



Future of Youth Fostered through Sports Charity

Vere Reynolds-Hale launches charity to encourage socialization and achievement of South African youth



In our modern society, we are often swept away from our hometowns to new neighborhoods, cities and in some cases, even countries, to further our careers or personal endeavors. However, no matter how far we may travel, for most of us, our hometown will always be the place that is truly home and a community that we would like to help or give back to in some manner. This is something *Vere Reynolds-Hale*, First Allied's National Sales Manager, can certainly attest to.

As a native South African and current citizen, Vere has fond memories of his childhood and young adulthood in this country known for its diversity of cultures and languages. Though he has been in the U.S. for 19 years, Vere has long desired to give back to his country of origin in a way that truly inspires him. He said, "I really wanted to do something positive to help the people in my home country by contributing in a way that I am passionate about. Because I've always loved sports since being involved in them as a child in South Africa, and have continued to participate in sports activities as an adult, I thought that a sports charity benefitting South African children would be the perfect fit."

KITS FOR AFRICA HELPS PREVENT JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

Vere was able to realize his dream earlier this year by launching Kits for Africa—a charity that raises money in the U.S. to support youth athletic programs for children ages 5 to 18 in South Africa with the goal of preventing juvenile delinquency. With youth development program funding being cut back and unemployment at nearly 25 percent in South Africa, it has become an increasing concern that much of the youth are being forced into a life of crime. Additionally, as a developing nation, youth in South Africa don't have many



opportunities to participate in activities like sports, and Kits for Africa is helping to change this.

Funding from the U.S. will help sports leagues in poverty-stricken areas purchase kits (sports equipment and clothing), so that more kids will have the opportunity to play for organized teams. Vere said, "Sports entice kids in underprivileged areas off the streets and away from trouble, while fostering their self-confidence through socialization and opportunities for achievement."

HOW IT WORKS

While Kits for Africa's funds are raised in the U.S., all purchases are made in South Africa through local distributors so the country's economy can benefit. The charity works in association with the various provincial and national sports unions, as well as youth development programs, to determine the needs of the communities, with a primary focus on rugby, cricket, football (soccer) and netball (a female sport similar to basketball).

Sports unions in South Africa can request kits for their teams through an application process that asks them to describe how their local children may benefit specifically. The Kits for Africa then reviews the applications and places orders through local distributors who work with the sports teams to determine things like shirt sizes and specific equipment needs.

RAISING THE FUNDS

The inaugural fundraiser for the charity was held on August 19 at Bar Basic in downtown San Diego and was a great success. More than 125 people attended and \$4,500 was raised through event purchases and raffle tickets. Additionally, supplementary donations were given and pledges made for future donations. The Kits for Africa Web

site and newsletter is up and running and will soon include inspiring photos, videos and testimonials of the positive impact the organization is having on South African youth.

The second event, a golf ProAm, is currently in the planning stages and will take place later this year. Vere hopes to someday expand the reach of Kits for Africa to other African countries and is hopeful that through their experience with sports, African children will have the opportunity to do something positive with their time and thus avoid lives of crime. "I really believe that having a place other than the streets for these kids to go will make a huge difference to them, as well as provide them with a positive influence that will help them to be more successful later on in their lives."

In addition to Vere's leadership, **Robin Duffy**, Office Manager, AEAM; **Charlie Gillespie**, Director of Mutual Fund Sales, Financial Services Group; and **Rich Keltner**, Vice President of Business Analysis, serve on the board of the charity. For more information, visit www.kitsforafrica.org.