

Bambisanani Partnership will deliver its most ambitious volunteer programme in South Africa

This summer will see the most ambitious Bambisanani Partnership volunteer programme in South Africa to date. In June, July and August volunteer teams from St. Mary's School, Menston, the University of Leeds, Leeds Trinity University and Newcastle College will work in partnership with schools and other organisations in the rural Nkandla region of KwaZulu-Natal to deliver a range of existing Bambisanani programmes as well as introducing new ones. In total, 58 students and members of staff have volunteered to work with local communities and schools in one of South Africa's most challenging and deprived rural and remote areas.

Over the past 17 years, the Bambisanani Partnership has gained international acclaim for its work using sport as a catalyst to promote, education, health, global citizenship and leadership. Based on needs identified by local communities the partnership is committed to a range of collaborations that create learning opportunities for both students from South Africa and the UK under the banner of 'Working together and learning together'.

The Bambisanani Partnership volunteer visits to South Africa were suspended during Covid and their reinstatement has been welcomed by all concerned:

“ It is wonderful that the visits will be starting again. Over the years they have made an incredible impact and changed the way that young people from both countries see the world and themselves. The visits enable special human connections to be made that change lives for the better and forever.”

– Mrs PK Zondi, Bambisanani Coordinator, Mnyakanya High School.

During the three years of Covid the charity demonstrated great resilience, determination and creativity in not only sustaining many of its ongoing activities but actually introducing some new projects with students in both countries. Much time was spent on maintaining the international relationships but also developing new ones. As a consequence, these visits will involve new schools, colleges and other organisations.



This year's programme of varied activities will see Bambisanani volunteers work with over 1,000 Zulu students in primary, secondary schools and in the wider community.

More than 200 students will participate in Bambisanani Sports Leadership programmes. Students from St. Mary's and Newcastle College will collaborate with Zulu students to jointly deliver Sports and Reading Festivals for over 400 primary school learners. Students from the University of Leeds and Leeds Trinity University will deliver a Sports Leadership Festival for primary school learners in the town of Eshowe. The university teams will also work on the Bambisanani and KZN Cycling initiative that will launch this summer and see the collaboration teach 5,000 young people a year how to ride and maintain bikes. Considerable sports coaching will also take place as well as the teaching of other subject areas in all schools. All four UK institutions will work in collaboration with the Norwegian charity, Zulufadder, at the Doremi Day Care Centre for orphans and vulnerable children.



Newcastle College is the latest UK institution to join the Bambisanani Partnership and area clearly delighted to be taking students to South Africa for the very first time. Brogan O'Connor from the college said. "Newcastle College is honoured and excited to be joining the Bambisanani Partnership and will commit to representing the partnership with positivity and pride to uphold the values and standards set by both organisations. We recognise the amazing work that has been done over the last 17 years and we commit fully to this, aiming to add further value to the partnership by the continued involvement of Newcastle College."



St. Mary's School will have two groups working in South Africa this summer involving 34 Sixth Form students and staff. Miss Charlotte Wood from St. Mary's said:

"It is just wonderful that we are very much 'back to work' with the volunteer visits. It will allow for students to work hand in hand with their South African counterparts and explore the programme which has brought so much success over the years. It will hopefully, make the St. Mary's students more aware of how valuable the work of Bambisanani is allowing them to pass on their experiences to younger members of the St. Mary's community and in doing so inspire the next generation of volunteers."



Suzzi Garnett from the University of Leeds added:

"The joint University of Leeds and Leeds Trinity University visit this summer represents a great chance to build on the projects of the past as well as look to a sustainable future for the Cycling to Success project. This group of students will deliver new things in new ways and help determine the next steps for the project."

David Geldart, Founder and CEO of the Bambisanani Partnership was full of praise for all those involved in both countries for organising the volunteer programme:

"The commitment and dedication of our team to create such amazing learning opportunities is simply remarkable. We created a fantastic platform during Covid to massively extend our work further and this is a great example of that. The encounters that will result have the potential to influence young people from South Africa and the UK that will be responsible for shaping society in the future. This is real education for a better world and we are indebted to the very special individuals and institutions that enable this to happen."

Beyond the Bambisanani volunteer programme the charity also has an extensive range of initiatives that operate throughout the year including its Cycling programme in partnership with KZN Cycling, International Athletics Challenge that links primary schools in both countries, joint training of Physical Education and Sports Coaches linking universities in both countries, Bambisanani Awards that promote Global Citizenship, Leadership and Volunteering for secondary and primary school students in both countries and a Bursary scheme supporting South African students into university and college.

For more information about The Bambisanani Partnership visit:

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