



Socio-Economic Development Initiative

SW Contracts Kennel Competition

On the 6th July SW Contracts chose Paragon Interiors to be part of a competition to decorate kennels that will be donated to dogs in need in local communities. Eager to help, Paragon Interiors took on the challenge to create beautiful homes for the animals. SW Contracts dropped off the kennels made from recycled products for our team to decorate according to three themes; save our planet, keep our area clean, stop animal abuse.

The Paragon Interiors team were thrilled to be part of a project with such a wonderful message and social outreach initiative. On a chilly Saturday morning our devoted staff woke up early and went to work. Each kennel was decorated with a different theme in mind. Those who could not be there physically were there in spirit by donating blankets, pillows, and food.

We are honoured to be part of such an initiative and thank SW Contracts for choosing us as one of the competitors.

We want to also thank all those individuals who worked on the kennels and donated their time or resources to this cause.



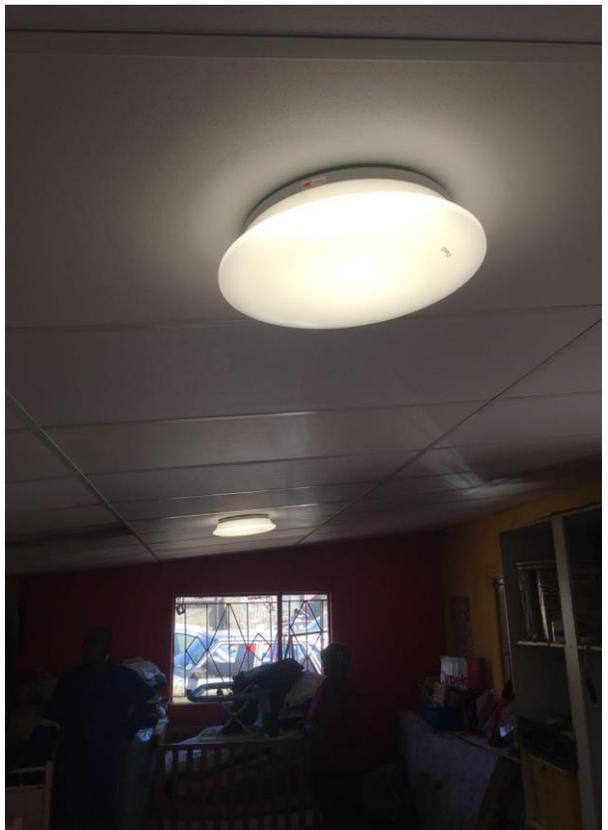
Socio-Economic Development Initiative

Luyanda Uthando Lwabantwana

Luyanda Uthando Lwabantwana (roughly translated to 'the love for the children is growing') is a day-care centre in Alexandra Township run by Joyce Hlomuka, a selfless woman with a big heart for children. Joyce opened the day-care centre after realizing the need for a low-cost child care facility in Alex. Joyce currently has 38 children registered at the centre – between the ages of 3 months and 6 years old – and 6 high school orphans that stay with her permanently.

Every month is a struggle for Joyce. She charges parents a fee of R100 a month to care for the children but often does not receive payment. She accepts stationery or occasionally, a food item (i.e. a packet of mealie meal) from parents in lieu of fees.

When we began our relationship with Joyce and LUL in 2015, the building that she was in in 17th Avenue, Alexandra, was dilapidated and in much need of repair. The wall that surrounds her property was disintegrating and the roof and ceiling, near collapse – causing a great security risk for the children.



Luyanda Uthando Lwabantwana

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As our area of expertise is in interior design and construction, we focused much of our efforts on improving the facilities (both of Joyce's home and the day-care building). Over the past 2.5 years we have facilitated the following changes and improvements:

- Purchased bunk beds, new mattresses, linen and knitted warm blankets for Joyce and the girl orphans (the boys had recently received a donation of bunk beds and linen)
- Repaired the perimeter walls on the left and right sides of the property
- Replaced the roof and ceiling tiles in the house and in the day-care centre
- Repaired the plumbing in the facility – installed new taps, toilets, basins, a geyser and installed three showers for Joyce and the children
- Rewired the electrics in the property and installed new lights
- Installed splashback tiles in the kitchen area
- Bought new tables and chairs for the day-care centre
- Carpeted key areas in Joyce's home and the day-care room
- Built and installed a new gate

It is important for us to acknowledge the organisations who partnered with us in making these improvements by donating goods or offering significant discounts on their products and services – Ezee Tiles, Cast Industries, PPC Cement, Pro Active Plumbing, Hi Tech Nail Plate, Albano Interiors and MD Electrical.

With the facilities improved, our focus now is to help Joyce to become self-sustainable. One of the initiatives to assist with this involves salvaging items off our sites during the demolition process and asking our suppliers to deliver these items to Joyce to sell to the community in Alex as a supplementary income!



Socio-Economic Development Initiative

Preschools 4 Africa/Play With a Purpose (PWAP)

At the beginning of 2017, we broadened our social involvement to include an ongoing initiative to collect paper and age appropriate books for an organisation called Preschools 4 Africa.

The objective of the Preschools 4 Africa is to mentor preschools and improve the overall standard of nursery school education in South Africa. They provide a programme (Play with A Purpose), equipment, ongoing mentorship and training to the schools that are registered with them. Their incredible vision is to have a preschool within walking distance of every child in South Africa!

At our first contact meeting with them, they expressed an urgent need for scrap paper (they were having to purchase paper for the children to draw on) and for books to begin libraries in each of their affiliated schools.

Our staff are determined to collect as much paper for them as possible. Paragon also matches the number of books donated by staff 1 for 1.

In addition to this, we have donated clothing, cupboards, reception desks, doors, carpet tiles and other items to the organisation. We are constantly watching what is demolished off our sites that could be useful for one of the nursery schools affiliated to PWAP.



Skills Development Initiative

Traditionally, our skills development initiatives have been focused internally with bi-weekly staff training sessions on new products in our industry, office design and on the world of work, and on, upskilling employees with formal training (funding higher certificate studies).

In 2016, we extended our focus outwards and awarded a scholarship to a final year NDip Interior Design student at the University of Johannesburg. He is a truly impressive and talented young man who lives in Soweto. He had been relying on financial aid to get through his studies and we were honoured to help him in his third year.

He joined us for six weeks to fulfil the 'experiential learning' component of his qualification in 2017. We were excited to have him join us for a year's experience at the beginning of 2018 as a full-time member of the design team.

Passionate about the development of young people, we are looking forward to expanding this initiative going forward.

We have enjoyed hosting other students for internships, and high school students for job shadowing, to help expand their knowledge of corporate interior design.

