



Infinite Family: Keeping in Touch

September 2011

In the News:

**Founding Director of Programs
Dana Gold visits the
Philippines to launch second
Infinite Family joint venture
with Save the Children**

**" I HAVE STRENGTH AND
POWER TO SURVIVE"
from a Net Buddy Blog**

**Next Online Open House,
a 30 minute webinar on
video mentoring**

**September 22 at 7pm
September 23 at 11am
October 21 at 7pm
October 22 at 11am**

[Register Now](#)

Can't wait?????

**See a quick video
ON DEMAND
introducing the Infinite Family
video mentoring program**

[Watch the Video](#)

BBC Radio Features Infinite Family Video Mentor Pair: Sheila and Mbali

It was a dreary, rainy afternoon in Johannesburg, but inside the Infinite Family mentoring lab at Nkosi's Haven, the bright smiles were creating a warm glow. BBC reporter Mpho Lakaje recently visited Infinite Family Net Buddy Mbali to find out how connecting to her mentor Sheila 8000 miles away had impacted her life. Mbali, who came to Infinite Family partner site Nkosi's Haven after having been orphaned, has been working diligently to achieve the highest marks possible in order to earn entrance into college. In large part, she credits Sheila with inspiring her to reach for the sky.

"At first I can say I used to pour out everything that happened to me to her. It felt good that someone would listen and give me good advice. I would come in crying and walk out smiling," reminisced Mbali.



Before being matched with Sheila four years ago, Mbali thought her future was limited by what she saw surrounding her: poverty, lack of achievement, and the unending cycle of low-skilled employment and subsistence living. Sheila "opened my eyes to the possibilities that are there for me. She told me that I can remember the past, but it does not impact my future. My future begins now and I must work hard for it. I have learned to let go. If something doesn't work out today, I must work harder tomorrow."

Nkosi's Haven Founder and Mbali's guardian Gail Johnson adds, "With Infinite Family, their confidence grows; their command of English language, as well as computer skills, improve. It is a dual way of education. Our children are educating their mentors. It is a freedom for these youth that they can express anything and everything."

Today, Mbali is preparing for her final exams which will determine whether or not she is able to fulfill her new vision for herself and her future. She shares Infinite Family's vision about the power of mentoring and the potential of the youth of Africa. "I would love to see teenagers all around have access to this program. I believe there is no certain age when you stop learning. It will open your mind. Teenagers give up easily and having someone to talk to will help bring them up, raise them up."

We agree.

[Listen to Mbali](#) share her transformation in this inspiring BBC interview.

View the Infinite Family blog.

infinitefamily.blogspot.com

Contact us or make
a donation at:

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Infinite Family is a 501c3
non-profit charity.

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Putting the Fun in Fundraising

Two committed Friends of Infinite Family got creative about ways to raise the Infinite Family profile, some funds, and have a great time while doing both.



Jay Meisel, an Infinite Family Connections Council member (on the right, with Board member Jason Asbury), organized a South African wine tasting event at Wright and Goebel, a wine store in downtown Brooklyn. Over 70 of Jay's personal circle of friends attended to learn about Jay's passion for the cause. Jay spoke about his time, as an undergraduate at Princeton, doing educational research

and volunteer tutoring while in Gugulethu, a township outside of Cape Town, and how this experience inspired him to get involved with Infinite Family. The event raised over \$500 for Infinite Family through a combination of donations and a percent of wines sales that night, generously donated by Wright and Goebel.

Jerrell Horton, the founder of Suit Dreams and a DePauw University alum, was so inspired by Infinite Family's mission, that he decided to share a third of the proceeds of his Suit Dreams back-to-school supply event with our Net Buddies in South Africa. Suit Dreams' primary mission is to address the educational and social disparities plaguing young urban males in Brooklyn, New York. Recognizing that the needs of students from low income backgrounds who are unable to purchase basic school supplies transcends geography, Jerrell expanded Suit Dreams' efforts to include Infinite Family. A vibrant crowd of over 100 lent their support to the efforts of students in Brooklyn and Johannesburg. The event was held at a downtown NYC club, and admission was payable in school supplies or the cash equivalent.



You too can share your passion for Infinite Family's mission by organizing an event for 10 or 110!

Infinite Family will be happy to attend in person or virtually and lend our expertise to your efforts. If you are interested in learning more about the Connections Council, a group of young professionals committed to advocating for and supporting Infinite Family, or creating your own event at home or anywhere, please contact [Dana Gold](#).

A Warm Winter Present from Internet Solutions

Winters in Johannesburg are cold, and if it was the winter of 2011, it even snowed. But, Internet Solutions, our corporate partner that delivers solutions to all our internet needs and connects our Net Buddies and Mentors via satellite, knew just how our youths were struggling in their unheated homes, schools and computer labs and came up with a different kind of "solution".



Can you imagine the surprise when all Infinite Family Net Buddies returning from their July (winter) school holiday were greeted with warm, fleece pullovers courtesy of IS? They were overjoyed...immediately donning their pullovers and grinning ear to ear.

We are extremely grateful to Internet Solutions for continuing to enrich the lives of Infinite Family's Net Buddies. Many thanks for all that you do!

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Infinite Family believes in the potential of Africa's youth. We envision an Africa in which its youth, in ever-increasing numbers, contribute to their schools, communities, and countries. We achieve our goals by facilitating video mentoring by adults around the world, in collaboration with partners who share our objectives, and through the optimism and determination of these youths. And, ultimately, we foresee an African continent changed forever through their optimism and determination.