented an opportunity to explore the social media space through Youth Webinars and the Y- Leaders Talks. It was encouraging to see young people taking full advantage of this space, hosting a series of dialogues on relevant issues affecting them and taking a leading role in coming up with solutions. The Y-Leaders Talk series has presented us with a

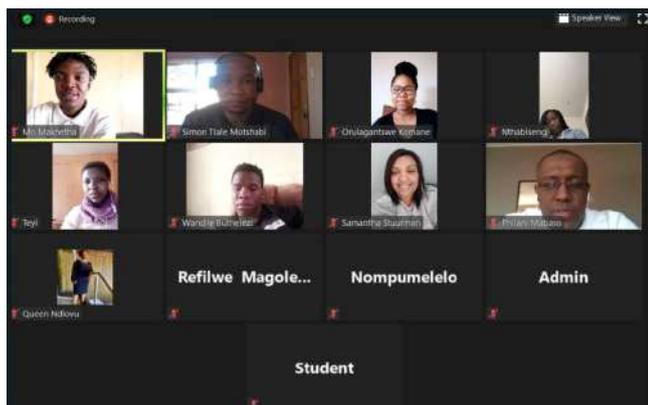
unique opportunity to have conversation with high level, thought provoking industry leaders and to profile the movement as a safe space for such conversations.



**Siya Kolisi, Springbok Rugby Captain, working with NMB YMCA to bring relief to local communities**

Our Local YMCAs stepped up to the challenge as they took their rightful place in the front line by providing support such as food parcels, Health care, shelter to the homeless, masks and sanitizers to different communities. The provision of food vouchers for young people has really exposed the reality of poverty that still ravages our communities, 26 years after Democracy. Different stakeholders such as Municipalities, Private companies, Church leaders, Non Profit Organizations, and celebrities such as the World Cup Rugby 2019 winning captain, Siya Kolisi, partnered with Local YMCAs in reaching out to our communities during challenging times.

With the high unemployment rate among young people, we explored Social Enterprise as a solution. The youth in SA and other African countries grabbed the opportunity in attending Social Enterprise workshops conducted by the Vice President of The African Alliance, Queen Ndlovu, in an attempt to pursue entrepreneurship



to provide for their families while addressing social challenges.

### Challenges

One of the major challenges faced by our Local YMCAs during Lockdown was keeping our doors open, since some YMCAs had to be closed, lay-off volunteers and staff and experienced electricity disconnection to name just a few of the issues.

### Way forward

The Rise of the Gender Based Violence cases during Lockdown and the racially motivated brutal

killing of George Floyd has given rise to initiatives /Campaigns such as “Transformative Masculinity” and “Black Lives Matter” which have laid the foundation for us to pick up on these issues from both an advocacy and a programmatic point of view.

As we approach level 1 of lockdown and preparing for Post COVID 19, we are repositioning ourselves to prepare for the Reconstruction and Recovery Phase of our country. This phase will require the movement to fold its sleeves and partner with our stakeholders in bettering the lives of Young people in SA. **Philani Mabaso - NEC member**

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## YMCA Covid Task Team and Partners Bring Relief to Local Communities.

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The South Africa YMCA, in partnership with Y Care International will distribute 120 food sms vouchers, each valued at R300. This will provide a small measure of food security and relief for vulnerable youth and families, due to the impact of covid-19. Beneficiaries of the vouchers are between the ages of 15-35 years, who are also part of YMCA programmes. The vouchers will be distributed

through an sms system, in collaboration with DOMINO Foundation (NGO) and Intellimali, a well established South African SMS voucher service provider. This is a once off initiative, which will positively impact the lives of young people.



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## ATHLONE YMCA - Novel Medical Delivery System

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With the Covid 19 pandemic, Hospitals and Clinics have shifted most of their Covid 19 related demands to address non COVID-19 related needs such as providing medication for chronic patients. Research has shown that people with chronic diseases are at a higher risk of contracting and succumbing to COVID-19. With that being said, patients live in fear and worry that a visit to the clinic or hospital may increase their chances of contracting COVID 19. To address this issue and to reduce long queues for medication in the health facilities, the

Western Cape health authorities recently introduced an innovative system to have non-COVID patients' medication delivered to their homes. Tens of thousands of chronic medication parcels are now being distributed to vulnerable patients by community health

workers, including those from the Athlone YMCA. These staff have worked tirelessly to delivery the medication since level 5 of the lockdown. Their work has been covered by ENCA news channel.

Link to the story.

[Novel Medical Delivery System](#)



Athlone YMCA staff preparing Medicine for delivery to patients

# YMCA Restoring Dignity and Hope to People

The Cape Flats YMCA continues to be humbled and grateful for the opportunity and experience we have been afforded to work in partnership with the City of Cape Town in addressing the issue of homelessness in a meaningful way within our City. We currently have 30 residents/ participants in the programme. Our key focus areas are restoration, re-integration into society and re-unification.

guards and a further 10 attended a money management course offered by a clothing bank. The feedback we received from the stakeholders was phenomenal. On 31 August one of the women was invited by the Clothing Bank to attend their two year training course. The art classes are both therapeutic and provides the possibility, together with the beading and wire classes, of an income for the residents.

## Restoration

The residents attend two group sessions a week. We focus on stress and anger management. The lifeskills sessions and sports/ exercise activities are run to compliment the restoration sessions. Self-defence classes are a highlight for the group. The discipline instilled through this training is becoming evident in the daily functioning of our residents. We have also introduced art therapy classes. As part of restoration and getting to work together through fun activities, we host voluntary Friday night games evenings.



## Re-unification

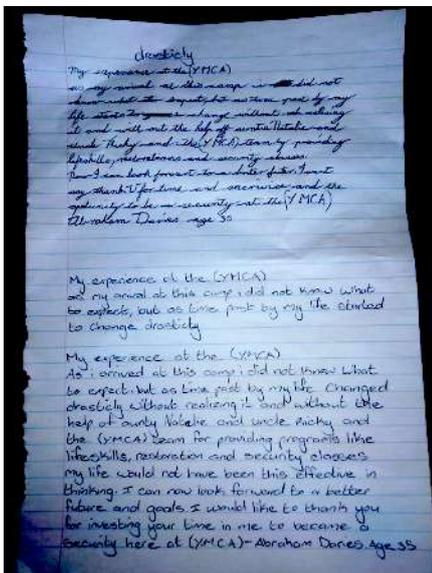
Home visits have been conducted and residents are taken to meet families. It is challenging but not impossible. There are many hurts and betrayals on both sides.

Our family afternoon on 12 September was a success. Close family of residents were invited to spend quality time with each other in a safe environment. This is the second step, after initial contact, in the unification process.

## Re-Integration into society

The residents are linked to training opportunities through referral to different stakeholders. 10 are being trained as security

One of the highlights was the exit of one of our residents from the program who found work as an apprentice electrician with AI Electrical in Durban. We will follow his journey closely.



### The Letter

As I arrived at this camp I did not know what to expect. But as time went on my life changed drastically without realising it and without the help of aunty Natalie and uncle Ricky and the YMCA team for providing programs like life skills, restoration and security classes my life would not have been this effective. I can now look forward to a better future and goals. I would like to thank the YMCA for investing in me to become a security guard here at the YMCA.

Abraham Daries Agess.

## A STAFF POINT OF VIEW

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**W**orking during COVID19 restrictions challenged me on many levels. When I started working with the Homeless people sheltered at the Durban YMCA, I was overzealous. However, I soon realized I cannot change the world alone. We did not have sufficient time to make a long lasting positive impact in the lives of our participants.

There were many moments when I felt depressed, acknowledging how limited I was in working with people with mental health conditions, especially during a pandemic. It was intense, there were a lot of tears, physical fights, withdrawal symptoms, anger. Being a hugger, I had to restrain myself several times from hugging the most vulnerable participants. We had so much fun during role-plays, discussing gender roles particularly so because our group was representative of all the racial groups, religions, ages. True Rainbow nation.

The joy I felt when people shouted my name out of the YMCA windows as I parked. Many times I was tricked to allow people outside the YMCA building on the pretence that they were helping me carry stuff to my car. In most cases, it was just the laptop. That was the only time they could venture outside the building. Sometimes I just turned a blind eye and allowed them to carry my laptop.

I was angry when the Government approach conflicted with that of the YMCA. There were many unrealistic expectations which were raised and never met by the government officials. I felt hopeless and sad when some of our participants started stealing and escaping, due to the withdrawal cravings people were having. They kept on waiting to be sent to a rehab centre until they just gave up and left to go back to the streets.

It was extremely difficult, leaving my family



every morning, even though I had a permit, driving through the road blocks.. those soldiers with their rifles....it was like a war zone.

My greatest fear was whether I would contract the virus at home, or in the supermarket, and would I transmit it to my participants? Would I bring the virus home from work? Even though I kept the regulations to the tee, no-one knew all that needs to be known about COVID19. It was extremely scary and confusing.

I took out all my frustrations on my newfound love of gardening. It was so peaceful and therapeutic. Cooking also did the trick. I had to constantly tell myself that I need to be healthy to reach out to my family and participants. The consolation I gained from my spirituality was amazing... reading the Bible and praying gave me strength and sustained me so much.

Given the opportunity to work under these circumstances, I will gladly do it all over again.

I know I am not invincible but I will do it again.

**Nompumelelo Zama**

# TOWARDS A GREENER YMCA

## RESULTS OF A SURVEY OF 10 YMCAS



AVERAGE MONTHLY COST OF ELECTRICITY TO 7 YMCAS

**R 197,000**

POTENTIAL COST BENEFITS IF 10 YMCAS EACH INSTALLED A R50,000 SOLAR SYSTEM

Cost: R500,000  
SAVING OVER 10 years:  
R2.5 million



% OF YMCA GENERAL SECRETARIES WHO RATE CLIMATE CHANGE AS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT

**90%**

CARBON SAVING FROM 10 SOLAR PANELS PER YMCA

**9000 kg of carbon per year**



SOURCE: SURVEY CONDUCTED BY NATIONAL OFFICE AUGUST 2020

## Linking Young People to Opportunities

As the YMCA moves towards a green culture, we are proud to announce a new partnership with Nepoworx, ([www.nepoworx.com](http://www.nepoworx.com)) to train young people with solar installation skills and knowledge. This initiative supports Pillars 3 and 4 of the PowerSpace framework which is Skills Development and Linking to Opportunities.

The partnership was facilitated by Queen Ndlovu, a Board member at the GaRankuwa YMCA, a National Executive Committee member of the SA YMCA and Vice President of the Africa Alliance of YMCAs. Queen is a passionate advocate for entrepreneurship and small business development, targeting young people.



*"...providing job opportunities for young people..."*

The project is in the process of being implemented with a selected group of 20 young people from YMCAs in South Africa. It is linked to the Youth Justice programme...thereby providing vocational skills and job opportunities for young people at risk.

# Y-LEADERS TALK SERIES & Webinars

**YMCA SOUTH AFRICA**  
**Y-LEADERS TALK SERIES**

**Date: Wed, 16 Sept 2020**  
**Time: 17h00**

**Topic: Clicks advert — The mirror of our society**

**SPEAKER: VICTOR KGOMOE SWANA**  
Author of 'Africa is Open for Business,' media commentator and public speaker on African business affairs

For more info contact: Pasca Ndlovu [pascandlovu@saymca.org.za](mailto:pascandlovu@saymca.org.za)  
Youth Empowerment Now  
#YeNow

16th September

Planning for the series of Y-Leaders Talks started in May 2020. Since that time the YMCA has facilitated 9 webinars attracting 360 participants @40 people per webinar.

**YMCA SOUTH AFRICA**  
**Y-LEADERS TALK SERIES**

**Date: Wed, 2 Sept 2020**  
**Time: 17h00**

**Topic: Promoting social impact in life, leadership and service: On the interconnection between race, gender, power and class**

**SPEAKER: DR CLINT LE BRUYN S**  
Director of the Theology and Development Programme, UKZN  
CEO of the Underground Academy for Lifelong Learning

For more info contact: Pasca Ndlovu [pascandlovu@saymca.org.za](mailto:pascandlovu@saymca.org.za)  
#YeNow

2nd September

**YMCA SOUTH AFRICA**  
**Y-LEADERS TALK SERIES**  
A Conversation with **Justice Leona Theron**

Judge of the Constitutional Court of South Africa  
Advocate for women's rights

Guest: Justice Leona Theron  
Host: Dasley Ramonyal

**Topic: Ending violence against women**

Date: Wednesday, 19 August 2020 | Time: 17h00 - 18h00

Zoom Webinar | #YeNow

For more info contact: Pasca Ndlovu [pascandlovu@saymca.org.za](mailto:pascandlovu@saymca.org.za)

19th August

**YMCA SOUTH AFRICA**  
**Y-LEADERS TALK SERIES**

**Speaker:**  
**Rev. Bafana Khumalo**  
Director & Co-founder: Sonke Gender Justice

**Topic: The Impact of gender-based violence on young people**

**Date: Wed, 5 AUGUST 2020 | Time: 17h00**

Zoom Webinar

For more info: Contact Pasca Ndlovu | [pascandlovu@saymca.org.za](mailto:pascandlovu@saymca.org.za)

5th August

The webinars have succeeded in **raising awareness** about relevant issues; **increased awareness** among leaders in society about what the YMCA is doing; raised a cadre of **emerging young leaders** within the SA YMCA; created **new ideas and skills** around use of digital technology for work; created **momentum for YMCA programmes**.

30th July

**Social Enterprise Workshop**

THURSDAY, 30 JULY 2020

ON ZOOM @ 3-5PM

What is a social enterprise?

**YMCA SOUTH AFRICA**

22nd July

**YMCA SOUTH AFRICA**

**OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES IN THE TIME OF COVID-19**

Date: 22 July 2020  
Time: 17H00

Zoom Webinar

Speaker: **Nirina Rakotomalala**  
General Secretary  
Africa Alliance of YMCAs

For more info contact Pasca Ndlovu  
pascandlovu@saymca.org.za

#YeNOW

**Y LEADERS TALK SERIES**

**YMCA SOUTH AFRICA**

Speaker:  
**Carlos Sanvee**

General Secretary  
World Alliance  
of YMCAs

**The State of the Global YMCA in the Time of Covid-19**

Date: 8 July 2020  
Time: 17H00

Zoom Webinar

For More Info Contact:  
Pasca Ndlovu  
pascandlovu@saymca.org.za  
(031) 305 4496

#YeNOW

8th July

**YMCA SOUTH AFRICA**

**MANDELA DAY 2020**

**YOUTH WEBINAR**

**Be an ACTIVE CITIZEN in 67 minutes** 16th July

As our world changes, we must ask: **What is my role?**  
Covid-19, Mandela Day, me, you, us - Lets talk!

Zoom Webinar  
Date: Thursday, 16 July 2020  
Time: 17h00 - 18h07 (67minutes)

**NELSON MANDELA DAY**

Samantsha Stuurman, Mo Makhele, Sharnelle Cedar, Gill Harper - MamaG

**YMCA SOUTH AFRICA**

PRESENTS

**YOUTH DAY Dialogue**  
WhatsApp Edition

YOUTH POWER: Growing Together Beyond Covid-19

MODERATED BY NATIONAL YOUTH REPS.

**TUE. 16TH JUNE 2020**  
18H00 CAT GMT+2

<https://chat.whatsapp.com/GdFzdGCIUOM3hEwhnpYR6>  
www.iamyca.org.za  
-27 64 684 9165 MO | -27 83 812 1780 Pasca

16th June

**YMCA SOUTH AFRICA**

*Celebrating Youth Month*

THEME: YOUTH IN THE DRIVING SEAT

DATE: Friday 26 June  
TIME: 5PM

PLATFORMS:  
ZOOM WEBINAR  
FACEBOOK LIVESTREAM

Guest Speaker: **Vozi Mncwango**  
CEO of The Thought Coach

26th June

# YMCA Youth Worker Intern Programme

An extract from the Y-Talk magazine September 2000.

Y-TALK - September 2000  
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## 2 YOUTH INTERN PROGRAM



**Berenice Burrel**  
(Eastern Cape YMCA)

My understanding of Community Development is to work with the community as far as possible in helping them to achieve their goals as a community. To be able to withdraw yourself when you see they as a community are taking responsibility for their own development.

As a Youth Worker, I believe this program is going to equip us with the necessary skills in order to help us to deal with youth of all ages. It will also prepare us to meet the challenges facing young people. At the end of this course we should be equipped to run programs that develop body, mind and spirit.

**Vincent Mdluli**  
(Vaal YMCA)

If I can be given a chance to be on this course I expect to learn skills of working with youth of all cultures and races. To learn to help youth to be self-reliant and to create job opportunities for each other. I will learn from the experiences of other participants and come and share with the youth in my Association.

**Phillapine**  
(Mamelodi YMCA)

My role as a Community Youth Worker is to love them and support them. To help my friends who are still gangsters and doing drugs - try to counsel them because I come from the same situation.

**Jonathan Brown**  
(Bonteheuwel, Cape Flats YMCA)



Participants in the Youth Worker Intern Program 2000

"In dwelling, live close to the ground. In thinking, keep to the simple. In conflict, be fair and generous. In Governing, don't try to control. In work, do what you enjoy. In family life, be completely present."  
- Tao Le Chang

The Y-Talk was produced by young graduates from the Digital Design Studio and Red Eye Design...both projects initiated and run by SA YMCA in partnership with YMCA USA...from 2000-2006.

The Youth Worker intern programme was started by an Australian volunteer in the SA YMCA, Peter Westoby and then managed by Trevor Pedro, who was National Youth Director at the time, both who remain good friends of the YMCA to this day.

Over the course of about 10 years the programme benefitted over 100 young people. Some of the graduates are still involved in the YMCA.

If you know of any young people who were a part of these programmes (Youth Worker Intern, Digital Design Studio or Red Eye Design) or if you **are** one of those people, please contact Mpume Zama on [mpumez@saymca.org.za](mailto:mpumez@saymca.org.za). We would love to hear from you.