



## COMMUNITY FOCUS IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Being part of and integrated with the local community is essential for the longevity and soul of iThemba. The past quarter has demonstrated the value of these links and that they bring with them so many rewards on different levels. Exciting projects involving children from the community and iThemba included (pictured from top left clockwise): the interactive Side-Kick Academy, swimming lessons at St Mary's DSG, Kearsney College boys assisting on the campus and handing out of 'Containers of Hope' giftbags. See inside for more details.

# Message from the Chairman



As I walk over to the edge of our property and look over the magnificent sight of the Valley of 1000 Hills with its peaceful sounds and serenity, its beauty is marred by the thought of the 4000 children on our doorstep who have lost one or both of their parents, scared and abandoned ...where is their hope?

Fortunately, iThemba is strategically placed, bordering on the Embo community and adjacent to suburbia. This

enables us to respond to the needs of the community in a relevant way as we try to raise the awareness of this plight and allow the community to reach out and touch lives.

Our message of Hope is continuing. Over the past few months the campus has been alive with activity.

Through the generosity of our friends, Jenna and Ashley, we were able to hold a two week holiday camp for local children focusing on fun, friendship and values. Winshape International held a Leadership conference which drew on members of the community from the valley and from the suburbs, who benefited from the knowledge and advice of top American professionals. Our local schools – Kearsney College, the Hillcrest Christian Academy and St Mary's DSG, are sharing their resources and making a difference on our campus. Our iThemba children have also had the opportunity to give back and donate 'Containers of Hope' backpacks to the children in the valley. And most exciting, through our

deepened relationship with the local community leaders, we were able to host the Embo Chief's wedding here on our iThemba Campus.

We have a dream to open up **at least one new home every year** for six additional children in each home. Plans are well on the way to having our fourth home opened in October this year. Thank you all once again for helping us provide hope for more children as we at iThemba spread our message of hope!

Sincerely

Danie van den Heever

P.S. As we look back on these last few months, it is difficult to report back on all the things that have been happening here. If you are in the area, please come and visit. We would love you to meet our great kids and show you around the campus.

## iThemba children update

### JOSEPH HOUSE

**Peaceful** continues to live off campus but comes home regularly to visit. She is doing well in her studies and is hoping to be able to combine her studies with work next year. **Promise** is very excited as she has officially passed Grade 12 and is now looking into what course she would like to study next year. She has really grown in maturity since she started working and her employer speaks very highly of her. **Chris** has been accepted into Kearsney College for 2009. He has been commended for his leadership at school and was voted by his peers to be the Deputy Head of his House. This is a great honour and Isaac and Christina are very proud of him. **Brian** is making steady progress at school and is very settled at home.

### ESTHER HOUSE

**Ndu** has started his electrician course at Thekwini College. He is really enjoying the course and is applying himself well. **Lindo** and **Musa** are continuing to make steady progress at the iThemba Academy. Options for them to work in the fields of hair-dressing and catering respectively are being explored. Musa recently celebrated his 16th birthday and is now the proud owner of an ID Book (see Q&A on opposite page). Lindo and Musa attended the Scripture Union camp for the first time and had a fantastic time and built good friendships. **Zama**, **Sanele** and **Sphe** continue to make good progress at school.

### JOSHUA HOUSE

**David** has been excelling on the sports field with hockey, athletics and cross country. **Nandi** has also been excelling in athletics. She and **Peter** are both coping well at school and making steady progress. They are all very settled in their home and with their family.



**NEW FACES ON CAMPUS** - We are delighted to welcome three new children to the campus: **Nokulunga** (above left) a delightful nine year old girl who has been placed in Esther House. She has settled in very well and is already expanding her English skills. The second and third children are siblings, 17 year old **Thokozani (TK)** and his 10 year old sister, **Nomfundo**. They are presently staying at Joseph House. They are both delightful children. TK is a very keen rugby player and is hoping to make his first team at school. He also loves drama, poetry and playing the piano. Nomfundo is a pleasant friendly child who always has a smile on her face.



## Q & A with Musa

Creative, determined and talented are a few words to describe Musa. He is a valued member of Esther House and is continually demonstrating the power that love and care can have in making a difference to an individual. He recently visited his previous foster home (*pictured on cover*) where he handed out gift bags to the children, which he found very rewarding. He is shining on the hockey field and his talents were noticed by Kearsney College, a top local school. We caught up with him and asked him a few questions...

*What does hope mean to you?*

*To never give up - that you have hope for tomorrow. A hopeful future.*

*You are very creative, especially in the kitchen, what inspires you to cook?*

*My grandfather was a chef, so it runs in the family. When I am in the kitchen I just get ideas, I don't follow recipes I just use my mind. I like to work with my hands. I also like baking, interior design and decorating the table, photography and craftwork. I was inspired by my Aunt Eunice from my previous foster home - she is also very creative.*

*How did it feel visiting your previous foster home and handing out the 'Containers of Hope' gift bags?*

*I love helping other people. I always want to help others before myself. The bags were full of school books, stationary, sweets and more so it was wonderful to see all the smiles.*

*What motivates you on the hockey field and how did it feel to be included in one of the Kearsney teams?*

*I enjoy hockey and play right wing. I will also be joining the Kearsney teams for soccer and athletics in the next term, which is great.*

*How has your life changed since joining the iThemba family 18 months ago?*

*My life has changed so much. Especially with my schooling as I can attend extra lessons at the iThemba Academy. I get along with everyone and I like being around people so I am very happy here. iThemba is not an orphanage, it is a place where children can experience a real family life.*

## Local schools contribute to iThemba



*Nandi and Cameron (from Kearsney College) team together and paint one of the iThemba Academy buildings.*

Sharing and linking with the community is a key objective at iThemba. Two exciting partnerships with leading local schools, Kearsney College and St Mary's DSG, have been very encouraging. In August 60 learners from Kearsney visited the campus and spent the afternoon painting school buildings and digging

trenches for computer cables, as part of their outreach programme.

"We want to help where we can," said Jason Temlett, a Grade 10 pupil from Kearsney. "We are all part of the community and are all one big family. We learn a lot of humility through these programmes."

Kearsney boys have been assisting at iThemba for the past couple of months and plans are in place to continue in the future.

"We are called to serve," explained Mr Zungu, teacher at Kearsney. "Every boy must experience life and help the community."

In addition Judy Ambrose, teacher at St Mary's DSG, is offering swimming lessons to iThemba children (*pictured on cover*). The lessons are highly anticipated as some of the children have not had the opportunity to swim and splash in a swimming pool. Raising confidence in the water is essential, as the ability to swim is an important life skill. The progress is already encouraging.

It is hoped that through partnerships like these the Academy will quickly grow from strength to strength.

## Conference reaches in & out

The thought provoking Chick-fil-A SERVE Leadership Development Conference was hosted at the iThemba Campus in June. Conference attendees included local business people and leaders from the Embo Valley. Top business professionals from the USA facilitated the training and imparted knowledge on: shaping the future, engaging with others, reinvention, valuing results and relationships and embodying values. The local Embo Chief, Dominic, attended the conference and benefited from the leadership training. He is a key figure in the community and it is wonderful that he is inspired by the work at iThemba and the knowledge he can obtain from and share with the organisation. He was married to the lovely Thandeka in June (pictured below) at the iThemba chapel. It was a joyous occasion and the iThemba team were fortunate to be invited to enjoy the celebrations.



## Side-Kick Academy shines



Two effervescent girls from the USA, Jenna Bagnoli and Ashley Maydwell (pictured right), decided to take action and make a real difference in South Africa. Their brainchild was the 'Side-Kick Academy', which aimed to share and teach important values to children in a fun interactive way. The duo fundraised for two months in the USA and raised enough capital to run the programme, provide food and material for crafts. From 30 June to 11 July they hosted an amazing camp tailored for children between ages 5 to 10 years. Children from iThemba, the Embo Valley, the local community and the USA attended the Academy. Values they explored were - the power of prayer and courage, forgiveness, helping others, accountability and freedom. Each day included a session with crafts and activities which kept the little minds very entertained. New friendships were formed and it was inspiring to witness the profound learning.



## We value your support

Supporting iThemba can bring much significance to your life when you realise the **tremendous impact** of the organisation. There is no monetary value to witnessing a spontaneous smile when previously there was doubt and confusion. **Take a step today** to join our family and know that you too are part of this movement which brings positive change.

Our friends and donors, both locally and abroad, are most valued and **crucial** to the longevity and sustainability of the organisation. Should you feel moved to donate please notify us of any deposits made so that we can issue a tax certificate and acknowledge your generosity. Donations can be made by direct deposit into the following accounts:

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## CONTACT US:

### South Africa:

Focus on iThemba

Tel: +27 (0)31 716 3339

Fax: +27 (0)31 766 1949

Email: [info@focusonithemba.org](mailto:info@focusonithemba.org)

[www.focusonithemba.org](http://www.focusonithemba.org)

### USA:

Friends of iThemba

Tel: (908) 771 9110

Fax: (908) 771 0382

Email: [BagnoliPM@comcast.net](mailto:BagnoliPM@comcast.net)

[www.focusonithemba.org](http://www.focusonithemba.org)

Thank you for harnessing the power of hope and making a significant difference in the lives of South Africa's future leaders.