

update

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Jennie and Khumbelo



When God brings the Unexpected!

There are times when you think God has done above all you could ask or imagine . . . and then He does above and BEYOND just as He promised! Such was our experience in January at what we expected would be a normal *It Takes Courage!* training. An enthusiastic group of pastors and youth workers, principals and school district officials joined us in Soshanguve for an introduction to the *ITC! Youth Curriculum*. As always, we introduced the subject of forgiveness, a hard but necessary focus in a country so torn by social strife. After a lengthy heart-felt discussion about the need to forgive, we encouraged people to stand and say "I choose to forgive!" outloud. One by one, they began standing, popping up all over the audience until almost everyone in the room was on their feet, committing themselves to a new life not defined by bitterness and resentment. It was overwhelming!

One of the participants was the director of Life Skills for one of the large school districts in our area. As such, Mike is responsible for more than 180 primary, middle and secondary schools, each with 1000+ students. Impressed by what they learned, he and 23 teachers from his district attending the training met to create an action plan to bring the *ITC! Youth Curriculum* to the entire district. **Such a project would bring these life-changing principles to more than 180,000 students!**

After much discussion, plans for a pilot program emerged that would use five schools in the district as pilot schools. Each school would have teachers and administration trained in the *ITC! Youth Curriculum*. They would undertake the daunting yet exciting task of infusing the *ITC!* principles into each subject area. Using the 15 foundational character traits and healthy decision making principles that are the core of the *ITC!* program that we know will have a huge impact on the entire school. What will that look like? We can't wait to find out and are thrilled to have the educators in our own backyard embracing this project so passionately!

We are excited to not only roll out the *It Takes Courage!* *Youth Curriculum* in this school district but these same schools will be our pilot group for our *Courage to Care! Anti-Sex Trafficking and Self Defense Curriculum*.

This is an incredible open door! However, as always, one of the first challenges is finances. The school district has no money for such a venture and cannot depend on government aid. Kerus has committed to helping raise the necessary funds to make this a life-changing reality for so many precious children.

Will you help us take advantage of this amazing opportunity?

Marcia and Jennie with the BBD Team



Computer Lab

Grand Opening!

As our teens grow and get closer to adulthood, we are endeavoring to provide as many opportunities for them to gain skills and be equipped for the future. Thanks to the generosity of BBD, a South African software development company where our Kerus Board Member, Johan Mostert IV is an executive, the Kerus Go Amogela Orphan Care Center now boasts a new computer lab with six laptop computers and a server in the Kerus Academic Enrichment Center.

Most families in Soshanguve cannot afford a computer, and there is very little access to computers or the internet. The kids are incredibly excited to learn computer skills that will help them with their school work and open up job opportunities for them in the future.

The lab will also allow us to upgrade all of the programs we have for teens and for the grannies. The possibilities are endless!

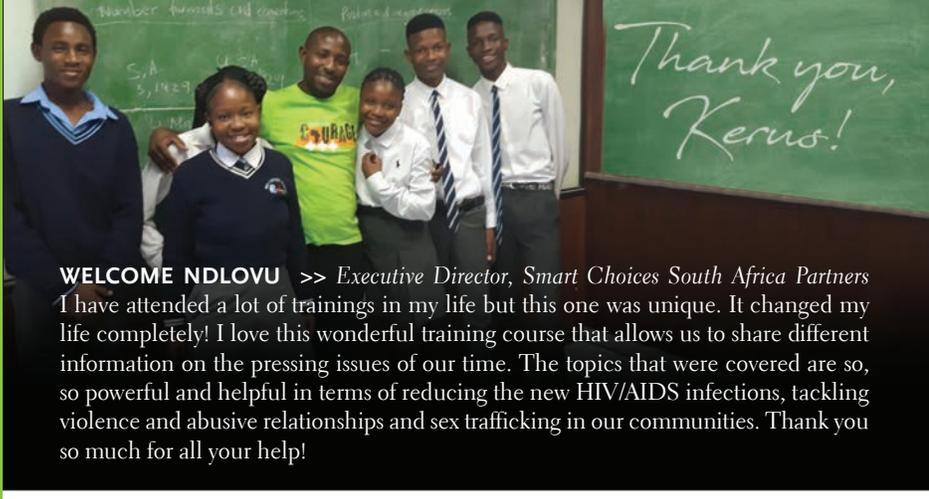
What a blessing to have BBD, a local company, invest in the center in such a meaningful way. We are grateful for such a wonderful partnership!

This will change the future for our children!



To become a part of the Soshanguve family, visit

www.kerusglobal.org



WELCOME NDLOVU >> *Executive Director, Smart Choices South Africa Partners*
I have attended a lot of trainings in my life but this one was unique. It changed my life completely! I love this wonderful training course that allows us to share different information on the pressing issues of our time. The topics that were covered are so, so powerful and helpful in terms of reducing the new HIV/AIDS infections, tackling violence and abusive relationships and sex trafficking in our communities. Thank you so much for all your help!

KHUMBELO RAMARU >> *Elementary Teacher* I am a primary school educator in Soshanguve and it has been an amazing experience to work with children. I attended my first *It Takes Courage!* conference in 2015; the experience changed me both personally and professionally. The tools that were taught apply to both adults and youth which makes the curriculum so impactful. I noticed my interaction with my students changed. There was a new found depth which allowed me to help them realize their potential and decision-making skills required to progress towards their goals. I thank Dr. Marcia and Dr. Jennie for developing a life-changing curriculum and availing themselves to equip us to influence the lives of children.

GIVEN BAYO-AFOLABI >>
Kerus Orphan Care Center Administrator

It fills my heart with joy and my face brightens up as I reflect on what I have experienced through being a part of the *It Takes Courage!* movement here in South Africa. Over the past seven years I've grown in my walk with Jesus and my character continues to develop. I face fear and adversity with courage and have learned to put my trust in God. I now feel a sense of belonging like never before and I so love working at the center and caring for our precious little ones that come to us with such hurt and sadness. Dr. Ball and Dr. Cerullo are my mentors, sisters and dear friends, and now as an adult I feel more confident and skilled not only at work but at home with my husband and children. Because my life was changed so drastically through *ITC!* and my relationship with Kerus, I named my last baby girl Kerus. She is almost three years old now and such a joy! She is a little girl that does life with all her heart and a lot of passion! That's why Kerus is the perfect name for her. Thank you for investing in Kerus and directly impacting my life and showing me the love of Jesus.



Baby Kerus and Given



Nelly and Audrey

AUDREY HLONGWANE >>
Kerus Orphan Care Center Social Worker

I have been working as the social worker at the Kerus Go Amogela Orphan Care Center in Soshanguve for the past four years. I had heard about *[ITC!]* and have observed our care givers teaching the lessons to our kids but actually attending the conference was a life changing experience for me. I learned a lot about my personal life. I especially loved all the discussion about life choices and the practical skills I learned to help our youth make wise choices. If I could turn back the clock of my life, my choices would be so different. I'm so grateful to be a part of the Kerus family and for my growth personally, professionally and especially spiritually.



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