

AFS Interculture South Africa News

Inspiring
Challenging
Learning
Discovering
Transforming

Supportive
Passionate
Caring
Understanding

Trustworthy
Reliable
Responsive
Experienced

Connecting
Sharing
Familial
Bonding

MAY 2017

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Dear RSA Family and Friends

Almost mid-2017, so much has happened. The highlight of this year was the conclusion of our Transformation Workshop which started in April 2016 as well as finalizing the 2017-2022 Strategy. We drew the line in the 'sand' to leave the past behind and face fresh challenges.

We put our Active Citizenship Strategic pillar to test on 24/25 and 27/28 April in Pietermaritzburg and Bloemfontein respectively through teaching African Batik by Mr. Kwame Otchere, (National Director AFS Ghana).



In Bloemfontein we had an opportunity to be on Central University of Technology FM's breakfast and afternoon drive shows. This gave the Bloemfontein Chapter much desired exposure and a lot of interest was shown by the listeners.



We also took part in the initial meeting of the Cross Sector Collaboration Exploration Workshop at Tiger Brands with other related organizations. There is potential to work together with other organisations towards a common goal of making our world a better place through skills sharing, broader social emotional healing etc. Watch this space for further associations.

AFS in Africa (AiA)

As announced, AFS Ghana will be the host for 2017 Network meeting in October. We are working closely with Ghana to make the first AFS event on the African soil a success. Wishing you more Peace

Palesa

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Meet Utumiseng and Unathi

Unathi Sophazi - Sending Coordinator



The past three months have been such a refreshing change from working with older persons to working with a world-class intercultural organisation. The experience thus far has been challenging, eye-opening and enlightening.

Taking into account what has been accomplished so far; with the support of an extraordinary team, I am looking forward to the challenges ahead that will help boost Sending programmes for both schools and 18+.

So far, we have three students on a year programme; two are going to the USA on BP Scholarship and one is heading to Switzerland on an SUI Scholarship.

The number of IP inquiries is promising so far, hopefully; we'll reach our target for this year.

Utumiseng Rangaka - Hosting Coordinator



As the new hosting coordinator, the past couple of months have been eye-opening and very interesting. I have been learning new things about my role, and the challenges that come with it.

The staff members of the organization are so welcoming and always willing to assist when I need assistance. The challenging part of my role as a host coordinator is looking for families and having to deal with support.

I've always wanted to work for an NGO or NPO while I was studying my undergrad, and I knew that it would help me by having to bring peace into the world.

What I like about AFS is, they are contributing towards peace making and always meeting new people and learning about their culture. I look forward to building relationships with all the stakeholders, internal and external.

AFS Returnee awarded Ivy League Scholarship

Well done Kalisa!



Kalisa Ndamage is a South African AFSer who went on a year programme to the USA in 2014-2015 and was hosted in Iowa.

He will soon be returning to the USA, having been awarded a full scholarship (tuition and boarding) to study Chemical Engineering by Columbia University in New York.

Columbia has a 5.8% Acceptance rate (Only Harvard is more selective than Columbia in the Ivy League). Well done!

18+ Programmes Overview

The local chapters nationwide have contributed to the success of the BZ & CS placements.

There are currently 17 German participants placed on the YPbzNH17 cycle. Of the 17 participants 11 have been confirmed and there are 7 more project spots to confirm.

There are 2 placements on the cycle for the YPcsNH17 group. Of the 2 CS programs one spot has been confirmed and looking for a potential project for the other.

Over the four months planning will take place for all three orientations and volunteers will be needed for all three events to assist with planning, content and facilitation.

Important dates:

26 & 27 July

YPbzNH16 - Departure - 13 Participants.

16 -20 July

YPbzSH - Mid stay - 5 Participants.

24 -26 August

YPbzNH17 - Arrival - 18 Participants.

Stories of Change

Nqobile Nhlapho



So my first month in Argentina was amazing with highlights such as visiting Villa Carlos Paz during my second week here and starting school.

I attend Colegio Adoratrices which lies in the heart of Rosario centre. Making friends was easy since majority speak English, and at first classes were hard considering the language barrier but with the help of my friends it's getting better.



People here are lively and warm although there's a lot of hugging and kissing. Music, soccer, dance and meat is the culture here same as us.



I met other AFS participants and host sisters and we have become close friends. We usually go to Indahs' house who is from Indonesia, that's where myself and other AFS girls and host sisters just chill.

I'm really enjoying my experience thus far, there's nothing greater than interacting with other cultures.

I'm really grateful to AFS for this opportunity and I'm going to hold my country up high.

Lwandile Jacobs



Finally winter's gone, the flowers are blooming and the land is looking fresh, lush and beautiful. Having no fences around most places helps me get to appreciate all of the wonderful changes of the season...

All well until I got another cold! I didn't go to school for a couple of days, but I returned revitalized and ready to continue on with the year. Highlights of the month?

I participated in the Jewish Passover twice! It was really interesting having insight to Judaism, myself being Christian, and looking back at the origins of my religion.

I participated in making some of the food, and even being stuck with having gefilte fish for the next couple of days. Being part of the painting crew in theatre guild is quite the commitment, but it paid off after seeing the final set that I helped paint!

The Wizard of Oz show that my school had been working on since January was quite phenomenal, from the actors, to paint crew's work, sets, lights and the carpentry crew.

Students can do a whole lot of amazing work when led by individuals who are passionate and dedicated and can give off that energy to us also.



The Neutral Zone 35th Potential exhibition also occurred in which I was part of the Youth Curating team. I soon found out that my artwork was one of the 11 in my school to get accepted for the exhibition itself!

This show is one of the biggest high school art shows within my area, and the work that got in was work that was really, really good.

All types of artworks were submitted i.e. photography, paintings, drawings, ceramics and even graphic design, ranging from still life paintings to powerful political, environmental and social issues being expressed by the artists.



The end of April was the end of the school year for many college students, and for most the graduating seniors in the University of Michigan, it was their big graduation ceremony.

I didn't get to witness the ceremony, but I volunteered in assisting with the photo-taking process for the graduates, and it was a really unique experience seeing the different thoughts and feelings every graduate had.

What's been going on in the beginning of May?

I find it entertaining to see all of the seniors in my humanities class be affected by "senioritis"- the stage in which they are really anxious to graduate, therefore they participate in slightly rebellious antics such as arriving to school late, complaining about school etc.

There hasn't been much going on, apart from attending school, participating in activities with my friends. I received a package from home with some gifts to give to my host family, and they were all very excited and grateful to receive them. My humanities class also got the experience of visiting the Toledo Museum of Art, in which we saw some of the most famous paintings (frequently seen in our Art History Humanities lectures), in reality!

Excitement and anxiety about my return home is naturally coming to place. It's quite interesting having the same emotions I had before going on exchange, now happening before my exchange year ends.

I'm not letting that make me feel down, but rather acknowledging the feelings I have, and making the most of the remaining time!

Ambani Makuya



My name is Ambani, but people call me Dean. I am a 17-year-old from South Africa who has been granted an amazing opportunity to go on a student exchange.

With AFS Investing in Africa's Future Leaders scholarship, I am now spending a school year in the Philippines. I have always known that I wanted to be an exchange student and now that I have been granted this opportunity, I am living my dream.

I wanted to be an exchange student because I want to broaden my horizons. I did not want to limit myself to what I know and to what I know how to do best. I want to think far beyond South Africa, learn new things about other cultures and traditions.

In short I want to be a global citizen who doesn't judge other cultures but celebrates our differences. Being an AFSer for me is definitely more than just hopping on a plane and setting off to live in a new country. For me it basically means adopting the new culture as my own and embracing the way of life.



My introduction into the Philippines was in Manila where I was greeted by the warm and friendly people of the Philippines, to such a point where I forgot that I was a

foreigner. The skyscrapers, busy people and the hustle and bustle of Metro Manila made me assume that all places in the provinces would be somewhat like Manila – which is actually not the case.

I was shocked when it was time for dinner and we were given a fork and a spoon instead of a fork and knife, that was because in South Africa we use either our hands to eat just like in the Philippines or a fork and a knife instead of a fork and a spoon.

"From cereal as breakfast to rice for breakfast, lunch and dinner, that is quite an adjustment. I am now used to it and I absolutely love rice, to a point where I have to ask where the rice is if it's not served as a meal (it rarely happens that they don't serve rice)."

I live in a quaint city in one of the many provinces in the Philippines. My city has a certain charm about it, it is rustic, peaceful and generally a happy place to live in. I am proud to say that I live in Dapitan City because of the history behind this city.

For me Dapitan has a little bit of everyone, it is a good place for nature lovers, history lovers, tracking and sunbathing by the beautiful beaches.

Learning the language has been quite an obstacle for me but in time I will overcome it. Language barrier almost cost me my uniform... weird I know.

So the story goes like this: One day I went to the tailor and got measurements done and I kept on telling him, "I want to be able to move in the uniform, please make it a little bigger." He made it super big to a point where it looked like a dress. Fortunately enough, he agreed to shorten it but then there was another problem: he made it too short and now it almost looks like a tank top.

One thing that people ask me a lot is, "Since you are from South Africa, is there North Africa?" I always explain that there is no country called North Africa but there is North of Africa as a geographical cardinal point of other countries who are in the northern part of Africa.

From South Africa to the Philippines, big adjustment, from my culture to theirs, not easy, first time in a plane, awesome and weird in so many peculiar ways.