

## MRYE POPULAR ARTICLE

Mpepu Rural Youth Encouragement (MRYE), an organisation registered under the Student Representative Council (SRC) at the University of Pretoria, formed a stable liaison with JuniorTukkie at the beginning of 2015 and became one of the JuniorTukkie ambassadors. The MRYE outreach initiative was instigated by two avid and motivated engineering students in 2005, and so this year celebrates 10 years of excellence.

Under the leadership of Thembelani Sithole, MRYE this year visited schools in five provinces in South Africa: Dennilton (Mpumalanga), Lusikisiki (Eastern Cape), Tembisa (Gauteng), Nqutu (KwaZulu-Natal) and Taung (North West).



They imparted knowledge to more than 3,000 students in rural areas and their mission statement: *"We are driven by passion and willingness of our hearts to empower the youth of South Africa so that they can make informed decisions"* was fully and successfully accomplished.

### Highlights of the Year 2015

#### Dennilton (Mpumalanga)



A group of eight MRYE members embarked on a short one-day trip to Dennilton on 20 February 2015. They were granted an opportunity to speak to learners in three schools; Kgothala Secondary School, Sereme Combined School, and Thejane High School. They were warmly welcomed at all the schools.

Former MRYE chairperson, Nametsegang

Thungela said: "the trip went very well, we had amazing team work and we were all very well prepared. I am happy with the way the trip went. This was my last MRYE trip as I am leaving the group so I was a bit sad that I will no longer be part of the team."

### **Lusikisiki (Eastern Cape)**

The second MRYE trip took place between 27 March and 2 April 2015. Nine members partook on the long trip to rural Lusikisiki in the Eastern Cape Province which is about 900 kilometres from Pretoria. They visited nine secondary schools namely: Ntafufu, Ben Mali, Hillbrow, Toli, Mgezwa, Phambili, Mqikela, Sangoni, and Palmertom. The teachers were very happy for them as they were warmly welcomed in most of the schools. The learners were keen to receive the information, as the team experienced maximum participation from learners. In two of the schools they presented to more than 800 learners at assembly.



**Ntafufu Senior Senior School (first school to visit)**

MRYE secretary Mputle Makgoale said about the trip: “God's grace allowed us to begin at schools in which we were welcomed. This gave us strength to pull through.”

The team also had team building at Port St. Johns beach. And that was not all! On the way back to Pretoria the team passed by Durban where they had all the fun at the beach and a braai. “We had fun, and I am so grateful to lead a group as dedicated as the one that went to the Eastern Cape. They were respectful and they did all they were expected to do without disagreeing or being pushed,” said Thembelani Sithole.

### **Tembisa (Gauteng)**

Towards the end of May, MRYE was invited by their former Chairperson Aaron Mabaso to a school where he teaches, Umqhele Secondary School. It was a short trip. The team was warmly welcomed by the principal. Though invited at short notice, the team presented successfully. Former MRYE chairpersons Sithembiso Khumalo and Slindile Zulu also attended and helped motivating the learners who were enthusiastic and listened to the presentations without making noise or causing distractions.



**Palmarton High School**



**Ben Mali Senior Secondary School**

## **Nqutu (KwaZulu-Natal)**

During the June–July recess, MRYE embarked on a trip to Nqutu in KwaZulu-Natal. It was a long trip that took place from the 04<sup>th</sup> to the 11<sup>th</sup> of July 2015. A team of 12 members visited 18 secondary schools: Mzilankatha, Mangeni, Springlake, Ngwane, Mgazi, Ubongumenzi (Thembelani's former secondary school), Leneha Tumisi, Funulwazi, Msimbu, Nomdumo, Zicole, Ekucabangeni, Velaphansi, Ukuphumula, and Sicelimfundo. Everything went well, and all the presentations were successful, though they had faced some challenges. Dijo Koottappillil said: "This trip was like no other. Unexpected things happened. This was my third MRYE long trip. I was so excited. It felt good going in as one of the senior members and I could see that people were looking up to me."

Members who were on the trip for the first time enjoyed the trip. "I was really happy with the two MRYE members (Dijo & Kele) who were put in charge of us, they were very helpful and patient with us. They led by example and made sure that everyone was comfortable and well prepared for the presentations. They were fun to be around but still kept their authority," said JCP student Claire Chinembiri. Dijo and Treasurer Kelebogile Ramogobeng were put in charge by the Chaiperson as he could not take part in the trip.



## **North West**

On 1 October 2015, a group of 10 members travelled to North West. The team was expected to come back from North West on 7 October and then set off on a short trip to Makapanstad on the following day. But the Makapanstad trip was cancelled because the schools they had communicated and arranged with pulled out. In the North West, they presented at schools

and also to groups at different 'Spring School' camps arranged for students that were struggling with their studies. MRYE presented at 23 schools.

After the trip head-organiser Sylvester Phalane said: "This was the first trip I organised. It was challenging and it was also a learning experience." The trip, like all the other trips in 2015, was a huge success.