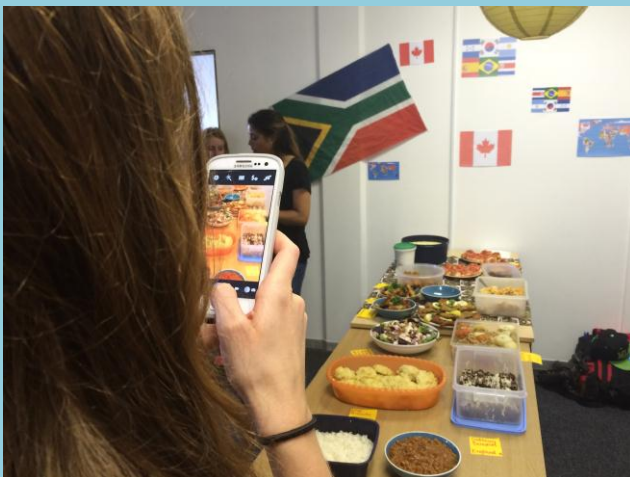


THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER

For Projects Abroad South Africa



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ProjectsAbroad

Valentine's Day Celebration: Where Rainbows Meet



Volunteers Narrinder Taggar(UK), Caroline Walde (Norway), Peggy van der Hoven(Netherlands), WRM staff member, Celilie Muller(Denmark) and Sara Sekine(Japan).

It is of course the month of love and while we were all trying to spread the love in our own special way, our project partner Where Rainbows Meet hosted a one of a kind event for the couples in their community.

Couples from the Capricorn township were treated to a heart-warming evening of good food and entertainment by our volunteers and project staff.

Our volunteers went above and beyond to make sure they provided the couples with all they could want during the night, by running a donation drive for goods, cool drinks and decorations which went towards the event.

There was so much excitement for the event that even our volunteers from our other projects joined in as waitrons for the valentine couples. Our volunteers had lots of fun, but not as much as the beautiful couples who came to celebrate their love for each other.



Journalism Volunteer Nicolas Figueroa assisting WRM staff in the kitchen.



Volunteers set the tables for dinner.

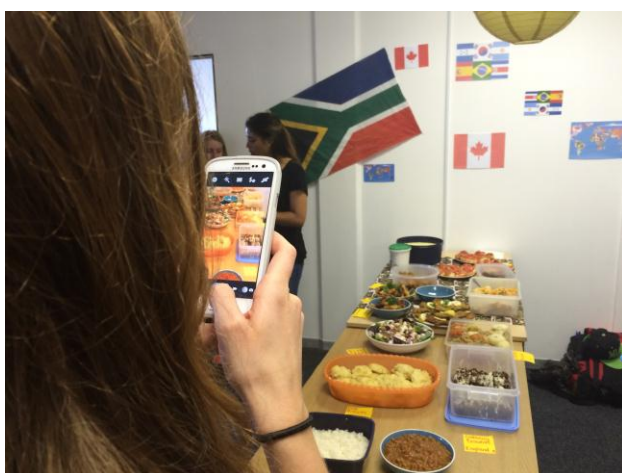
Volunteer Social: Tastes of the World

We recently hosted a “Tastes of the World” social, where volunteers paired up and prepared a unique dish from their home country.

This exciting event brought together different cultures and cuisines that many people didn’t know about prior to the event.

The evening ended with a quiz about South African culture and history which our volunteer teams did very well in.

The quiz winners Ally Wood and Hyuma Kaneko won themselves a tour on the popular Cape Town Sight Seeing bus which will take them around the city scenic sites.



Top: Some of the great food the volunteers prepared.

Left: A volunteer taking a picture of the different dishes



Human Rights volunteers, Hannah Sills(UK), Marie Rasmussen(Denmark) and Anne Skott(Denmark).



Sarah Minke(Germany) and Jonathan Rebman(Germany).

Dirty Day: Tehilah Educare

Our Care volunteers, from all of our 12 care placements in Cape Town, came together to paint and refurbish one of our care placements, Tehilah Educare.

The school needed a paint job which our volunteers, sponsored by Projects Abroad, were more than happy to do. We would like to say a big thank you to all the volunteers that came to participate on this day at this event.



A volunteer painting the outside of Tehilah Educare.



Care project supervisor Ashwin Scott and Anne van de Pol(Netherlands).



Office assistant Kayla Davis.



Carolyn Shittleworth, from the UK.

Projects Abroad volunteers come to the aid of distressed fire victims.



Our Building volunteers at the scene after the fire



Children from the families who were affected by the fire

October 10th 2014, was the day our Building Project Manager, Deen Singh was met with the devastating sight of burned down shacks not too far from the Projects Abroad building site in the community of Village Heights, Lavender Hill. Lavender Hill, which is a township consisting mainly of shack dwellings; deals with and is often confronted with a number of issues ranging from gang violence, drug abuse and shack fires. While there are many ways which the government helps in addressing some of these problems, it is the shack fires that can have the worst impact on the families from this underprivileged community. The victims without warning lose their homes and valuables in just a matter of minutes. This time, the recent fire affected more than one house as there were a total of six families who lost their homes.

It had become clear to Deen; who has a close relationship with the families in the community; that the fire had affected more families than he initially thought. He was on his way to the building project when he came across the smell and sight of burned remains from the fire. "The usual smiles and greetings in the mornings by the many families I meet on my way to the building site were no more visible. There was thick smoke and the smell of burnt items all around. The anguish, sadness and tears from the once happy, smiling faces came running up to me to describe the horror they had experienced the night before." He recalls.

Knowing some of the families so well, Deen could not leave them to pick up the pieces of their lives on their own. Our building volunteers were equally moved and they too understood the extent to which these families had been displaced. Just by sharing this tragic story with our staff and volunteers, Deen and his volunteers were able to draw attention to this, and gain the support of past and present volunteers who also knew some of the families.

Our Global Gap volunteers who were already working at the building site at the time donated money and groceries to the families, and through the participation of our Facebook members a former group of volunteers from the UK, The Girl Guides reached out to their organisation and managed to raise close to R10 000 for the families. Girl Guide leader, Moira Stewart was quick to respond to the call for help on Facebook and was beyond pleased at the success and said this on our Facebook group: "Deen it is a good report, just wanted to mention it was the whole group that agreed that the money they had raised before our trip was to be donate to the Lavender heights fire victims. Miss you all." Former volunteer and Girl Guide, Beth Conroy was just as happy to have made a difference with their donations. "Deen, so pleased we could even begin to help!" she said.

Blankets, clothes and household goods were some of the things that our volunteers and sponsors such as Food for Life ISKCON donated to the families. On, Monday the 15th of December one of the families that were victims of the fire, the

Mtomba's , came to receive their donation gifts at our head office in Wynberg. While the family was beyond grateful for all they received, it was the school uniforms and stationary that was bought with the donation money that they felt would make the biggest difference.

Their children would be starting their school year and the fire had damaged all their books and uniforms. While the families begin to get back on their feet again, it is important that the children's education isn't hindered in the process. Projects Abroad is glad that our building project manager Deen, was able to recognise the importance of this and equip the children with the necessary materials that will assist them in their schooling.

It's amazing to see the great support that came from all our volunteer groups and staff. We now hope that with donations that our building project and all our volunteers, past and present have contributed, that there will be a new found hope for the families. Deen would like to personally thank everyone who has helped make this a success:"

On behalf of the fire victims of Lavender Hill and the building project in South Africa we sincerely thank volunteers, Ian Birbeck and Christine Griever for organising the funds to reach us to purchase all the donations, especially the school clothes and stationery on time."



Some of the school uniforms, shoes and stationary donated.



The family from Lavender with a group of our staff and volunteers

Editor's Note: Love and light!



Kay Kekana, Communications Officer

It's the month of love and what better way to spread love than to do something good for others?

It's been a very busy month for us here at Projects Abroad South Africa, and our volunteers have played a huge role in making sure that we do good and spread love in all our projects.

I'm sure that's it's always interesting to see how love can bring people from different cultures and backgrounds together.

Our love for good food is what had our volunteers and staff gathering to create an exciting evening of cultural exchange with our Tastes of the World social.

It was really fun seeing how some volunteers found a way to incorporate their different countries tastes into a single dish. This will surely be one of many cultural exchange socials to come.

Our biggest event however, was The Where Rainbows Meet community dinner that created a romantic and colourful setting for the couples of the community.

To see an organisation go to such lengths to help others celebrate their love for each other is one of the reasons why it is one of our biggest growing projects.

Understanding that making a difference in one's life isn't always about charity but sharing special moments with them. We are glad that our volunteers were able to be a part of this lovely event.

We are well into the year and I look forward to seeing the great work of our staffs and volunteers from Projects Abroad continued in the spirit of love and giving.

"You can give without loving, but you can't love without giving."