



PATHER EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE

Improving Learning Outcomes for Disadvantaged High School South African Students

The Problem: Access to Quality Education

South Africa faces a growing education crisis with millions of learners each year failing to complete high school and even more learners failing to enter a form of tertiary education. **Only 29% of students passed grade 12 in 2017.** Of the 29% who passed grade 12, **only 31% of them will enter onsite tertiary education. A mere 9% of High School learners.**

With a dearth of resources, teachers are overburdened and learners do not receive the attention and facilities they need to succeed. There are only 26 000 schools and 400 000 teachers for South Africa's 12 million secondary learners, resulting in an overwhelming faculty to student ratio. For students who do matriculate high school and qualify for tertiary education, there is a lack of institutions and funding to support them.

Academic universities **only have +- 70 000 positions available to the +- 230 000 students** who pass grade 12. There are only 26 universities for the 1 million students in tertiary education, with over 40% of these students studying part-time and offsite through programs like UNISA. Furthermore, for the lucky few who do enter tertiary education, most are unable to afford the cost of their tuition and additional costs.

Simply put, the lack of support and infrastructure **leaves struggling students with few prospects and opportunities for further education in South Africa.**

My Solution: PEDI

My solution is to grow my education initiative that **mentors and tutors underprivileged students** with the aim of **improving their access to tertiary education.**

In 2018, I started the Pather Education Development Initiative (PEDI) to help underprivileged students gain access to tertiary education by excelling in high school. I started by

working with the top 6 grade 11 learners at Centurion College in Hillbrow, Johannesburg. In a particularly dangerous part of the city, the high school sees only 4% of its students reach tertiary education.

I employed an academic tutor based in Johannesburg and personally tutored these 3 boys and 3 girls via WhatsApp and email to help them improve in their high school subjects and to apply to South African and US College programs with financial aid opportunities. **All 6 students have been accepted to South African Universities.** All the students wrote the SATs twice, with the top student achieving a score of 1360. Collectively they applied to 24 different US Colleges and we are eagerly awaiting their results.



My goal is to create a center at Centurion College that helps learners write international examinations like the SAT/ACT, prepare applications for US and South African universities, as well as provide tutoring and financial sponsorship for exams and application costs.

Additionally, I want to establish a **financial incentive program** at Centurion College to encourage students to improve their grades. Eg.) Students achieving a 10% increase in their GPA within a year would be awarded a scholarship paying for next year's tuition (R700 = \$50). This would encourage all students to improve, not just the top performing students. Given the incredibly low percentage of students who access tertiary education, as early as grade 9, students below the

top 10-15% of their class tend to become disillusioned with their studies and lose hope. This program would seek to combat this phenomenon, giving hope to students at every academic tier.

The Education Landscape

Several organizations exist, some of which for whom I have worked, that attend to education relief in South Africa, such as IkamvaYouth, GlobalGiving, Education Africa and Aid for Africa. However, most of these organizations are large and overly broad in their program initiatives. Additionally, very few of these organizations focus specifically on helping underprivileged students access tertiary education and almost none support applications to international programs in South Africa. Furthermore, I have not come across an organization implementing internal incentive programs within schools.

What Does Success Look Like?

Thus far, I have a 100% success rate as all 6 learners under PEDI have secured places in universities. Within one year, the 6 students improved their GPA by 25% on average. I will also measure my success by the acceptance rates of these students to US colleges, of which I hope one of the six students will be able to attend a US college on scholarship.

I have not been able to trial run the incentive program as yet, although all the teaching staff at Centurion are fully behind the idea.

My goals for 2020, and thus what I will measure success against include:

- Expand access to the program from top learners to any student at Centurion who wants support in applying to South African and US Colleges
- Getting 24 students from Centurion access to tertiary education (quadrupel 2019)
- 12 students apply to international programs
- At least 3 students enter US Colleges
- Employing a full-time academic tutor and an employee to help manage the program in South Africa
- Setting up a computer lab at Centurion to allow students to research different programs, study and practice online tests and eventually write application materials and submit applications.

Team

PEDI Founder: Kyllian Pather

2012 - 2014: Rotary President: Managed range of social programs and budget of <\$10 000

2015 - 2016: Ikamva Youth: Taught variety of subjects to grade 9 - 12 underprivileged students

Summer 2017: Intern at Africa-America Institute:

non-profit securing US College programs for African leaders (mostly post-graduates)

Support: Palesa Ramaisa: Principal

- Former teacher and principal at Centurion College for the past 30 years

I have known Palesa since 2013 when I worked with her as Rotary President.

Timeline

2019: First International Program

- 6 Students, all entering South African university
- 24 US Colleges applied to

2020: Create PEDI Center at Centurion College

- Q1:** Build Computer Lab with Internet Connectivity
 - Open program to all students
 - Implement incentive program across all grades of high school
- Q2:** Pre-College Exam Boot Camp
- Q3:** Write SATs and NBTs (South African Exams)
- Q4:** Host workshops on applying to South African Universities
 - Submit US Applications

Grant Budget

Computer Lab:

Monitor + Desktop + keypad = \$217 x 5 = \$1085

Internet: Wifi Router (\$50) + [(\$65/m) x 12] = \$78

SATs (Based on 2019):

\$107.50 per test x 2 per 12 learners = \$2 508

Books and Teaching Supplies (Based on 2019):

\$150 x 12 students = \$1300

Total PSCE Grant Budget:

\$1085+\$78+2508+1300 = **\$4 971**

Grant Outcomes: Center built, 12 learners through full program + Open center to all learners

I will approach a corporate sponsor for the computer lab, and other non-profits working in the space to collaborate. So far, however, I have not had any sponsors come on board. I will continue to attempt to bring in private donations, these have been PEDI's only stream income. All donations I collected for the program within the past 1.5 years has been spent on books, application materials, SAT tests and aid and college applications.

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