

Kurios Trend – OACS partner in SA

Kurios Trend volunteer projects is a small, locally owned volunteering company in Port Elizabeth, South Africa. We focus on putting specialized community service programs together for students and holiday makers from around world. Our goal is to make a positive impact in our community by assisting NPO's, schools and any community programs. Living in, and coming from these communities gives us an understanding of the social challenges and pressures that plague our people. Through hard work, through dedication, through hope, we believe that together we can make a difference.

Our Community

During the old Apartheid regime, people of colour were forcefully removed from areas that they resided in. This was known as the Forced Removals Act. South Africans were forced to live in areas, designated by government, according to race. White South Africans occupied the more prestigious areas and the darker your skin complexion, the further away you were moved from these areas. "Coloured" people were relocated to what was known as the "Northern Areas". Fast forward somewhat 22 years, the fall of the apartheid regime and old government gave way to the ANC and democracy in South Africa. Today, the Northern Areas has developed into a large community with many different areas. Some areas are well developed, whilst others remain under developed. Although many positive changes took place in Northern Areas, the effects of apartheid still remains an underlying factor, and this is evident in our socio-cultural structures.

Some of our greatest challenges in these areas is the lack of commitment to structure and the lack of vision and drive by our community. We are a community that needs much support and we are aware of it. What you will experience in the communities, is the result of our past and the cause of the oppression that took place then. Although we are "free", some of us remain enslaved to our circumstances and surroundings. Poverty is rife in our communities and this has a spin off effect on our people, especially our youth. Yet, to live and remain in poverty is a mere mindset, if you do not have spiritual wealth, regardless of your bank account, you are already poor. As time goes on, you will notice that we live by faith, by the unseen and by the hope that holds everything together. And Because of this, we always remain positive.

Our Team



Junayne Baatjes is the Owner/Director of Kurios Trend Volunteer projects. He holds a Bachelor's Degree in Tourism Management (NMMU) and is also currently employed as a tourism lecturer at EMC (East Cape Midlands) community college in Uitnehage, just outside Port Elizabeth.

“ Kurios Trend Volunteer Projects has always been an integral part of me, even as a child growing up in South Africa. Being part of a minority group in South Africa, the exposure to circumstances in the community had a significant impact on my character. Understanding the deep rooted issues of the community, understanding the politics surrounding the community and understanding the needs of the community is the foundation of our vision. Our goal is to mitigate these

challenges in our community by introducing sustainable community projects to our community.

Working with Vanderbilt University is truly a great privilege for us. The interest that the students have for our community really inspires us to develop a more impactful service programs. What we really appreciate about the Vanderbilt students is their willingness to learn, and the courage they have to take on the task of assisting our community. They make our challenges their own and adopt our challenges as South Africans. This mean so much to us as a community. Our hope for every student that comes to do their service with Kurios Trend is for them to embrace this once in a life time experience. They will come for service, but hopefully leave with so much more than they've ever expected. The opportunity to experience our community; the hardships, the joys, our challenges, our blessings. Vanderbilt has really embraced our community and we no longer see them as friends, but as family. We welcome you always!”



Andrew Johnson is the volunteer coordinator. Andrew plays a very central role in the success of our service programs. His background and experience working with people makes him the perfect person to lead any group. He is currently involved community work and serves as the Chairman of the School Governing Body, at Machui community school. His passion is community and his love for people is what encourages him to move forward.

“When the group from Vanderbilt came to South Africa I was so excited to work with them. I knew that this would give me an opportunity to learn a new culture. What really stood out for me

was that Vanderbilt came to South Africa to achieve a goal and not to play around. After spending much time with the cohort, they've shown me something that I'm not use to in my culture, that is, volunteering and being so committed towards their project and wanting nothing in return. This was really outstanding. In communities that we're from, the moment people are asked to assist somebody else, the first thing they want to know is how they would benefit. The crippled mindset of "work equals money". We could blame it on circumstances, because people cannot afford to work for free but we are still a community that should stand united if we want to prosper. Vanderbilt has really encouraged me to remain positive for my community and with the attitude of giving your all; I would like to work with Vanderbilt University more closely in the future. Thank you for accepting me and being willing to work with me".

What we provide our international students

Accommodation



We don't just provide students with service projects, but we also provide them with comfortable accommodation. The accommodation is in the form of a volunteer house that is situated the suburb of Summerstrand, walking distance from our blue flag status beaches and beachfront amenities. The house is fully equipped and fully furnished. Students share rooms and males and females are separated. WIFI is included.



Transport

We also provide transport for students on a daily basis, to and from their projects. The transport is a 14Seater mini-bus taxi and is driven by our volunteer coordinator.

Weekend outings



It is important that students get some time off from their projects, so we have added in weekend tours. We focus on all the main attractions in and around Port Elizabeth so that students can get the “feel” of our beautiful city. All the tours are inclusive and is conducted by local expert and coordinator, Andrew.



Food

Three basic meals are included for each day and volunteers are expected to share in the preparing of meals and washing up. There is a set menu for the week that will be created by the volunteers with the help of Andrew. He will make sure that the kitchen is well fully stocked at all times. We also cater according to food preference so it is important that all dietary requirements are communicated with us prior to arrive!

FAQ's

What is included?

- Service projects
- Accommodation
- Transport
- Food
- Outings
- In country assistance (Volunteer coordinator)

What is excluded?

- Passport
- Visa
- Flights
- Any personal gifts