Always Keeping Girls in School campaign

Reitumetse Johnson

The final leg of the 2010 GEM/BEM Back to School Campaign saw us packing out luggage, banners, GEM/BEM guides and HCT questionnaires in the Mother City. But this time, we were joined by a five-member team from Procter & Gamble. The company has recently formed a partnership with the Department of Basic Education (DBE) called “Always Keeping Girls in School” campaign through the GEM/BEM movement.

The Western Cape girl learners were to be the first beneficiaries on the campaign, which saw Procter & Gamble announcing that they will adopt 9000 girl learners in all 9 provinces, by providing sanitary towels directly to them throughout the year. In the 3 districts in the Cape, we were hoping to introduce the girls to proper sanitary towels, and to get their opinions on the campaign.

According to DBE website, “Studies have shown that about 1 in 10 school age Africans do not attend school during menstruation. This suggests that girls are forced to be absent during their period, and thereby lose critical learning time. On average, about 4 days per month can be lost, which can add up to 528 days of schooling across the years that a girl should be in school. You will know that for poverty stricken families sanitary pads are simply too expensive”.

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Based on these facts it is imperative that the project is rolled out to reach needy girl learners. The Tshwane Municipality officially launched the campaign “Always Keeping Girls in School”, in March 2011 in Mamelodi. The Girls and Boys Education Movement clubs in their respective schools will be used to identify needy learners who will benefit directly from this project.

According to Procter & Gamble Manager for the Regulation and Technical Division, Ms Thando Mazibuko, “we aim to hand the pads directly on the hands of the girl learner. We will not be leaving stock with the school or district officials. Some of these girl learners are yet to communicate their challenges openly, hence we want them to use the towels and always have them with them. We are investigating ways in which we can do the hand-over and packaging which will not raise eyebrows or allow them to be victimised”.

While this is a noble project, both GEM/BEM and Procter & Gamble insist that the dignity of the learners must be maintained. To allow sustainability, this project will see all beneficiaries being registered to allow a second handover during the second term of the school academic calendar.

In the Western Cape, the project reached close to 200 girl learners per district, in the South, East and West Districts respectively. GEM/BEM Project Manager Eric Mlambo says “while we have noticed uneasiness from some quarters about the project, GEM/BEM will continue to identify needy learners. One of the objectives of the Girls and Boys Education Movement is to promote equal access to education to the girl and boy learner, and we see this program as another vehicle to making a difference in the lives of the learner”.

He adds that the campaign will soon be visiting other provinces and we hope that deserving girl learners will be the true beneficiaries, and that we will promote access and equality in education. Reitumetse Johnson is an intern at the Department of Basic Education.
The desk of the department

Ms Gugu Ndebele, Deputy Director General, Department of Basic Education

I had an opportunity to interact with some of the Girls and Boys Education Movement members. What a pleasure to know that we have young, gifted and articulate learners who are doing a good within their schools and respective communities.

I was part of a radio interview with two of the GEM/BEM members, and they blew me away with their ideas, calmness and most importantly on how they want to play a role in making our schools a safer and better place for their peers. Not only are they doing this for themselves, they are contributing towards building a better South Africa. The reality is that the Department of Basic Education needs to push harder for our learner's voices to be heard and send a strong message that education is a societal issue.

GEM/BEM has taken a few steps in the right direction in the last few months. I welcome the number of opportunities created for thousands of our learners who are part of the movement.

The recent GEM/BEM Back to School Road Show is a classical example of our commitment to positively reach more learners, even those in rural outskirts of our country. As we forge ahead in with our drive to create opportunities for you, the learner, I want to challenge you to use them. This year we plan to host a national GEM/BEM Camp during the Winter School Holidays, and we will be selecting some of the learners we met with as part of the road shows to participate in the upcoming 2011 International Climate Change Conference to be held in Durban in December.

I urge you to use the communication platforms created for you, GEM/BEM members. We have the Facebook page, Mxit and very soon a website dedicated to the activities of the Girls and Boys Movement will be up and running. Some of the new ideas include plans to award the best performing clubs and educators who are supporting your activities. I wish you all of the best for 2011 with your studies and activities that you engage in as clubs.

Ed’s corner

Eric Mlambo, GEM/BEM Project Manager

It's been fun, educational and full of surprises. That's how I can best describe my experiences nine months into my journey as family member of the Girls and Boys Education Movement.

I have been privileged to meet the brightest learners’ in all parts and corners of our beautiful country, South Africa. As I pen the second edition of Mover’s Forum, let me take this opportunity to reflect and let you inside the “think tank” of the movement.

The 2010 GEM/BEM Back to School Road Show was a success. We are starting to see the results with a number of you registering and getting in touch with us. We are happy that our face book page is alive and full of comments and ideas from club members.

We will be sending an annual program to your province and districts. Those that are able to follow us on Face book, you can view the document online. The movement will hold its first Bursary Symposium. We want to open funding and scholarship opportunities for you guys.

We have partnered with the International Marketing Council, Brand SA, and we plan to host a conference on the 11 of June 2011. We will be selecting some of the learners we met as part of the GEM/BEM Road Show to participate.

We plan to hold Educator Training session in the remaining 8 Provinces, with KZN being the first to have the training last November.

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The Girls and Boys education Movement kick started the academic year 2011 in style. The learner based movement, embarked on a nationwide road show aimed at educating communities about its programs while recruiting new learners to launch clubs. The road show proved to be the best way for the Department of Basic Education and UNICEF to reach learners on the ground. Planning for the road show started midyear in 2010, and by the first week of January 2011 it was time to hit the road for the GEM/BEM team.

The road show’s first stop was three semi-rural districts in Mpumalanga. At each event, 430 learners would pack the venue of the day, dressed in colourful school uniforms ready to be informed. The road show package included a bursary pack which proved to be a major hit with both the learners and educators. The GEM/BEM team would arrange all packs and put them on the chairs before hand, while learners were queuing to receive their lunch boxes. The information pack had amongst others a GEM/BEM guide book, a Speak Out booklet, GEM/BEM Pledge, Goals for life guide, Genderations publication for the educators, and questionnaires on HIV Counselling and Testing (HCT) Campaign.

At each venue, learners displayed various skills in reciting poems, singing and acting. The road show theme was based on social issues that learners experience at schools. By the time the road show headed to the north of the country for the 3rd show, it was evident that South African learners are talented, and needed a vehicle like GEM/BEM to showcase their skills and harness their leadership potential.

In Limpopo, Vhembe district learners had plans for their GEM/BEM clubs, ready to present to their peers. They were told of new opportunities such as participation to the Climate Change Conference to be held in Durban this year, the upcoming GEM/BEM National camp and participating in youth related activities. We left Limpopo shedding tears, due to the creativity of Capricorn District learners who came out of their shells and blew us away with their poems, dance and public...continued on page 5...

Ed’s corner...continued from pg 3

Clubs that will be active and show new ideas around climate change issues stand a chance of representing SA in the upcoming Climate Change Conference in December, to held in Durban. We are also looking for clubs to help us identify needy learners that can be beneficiaries to the sanitary pads program we are rolling out nationwide.

And finally, for the first time we will be awarding the hardworking club and leaders of GEM/BEM. The long awaited GEM/BEM awards will be held later in the year when all the Gemmers and Bemmers convene for the annual GEM/BEM camp in December. Those that have access to Internet and MobiSite, brace yourself for the GEM/BEM interactive website coming your way. You can also give us ideas, on how you want the website to look, via our face book page: Girls’ and Boys’ Education Movement South Africa.
speaking abilities. It was evident that GEM/BEM has a bright future in Limpopo.

The next Province on the line was the Free State. Most of the learners invited were being introduced to GEM/BEM for the first time; however, the moment they were given the mic, they acted out the social challenges faced by learners daily at their respective schools. From the plays presented by the learners, they showed learner and educator sexual relationship and its impact on both individuals.

The talented learners dazzled us when they demonstrated how needy learners are treated by their peers at our schools. The lessons were out there, that there is room for the movement to mobilize, educate while changing perceptions and bad behavioral patterns of some of our learners.

Eastern Cape was fun, we got to see for the first time a district GEM/BEM choir. A club from Dimbaza Township, Nobuntu Senior Primary displayed their vegetable produce, earning praise from their peers and educators from other schools. Two ex-convicts addressed the learners while police and officials from the Department of Social Development in all three districts, presented possible partnerships with the clubs.

The Northern Cape was the next destination, for the road show and the province has a huge number of active GEM/BEM clubs. We had learners presenting their action plans and reports while a group of ex-convicts shared their stories of criminal activities and life behind bars. Their stories were captivating, relevant and had a bad ending, but it was a way to educate learners about the end results of crime.

The North West Province disappointed us, we went there expecting to meet learners and share with them what GEM/BEM is about. The road show had to be called off due to poor organization and lack of communication on the part of the province. GEM/BEM and UNICEF ambassador, Tsheddi Mholo, accompanied us to Potchefstroom and she shed a tear, lamenting poor organization and lack of willingness by the gender equity team in that province to organize events effectively.

We headed to KwaZulu-Natal which was our next destination. Similarly to the North West, bad planning and poor communication syndrome reared its head once again.

Gauteng and the Western Cape were the last provinces to host the GEM/BEM Back to School road show, and what a pleasure to work with. Learners shared their dancing skills, mingled, and exchanged ideas on ways to better improve their club structures. In the end, it was money well spent, it was worth the trials and tribulations the team went through while organizing the events. A data base of actors, writers, singers, poets, public speakers, dancers and future leaders is now in place, and we must use the movement to propel them further in their lives. After all, GEM/BEM is the friend to the learner.

Let’s get this show on the road...continued from pg 4
Touring the country to meet the clubs

Reitumetse Johnson

Okay! I know that the title says end of the Road, but I want to start at the beginning. My name is Reitumetse Johnson and I am an intern at the Department of Basic Education, Gender Equity Directorate. When I joined the Department I was told that I was going to support the GEM/BEM movement...what! I knew nothing about GEM/BEM or the work they do.

I must say that I feel immensely privileged to be afforded the opportunity to travel around the country getting to interact with youth folk and possible future presidents and Kwazulu singers. I am now convinced that what the politicians are saying about the skills shortage in the country is soon to be a thing of the past. I met learners in semi-rural Mpumalanga who had goals of becoming mathematicians, scientist, engineers, social workers, artists and politicians. Let me not forget the ones in Limpopo who were just passionate about motivating other learners. I saw a girl who sings much better than Beyonce form the Western Cape and a white brother who dispelled the myth that white people cannot dance; he out-danced his compatriot from other schools in Vhembe district, Limpopo.

Every single province had its own magic, dazzle, and well deserved bravo. I fully understood the phrase “every child is a national asset”. GEM/BEM in our lifetime... the Road is only beginning.

Reitumetse Johnson is an intern at the Department of Basic Education

GEM/BEM opens the door of opportunity

Catherine Seabi, Princess High School, Grade 11

Since being recognised as an ambassador for GEM/BEM, it has opened my eyes to a new world of opportunities. First, I was selected to be part of a radio interview representing my GEM/BEM club. I was excited, told my school principal, my club members and family to tune in to Kaya FM, a Gauteng radio station. It was my first time visiting a radio station, let alone being given an hour to speak about what I love - peer education and my role as GEM/BEM diamond.

So far, I have been to TV studios where I was interviewed on YO-TV, Soweto TV and numerous skill based workshops. But I have to mention the presentation workshop held in Sandton, Johannesburg late last year, 2010, which was organized by the SAMAFCO Trust. I was asked to present about anything, I took chance and introduced a concept aimed at getting school learners to play an active role in the country’s economy. I called it SASEM, South African Scholars’ Economic Education Movement.

This initiative came from my own experiences as a learner and the challenges I had to overcome. I always felt that I should be able to earn an income or come up with ideas that can generate income. An official from SAMAFCO has since asked me to prepare an proposal, with the view of assisting me to put my concept into reality.

I was also lucky to be chosen to be part of the Video shoot of the Department of Basic Education. The video was introducing a departmental program called Care and Support for Teaching and Learning. I got to meet and work with a TV personality, Andile Gaelisiwe, from the Khumbula’ ekaya fame.

I am excited by the opportunities that GEM/BEM has created for me. I am grateful to the guidance provided by GEM/BEM Project Manager, Eric Mlambo.
When the SABC radio news aired a story depicting the conditions faced by South African girl learners at schools, who had no access to proper sanitary towels, most people reacted with shock. The story was part of the annual Women’s Day Celebrations, aimed at establishing whether we are making a difference in the lives of women and girls in South Africa.

A higher percentage of the girls interviewed by the SABC News said they chose to stay at home when they were menstruating for fear of being victimized. Some of the learners said they used toilet papers, newspapers and old clothing material as sanitary pads because their families could not afford to buy them proper towels. This is despite the health implications and dangers faced by these learners. Most South Africans who heard the broadcast responded positively by donating sanitary towels, tampons, soaps and roll-on.

Since than, there have been calls for legislation and for new measures to be introduced aimed at making schooling comfortable for girl learners.

The Gender Equity Directorate at the Department of Basic Education is leading an internal campaign aimed at getting the DBE employees to donate sanitary towels. Baskets have been placed at the Department’s entrance points and staff members are urged to donate.

The directorate is evaluating the donations, and plans are underway to host the first in-house fund-raising event during the second school term. Staff members will be grouped according to their surnames and they will be making donations in groups with a winner-takes-all prize awaiting the group that donates more.

This initiative is earmarked to be held monthly in partnership with the country’s biggest pads manufacturers and distributors, Procter & Gamble. The company distributes the Always brand and has a program called Always Keeping Girls in School. The program is aimed at providing sanitary towels to needy girl learners in South Africa. The company has further committed itself to match the in-house collections, and work with the Girls and Boys Education Movement in identifying needy and deserving learners as recipients.
As part of strengthening the Girls and Boys Education Movement, UNICEF organized training for selected educators in KwaZulu-Natal. The training of educators came after the Gender Equity directorate identified the need to assist district officials who were struggling to reach all schools with the view of supporting and starting new Girls and Boys Education Clubs.

In Partnership with the Department of Education in KZN, 12 districts were grouped into four clusters. This allowed the training sessions to take place over a week. The first group of educators was trained on the 5th and 6th November 2010. The training targeted educators who were never exposed to the Girls and Boys Education Movement, and those that needed support.

The expected outcome was to get educators to know about GEM/BEM, and for them to understand what the clubs or movement focused on. As part of the training pack, educators were given a guideline on starting a GEM/BEM club, suggested activities that they may choose and how to report to the national office. The pack also included a “Speak Out” booklet, which addresses cases of sexual abuse and harassment at schools. They were also given GEM/BEM newsletter, Mover’s Forum and a form to register their clubs.

The first training workshop was held in Durban CBD, on the 12th and 13th November 2010. Over 90 educators volunteered to work with the GEM/BEM movement from the first three districts and arrived at the venue in high spirits. Most of the educators were introduced to GEM/BEM for the first time, and they showed interest to the program. After a presentation on what GEM/BEM can do for a school and its learners, educators got stuck in preparing plans for their respective schools and districts. This was done with support from the districts’ gender focal persons.

Educators from the Illembe, Pinetown and Umlazi districts shared their visions and passion for developing youth.
Wow! I do not think I have enough words to describe this, to me it seems like an adventure or treasure hunting. I have had quite a few fantastic experiences in my short life but the 10th of February 2011 was the BEST. I attended a workshop, which was very interesting. Then the facilitators introduced GEM/BEM, for the life of me I did not know what they were talking about until I really listened. This sounded like a support group across the bar for all learners something that can make our schooling careers more worthwhile.

You begin to feel responsible for each other, you start caring about one another and most of all you feel for each other. To me that is the most humane act in the world. I would love to promote this group (GEM/BEM) and become an Ambassador for them someday.

The open house Q & A sessions put me on a high – because anyone and everyone participated, whereas at school it’s different. It was a fun learning experience – having this educational session in a mixed group was not volatile it was quite conducive. The crux was when ‘Malaika’ started speaking, she enthralled and captivated her audience and just about everyone hung onto her every word.

GEM/BEM can offer learners, a sense of purpose, a desire to live life to the full, an ability to have and to maintain good relationships with friends and family. Good self-confidence and it can equip us on how to deal with life’s ups and downs. All this is possible depending on how the individual chooses to look at GEM/BEM!

We are all forced to face the challenges thrown at us every day – we become overwhelmed, lost and miserable and nobody knows what we have gone through before getting to school. The moment you hook up with your fellow learners everything can change because you will now have the support you need.

You will become so motivated because your sister and your brother will be here to share your thirst for knowledge and you will be helping each other and promoting each other – no more failure – no more drop-out – no more hunger – no more rapes that you cannot talk about – no more feeling guilty - no more fear of the future. We will guarantee to stand together: What’s that famous saying - Ah yes, UNITED WE STAND, DIVIDED WE FALL!

Now, you will see that there is a light at the end of the tunnel – which of course is GEM/BEM. UNICEF supports the program, and the opportunities for club members are limitless. From participating in local workshops, national and international summits for youth leaders, and that’s where I see myself in the next four years. As a learner, you get to visit companies in the engineering field, enter the world of Science and Technology, Medicine, etc. This club and group are waiting on the sidelines with open arms all we have to do is step up to the plate.

Thus enhancing your chances of being who you want to be!

Have your say: the values of GEM/BEM

Atiyah Osman-Latib, Potchefstroom Secondary School, Grade 10

Atiyah (top) is an energetic learner from the North-West Province who was a 1st prize winner in the junior phase at her school in 2010 and was featured in her local newspaper.
Taking on the world, one step at a time

“Our club is based in Zone Q, which is a developing community, under Lebowakgomo Lepelle-Nkumpi local Municipality, Limpopo Province. Zone Q is still new area of RDP houses. The environment of this area is unpleasant and unhealthy; there are many social issues, which need special attention. As there is a lack of education, skills and knowledge about how to develop the community that is where our group comes in.”

- Bridget Mphahlele, leader of Genius Buddies of GEM/BEM

The Genius Buddies GEM/BEM club’s objective includes educating group members about morals, good values and ethics, to take care of the environment and create a healthy community, to socialize with their peers while educating the youth about the benefits of being a GEM/BEM member.

Lebowakgomo is an hour’s drive from Polokwane, in Limpopo Province, and this is where the 16-year-old Bridget Mphahlele is quietly making waves as a GEM/BEM leader. The outspoken, charismatic and bubbly learner boldly declares that her dream is to see all learners in the surrounding schools launching GEM/BEM clubs.

She is quick to share with Movers’ Forum that her club has done their best despite the challenges faced by the community. Learners are faced with poor living conditions, poverty, low income for the majority of the households and low self-esteem. Yet, Bridget says her club can see the light at the end of the tunnel.

She is optimistic that the youth will succeed in steering fellow learners and community members to look for the positives and help improve the conditions. She says quality education, is one way of opening the eyes of thousands of young people who hail from Lebowakgomo and change their futures for good.

As a start, she is hosting a 30-minute weekly radio show at the local community radio station, Greater Lebowakgomo FM, (GLFM). This is after she approached the station with an idea to start a kids educational program. The program tackles teenage pregnancy, environmental issues and caring for one another.

The reaction from community members and her peers is positive. More parents now send their children to attend the weekly club meetings and cleaning programs. The cleaning campaign sees all club members collecting rubbish and cleaning the illegal dumping sites. They are planning to approach the local municipality to provide them with signage, which will inform community members that they must stop dumping their rumble at the illegal sites.

Bridget says she is aware that her community does not consider public health to be a serious issue, but she is on a mission to change their perceptions. Her club will introduce a waste and paper-cleaning project, aimed at the youth. She argues that young people are her main foot soldiers and they play a key role in educating their parents and change in attitudes.

As we end our chat, she is quick to ask that we write her request for a computer and Internet access. She is planning a party as a thank you to her club members, and she needs donations from South Africans. Her clubs currently meets under a tree and they don’t the luxury of an office or working area. This will not deter this young lady to make a positive change in her community.
What is the TechnoGirl programme?

TechnoGirl is a program aimed providing girl learners with an opportunity to learn first hand about careers in the fields of Mathematics, Science and Technology. The program is aimed at addressing disparities primarily along rural and urban, racial and gender lines while playing a key role in changing the lives of girl learners in South Africa.

The gender analysis and evaluation of Girls Education study revealed that girls perform poorly compared to boys in Maths, Science and Technology. This has major implications later in the girls’ lives, as they have fewer career opportunities, and get relatively lower paying jobs.

TechnoGirl aims to provide girls with access to the world of work, to enable them to take up scarce careers required by the economy. The programme maintains an exclusive focus on careers in the Maths, Science and Technology fields.

Learners are placed with companies for a 3-year cycle starting from grade 10 to 12. During their tenure at these businesses during the school holiday season, the girls are exposed to various career paths and options through job shadowing.

The program is implemented by UWESO consulting for UNICEF and in partnership with the Department of Basic Education.

After taking part in the TechnoGirl programme these learners from Johannesburg have a better understanding of what it takes to work in the fields of science and engineering.
World wide, girls are destroying their lives through different ways. I was one of the lucky girls to be placed at Smiths Manufacturing, in Durban. The company is a big manufacturing engineering firm that has international clients. They have played an important role in reducing and changing the focus of girl learners by opening their doors to girl learners, like myself.

I can only say that I have been motivated and feel that there is hope for young people out there. After being selected to be part of the TechnoGirl program, I was exposed to how workers behave, how the company encourages cleanliness, safety for their employees. The firm has so many machines used as part of their daily activities, and it’s important that all of their staff know and understand them. Dave Botha, their safety manager, explained in detail why we needed to understand and follow instructions while we were at the working site.

I can only say that I now know more about Mechanical engineering, which is my chosen field of study after matric. Smiths Manufacturing Industrial showed me various levels and opportunities available for us. I know that I can either choose to specialize in industrial, design, quality or production in order to work for them. More than anything, I now know that I need to work hard on my grades if I want to see myself working at a big firm like this one.

The firm has three different plants, and they allowed us to move around in order to get a better picture of how they operate. The first unit we toured work with automatic components, and a Japanese company, DENSO has 25% shares in that section of the company. DENSO supply Smiths Manufacturing Industrial with parts, which are used to assemble Toyota vehicles in South Africa.

The other section is called HVAC, and they assemble air-conditions. HVAC stands for Heat Ventilation Air-conditioning System. The system specializes in combining heater and air-conditioning system for Toyota vehicles.

I can only say that the treatment they gave us was first class considering that we are learners who were interrupting their production cycle. On the 8th of December 2010, I was selected to attend a board meeting. At this meeting, I got to see first-hand how they decided on big business deals. I was introduced as a guest board member. This opportunity has assisted me in understanding how boards operate.
The TechnoGirl program was a great opportunity for me as a young girl from rural KwaZulu-Natal. I know that I am lucky to have been afforded this opportunity to be part of the group of girl learners who were exposed to job shadowing out of the thousands of learners. I was placed at an engineering company based in Durban, Smiths Manufacturing Industrial after they asked me my first choice of career that I wanted to pursue after grade 12.

I can now proudly say that the TechnoGirl program has assisted me in cementing the decision to further my studies in Mechanical Engineering. The experience has now eased my doubts and helped me understand of the industrial engineering process, the person responsible and how the whole process is rolled out systemically.

Smith Manufacturing Industrial are implementing programs aimed at educating their staff on climate change and how they can play their part. The management emphasized the importance of treating their customers with respect and honesty. They shared with me this lesson, that there is no business without the customer. I will never forget this lesson. Their plant has giant motor manufactures, Toyota as their biggest client.

During my stay, I learnt about the engineering design, metrology, and production process at the plant. I also learnt how they assemble and connect motor vehicles air condition systems, which they assemble and fit to different types of cars. As I left the plant, I told myself that I will come back for my practicals one day. I know that I will be working with the engineering design process. I hope that this program continues as it can only help other learners who are from the rural areas.

Our girls learn the ropes of the science world

Nokubonga Ngcobo, Dr JL Dube High School, Grade 11

The TechnoGirl program was invited by the Minister of Women, Children and People with Disabilities to be part of a delegation that went to New York to the UN 55th Commission on the Status of Women. A reception was held where the TechnoGirl programme was showcased to leaders from across the globe. One of our TechnoGirls, Khanyisile Mokele, a grade 12 learner, who has been part of the programme since 2009 was also part of the delegation. This brave young lady gave a speech at the reception to tell about her experience.

I praise God for making this event a success. Greetings to all Ministers, Deputy Ministers, Dignitaries, sponsors and the house in totality. My name is Tsholofelo Khanyisile Mokele. I am 17 years old and doing my matric at M. H. Joosub Technical School. I stay in Rockville, Soweto in Gauteng. I am the only child of Nomajama Lorraine and Nathaniel Thabo Mokele. My mother is a student nurse and my father is an educator. It is a great honour and privilege to be part of Anglo Platinum TechnoGirls since 2008. I am honoured to represent all 2000 TechnoGirls.

As an individual, TechnoGirl has assisted me to aim high and have clarity about my future career. I have learned to believe in myself and have developed an understanding of engineering field. Through visits to Anglo Platinum, I have acquired an understanding of platinum mining processes. The platinum mining process starts with extraction of the ore, followed by refining the ore, and then to the concentrator and to the smelter. After all processes, the platinum product is ready to be utilised in diesel, jewellery, petrol, medicine and etc.

This experience enabled me to have an interest in studying for civil engineering which will enable me to be part of mine construction. TechnoGirl has helped me to be independent, critical — thinker, dynamic and positive about my future.

All girls in the world must know that the sky is not the limit, but your mind is the limit. The power of your mind is infinity. I thank you.
SNAPPED UP...  
...at GEM/BEM events countrywide in 2011
Onse Isaac Nthutang leads by example: when he decided to introduce fellow learners to the Girls and Boys Education Club (GEM/BEM) at the B.A Seobi Secondary School, he knew he wanted to make a difference for his community and the lives of his fellow learners in Potchefstroom, North West Province.

His break came when he was invited to the GEM/BEM District Workshops held during the 2010 winter holidays in Krugersdorp. He met other young learners who had recently returned from attending a Climate Change Conference and J8 Summit in Denmark and Italy, respectively. As part of the workshop, learners had to report back on their experiences and resolutions agreed at the two youth international conferences.

Isaac says he realised that young people needed to act today to shape their future, their environment and how they want the future generation to judge them. He decided that his main goal as he headed back to his hometown on Potchefstroom, was to launch a GEM/BEM club at his school, B.A Seobi Secondary School.

The process was made easier as he had the assistance of his educator, Mr Motheletsi Reetsang. The club was official launched a month after the GEM/BEM winter workshops. Isaac felt relieved that things were going according to his plan, but he needed to come up with programs and initiatives aimed at enticing more members to join the movement.

Isaac tells me that as part of the GEM/BEM workshop, they were urged to use resources in their communities to mobilize and garner support for their clubs. He decided to pen a proposal to the local radio station, requesting to host a youth education show.

In August 2010, Isaac’s view of being a learner and community member had changed. He was now researching ideas for his club’s radio show, he was speaking to learners from his school and peers from other schools. He admits that he now has new goals and objectives and his life has taken a 360 degree turn, and he credits the GEM/BEM for it.

The agreement with Aganang Community Station was for him and club members to produce 12 episodes of educational content. The show focused on social challenges such as HIV, teen pregnancy, poverty and educator having sexual relationship with learners.

He tells me that it felt great being on air, talking to learners, and not only learners from his school, but also learners from the entire Dr Kenneth Kaunda district. Isaac has been earmarked to play a leading role in a pilot program from UNICEF, aimed at providing learners with a 12-month radio show, where they will broadcast issues affecting learners.
Four South African learners were selected to participate in the Children and Youth International Conference in Brazil in June last year, coinciding with South Africa’s hosting of the 2010 FIFA World Cup. This opportunity was extended to the South African Department of Environmental Affairs by the Brazilian Minister of Education and Environment. The conference aimed to promote international exchange of experiences that will contribute to confronting global socio-environmental issues through education and public participation. It also aimed at enabling children and youth across the world to apply global commitments locally, and assume responsibility for the construction of sustainable societies. The learners were selected after they were asked to write an essay on Global Climate Change, its effects and possible measures to reduce Climate Change. The top four were from the Western Cape, Limpopo, Northern Cape and Mpumalanga.

**NAME:** LERATO RAMANAME  
Masekaseka Secondary  
Grade 9  
DATE: 5 JUNE 2010

At 18:00 we opened the ceremony with happiness, singing, dancing, hugs and greeting. We met the fellow delegates from different countries. It was very nice. We also met the Minister of Land and Forests, Minister of Basic Education, The Minister of Agriculture and the President of UNICEF.

**NAME:** MASIBULELE NDWALAZA  
Scottdene High  
Grade 9  
DATE: 6 JUNE 2010

We and the other countries from the African Continent were put together so that we could come up with ideas and the problems that we face in our communities and countries. We had to write down what we thought we could do to stop water pollution. We drew a charter together and we had to only choose one from the English and mixed with other languages, so that all of it can be changed into Portuguese.

**NAME:** KHULISO MULAUDZI  
Dimani Agricultural School  
Grade 9  
DATE: 10 JUNE 2010

Today was a very busy and sad day. It was the last day of the conference. After the Auditorium, everybody was crying and it was really sad. I didn’t wanna cry at first but tears just fell off my cheeks. We were hugging people and kissing on the cheek because that’s how the Brazilians greet and hug.

**NAME:** FAARIA KANA  
Kimberly Girls High  
Grade 9  
DATE: 8 JUNE 2010

Our responsibility was to create awesomeness among people and to change their perspective on pollution and global warming. We suggested using media like Internet, television, radios, newspapers and cell phones to change people’s negative attitudes regarding our problems. If people knew what they were doing to the earth and understood the consequences, they would want to play a role in making it a better place for all. Many people are ignorant and unaware of what they are doing so the problem continues. If we could all work together as one, it would be so much better than acting as individuals.
Nobuntu Senior Primary School is one of the ordinary public schools in South Africa. It has no fancy buildings, classes, let alone a comfortable playground for the learners. The security fence and the gates are not manned, and yet you cannot see learners roaming around aimlessly.

The reason for my visit is to check up on the Girls and Boys Education club based at the school, which is situated at the small town of King William’s town under the Buffalo Local Municipality in the Eastern Cape Province. The city has reach history with most of the public structures and businesses built of stone and also boasts one of the oldest post offices in the country.

The GEM/BEM club at Nobuntu is vibrant, and has for the past three years proved to be a true grooming ground for the learners. The club, led by the active educator, Mrs. RN Ntsepe, has won two awards based on their participation in various youth competition within their municipality. The club came second on the Waste Management Institute, funded by the local municipality that carried the prize money of R8,000.00.

As a token of appreciation and a way to motivate the learners, the school decided to split the money between the school and the club. They gave the learners R5,000, while the school retained R3,000. The other major award was a whopping R20,000 the club won from the Provincial Department of Environmental Affairs. The school will use the money to

The parents of GEM/BEM learners at Nobuntu Senior Primary receive prize money on behalf of the children from the teachers, to support the club.

On the 28th January, we went to King William’s Town to attend a GEM/BEM function. We then waited for all the schools that were invited to arrive, and after their arrival we were served lunch. We were greeted by Miss B. Fanta, who told us more about what GEM/BEM clubs are all about. After explaining to us, she handed over to a reverend who gave an inspiring sermon that we all enjoyed.

The function was great, educational and fun at the same time. We got to show our talents, and by acting out challenges that we face, at the same time we got to come up with solutions to the challenges.

The people from SAPS were there, and they told us everything about being in prison. They brought someone who’s got the experience of prison life. He told us about the dangers of being in prison, and advised us to do everything in our power to stay out of it. The organizers did a very good job because the function was fun yet educational. I wish that you could come back again in King William’s Town and educate more learners who were not part of the event.

Viwe Ndulula
Grade 11
Kuyasa High School
Movers’ Forum

GEM/BEM making moves: Nobuntu Senior Primary School...continued from pg 16

upgrade their facilities.

One of the reasons the club is able to get their members to think big and be responsible, is the pledge, which all members have to perform. The members’ pledge, “not to eat what they did not work for”. On the day of my visit at the school, the school management committee in partnership with the district office, had arranged a handover ceremony of the prizes to the club members in the presence of their parents.

At this event, it was evident how proud the club members’ parents were, but for me it was also refreshing to see a school extending its hand to the community. The school was handing over the money directly to the parents, and it made sense that parents accepted the money on behalf of their children.

The club members led by the charismatic 12-year-old Nomphele Monyobo, told me how they value the school library and the computer centre. They did, however request assistance with Internet connection to their computer centre. They shared with me how they plan to introduce reading to the lower grades, and how they think that an E-library could help them.

My memory flashed back to the Free State, in Thaba-Nchu, where I met Nomphele for the first time during a winter holiday workshop. She boldly suggested that we bring back death penalty, and while others quickly dismissed her suggestion, I was happy to see a young learner who knew her right to freedom of speech. She was presenting her group discussion points, participating in all the activities and at the end of the workshop, I wondered where she came from. I was also glad to meet the educator who is keeping the club glued together. Her enthusiasm, love and willingness to go beyond her duties to assist the learners is out of this world.

While I still search for the goodies to hand to the club, I do hope that one of the sporting apparel manufactures, giant IT & computer companies can come to the party by adopting the club, to the benefit of the school and the Dubaza community.

The club, is currently running what they call “MAD Programme, Make a Difference! They have identified various activities and community shortfalls, and the club plays an active role in educating and raising awareness around gender issues in their community.

The club engages in various recreation activities such as drama, dance and singing. They have since asked me to assist them in raising funds to purchase a soccer gear for both boys and girls in their school. The club is also running two gardens and a soup kitchen. The club raises money by selling ice blocks in order to buy food parcels that they use to feed the needy.

The club has a rule that all members must take an oath, and they vow that they will not eat what they did not work for. This lesson is important as it teaches the club members to be responsible to learn the importance of being independent early.

FEEDBACK FROM THE GEM/BEM BACK-TO-SCHOOL ROADSHOWS

On a Tuesday afternoon we as GEM/BEM members were told about the good news of attending a workshop. The most exciting part was meeting the Editor of Movers’ Forum newsletter Mr. Eric Mlambo. The workshop was attended by most schools in the district of King Williams Town. We had an opportunity to share ideas, and have fun with learners from other schools, while at the same time learning a lot.

The theme of the workshop was eye opening to GEM/BEM members as we learned about different types of abuse around us. The theme was to speak out against sexual, physical and emotional abuse, and also about drug abuse. We were given information on where and how to report abuse and booklets which have important numbers to know in case of an emergency. Some of the advice given to us is similar to what our educators, parents and church leaders always tell us.

As a GEM/BEM member I felt great after the workshop. I told myself that I have to take the first step of being responsible sharing what I learned with my brothers, sisters, friends, classmates, as well as at church and with my parents.

Somazombe Chimasande
Grade 9
Kuyasa High School
As we embarked on our back to school road show campaign I was so excited and nervous at the same time. It dawned on me that months of planning finally were finally to come alive for the next one and a half months. We would be on the road, sleeping in hotels, and flying to all nine provinces. But what put a smile on my face was the task at hand, to inspire students and strengthen GEM/BEM clubs across the country!

We started our journey in Mpumalanga Province and the energetic students raised their issues and challenges to us. Other learners entertained us with their dancing, singing and acting talents. I must say that my highlight for the Mpumalanga leg was a student from Enhlanzeni district who jumped 5 students who were quite tall and said that for every student that he jumped they must add more members to their respective GEM/BEM clubs.

There will always be that one student who will touch your heart and Shudi Tjale did just that in Limpopo at Nirvana Primary School. The reserved learner bravely stood in front of everyone and told us how nervous she was as she related her experiences and lessons learned on the day. This led to all the students jumping to the stage to hug her, while others started relating their fears and how she had helped them by speaking out. It was truly an awesome experience for me to see the concept of “my brother’s and sister’s keeper” at work. I counted a few adults who shed a tear or two, including GEM/BEM Project Manager, Eric Mlambo.

My favourite province by far had to be the Northern Cape. It was an eye opener to finally see the famous Kalahari Desert and a place called Kakamas. The students were lively as expected and I loved their confidence and energy as they interacted with all of us. They raised various challenges like drugs, and it was good that there were SAPS members who came and gave a talk to the students. This will hopefully lead to long lasting relations between the learners and the police force as they work together in curbing the fight against drugs.

As I ended my journey, I must say it was a wonderful experience being on the road show. Hopefully I will get another opportunity to work with young people and offer support in the most challenging time of their lives. I hope our support will go a long way in helping them to shape their future, as they work out their high school period.

Keabetswe Ledwaba is an intern at the Department of Basic Education

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**On the road with GEM/BEM**

Keabetswe Ledwaba

host a men’s forum, where they will get men to adopt a son for a weekend. They have identified churches, communities, parents, UNICEF, Department of Basic Education and businesses to support their district plans.

Pinetown district has identified poverty, bullying, teenage pregnancy and educators having affairs with learners as priorities. They plan to partner with the South African Police Services, Social Services department, parents and schools to address these issues in the first term of schooling this year.

The districts will also have events aimed at strengthening the movement clubs within their communities. Ilembe district suggested similar programmes and have also added the following as opportunities. They want to use the clubs to invite home affairs to resolve access to grants, help learners access ID, Bursaries and to be responsible young people and adults.

The three districts jointly agreed during the second and last day of the training that they want the following to be provincial focus areas;

- Dads/lads
- Teacher and learner affairs
- Incentives for clubs
- Techno-Girls
- Clubs development
- HIV, TB, AIDS

GEM/BEM educator training in KZN...continued from pg 8
BURSARY INFORMATION

1. ABSA Bursary Scheme - Must have passed the first semester with a minimum aggregate of 65% and no failure of any subjects in current year.
   Fields of study: Engineering; Commerce; Science
   Applications open – Close: 21 September
   Bursary enquiries: www.absa.co.za
   Tel: 0860 008 600; careers@absa.co.za; www.absa.co.za

2. Accenture Bursary Scheme - Service binding contract after graduation for a period equal to the tenure of the bursary
   Fields of study: Engineering, IT
   Applications open – Close: 31 July
   Bursary enquiries: Accenture Education Trust P O Box 1587 Kelvin, 2054 or download application form from: www.careers.accenture.com/southafrica

3. Anglo American PLC Open Scholarship - Service binding contract after graduation for a period equal to the tenure of the bursary
   Fields of study: Engineering
   Applications open – Close: 30 September
   Bursary enquiries: www.angloamerican.co.uk
   Contact John Legoete at Careerwise for an application form PO Box 30632 Braamfontein 2017, South Africa
   Fax: +27 (0) 11 484 5951
   E-mail detailed CV (including Academic Results, Degree and University) to: johnl@careerwise.co.za

4. Anglo Gold Ashanti Bursary Scheme - Service binding contract after graduation for a period equal to the tenure of the bursary
   Fields of study: Engineering and science
   Applications open – Close: 15 June
   Bursary enquiries: Career wise: 011 403-0933
   bursar@anglogoldashanti.com

5. Anglo Platinum Bursary Scheme - Service binding contract after graduation for a period equal to the tenure of the bursary
   Fields of study: Engineering, science and commerce
   Applications open – Close: 15 May
   Bursary enquiries: The Bursary Department
   ADC PO Box 450 KROONDAL 0350
   Fax: (014) 596-5571
   http://www.angloplatinum.com/