



THE MAMELODI INITIATIVE

Learn. Grow. Dream. Achieve.



SUMMER PROGRAM 2015 FINAL REPORT

mamelodi.org



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I. The Challenge



Nelson Mandela once said, "Education is the most powerful weapon you can use to change the world." Unfortunately, dropout rates in Gauteng are extremely high, with only 40% of individuals age 20 and above in the province having passed Matric. Research shows that coloured and black learners are the most likely to drop out, while whites were the least likely,¹ making the issue of dropouts even more urgent in the township communities. Increased dropout rates inherently means less job opportunities for our youth and leads to more reliance on governmental subsidies and higher crime rates in the community.

What research has found is that the drop-out rate dramatically increases from grades 10 to 12. Part of the reason for dropouts is an accumulation of a knowledge gap. The Annie E. Casey Foundation and the Center for Summer Learning at Johns Hopkins University have both consistently pointed to summer learning loss as one of the major contributing factors to lack of success in school.² John Hopkins University has said that the summer learning loss for low-income or disadvantaged youth is at least double the summer learning loss of non-low income counterparts who traditionally have greater access to summer and holiday programming.³

Beyond competing against summer learning loss, many youth don't have the soft skills to succeed in secondary school. The report by the Department of Basic Education said that a "proportion of children starting Grade 9 [are] not in a position to finish secondary school,"⁴ leading to a "high failure rate, repetition, and dropping out in grades 10 to 12."⁵

¹ <http://www.citypress.co.za/SouthAfrica/News/School-drop-out-mystery-20100117>

² Doesn't Every Child Deserve a Memorable Summer?, Center for Summer Learning at Johns Hopkins University, 26 February 2008, 5 March 2008

<<http://www.summerlearning.org/media/researchandpublications/Memorable.Summer.Fact.Sheet.Final.2.26.08.pdf>> ; Doesn't Every Child Deserve a Memorable Summer?, Center for Summer Learning at Johns Hopkins University, 26 February 2008, 5 March 2008
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II. The Purpose

The primary purpose of the Mamelodi Initiative Summer Program is to support the Mamelodi school system and Mamelodi community in giving our learners the skills necessary to succeed in school, careers, and life. Our vision is to see every child in Mamelodi achieve success in secondary school. The program aims to stifle summer learning loss and provide essential soft skills to students so that they can achieve what is expected of them at the secondary level and be prepared to continue to University. The Summer Program provides a safe space for students to “**learn, grow, dream, and achieve.**” Through the summer, students are exposed to strong role models, enriching workshops, stimulating activities, and essential soft skills. The program prioritizes building meaningful relationships with youth and endowing them with the understanding that they don’t have to be another statistic.

The Mamelodi Initiative seeks to have a holistic, long-term impact our students rather than a one-time, solely academically focused one. It is therefore not uncommon to see our volunteers seeking to address students’ physical, emotional, spiritual, and relational needs in addition to helping them learn practical skills. We also find that the teaching goes both ways; volunteers are often taught more than they had anticipated to learn from our students – from phrases in Sepedi, to lessons in cultural tolerance, to the true meaning of *ubuntu*.





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III. The Program

The Mamelodi Initiative 2015 Summer Program ran for seven full days during 5 - 10 and 12 of January from 9AM to 2PM. In addition, we had a follow-up session for our students after the first school day of the year, from 2:30 - 5PM on 14 January. During these times, students in grade 8 through 12 came to the University of Pretoria, Mamelodi campus to engage in morning small groups, afternoon enrichment activities, and fun-filled opening and closing sessions.

Mornings

Each day of program started and ended with an all-group session. The morning sessions had a powerful motivational speaker who talked about a variety of issues affecting high school students and people in general. Notable speakers this year included Edwin Smith, director of the UP Mamelodi campus, and Reverend John Walton, Professor of Divinity at Harvard University. In addition to these talks, we used the morning time to sing gospel songs (as requested by the students), share important announcements, and engage in friendly competitions, i.e. crazy hat contests and cheering rallies.

Small Groups

Small groups were essential to the success of this program. During small group time, a class of 10-13 learners and three teachers focused on essential soft skills to help the students excel in high school and beyond.

Grade 8 learners focused on study skills. The topics included time management and goal setting, effective studying, note and test taking, essay writing, and peer pressure and stress management.

Grade 9 learners pursued our leadership curriculum, which was designed to explore their past, present, and future as a leader. The curriculum was designed to have the students think about where they come from and what they are bringing with them as they develop into leaders. Next, they learned practical skills such as public speaking and problem solving. Finally, they focused on framing themselves as leaders of the future – writing a “leader” biography, taking part in simulations where each learner took on important leadership roles in the government, etc.

Grade 10 learners focused on our community engagement curriculum, which was first piloted during our 2014 summer holiday program. This curriculum started by teaching an “asset-based” community development model, looking at the assets in their community (rather than the negative aspects of it), and then using those assets to make positive change. The students were then encouraged to think critically about how to come up with and implement a service project, using skills such as community asset mapping and asking themselves what assets and passions they bring to the table. For the final full day of program, these students organized an outreach day during which they visited SOS Children’s Village in Mamelodi, serving the young children there through playing games with and serving lunch to them.



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This year, we also piloted a new entrepreneurship program called CREED (CREating Entrepreneurial EnDeavors) for selected grade 11 learners. During this program, learners were exposed to the basics of how to start a business, make a business plan, present their ideas, and think innovatively.



Our growing Team Matric program provided intense academically focused tutoring to students in grade 11 and 12, in preparation for their matriculation exam. This portion of the program provided support in various specific subjects, including maths, accounting, physical sciences, life sciences, English and other subjects for which the students required extra tutoring. Team Matric students were involved in our morning sessions, but focused solely on academics for the rest of the day.

The most important part of these small groups came not with the curriculum, but with the relationships formed. Teachers and learners had ample time to bond due to the small teacher-to-student ratio as well as an overall emphasis on holistic support for each individual student. Each learner had at least three strong role models to which they are able to ask questions during the



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program. Many of these relationships persist today, since these teachers go to local universities and are able to follow up with the learners.

Afternoon Workshops

The afternoons were set aside for enrichment workshops. Each workshop was designed to provide an enriching experience to our students, allowing them to explore new skills and gain new understandings of skills already possessed.

For an hour and a half each afternoon, learners took part in the following workshops: [American Football](#), [Ballroom Dancing](#), [Basketball](#), [Bible Study](#), [Chess](#), [Football \(Soccer\)](#), [Music](#), [Photography](#), [Public Speaking](#), and [Spoken Word](#). At the end of the program, each performance-based workshop had an opportunity to perform what they had learned in front of their fellow students, teachers, and community members involved in the UP Mamelodi campus.



Closing Session

The afternoon allowed for final announcements and a daily competition between our small groups (or classes). Each small group was given a name, i.e. Sharks, Panthers, and Meerkats. This facilitated a team mentality amongst each small group, as well as a spirit of friendly competition between the



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teams. Points were given to each team according to overall behavior, team spirit, and performance in the afternoon competitions.



Volunteers

The Mamelodi Initiative Summer Program is made possible by the large corps of volunteers that give their time to make positive change in the Mamelodi community. The Mamelodi Initiative Summer Program 2015 was our ninth installment of holiday programming. Approximately 30 South African varsity students from the University of Pretoria, the University of the Witswatersrand, and other universities came together to make this program possible; as well as 12 American university students from Harvard University, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), and Cornell University. Each class was co-taught by two South African university students and one American university student.

In addition to teacher volunteers, we had an immense amount of help from those who helped in an administrative context. For this program, we had at least 20 volunteers who helped with everything from mixing juice concentrate, to printing and distributing attendance sheets; from monitoring halls and bathrooms, to coming up with creative game ideas.

Our two staff members directed the program, making sure all administrative details were in line in order to make it happen effectively. They were in charge of recruiting volunteers, delegating tasks, managing resources, pre-program communication and preparation, post-program reporting, arranging transportation, and general crisis management.



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IV. The Goals

The goals for the Mamelodi Initiative Summer Program focused on four areas: providing a safe and fun program, providing academic skills, providing enrichment activities, and providing individual and personal growth.

Programmatic

- To create a safe and comfortable space for students to learn, grow, dream, and achieve
- To help youth have fun while learning
- To foster an environment where cultural exchange occurs

Academic Skills

- To equip grade 8 students with basic study skills necessary to succeed in secondary school
- To equip grade 9 students with fundamental leadership skills to create effective change
- To equip grade 10 students with skills necessary for effective community engagement
- To equip grade 11 students with entrepreneurial skills and to think “outside the box”
- To provide much needed academic tutoring for grade 11 and 12 learners
- To have learners set out goals for academic year 2015

Enrichment Activities

- To expose youth to new activities and experiences
- To engage youth in a culminating project to demonstrate new skills learned

Individuals

- To provide positive role models for our youth
- To grant space for personal, emotional, and spiritual growth

The Mamelodi Initiative Summer Program aims to create genuine, caring relationships between the learners and volunteers so that we can impact the learner holistically, not just academically. We try to attain this result by recruiting as many volunteers as possible, thereby lowering the learner-teacher ratio. We hope that developing and maintaining these relationships will benefit the students in the long run, for they will gain mentors in the long run rather than just in the holidays.



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V. The Results

Throughout the program, we used several metrics to evaluate the success of the project. Our primary data collection methods were daily attendance, teaching hours, and post-camp student surveys.

Attendance indicates satisfaction with a program and a feeling that one is learning something. The program's **final enrollment was 220 students, with a 76% attendance rate**. In addition, due to space limitations, the Mamelodi Initiative had to turn away about 50 students per day for the last four days of our program. These 220 students represented about 20 secondary schools serving the Mamelodi Township. Each learner received sixteen hours of skill-based curriculum and twelve hours of enrichment activities, for an effective total of 1,664 morning curriculum hours and 1,248 enrichment activity hours delivered to Mamelodi youth.

Furthermore, youth were given the opportunity to give feedback on the summer program curriculum. **The learners' responses were overwhelmingly positive.**

96% of learners reported that they felt excited to come to program in the morning; 95% also said that they had a good time. 90% made new friends, while ALL 100% of students reported that they felt safe at the program. These numbers indicate that students felt the program was a comfortable and fun place to be.

Data confirming our ability "to provide positive role models for our youth" was a bit more difficult to directly collect. However, our data implies that the program was also successful in this area. 93% of students reported that their teachers were positive role models for them. Overall, we are proud that 95% of learners said they had a good time at program and 93% of learners reported that they would recommend the program to their friends.

The results inherently lack understanding of the long-term effect of the program on Mamelodi learners. The Mamelodi Initiative plans to track its students from Grade 8 through Matric year and beyond. Though this data collection will take time, the Mamelodi Initiative is confident that this program will make a long-term difference in the lives of our learners.



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VI. Sustainability

The Mamelodi Initiative is concerned with two forms of sustainability: sustainability of achievement and longevity of the program. In regards to sustainability of achievement in our learners, learners from the summer program have the opportunity to be involved in year-round programming. The Mamelodi Initiative has a strong program with the Mae Jemison Reading Room, a year round library available to Mamelodi high school students. Students are welcome to attend the library any day after school during the term. Also, past holiday program participants have priority acceptance to a winter program focusing on academic excellence.

In terms of longevity of the program, the Mamelodi Initiative grounds programming in strategic partnerships. Cru continues to send US volunteers every January and June / July to act as co-teachers in the holiday programming, as they have since January of 2011. Furthermore, the University of Pretoria has committed their support to the program through the use of university space on the Mamelodi campus free of charge. The Mae Jemison Reading Room, a partnership between the University of Pretoria and the US Embassy, has been a pivotal partner in recruitment of kids and as a resource for our after school participants to use for research and homework needs.

The work of our two year-round staff members ensures that all groundwork leading up to the programs is taken care of, and the ever-growing Steering Committee helps make their efforts a success. Some of our brightest and most involved students are also stepping up as "youth leaders," helping with the logistics the program and implementing their own service projects in their community throughout the year. These students have been involved in our holiday programs for years – some since 2011 – and plan to be a part of them in a leadership capacity for a long time to come.



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VII. Next Steps

Since 2011, the Mamelodi Initiative has seen a huge growth in attendance, programming, and partnerships. Our holiday programs are an indicator of just how much growth has happened --

- We now serve students in the triple digits – safely saying that we impact *hundreds* of students through our January Program than *tens*.
- We accommodate students from grade 8 through 12, growing from serving two grades (grade 8 & 9 in 2011) to five grades. We have also increased the diversity in subjects offered to account for this growth – classroom teaching includes study skills, leadership, community engagement, entrepreneurship, and academic matric tutoring.

Currently, we are working towards opening up a second site in Mamelodi. By 2015 June / July Program, we will have *two* holiday program sites, thereby reaching students who travel long distances or are unable to attend our camp due to lack of transportation.

We also hope to continue to grow the numbers of students attending January Program. This will mean finding more funding, volunteers, and doing a more robust outreach to inform students about the program ahead of time.



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VIII. Actuals, January 2015

Income (R)	
Sponsor	Amount
Cru	3 894,95
Individuals	6 440,00
Mawonga Group	2 000,00
Mr and Miss EBIT 2014	1 200,00
Ransom Foundation	2 314,22
Total Income	15 849,17

Expenses (R)	
Supplies	Amount
Printing; learners, teachers and manuals	1 320,00
Paper, awards, stationery	3 362,00
Total	4 682,00
Food	
All day program lunch (7 days)	7 577,22
Volunteer food (training, final thank-you braai)	1 894,95
Total	9 472,17
Transportation & Communication	
Petrol	1 100,00
Taxi fare	445,00
Airtime for internet	150,00
Total	1 695,00
Total Expenses	15 849,17

In-Kinded Resources	
Mamelodi Initiative	Sports equipment (from previous programs)
University of Pretoria - Mamelodi Campus	Space: Lecture halls, IT labs, sports grounds

The USD:ZAR conversion during January 2015 was 1:11.75. All values above are denoted in ZAR (rand).



IX. Thoughts from Learners

I learned...

"how to present in front of my peers and how to be an entrepreneur"
"public speaking" "how to start and run my own business"

"that I should always believe in myself no matter what
people think or say because nothing is impossible"

"that school is the key to success"

"about leadership: how to be a great leader, give speeches, and set smart goals to achieve"
"how to love and respect yourself and others"

If I could change program, I would...

"have it run throughout the year"

"make more subjects so that the learners could choose what they like"

"increase the program and make it also in December"

One great thing about program is...

"the teachers and the food they give us, we are thankful for that"

"gathering in the assembly with each and every group cheering for points"

"it taught me to communicate with my mates and my teachers"

"you get to learn new things. You leave with a lot of knowledge"

"all students were treated fairly and equally. The co-teachers were caring and loving."

"it keeps us busy and away from trouble"

"our teachers are very helpful and kind. They are good role models to me"

"sharp sharp"



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X. Thank Yous

We would like to extend a special thank you to all of the partners that made this summer program possible, most notably:

- The University of Pretoria, Mamelodi Campus
- Edwin Smith, Director of University of Pretoria Mamelodi Campus
- Dana Mahan, Partnership Development Coordinator at the Center for Contextualized Ministry, Faculty of Theology, University of Pretoria
- Our Partner Primary and Secondary Schools
- The Mae Jemison Reading Room and Staff
- Cru (formerly Campus Crusade for Christ)
- Pat McLeod, Cru Staff Leader
- Professor Jonathan L. Walton, Plummer Professor of Christian Morals and Professor of Religion and Society, Harvard University
- Our Steering Committee
- Richard Kelley, Founder of the Mamelodi Initiative, Program Director Emeritus
- Seikanelo Sedibane, Program Director Emeritus
- Mr. & Miss EBIT, Faculty of Engineering, Built Environment, Information Technology, University of Pretoria
- Mawonga Group
- Carol Matsheni
- Ransom Foundation

All of our AMAZING Volunteers!

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For more information, please visit mamelodi.org.