



VOLMOED YOUTH

LEADERSHIP TRAINING PROGRAMME

Volmoed Youth Leadership Training Programme Report

December 2025

Thank you! Dankie! Enkosi! Tathenda!

It's been an active and joyful few months for the young people of the Volmoed Youth Leadership Training Program, and we are grateful for so much.



There have been quite a few local and international groups and visitors. A large group from the Indianapolis Center for Middle East Peace (ICMEP) came to visit Volmoed, to spend time reflecting on Reconciliation and Justice, to drum with the young people, visit the drum making venue in Zwelihle, and be taken on a walking tour of Zwe and Mount Pleasant townships by the young people.

Some of the young drummers

were at the local Marine hotel to drum for the official celebrations to open the new cliff path extension in Hermanus, and they were praised in the local newspaper. The next day they drummed at a Pro-Musica choir event in Hermanus – this is a large, local, excellent choir who along with the audience, just loved the drummers and their drumming.



Another fun event was a Friday lunch at a restaurant at the Whale Coast Mall. A US friend wanted to pay for a surprise lunch for the young people. Altogether 21 of them – and this was a first for most of them – it was wonderful!

At another event, ten drummers joined to drum at the old harbour for about fifty geography educators from around South Africa, who were visiting for a geography conference and also joined the

drumming. This included a bus ride through Zwelihle township. Thanks to Bridget, the organiser, who said that the commentary explaining local context provided by Siya as they drove through the township was “incredible, professional, and profoundly moving”. We are gifted to have our staff member, Siya, working with such dedication and commitment to the young people and this program. We are also gifted with the energy and commitment of Edwin, the director, who remains networked with people all around the country and the globe who have visited the group and become part of a larger, supportive family – many of whom support us via Global Giving platforms – thank you!



The young people attended the annual Thursday service that precedes the Annual Meeting. This is a leadership learning experience for them, and they spend time beforehand learning about the function of annual meetings and how they work. One of our patrons, Dr Lionel Louw, described the youth program as ‘a sign and carrier of hope’. The young people were also acknowledged and appreciated by Theresa Edlmann, the new managing trustee of Volmoed.



Some of the young people drummed at the Volmoed 40th anniversary event of the art exhibition and de Gruchy lecture, to welcome people to the event. They are well integrated into the ongoing life and various events that take place at Volmoed, which is another way to build their confidence as young leaders.



A group of women from Minnesota, who were on a tour of SA that focused on the environment and on different cultural expressions of music in SA, were delighted to visit the drum making center and drum with the young people. They brought them bright colored pink and turquoise T-shirts as another outfit to drum in, and the young people love them. The



young women especially were delighted to meet so many older professional women who were interested to listen to their stories of township life in SA.



Our young drummers are getting well known in Hermanus and getting press in the local newspaper. On the September Heritage Day national holiday, they opened and closed the Hermanus celebration at the Old Harbour with fifteen-minute drumming sessions. In

November they kicked off the Western Cape Provincial launch of the 16 days of Activism to end gender-based violence, in the stadium in Zwelihle. The organiser said “they brought energetic magic to the event!” In December they participated energetically to help the official launch of the month of “Disability Rights Awareness” in the local town of Hawston.



The Youth Taizé Day brought about thirty-five young people from around the Western Cape to Volmoed, and it became an intergenerational

event when one woman brought her 2 month old grandchild, and an elderly resident, a founder of Volmoed, attended as well. This event is a beautiful day of quiet reflection and song, solo and group reflection/discussions, workshops, a walk to see the waterfalls, and more. We’ve done it for five years now and it is great to see how the young people have grown and matured over the years.



Two of our young people joined another youth member in France, with the Taizé Community, to volunteer for three months until January. They are learning a lot, while experiencing new degrees of cold in winter.

Meanwhile the young people continue to gather on Thursdays at Volmoed, to interact with the older folk, and engage in learning and discussions. A particular focus was Gender Based Violence, and sessions with a facilitator from Hope Africa in Cape Town. Many of the young people have experienced gender based violence themselves, and some are gaining the confidence to share their difficult stories, while also being empowered through knowledge and understanding of gender equality and their rights.



Another opportunity for learning through experiences of diversity was a weekend that brought young Muslims and Christians together to share their stories and learn about each other's culture, language and religion, to promote mutual understanding and respect for others. The drumming around the firepit in the evenings was a huge success that enabled them to enjoy themselves while also sharing their stories, and learning more during the daytime sessions and through shared accommodation. The value of this kind of

learning for leadership is priceless.

The leadership team is turning its attention to the VYLTP tenth anniversary which takes place in June 2026. This will provide exciting opportunities to gather alumni and friends for a few days in June, and it is time to start planning.

Our very best wishes to you all as the calendar year draws to a close and a big THANK YOU! to all of you for your generous donations and support throughout the year, and especially to those who gave on Giving Tuesday. May your end of year celebrations and holidays bring you great joy and the new year lead you forward into peace, truth and beauty.

A HUGE THANK YOU TO EACH AND EVERYONE WHO HAS DONATED TO VOLMOED THIS YEAR. WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR YOUR GENEROSITY!

Thank you! Dankie! Enkosi! Tathenda!