

"Your youth is the time to build the skills that will shape your destiny."

Oliver Tambo

June is youth month and together with our beautiful country, Ukuwela celebrates the resilience and voice of our young people. We stand in solidarity with the great Oliver Tambo who reminded us of the importance of youth mastering new skills, and gaining the experience needed to build their own futures. Keep reading to find out how our learners did exactly that!



SUZETTE (LEFT) AT HEATHERPARK SUPERSPAR, CODY (MIDDLE FAR RIGHT) WITH HER COLLEAGUES AT HOEKWIL PRE-PRIMARY, AND OTHANDWAYO AT PRINCE OF TARTS.

Employment

Congratulations to three of our Ukuwela candidates who entered the job market for the first time during the month of June! Cody Abrahams started as a class assistant at Hoekwil Pre-Primary where has been welcomed with open arms by the lovely team.

Othandwayo Baadjie is even sweeter, if that is possible, working in the bakery at Prince of Tarts. Otha has always loved the kitchen, and it is her dream come true to work alongside staff who are so knowledgeable and supportive.

You will find Suzette MacKay with a big smile at Heatherpark SuperSpar where she is working in the deli doing whatever needs doing! Being such a popular spot for customers there is a lot of doing to be done!

A very big thank you to the Garden Route District Municipality for making these Work-integrated-Learning opportunities possible for our learners! Thank you for being an inclusive municipality who take the contribution of youth with disabilities seriously.

Work exposure

Practicing for real life happens best when it can happen in real life! Our senior boys participated in a work exposure opportunity at Norgariver Nursery. The team at Norgarivier made special efforts to make the workspace accessible and comfortable to our wheelchair users. Thank you Team Norga!

Our senior girls had a lovely time at the Protea Hotel by Marriott King George where they got hands on with housekeeping and crafty in the kitchen! Thank you to our dedicated teachers at Carpe Diem who lay the foundational skills and to Asisipho Ndzoto, our Facilitator who support our learners to bridge the gap between school and the world of work.



**LEFT: IT'S BOTH THUMBS UP FOR OUR BOYS AT NORGARIVIER NURSERY.
MIDDLE AND RIGHT: LEARNING VALUABLE PRACTICAL SKILLS AT PROTEA HOTEL BY MARRIOTT KING GEORGE**

Skills training

Two of our senior learners, Curtleigh and Abigail, showed real commitment to participation in the job shadowing program at McDonald's. These learners have not missed a single session and are continuing next term. Keep going guys!

Three of our senior girls have also attended Barista training under the watchful eye of Barista Nelson at Root Coffee. Who doesn't love a good cup of coffee? What a great skill to have in your toolbox!



ABOVE: BRING ON THE BARISTA TRAINING!

The Big Brag

We love honing our skills to perfection and this term proved to be super productive! A group of 16 learners attended 'Knife Skills and Table Attendant Training' during May presented by Chef Lianda from NQtac Hospitality. The course ended on a highlight with the group dividing into Team Chef and Team Service where each team got to cook and serve special guests invited to the school! What a privilege to take our skills to the next level! Even the media agreed - the training was featured in local newspaper [George Herald!](#)



ABOVE: KNIFE SKILLS AND TABLE ATTENDANT TRAINING FOR THE WIN!

Hold onto your seats, the bragging is about to continue. Big time! One of our long-time Ukuwela candidates was recently featured in the May edition of the Huisgenoot/You! As the tiniest baby to be born in South Africa, Jarryd overcame the odds not only to survive but to thrive! He has been working at Woolworths since 2021 and is still going strong!

Ukuwela featured candidate, Brandon-Lee Platjies (right), on our Ukuwela facebook page following his permanent employment at De Dekke Spar. His post received an all-time high of 428 likes, 47 comments and 8 shares! A total of 31 027 views were clocked! The best part is the comments of customers who praised Brandon-Lee for his positive attitude, friendliness and helpfulness. What a testimony to the contribution of youth with disabilities!



We're not leaving it to the media alone to spread the word. Occupational therapist from Ukuwela, Suzanne Stark, have shared practices and pearls during online training sessions with therapists from the Western Cape Education Department. She will also be presenting at the OTASA school-based virtual congress on Tuesday the 30th of June 2026. We're leaving nothing up to chance! But we are also nowhere without chances to make it happen for our learners! A heartfelt thank you to our donors, supporters, partners and the school for making our learner's dreams come true and building their futures. Thank you for walking this journey of inclusive employment and empowerment with us.

Yours in shaping destinies,

Ukuwela