

OPPORTUNITY: Join a youth led national network of Change drivers

By: Zamayirha Peter

Young people in South Africa can be a positive force for development when provided with the knowledge and opportunities they need to thrive.

The imagination, ideals and energy of young people are vital for the continuing development of the societies in which they live. National network, ACTIVATE! Change Drivers (ACTIVATE) has a decade long legacy of housing mobilisers, entrepreneurs, developers, leaders, and activists who form part of a generation of youth who do not feel entitled to anything but have chosen to give of their time and youth, towards the development of first their communities and in turn their society.

Some of the young people who have gone through the ACTIVATE Change Drivers programme (ACD Programme) include; youth development practitioner, Pearl Pillay, sitting network CEO, Sophelele Chirwa, Chair of National Youth ICT Council Bongekile Filana, Advocate Irvin Chauke, trail blazer Dr. Gladys Sesinyi, internationally renowned ICT specialist Nazareen Ebrahim, ward counsellors Fumayo Mabitsela, Inga Nodali and Alina Mazibuko. Mandela Washington fellow and Kasi Meats founder Bohlale Buzani, activist and author Ntsikelelo Mzibomvu, social innovator Koketso Marishane, Sibongile Mngadi, Jabulani Thabethe and Telo Moloi who all are leaders of their respective sectors in society.

Opportunity to join the network

Traditionally the 4365 young people who are presently a part of the network, were given the opportunity to join the network through applying to be an activator and were taken through a yearlong programme by the network staff.

Nearly two years after the halt of the programme, due to COVID restrictions, it is being revitalized. To champion the recruitment of more young people into the network it will be led by its alumni and active members of the network. They are called the amplifiers, they come from every corner of South Africa, and they all carry a track record of positive experience in the network and more so active participation in their communities. We asked them about their role looking towards the next decade of the network as they would be playing a critical role in its sustainability and growth.

Voices of the Amplifiers leading the call:

1. Gauteng

Shoki Abigail Chuene joined the network through the ACD programme.

“I have a youth organization called OUTREACH FOUNDATION wherein young people come together to assist other young people in matters such as Tutoring and other means and ways in which they can develop themselves. I have resolved, after being inspired by the network, that I want to form a youth based organization and programme which will deal with issues around womanhood in a safe space. I wish to have a South Africa where young people are ready for the opportunities they fight for and are always informed on opportunities.”

2. Kwa Zulu Natal

Ntombi Mtolo, a KZN born activator who is a lover of media and not only its consumption but the manner in which it brings a voices to people who would otherwise not have a voice.

“My everyday life is filled and characterized by my love for radio production, I use this opportunity to empower young people and make sure that I expose them to opportunities that change their lives”.

“The young people of KZN may expect from me information that will make sure that they can effect change in an ideal way. I believe in integrity and that young people need to do things the right way and enforce their rights with a lot of integrity. Through the ACTIVATE! Programme, I will be able to echo and amplify the tunes of social change to young South Africans and preach the gospel of Activate Change Drivers to them”.

3. Eastern Cape

Phumlani Mbulelo Nceza is an activator based in the Eastern Cape, Mdantsane, “I am running an organization called PACE which stands for Prevention Awareness Community Empowerment. This organization deals with youth empowerment in all aspects where young people may need empowerment and where edification may be needed in terms of providing young people with the necessary skills so that that they may empower themselves. I can’t wait to join with more young people in their community development pursuits”.

4. Western Cape

Activator Amanda Dumisa who is part of the Provinces recruitment of young people says, “My dream for South Africa is that we have the kind of youth force that takes full ownership of their economy in that they have enterprises that drive the economy in the direction that favors young people.”

5. Limpopo

Ready to share what she has learnt is Limpopo based activator, Initia Magoswana,

“Through the network I will be able to equip the young people with the same set of skills I have been equipped with by ACTIVATE! I love ACTIVATE! CHANGE DRIVERS because it is a network with a lot of interconnectedness and is able to connect young people with different skills and drive them towards the same vision.”

6. Free State

Founder of reformed men and Activator in the Free State, Tlotliso May says, he hopes to mobilise society toward a violent free society that eradicates gender based violence,

“I believe that an end to GBV in our country is based and predicated on the mental state of the men who commit the atrocities we read and hear about on a daily basis.”

May hopes to use his organisation and the resources of the network to realise this dream and encourage other young people to join this call.

7. Northern Cape

Northern Cape based activator, Lesedi Meza is a leader in an organization called Bafenyi House which means House of Winners.

“Our focus in this organization is early child development throughout adolescent stage because we believe in continuous growth. I am excited for the opportunity to serve as an Activate Change Drivers Amplifier having gone through the programme myself”.

“I believe that young people are not lazy and that we are resourceful in nature in that we are hustlers of note and we are able to always make ends meet whenever we have the necessary platform and chance. I have been a victim of gender based violence before and most of my wishes for the South African social reform agenda is based on my wish to fight towards ending gender based violence in our communities.”

8. Northwest

Olebogeng Semenekane says his experience in the network has been that of giving back. I get satisfaction when I see young people reach heights they would otherwise not be able to reach had they not been exposed to a programme like the ones we offer at ACTIVATE! Change Drivers.

9. Mpumalanga

Farmer and Entrepreneur Kgotatso Mathebula since completing the ACD programme has gone on to train young people and equip them with skills that can better enhance their small enterprises.

“I believe in the replication effect wherein I will impact young people and they will go on and teach others about the ITC skills I would have equipped them with. In my business

quests I have established an agricultural department wherein I will be teaching young people about farming and we are also currently planting for the community as our gesture of giving back to our community in a charitable fashion. I have a positive attitude towards young people as I have seen how impactful and powerful young people can be when they are offered a chance and a platform, ACTIVATE! Gives young people the platform.

ACTIVATE! Change Drivers' Special Projects and strategic partnerships manager, Rammolotsi Sothoane , leads this recruitment process describes the value of the network.

“The ACD In-Community Programme represents a revised approach to the delivery of the core content of the ACTIVATE! Change Drivers leadership training programme.

Over the next 5 years a total of 50 Youth Hubs will be selected, resourced and equipped to deliver the ACD training programme in communities across the country. This will ensure that the programme would be fully integrated in the communities it will be offered, while at the same time adding resources to an already existing Hub, thus further strengthening social services at the Hub. This will likely lead to sustainable pathways for community services and community cohesion, a key social ingredient in addressing fragile communities.”

Participation in this project requires a young person (18-35) who has the following key traits:

- (1) An active citizen with proven concern for the affairs of their community
- (2) A high level of commitment to learn and act for the benefit of others [self-motivation]
- (3) A problem solver with a passion to drive change in their community
- (4) A belief that new and creative ways of doing things can bring change [willingness]
- (5) Passion for creativity and innovation

How to join

Applications to join this network of change drivers, are still open, if you are in the below areas, *Western Cape - Stellenbosch and Khayelitsha, Northern Cape - De Aar, Free State - Botshabelo, Mpumalanga - Bushbuckridge, Limpopo - Mphanama and ga-radingwana, Eastern Cape - Buffalo city and North West- Mahikeng*, and are a young person between ages 18-35 with an interest to empower their community, apply for an opportunity to join ACTIVATE! Change Drivers and advance your civic interests within a national community of likeminded young change drivers.

Use this link: <https://db000000cii7eai.my.salesforce-sites.com/Portal/ACD2023?id=a415p000001efTpAAI>

Send any inquires via email to: ACD@activateleadership.co.za

Social media: #acd_amplifiers and active on all social media platforms as 'ACTIVATE! Change Drivers'

Learn more about activate on: www.activateleadership.co.za

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