



2008 Reconciliation Award for SHINE Centre

The Institute for Justice and Reconciliation is pleased to announce that the 2008 Reconciliation Award has been awarded to Shine, a non-governmental organisation that provides early intervention and support to children in Grade Two and Three who are experiencing difficulties with language and reading, and who would not otherwise have access to this kind of support. The learning is facilitated by a corps of trained volunteers, many of whom are retired teachers and other professionals.

At least 700 children have benefited from the SHINE programme to date, with 200 currently enjoying the benefit of one-on-one adult mentoring by the more than 200 trained volunteers ('learning partners') at four centres in primary schools in the Western Cape.

Most immediately, Shine fosters reconciliation through the contact between its volunteers and the learners, as well as between the learners who participate in the programme. In the longer-term it highlights education as an important means to overcome structural inequality and build a more inclusive society, as well as the leading role that community-based initiatives will have to play in this regard.

In honouring this one organisation, the Institute furthermore recognises the many other initiatives, private and public, that share Shine's mission to improve the educational well-being of South African learners, specifically those facing the greatest obstacles to education. These actions represent a vital investment in the future of reconciliation.

Today, fifteen years after the demise of apartheid, many of the structural underpinnings that have bred injustice in the past remain intact. Consequently, inequal-

ity continues to reproduce itself. Whether South Africa will overcome this divide between those who are getting richer, and those who are getting more destitute will depend largely on the education system's ability to ensure equal access to quality education for all learners. The education system needs not only to produce skilled individuals to enter and grow the economy, but also to encourage a fairer distribution of wealth. Without the opportunity for all South African youth to be educated well, regardless of background or class, reconciliation will eventually falter.

The signs are discouraging. While access has broadened, the quality of the education system's outputs has remained deeply worrying. It is clear that learners in poorer schools are bearing the brunt of a struggling system, and that the barriers which they face, often without additional support, have a profound impact on their mobility, both inside and outside of the schooling system. Unlike many affluent schools where the system's shortcomings can be compensated for through collaboration with specialist remedial support teachers, occupational therapists, educational psychologists, speech and language therapists, disadvantaged schools are often reliant on the overstretched resources of education district offices for assistance.

Change will take time. In the interim, however, a significant section of our learner population stand in danger to become part of another lost generation, unable to participate fully as citizens in the economy or the democratic structures at its disposal. This has profound implications for all of us, and it calls for a civic response, which transcends our historical differences, to compliment official efforts to improve the life chances of our children.

Throughout South Africa many communities and organisations have bravely stepped into this breach. SHINE, to which the 2008 Reconciliation Award goes, has been one of them. Established in 2000, the Shine Centre, in partnership with better-resourced inner city schools in Cape Town, has developed a proven and innovative approach for mentoring second language learners (students) from disadvantaged backgrounds. The challenges that they face are significant, and SHINE's foundation level program helps these children to thrive and learn, rather than fall behind in their schooling at a time when learning the basics is critical. The mentoring helps to facilitate sound, independent learning habits and, according to an independent Western Cape Education Department evaluation, the programme has had a remarkable impact on the literacy levels of learners who have participated in it. The Institute for Justice and Reconciliation salutes such remarkable instances of active citizenship designed to break down the barriers which continue to separate us.

In honouring this organisation, the Institute also pays tribute to the many other initiatives, private and public, that share Shine's mission to improve the educational well-being of South African learners, specifically those facing the greatest obstacles to education. These actions represent a vital investment in the future of reconciliation.

Inscape Design College is proud to be involved with SHINE and it's partners this year. Our third year Interior Design students in Cape Town volunteered to be part of the one-on-one mentorship programme as part of the college's Leadership and Social Responsibility Programme.



Spotted on campus . . .



A bench in the garden beats a desk in a studio anyday.



Our CTN Principal, hard at work in Pretoria



Putting the campus pool in JHB to good use!



John at his baby shower?? . . .



. . . and Helen (and co.) at hers held in Pretoria.