

PROJECT DELIVERABLES AND HIGHLIGHTS: 2015-2017

Project Growth

Additional locations

In addition to Strandfontein, the project has expanded to St Francis Bay in the Eastern Cape and Elands Bay on the West Coast.

Both locations are near prime surfing beaches but the local kids have little or no exposure to the sport and have no recreational opportunities to keep them constructively occupied.

Number of kids

Primary location at Strandfontein Pavilion – we started with 7 children and now have 35 children from 7de Laan and OppermansOord informal settlements. An additional 15 will be recruited from Strandfontein in 2018

+10 in St Francis Bay

+24 in Elands Bay

School and youth groups also attend our surf clinics and life empowerment sessions so hundreds more children benefit from our programmes.

Annual Event

Bigger and better - the Annual Community Surf Challenge and Family Day grew from 250 people attending in 2013 to 2 000+ in 2017

The Acoustic Sunset Sessions was launched at the 2017 event (more details follows below) and will become a quarterly event.

With the partnership of Share the Stoke Foundation, the 2017 event also birthed the first Academy Cup for development surfers

Achievements

- Nigel was one of 4 finalists and the Grand Prize Winner of the Elizabeth Arden Make a Visible Difference Award in 2015. He was also featured as one of Expresso's Mandela Monday heroes.
- Some of our original students have blossomed into amazing leaders and achievers - Marchelino and Nathan stories follow at the end of the article.
- We attracted high-profile champions - Matt Bromley signed on as our GoodWill Ambassador and Chris Bertish is also a great supporter of our project.
- The project was nominated in the "Recreation Body of the Year" category at the SA Sports Awards.
- Nigel received a Civic Award from the City of Cape Town in 2017.

Programmes & Activities

- We formalised a 200-page life skills curriculum for the students
- We introduced Help2Read as a learning partner and adopted their programme to improve literacy amongst our children
- Our clubhouse has slowly taken shape and has become a comfortable haven for the kids.
- We acquired premises next to our clubhouse for our Café (which runs during holiday season) and which we use to prepare meals for our students.
- We launched a Clothing Bank which allows us to distribute clothing and household items to community members in need.
- The Jeffreys Bay trip has become an annual event on our calendar which provides the kids with educational and cultural opportunities and broadens their horizons.

Testimonials

Marchelino Anthony

"Marchelino is one of the most influential teenagers I've ever come across. Being in the presence of this young man has taught me that you should never allow your circumstances to hinder your progress, that you should never allow your past to hold you back from accomplishing your goals, that respect goes a long way, and with courage and God by your side anything is possible. It's very rare to come across a young man that constantly works hard for the benefit of his community, that leads with grace, does without being asked, that is constantly pushing boundaries and never allows a bad day to overpower him. This boy continues to inspire people of all ages and will pretty soon inspire the world. And yes he's the coolest 15-year-old on the block" - *Shanice Appels, Volunteer*

Nathan Perries

When Nathan Perries, more famously known as Bibo, joined the 9Miles Project and caught his first wave five years ago, he couldn't have dreamed that he would someday soon be chosen for the Western Province Grom Surfing team.

"Within the 4 years of knowing, watching over, and teaching this young man, I have learnt more from him than he has from my team and I" says Nigel "Over the years he has continued to display a positive outlook and always carries his "Colgate" smile around with him" laughs Nigel.

Nathan was since chosen for the U14 Western Province Surfing team and participated in the Billabong SA Champs in October 2017.



"We have created a space for students to explore and find their identities; and have instilled a sense of belonging in them by making them part of a supportive family, taking them on a journey where quality and excellence is pursued on a daily basis, and where they have outlets for their creativity and their unheard voices. **Going the distance means no man is left behind, it means no child is left unloved and that no community is left untouched.**" – Nigel Savel, Founder

Project overview:

9Miles Project is a registered non-profit organisation that was founded in Cape Town in 2013. The project works with the youth of Strandfontein and surrounding informal settlements, and aims to provide mentorship and support to the at-risk youth in the area.

This is achieved through surfing lessons, supplementary academic support, life skills and leadership training, health assessments, feeding schemes, educational trips, community events, and day-to-day mentorship and support. Based at Strandfontein Pavilion, the project is a haven and refuge for youth who have very few positive role models in their lives.



The programme is designed holistically to encompass the following four pillars: Physical, Mental, Social and Emotional. These pillars are underscored by lessons and principles which are outlined in our 200-page curriculum that each student receives upon starting the programme. After four successful years the project has also been expanded to Elands Bay and St. Francis Bay where it is already reaping great rewards.

Background:

Motivated by his love for surfing and the pivotal role that the discipline of this activity played in his life, Nigel Savel, along with his wife Sher'Neil, started the project with the vision of



improving their crime and drug-scourged community. Nigel recognised that the children growing up in the surrounding informal settlements were living with gangsters and drug dealers as role models and that there were very few organised activities or programmes to motivate and mould young impressionable minds. Surfing was used as a catalyst to entice students to the project and to teach them discipline, determination and life skills.

“Surfing has taught our students that if you work hard anything is possible... that waves & challenges will always come but it is up to us to decide if we'll give up or ride them” – Nigel Savel, Founder

Our team

Nigel Savel – Founder and Operations Director

Sher'Neil Savel- Co Founder and Chairperson

Danica Le Fleur- Head of Operations

Carmen Davids - Fundraising & Social Media

Chad Smith – Facility coach

Danielle Paulsen- full time volunteer

Daily Operations

Our base of operations is at the Strandfontein Pavilion tidal pool. The project operates 4 days a week in the afternoon from 3pm until 6pm; and on Saturday morning from 9am to 2pm. Daily activities consists of leadership training, Help2Read sessions, and academic support, life skills lessons from our *Awakening the Soul Surfer Curriculum*, and fitness and surf training. Each day, a meal is prepared before a lesson commences as many of our learners often go to school hungry and no child can learn and actively engage on an empty stomach.

Programmes & Deliverables:

Project Learn2Earn/Social enterprises – skilling youth and the unemployed in order to provide employment opportunities e.g. surf repair workshop, board turning etc.

Project Nosh - Giving students at least one wholesome meal per day, ensuring they do not go to school without breakfast and distributing donated groceries to families

Supplementary Academic Support - After School Homework Assistance, exam preparation and Tutoring of Difficult Subjects

Computer Literacy Training - computer training and learning how to use the Internet for assignments and projects

Surf Programme - Surfing, Fitness Training, Water & Safety Training

Project Connect - national trips to surf competitions and other non-profit organisations

Call 2 Lead - Leadership training programme that recognises the change in the youth in our project and focuses on empowering the individual to grow their leadership qualities

Reading Programmes - Literacy programme that teaches our students to read, write, and spell; and pronunciation of the English language

Core Life Skills Programme - Interactive lessons that impart life skills and information that they need to prosper in society. Lessons such as basic money management, food preparation, and written and verbal communication skills are essential parts of the life skills curriculum

Sustainability /Social Enterprises

9Miles Project has a few social enterprises that assist in generating funds to sustain our daily operations activities. These small businesses are:

- "The 9Miles Café" is open to the public during season, public and school holidays and weekends. It was launched on Boxing Day 26 December 2016.
- We stock second-hand wetsuits and surfboards at our Second Hand Surf Shop. It is open daily and we run the R300 SALE at the end of each month. The shop gives those who desire to pursue the sport the opportunity to acquire equipment at an affordable price.
- Surf and SUP lessons for single or group sessions as well corporate team building packages.

Events:

9Miles Projects hosts an Annual Community Surf Challenge and Family Day that creates opportunities for the entire family to participate in. The event is free to attend and only requires registration to participate in the recreational activities. These activities include surf lessons, kayaking, SUP, sand castle building, treasure hunting, volleyball, beach soccer. In 2017 9Miles Project partnered with Share the Stoke Foundation to birth the Academy Cup which is an outreach surf competition for other surf projects from around the country.

We launched our Acoustic Sunset Sessions at the 2017 event, hosting local prestigious musical jazz legends such as Frank Paco and Spencer Mbadu. Acoustic Sunset Sessions' objective is to create an ambiance where friends and family can come together to indulge in an afternoon filled with good energy and experience different mediums of the creative arts such as music, spoken word and dance.

Project Expansion

West Coast outreach and St Francis Bay Project

In April 2017 9Miles launched the West Coast Elands Bay Outreach Project. Our team visits every 6 weeks to host a life empowerment surf clinic with the youth, conducting lessons derived from our curriculum. There is very little to no extra- mural activities or youth development programmes within this region and even though they live within walking distance of one of the most popular surf hotspots in South Africa and are exposed to surfers, they have never had the opportunity to experience the sport for themselves. We currently work with 24 young individuals from the small town of Elands Bay.

Our St Francis Bay Project launched in April 2017. The learners are from a small informal community known as SeaVista. We have 10 boys within the project and it operates twice a week with each session consisting of a life skill lesson, fitness and surf training. Although the project is very young, change in behaviour, attitude and character is apparent. The premises were generously provided by Kouga Municipality for our kids to have a safe environment to conduct our lessons and store our equipment. There is a great support from the community as well as the town of St Francis Bay.

Vehicle Campaign

Imagine transporting kids, running errands, collecting and distributing food, etc. in a little hatchback...that's what the staff at the 9Miles Project do on a daily basis. Walking to the project clubhouse is tough for our kids - especially in inclement weather and with the fear of violence or child abductions. The journey is worth it though because the clubhouse is a safe and positive environment where they are inspired to achieve their dreams and goals.

Why do we need a vehicle?

- It would enable us to easily transport the students on a daily basis (cutting down on multiple trips with small cars) and ensure their comfort and safety.
- It would make site and home visits easier and would also streamline our outreach and feeding programme.

- It will reduce our operational costs and free up money currently spent on hiring vehicles for long trips to our other outreach programmes in Elands Bay and St Francis Bay.
- A vehicle would also allow us to expand the students' horizons by taking them on regular cultural trips.

Communication

Social media forms the core of our communication strategy and we have a very well-established and sophisticated footprint which includes our Website (www.9milesproject.org), Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and Twitter accounts.

Please follow us here for more information:



https://web.facebook.com/9MilesProject?_rdc=1&_rdr



<https://twitter.com/9MilesProject>



<https://www.instagram.com/9milesproject/>



The mural our kids did on the Strandfontein Library wall features our very own Nathan in celebration of his literacy journey...

9 Miles project

Going the Distance...

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