

Report on Careers Day

Compiled by Kundai Mangwende & Tawanda Chibisa

Oh what a day!!! There no better way to describe Saturday the 17th of November 2012 when ZOF Africa hosted a careers day for orphaned children from St Josephs House for boys, Emerald Hill Children's Home, and Harare Children's Home. A brief background on the need and how and how about with such an initiative.

ZOF Africa's mission is to provide funds for technical training for orphaned children in Zimbabwe. However the challenge we had was how do you provide an opportunity to someone who does not know what they want to do after school and it was because of this problem that we decided to have a careers day to help and identify possible career options as well as establish networks with influential people in society who would provide inspiration and motivation to the children.

Going back to the day, we were welcomed by Mr. William Muchono the superintendent of St Joseph's house for boys. He gave us a brief background history of the home noting that it was founded in 1930 hence making it one of the oldest children's homes in the country. Next was the country director of ZOF Africa, Mr Kundai Mangwende or preferably Kundie. Kundie talked about ZOF Africa, it's mission and goals and what it intends to achieve in Zimbabwe. However, what caught my attention and many others was the fact that ZOF Africa is run purely on a volunteer basis be it in New York or Paris or Harare. To see such passion even before the actual event and realise that it's all volunteering warmed people's hearts and made us realise how special we were.

The next speaker was a young energetic and I believe restless young lady by the name of Primrose Manyalo and it so happened that she works for an organisation called Restless Development, how ironic indeed. She talked about how she went for what she wanted in life, rather than waiting, for nothing comes to those who wait to be given opportunities. In addition she told us that as young and energetic people regardless of our background we are the owners of our life and destiny. "YOUNG PEOPLE WE ROCK" were her last words.

Next was another young man called Levy Machirolo of UNTO HIM Branding. At first I wondered how some like that can relate to us let alone speak sense, but it seems I was in for a surprise. It so happened that Levy, like most of us had a rough childhood that led him to run away from home as a teenagers live on the streets of Harare for six years. He did not even finish his primary education and spoke broken English here and there but hey.....despite all that here was a young man standing before us who now had his own branding company and better still was running a small children's home as well as supporting twenty other children on the streets of Harare. I could go on but doubt if my editor would allow. His is a story of hope, love and perseverance and in my opinion was the best speaker. I could see that even the other guests and speakers were close to tears and nodding their heads.

The next speaker was Mr. Felix Kumirai from Genesis Global Finance a well dressed and articulate man. He told us that he had a speech prepared for us but after such an inspirational talk

by Levy he was going to make his talk personal. He told us that success never changed who he was, a God fearing man and that he too had to work for everything he has. Mr. Kumirai also taught us the need to be organised and focused in whatever we do and that hard work always paid off in the end.

I'm going to end it there though we had two other inspirational speakers by the names of Alex Madziwa and Alvin of Core Foundation. They too were good speakers and we learnt something from what they shared.

It was now time for lunch and mix and mingle and Kundie highlighted that the refreshments were kindly provided by Toyota Zimbabwe and the printing of flyers done by PrintWorks Zimbabwe through generous donations. The food was plentiful and perfectly prepared and enough for everyone to go twice. During lunch we had an opportunity to meet the guests face to face and ask all those burning questions and from the look of things the children kept the guests busy.

But before the lunch Kundie alongside Dr Maggie promised us a surprise and during lunch everyone was wondering what this surprise was and after lunch the surprise did come and boy wasn't it a surprise. Maggie's husband read out a biography of Tapiwa Mugadza who also grew up at Harare Children's homes as well as St Joseph's House for Boys and even though he was lonely most of time he found comfort in his guitar and music and often played music for his friends. What was touching was that now he is based in Hollywood because of music, a young man who grew up just like us was now in Hollywood. To end the day we heard a cover song recorded by Tapiwa and it left us close to tears.

Among the closing remarks, we heard from Regina Jones from Miracle Missions, that even though Tapiwa was in Hollywood it had not changed his personality and that he often thought of the children at Harare Children's Home as well as St Joseph's. A call was made to him in Hollywood and everyone screamed 'hie Tapiwa'. he was a brother we never knew yet all the same felt connected deeply.

A big thank you to ZOF Africa for such a day that everyone, young and old would remember. As Kundie gave his last words of gratitude to everyone who made it, it suddenly began to rain. Guess the Gods were inspired too.

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