



Reginald Botha conducting an entrepreneurial workshop

As a graduate student, when conducting research within a community, it is very important to maintain genuine relationships and provide community services when requested. While in South Africa, I was able to collaborate with Reginald Botha, CEO of Westbury Youth Centre (WYC), who works along with Tracy Dennis, in coordinating and providing training sessions/workshops for entrepreneurs that want to take their startup businesses to the next level. This included workshops led by entrepreneurs from Westbury, prepare for potential networking events; and having guest speakers such as myself explaining the importance of establishing your brand, following your own life journey, and not following someone else's dreams.

The aims of this project is to expand the horizons of Westbury youth and understand that there are more opportunities outside of the boundaries of Westbury. Formerly known as Western Native Township located within the Johannesburg metropolitan area, constructed during the apartheid regime for the purpose of ghettoization and marginalization not only as a racially-segregated group, but also marginalized from opportunity and restricted from improving their life chances within a race-hierarchical society.



Westbury youth entrepreneurial trainees

In 2016, beyond 20 years of independence, the African National Congress (ANC) led government promotes a non-racial democratic society.

Yet, the predominantly Coloured community in Westbury still feels racially- marginalized as an in-between group (not Black, nor White) due to the memory of slavery, colonialism, exile, and spatial boundaries that were established during apartheid. Many Westbury residents still latch onto their Coloured identity as a form of resistance due to their socioeconomic status, lack of political presence, and isolation within an impoverished space.

The purpose of the WYC is to encourage, enlighten, and acknowledge that today is a new day in Westbury. We are not in the days of *apartheid*. The youth must understand that the world is their oyster and have the opportunity to achieve various dreams if they are hungry and are dedicated, whether short term (training and taking their exams in order to obtain matriculation) and/or long-term goals, which may involve either registering for courses at the college or university level, becoming an entrepreneur, or doing both. The youth are at various levels of their journeys.

As stated by former Columbia University Ivy League student Nayla Kidd: *I finally broke down because I was living a life I thought I should be living instead of living the life that I want.* ("Why I had to escape my Ivy League life and disappear." Nayla Kidd. New York Post, May 29, 2016, nypost.com)

If you want to change the narrative of your life, you are the only one that has the power and agency to make that change.



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