

Charity leader praises work of volunteers in South Africa

By David Geldart



Following a break of three years due to Covid 19 restrictions, 2023 has proved to be a remarkable year of volunteering in South Africa for the Bambisanani Partnership.

41 students together with 11 members of staff from St. Mary's School, Menston, University of Leeds, Leeds Trinity University and Newcastle College spent more than three months in South Africa delivering existing Bambisanani programmes using sport to promote education, health, global citizenship and leadership in one the countries most deprived and challenging areas.

In four separate coordinated visits the **volunteers worked with 3631 South African students** from 33 different schools of which 17 were new partner institutions. 3151 students from primary and secondary schools were involved in sports festivals and coaching activities and 1135 children experienced Bambisanani Leadership through Sport programmes.

David Geldart, CEO and Founder of the partnership said, “I have nothing but praise for the remarkable students and staff from St. Mary’s, Menston, The University of Leeds, Leeds Trinity University and Newcastle College for their outstanding work in not only reintroducing volunteer student visits to South Africa after Covid but also for having such an enormous impact in doing so. Our work puts great store in creating learning opportunities for young people from both countries; Europeans and Africans ‘working together and learning together’ in a spirit of Ubuntu.

All four institutions worked extremely hard with the local communities involved to establish what was needed on the ground then worked tirelessly in partnership to extend existing programmes and indeed to introduce new ones.

These are four institutions that are prepared to ‘live their values’ in terms of Global Learning.

They are helping to pioneer exceptionally powerful learning opportunities for young people in both countries.

This work is far from easy.

Despite the considerable challenges and hard work involved they are **committed to ‘real education’** that is enabling young people to take a broader view of the world and their place in it. By any standard this is phenomenal educating that is helping to make the world a better place.

Massive thanks to our wonderful team from South Africa and the UK for making all this happen and making a difference.

The work of the partnership has been highlighted at conferences throughout the world, most recently at the Global Sport for All Summit held at the Vatican and at the International Olympic Academy in Ancient Olympia.

The Bambisanani Partnership was named as International Sport and Physical Education Charity of the Year 2023.