
35 YEARS OF MANIFESTING HOPE
reach for a dream
2023
ANNUAL REVIEW

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EVERY DREAM IS A MASTERPIECE

OUR TEAM ENSURES THAT EVERY DREAM WE REALISE IS A ONE-OF-A-KIND MASTERPIECE, JUST LIKE THE CHILDREN WHO RECEIVE THEM.

Since 1988, the Reach For A Dream Foundation has brought hope, joy, and healing to countless children by encouraging them to use their dreams to fight life-threatening illnesses such as cancer, muscular dystrophy, renal failure, and various blood disorders.

We seek to alleviate the strain that a life-threatening illness places on children and their families by making dreams come true. These dreams — ranging from meeting personal heroes to having new experiences — provide them with a much-needed distraction from often painful medical treatments and give them hope to believe that tomorrow is worth fighting for.

The impact that a dream coming true can have on their well-being is overwhelming. The positive effect of a dream lingers, and children often respond better to their medication and treatments.

In addition to individual dreams, we run various national projects like Dream Rooms, Laughter Heroes, and Dream Club to provide ongoing support to the children and their families.

Reach For A Dream relies solely on donor funding and public support to ensure the success of our initiatives.
We're proud of our Level 1 B-BBEE certification but, mostly, we're proud of making magic happen.



WE MAKE DREAMS COME TRUE FOR EVERY CHILD WITH A LIFE-THREATENING ILLNESS BY GIVING THEM HOPE TO BELIEVE THAT TOMORROW IS WORTH FIGHTING FOR.

2,067
dreams fulfilled in 2023

27,670
dreams realised since 1988

WHAT DREAMS ARE MADE OF

100%
of dreams fulfilled

5.6
dreams a day every day of the year

- To go somewhere or see an amazing place
- To have a special experience
- To meet someone famous or the child's role model
- To have or own something
- To become somebody they hope to be when they grow up

MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

Julia Sotirianakos



Dear friends,

We are proud to present our Annual Review for 2023 and to showcase some of the Foundation's remarkable achievements. This year marked a special milestone – 35 years of turning dreams into reality, manifesting hope, and encouraging our children to dream big.

Our dedicated team, composed of staff, graduates, interns, volunteers, and board members, have worked relentlessly to fulfil an impressive 2,067 dreams. The dreams we've fulfilled have sparked courage, strength, and hope in these children, equipping them with the resilience to continue battling their illnesses.

Beyond realising dreams, the year was filled with many highlights from successful fundraisers like Slipper Day, gala dinners, and golf days to launching 14 new Dreams Rooms and piloting the Dream Club, which provides our children with ongoing support and a platform to build lasting connections.

As you browse through our publication, you will be greeted by the smiles and joy of our beautiful children - each a testament to the impact of our work. Just as every dream is a masterpiece, each child's smile is a work of art that inspires us daily. We hope this gives you a vivid insight into the work we are privileged to do every day.

We would like to thank everyone for the part that they played in our journey in 2023. We would also like to extend our best wishes to Carla Da Silva, who was elected as Chair of the Foundation. Her passion and dedication will undoubtedly enable us to reach greater heights in 2024.

All the best,
Julia

OUR DREAMERS



LETHOKUHLE

MEETS STOPPAMAN

Three-year-old Lethokuhle is obsessed with the superhero he calls 'Stoppaman' or, as we all know him, Spiderman. His dream of meeting his hero came true when Spidey himself showed up to surprise him. At first, Letho couldn't believe his eyes but soon realised he was dealing with the real thing. Spidey also came bearing some dream toys including a digger truck, police car, a Spiderman backpack, and a ride-on motorbike, which made Letho grin from ear-to-ear. Once Spidey had bid Letho farewell, we treated him and his family to a meal, where he regaled everyone who would listen with the story of how he had met the real 'Stoppaman', carefully pointing out that he didn't cry even once.



RYAN

GETS BOWLED OVER BY XBOX

Ryan is a 16-year-old who has been diagnosed with Paraganglioma, a rare tumour. He is obsessed with gaming and gadgets. We took Ryan and his grandmother to Electric Avenue for a game of bowling. When we presented him with a wrapped box, Ryan was speechless at first until he finally realised what it was. With wide eyes and the biggest smile on his face, Ryan exclaimed, "Grandma, it's an XBOX!" For Ryan, this XBOX represented so much more than just a gaming console. It meant freedom from his pain and being able to immerse himself in something he loved.



ANIKIWE

CAPTURES THE MOMENT WITH HER DREAM PHONE

Anikiwe's dream of owning a phone with three cameras came to life in the heart of Frere Hospital. The young, vibrant photography enthusiast couldn't contain her excitement as the wrapping paper fell away to reveal her dream device. Ignoring everything around her, she powered up her new phone, ready to freeze time with each click. This was more than just technology for Anikiwe, it was a tool to capture and preserve cherished moments and the breathtaking beauty around her.

OUR DREAMERS



LIAM

MEETS BONGI MBONAMBI

As a rugby fan and aspiring professional player, 13-year-old Liam, who is living with cancer, has always dreamt of meeting his hero, Bongi Mbonambi, a member of South Africa's 2023 Rugby World Cup winning team and the formidable hooker for Cell C Sharks. He received the biggest surprise when we flew him and his father to Durban for an unforgettable visit to Hollywoodbets Kings Park, where he met his icon. They toured the Shark Tank, visiting the players' tunnel and changing room. The highlight was when Bongi gave him one of his Springbok jerseys and some Sharks merchandise.

"It was the best day of my life. Thank you to Reach For A Dream and The Sharks for treating my dad and me like we were the heroes." – Liam Human



MELO

DREAMS OF WHIZZING AROUND IN HER OWN CAR

Five-year-old Melo from Cape Town holds a deep affection for cars, far preferring them to dolls. We took her to Hazendal Estate, where she experienced the magical world of Wonderdal, an immersive entertainment centre for kids, and its whimsical inhabitants, the Amuki.

The real surprise was a ride-on car waiting for her outside. The moment she spotted it, her entire face lit up with a brilliant smile! She eagerly hopped in and drove with gusto around the parking lot, leaving a trail of happiness in her wake. This magical day transformed Melo's life. Her mother reported that she has become happier and more content, knowing an exciting drive in her car awaits her each day.



OYI

GETS HER DREAM PLAYHOUSE

Oyi, a three-year-old dreamer from Gqeberha, was initially reserved when we met her, but quickly warmed up upon receiving a Minnie Mouse doll and matching outfit. As she joyfully played, our Dream Team and the Remax Bay fairies constructed her dream playhouse outside. The sight of her colourful house, personalised with her name in blocks, ignited pure joy on Oyi's face. She embraced the surprise, exploring her new home and its contents, then lovingly mothered her new baby dolls.

OUR DREAMERS



ZAVION

TAKES TO THE SKIES

Zavion, a four-year-old Retinoblastoma fighter, loves Bluey, dinosaurs and dreams of being a pilot. We took him to the Stellenbosch Flying Club where his dream took flight. Decked out in a full flying suit complete with badges and gadgets, Zavion embarked on an unforgettable journey in the sky, viewing their home from a whole new perspective. His day was made even more magical with a surprise hamper full of his favourite Bluey merchandise and his dream Bubblegum tablet for endless gaming fun.

“He was flying from Stellenbosch to Paarl. My pilot was in the air and clouds. Thank you for making Zavion’s dream come true.”
– Gwendeline Swarts, Zavion’s mom



PAYTON

BECOMES A PRINCESS, RIDING A WHITE HORSE

Payton, a five-year-old living with acute lymphoblastic leukaemia, dreamt of being a princess riding a white horse. We surprised her with a princess gown, tiara, and a visit to Outeniqua Moon in Mossel Bay, home of South Africa’s largest horses. The highlight was meeting and fearlessly riding Shadowfax, the country’s largest horse. Afterwards, she joined her mom on an unforgettable carriage ride, filled with laughter, camaraderie and scenic beauty.

“Reach For A Dream was exceptional. They made her dream come true, sparing no expense, and made her feel like a princess. The work the Foundation does is life-changing.”
– Renay Pillay, Payton’s mom



BUHLE

GETS HER DREAM BUBBLEGUM TABLET

Buhle is an adorable four-year-old girl from Aliwal North who is living with an inoperable heart condition. She loves to play games and watch YouTube videos, and dreamt of having a Bubblegum tablet to call her own. We made her dream come true! When she saw her pink and white tablet, it was love at first sight. She couldn’t wait to immerse herself in the world of games.

OUR DREAMERS



PEATHWIN

DREAMS OF BECOMING A NAVAL OFFICER

At just seven years old, Peathwin is courageously battling Burkitt’s Lymphoma and has dreams of becoming a naval officer one day. We gave him a glimpse of his future - complete with his own navy uniform and a surprise visit from Commander Leverne Nsibande and Warrant Officer Class 2 Byron Lombard from the Simon’s Town Naval Base.

His joy knew no bounds as he chatted about his desire to board a ship once his health improved. His day got even brighter when he received his dream tablet and headphones, perfect for keeping his spirits high during chemotherapy treatments.



RUBEN

TIMELESS SYMPHONY OF DREAMS

Sixteen-year-old dreamer, Ruben, had a dream day that was nothing short of magical. What he thought was an ordinary trip to apply for his ID turned out to be a surprise detour to City Hall.

Little did he know he was about to experience a Beethoven Concerto, performed by the Cape Town Philharmonic Orchestra during a rehearsal - a dream for our young Beethoven lover. Adding to the surprise was South Africa’s renowned pianist and Juilliard scholar, Leo Gevisser, who flew from New York for the concert. The joy Ruben experienced upon meeting Leo was priceless. The day’s highlight was when Leo presented Ruben with a long-desired vintage Fossil watch, symbolising his resilience and courage.



ZUKHANYE

PAWSITIVE ATTITUDE

Zukhanye, who is living with leukaemia, dreams of becoming a veterinarian. He has a soft spot for animals, especially stray cats and dogs, for whom he longs to provide the love and care they deserve .

We took Zukhanye on a visit to Tygerberg Animal Hospital where, dressed in scrubs and a stethoscope, he consulted with furry patients, used ultrasound machinery, and even participated in a surgery. His dedication was rewarded when he was presented with a badge bearing the name Dr Zukhanye, which made his face light up with pride. To top it all off, he received a laptop, something he’d always wanted but had never thought he’d be able to have.

OUR DREAMERS



ZHARA

ICE-CREAM TRIP TURNS INTO VIOLIN SURPRISE

Zhara, an 11-year-old living with cancer, dreamt of owning a violin. Her special day began at the V&A Waterfront in Cape Town with an art jamming session, which saw her painting a self-portrait. Later, under the guise of going to get an ice cream, Zhara and her family had a surprise encounter with a violinist, who had her mesmerised. As he finished playing, he surprised her by presenting her with a violin of her very own. Her reaction was one of elation, moving onlookers to tears. The musician also offered to mentor her on her violin-playing journey, making the day even more memorable.



MAKAYDO

FARM ADVENTURE

Makaydo, a four-year-old leukaemia patient, loves animals and wants to be a Minion when he grows up. He and his sister Zoe had an unforgettable day at Gumboot Parties Farm. Wearing a new farmer's hat and boots, he fed pigs, befriended a horse, and held a rabbit for the first time, amazing his granny with his gentleness. After a tractor tour, he unboxed his dream – a Bubblegum Tablet he'd been longing for. His joy was immeasurable as he switched it on and shared the experience with his sister.



XAVIER

TOUCHES THE SKY

A 16-year-old Hodgkins Lymphoma warrior, Xavier aspires to join the Metro Police but believes that may be out of reach as he currently can't run very far.

When his dream day came around, he and his siblings had no idea why they were supposedly going for breakfast at McDonald's on a school day. He was gobsmacked when we arrived at the local Air Force base, where he listened attentively to a presentation about the Oryx helicopter. Soon he, his sister and his dad were strapped into their seats in the Oryx and were taken for a magical flight over Cape Town. Back on land, he received an Air Force cap, badge, earphones and his dream Honor cellphone, which he said would "unlock his creativity".

DREAM ROOMS

OUR DREAMS ROOMS TRANSFORM STERILE HOSPITAL WARDS AND ROOMS INTO NURTURING AND JOYFUL SPACES.

These serve as an oasis for young patients undergoing prolonged hospital stays, providing an environment that encourages imagination, play and learning.

Each room features whimsical decor that reflects its unique theme and is equipped with a variety of toys, art materials, books and electronic devices. Dream Rooms are intended to not only entertain but also contribute to the children's emotional and mental well-being by enabling them to just be kids again.

In 2023, we opened 14 new Dream Rooms, bringing the total number to 45 since the project's inception in 2017. This was made possible by generous donations from Cell C, Airlink, Ronald McDonald House Charities South Africa, FEM, Truworths, Freedom Challenge (Payne Brothers), Victor Daitz Foundation, the Hollywood Foundation and Vukile, for which we are deeply grateful. Their contributions enabled us to design, and equip these rooms, enhancing the hospital experience for our young dreamers and significantly reducing their anxiety and stress.

Each Dream Room is staffed by a resident psychology graduate, who organises a variety of activities to ensure that the children not only enjoy themselves but meet their developmental milestones.



14
DREAM ROOMS OPENED

45 Dream Rooms in hospitals around the country

80,300 children reached in 2023

22 graduates stationed at our Dream Rooms





















> Play therapy and educational activities help the children to forget their illnesses for a while. The Dream Room provides a comfortable space where they can have a break from the hospital experience. It's a great facility that benefits the parents, the nurses and, most importantly, the children. – **Vhutshilo Mukwevcho, Dream Room intern.**

















VIRTUAL REALITY EXPERIENCE

WE BELIEVE IN MAKING DREAMS COME TRUE THROUGH TECHNOLOGY.

The Virtual Reality experiences we offer in our Dream Rooms are designed to open up new worlds for our in-hospital dreamers, and assist doctors by providing a much-needed distraction during medical treatments. They give children who are unable to leave the hospital the opportunity to experience and explore magical places such as the beach, Disney World, or even space. With the support from Eden, a company that specialises in hardware, content and platform-based VR solutions, we are bringing joy and happiness to children when they need it most.











LAUGHTER HEROES



LAUGHTER IS THE BEST MEDICINE.

It strengthens our immune system, boosts mood, diminishes pain, and shields us from the damaging effects of stress. When we laugh, our bodies respond in ways that promote wellness, triggering a release of endorphins, our body's natural feel-good chemicals.

But how does this translate into the work done by our Laughter Heroes?

Established in 2007 by Reach For A Dream, Laughter Heroes is an innovative initiative that brings therapeutic entertainment to children being treated for life-threatening illnesses across South Africa's public hospitals. Through arts-based activities like comedy, juggling, magic, mime, and storytelling, our Laughter Heroes stimulate laughter, joy, and a sense of wonder. They offer these children not just a momentary distraction from their pain and sadness, but also a chance to smile as well as finding new sources of courage and hope.

In 2023 alone, our Laughter Heroes brought smiles to the faces of 11,085 children. Each one of these smiles represents a moment of triumph over adversity; a testament to the healing power of laughter.



11,085
CHILDREN ENTERTAINED

7 Laughter Heroes
350 shifts
700 hours of fun



SUNSHINE IN THE WARDS

IN A WORLD WHERE WORDS OFTEN FAIL, ONE WOMAN HAS FOUND AN UNUSUAL, YET EFFECTIVE WAY TO BRIDGE THE GAP - THROUGH LAUGHTER AND MAGIC.

Laeticia "Tish" Spence, also known as Sunshine, has been an integral part of the Reach For A Dream Foundation since 2015. As a Laughter Hero, she brings joy and laughter to children in hospitals in the Eastern Cape, many of whom are suffering from long-term illnesses. Her mission is fueled by her own children's mental health challenges and her discovery of the healing power of joy.

"Laughter is a universal language," Tish says. "If you can get someone to laugh with you, immediately their blood pressure goes down and they are open to anything. I do not believe that the body can heal without laughter."



Despite not speaking the same language as many of the children she visits, she relies heavily on non-verbal communication to build rapport. She tilts her head to one side, enlarges her eyes, and spins in a circle, creating a spectacle that piques curiosity.

It's a strangely captivating routine, one that ends with her exclaiming, "Oh dear!" into her hand then seemingly retrieving a ball from behind the child's ear.

The ball then gets placed onto her nose, introducing them to a fictional and hilarious malady she calls "spongelitis", much like tonsillitis but far more visible and absurd. "What would the teacher say?" she says. A shared laugh echoes around the room, lightening the atmosphere and bringing people closer. This condition, "spongelitis," is simply a sponge at the end of your nose, but it serves as a catalyst for connection and joy.

At other times, she walks into a ward and begins laughing. Her laughter is infectious, resonating through the room and prompting others to join in. It's a powerful tool, laughter, capable of dissolving tension and fostering camaraderie. As she rightly points out, it's virtually impossible to dislike someone with whom you've shared a hearty laugh.

One impactful experience Tish recalls is a memorable outing to Jeffrey's Bay for children living in Humansdorp, which is just ten minutes away. These children had never been to the beach.

"We walked hand-in-hand, slowly along the beach. Every experience was the first time ever – the sand below your feet, the fresh smell of the ocean, the taste of salty water. How they enjoyed building sandcastles amidst shrieks of happy laughter! In all my adult life, I have never experienced such a deep-seated feeling of joy and contentment."

For Tish, spending time with children is not just a job; it's a rejuvenating experience. She believes adults can learn from children's wonderment and innocence. "When you don't see through the eyes of a child, you've lost so much. We are richer if we spend time with children. I believe it keeps you young," she shares.



DREAM CLUB

OUTINGS THAT TRANSFORM LIVES

Our Dream Club, which was piloted in 2023 and will be launched in 2024, is a unique project designed to help children receiving treatment for life-threatening illnesses escape the confines of their hospital rooms and embark on extraordinary adventures. Through age-appropriate outings and activities, dreamers can interact and make friends with peers who are on similar treatment journeys.

Each outing revolves around one of four themes: hope, confidence, courage or family, celebrating the children's resilience and bravery while providing them with much-needed emotional support.

Any child diagnosed with a life-threatening illness is invited to join Dream Club, either before or after receiving their dream. When joining, teenagers are given a journal to record their experiences, while younger children receive a sticker book in which they can paste the stickers they receive on each outing.

The objective of Dream Club is to help these brave children create lasting friendships and give each one something to look forward to in the future. Our vision is to share their healing journey with them in the hope that they emerge as survivors.

During the pilot phase, our branches hosted various outings, including zip-lining escapades, horse-riding adventures, cooking classes, art journaling sessions and drumming events.





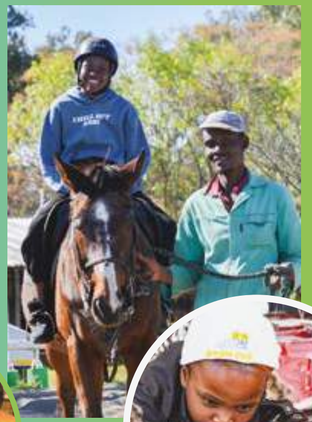
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OUTINGS HOSTED

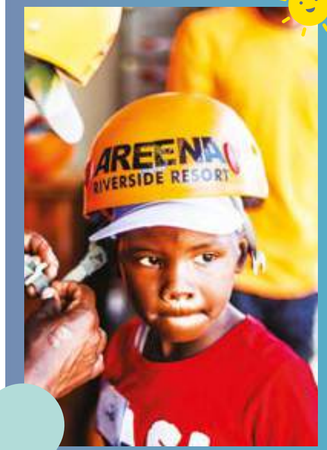
Piloted in **2023**

1,890 Children reached















DREAM CLUB OUTINGS SPREAD HOPE AND HAPPINESS ON MANDELA DAY

On Mandela Day, we hosted several Dream Club outings across the country, bringing some much-needed hope and companionship to a group of inspiring dreamers.

In Cape Town, our dreamers had a blast decorating cupcakes and playing ball, which helped them to develop both their physical and social skills. In Durban, they tackled an Amazing Race, earning Toys R Us vouchers for their impressive achievements.

In Johannesburg, they scaled the heights of Total Ninja's obstacle course, building courage and pushing themselves to new heights. Lastly, they had a thrilling experience at Acrobranch in Pretoria, navigating obstacles and zip-lining above the treetops.

























SLIPPER DAY

SLIPPER DAY, REACH FOR A DREAM'S FLAGSHIP FUNDRAISING EVENT, ONCE AGAIN PROVED TO BE A HEARTWARMING DISPLAY OF SOLIDARITY AND GENEROSITY.

This beloved tradition allows South Africans from all walks of life to show their support for brave children battling life-threatening illnesses simply by purchasing a supporter sticker for R20 and wearing slippers on Slipper Day.

Held on 5 May 2023, Slipper Day was an overwhelming success, raising an impressive R6.2 million. Throughout the day, office workers, school children, and individuals proudly sported their favourite bunny-eared and fuzzy slippers. This simple act served as a poignant reminder of the daily struggles faced by sick children, who often spend their days in slippers due to their health conditions.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to our partners - Wimpy, Pick n Pay, Dis-Chem Pharmacies, ToyZone, and Dis-Chem Baby City - as well as to everyone who stepped up and supported Slipper Day. Your generous contributions helped us make dreams come true for hundreds of brave children.



R6.2
MILLION
RAISED

Slippers for a whole day!





















STEP UP AND DO THE SLIPPER SHUFFLE

In 2023, we added a vibrant new dimension to our Slipper Day campaign with the launch of the Slipper Shuffle dance challenge, a five-step dance choreographed by TikTok sensation and teacher Mrs Bullock that anyone could perform in their favourite pair of slippers.

The dance was set to an inspiring track titled "Step Up", composed and produced by Neil Engel of Freq'ncy Audio. It features the soulful vocals of Bronté Borcherds, a singer, past dreamer and survivor of autoimmune hepatitis. Her journey with Reach For A Dream started 14 years ago when her dream to record a song was fulfilled with Loyiso Balla.

"Step Up is about believing that our goals and dreams are attainable and that even on our worst days, there is light at the end of the tunnel. Ultimately, it's a song about hope and encourages everyone to use the power of their dreams to overcome obstacles."
– Bronté Borcherds, past dreamer and singer.















GALA DINNER (JHB)

CELEBRATING 35 YEARS OF MANIFESTING HOPE.

The first of two 35th Anniversary Gala Dinners was held at Emperor's Palace in Kempton Park on 4 July 2023 to celebrate three-and-a-half decades of inspiring hope and making dreams come true. Reach For A Dream welcomed more than 900 generous supporters and donors on the night, which was hosted by the dynamic duo, Relebogile Mabotja and David Kau. The star-studded entertainment line-up featured some of South Africa's top talent, including the electronic band, GoodLuck; the blues and rock musician, Ross Harding; and the incredible TikTok sensation, Wian van den Berg.

During an evening filled with more than a little magic, we also honoured 35 brave survivors from around the country. Their journeys will always be a reminder to us that, when dreams come true, anything is possible! They and the many others like them will always be our heroes and our inspiration.

In addition, we took the opportunity to bid a fond farewell to our outgoing chairman, Mervyn Serebro, whose visionary leadership has helped us to shape Reach For A Dream into the incredible organisation it is today. We simultaneously welcomed our new chair, Carla Da Silva, whose care and compassion for our children shines through in everything she does.

Thanks to our amazing MCs, entertainers and speakers – and our esteemed guests, sponsors and donors – we managed to raise R2 million on the night. You are – and always will be – valued dream makers!



R2
MILLION
RAISED

A star-studded event!

900 Guests

35 Brave Survivors



GALA DINNER (CT)

CELEBRATING 35 YEARS OF MAKING DREAMS COME TRUE.

Our second 35th Anniversary Gala Dinner at Century City Conference Centre in Cape Town was a memorable event filled with emotion and generosity. We celebrated three-and-a-half decades of fulfilling dreams for children dealing with life-threatening illnesses.

MC Ryan O'Connor, comedian Alan Committie, and auctioneer Iain Banner added a touch of fun and laughter to the night. A highlight was seeing 15-year-old Andrea live out her culinary dream, working alongside professional chefs from Chefs Warehouse to prepare a meal for our guests.

We extend our gratitude to all attendees, whose support enables us to inspire hope and resilience in our dreamers. Special thanks are due to Century City Conference Centre, Chefs Warehouse Group, The Aleit Academy, Multi-Media, Delta Air Lines, and our décor, auction, and raffle sponsors.

"What Reach For A Dream did for Andrea was to give her hope, confidence, and an opportunity to pursue her culinary dream. The chefs, with their transformative wisdom, taught her that every dish tells a story, love is the secret spice, and attention to detail matters. In an environment where she felt safe, comfortable, and seen, Andrea discovered a new horizon."

– Mweze awa Irene, Andrea's mother.



R1.4
MILLION
RAISED

A dream fulfilled.



THE DREAMERS BOOK

A TRIBUTE TO THE COURAGE AND RESILIENCE OF 35 DREAMERS.

In celebration of our 35th Anniversary, we proudly launched “The Dreamers”, a remarkable book featuring the stunning art of visual artist Marc-Gregory. This publication is more than just a collection of stories and artwork—it’s a tribute to the bravery, resilience, and unwavering spirit of 35 dreamers who have faced tremendous adversities but never abandoned their dreams.

From a young artist painting the world in vibrant hues to a passionate musician aspiring to perform on grand stages, each story is a testament to the enduring power of the human spirit.

This publication enables each of us to peep briefly into the souls of our beloved children, to have them gently take our hands and to allow us to walk beside them into the surreal and magical world that is exclusively theirs. This book stands as a testament to our mission over the past 35 years, celebrating the inspirational stories of hope and courage that mirror the essence of what we strive to achieve at Reach For A Dream.







DREAM RIDERS

RIDING FOR DREAMS

The Dream Riders participated in the annual Virgin Active 947 Ride Joburg for Reach For A Dream with the thought of our brave dreamers fuelling their legs to keep pedalling. In 2023, over 210 enthusiastic cyclists chose to ride for our cycling team in the 97km and 35km road races.

They were rewarded with warm hospitality and pampering in our event tent, including massages by Fitpro, Swirl ice-creams, Krispy Kreme doughnuts, delicious State 5 coffee, cold beverages, and a buffet to still their hunger.

Over **R750 000** was raised, which would not have been possible without Old Mutual Insure and our dedicated riders. Old Mutual Insure's sponsorship ensures that all funds raised through the campaign go towards fulfilling dreams.

> **Each Dream Rider's commitment to this gruelling race is a testament to their empathy for our dreamers. It's a beautiful act of solidarity that says, 'Your fight is our fight, and together, we can conquer anything.'**
> – Julia Sotirianakos, CEO of Reach For A Dream.



R750K
RAISED

A **97km** and **35km** cycle race
212 Dream Riders

CANCER WARRIOR JOSHUA SOLE CONQUERS THE 947 RIDE JOBURG, INSPIRING HOPE AS A DREAM RIDER

Joshua Sole, a 14-year-old cycling enthusiast in recovery from cancer, pedalled for hope at the Virgin Active 947 Ride Joburg 2023 as our Dream Riders' ambassador.

Joshua was diagnosed with an uncommon type of soft tissue cancer when he was just eight years old. His intensive treatment regime involved 12 surgeries, over 100 days in hospital, 14 months of chemotherapy and a further 60 days of radiation therapy. Throughout all of this, his spirit remained unbroken. His passion for cycling and the professional Titan bike he received from Reach For A Dream sustained and supported him on his road to recovery.

Despite four flat tyres, a full tyre change, walking 6km in cleats and carrying his bike, Joshua showed grit and determination to complete the gruelling 97 km race. Thank you, Josh for riding for the Dream Riders, demonstrating to other children going through a similar experience that they too can recover.



















DREAM GOLF DAYS

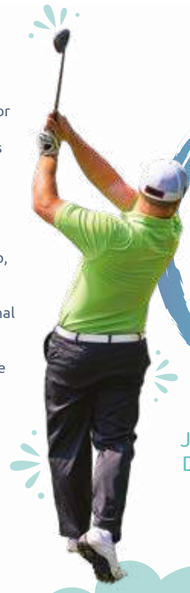
GOLFING FOR DREAMS

Our annual Reach For A Dream Golf Days, which are held in four cities around the country, are popular fundraisers. They are enthusiastically supported by regular partners, who sponsor the various holes on each course and provide the prizes. Each Golf Day offers a great opportunity to have an enjoyable day on the course and to contribute to making a sick child's dream come true.

GOLF DAY: JOHANNESBURG

Our Johannesburg Golf Day, which was held at the prestigious Royal Johannesburg Golf Club, was a resounding success.

Sponsored by Nexia SAB&T, with additional support from silver sponsors, Bidvest International Services and Tourvest, the event drew 220 golfers from various companies and raised an impressive **R800,000.** The prize-giving dinner was masterfully hosted by Dan Nicholl. Adding more depth to the event, our special guest and dreamer, Ethan Devraj, took the stage to share his inspiring journey. His story served as a testament to the strength of the human spirit, leaving a profound impact on all attendees.



R1.65
MILLION
RAISED

Johannesburg, Cape Town, Durban and Bloemfontein.

520 Dream Golfers

GOLF DAY: CAPE TOWN

This year's Cape Town Golf Day was held on a chilly winter's day in June at the Rondebosch Golf Club. We received incredible support from our title sponsor, Delta Airlines, as well as from the sponsors of the individual holes and the players. Despite the weather, all teams were chipper and much fun was had by all.

Our MC for the event, Guy McDonald, kept the players entertained at the prize-giving dinner with his sharp wit, where players received fabulous prizes generously donated by various partners. The highlight of the evening was the draw for two Premium Select tickets to anywhere in the United States, sponsored by Delta. The tickets were won by Deon van der Merwe. Through the generosity of all who participated, we raised a total of **R265,000** from the event, enabling us to fulfil even more dreams.

GOLF DAY: DURBAN

We held our golf day in partnership with Point-S Hillcrest and Tyrelife Solutions at Cotswold Downs Golf Club. As in the three previous years, it was a sold-out event and all participants enjoyed a fun day of golf. The sponsors of the individual holes made each hole fun, festive and entertaining for our golfers.

Before tee-off the golfers enjoyed a delicious cup of coffee, juices supplied by Sir Fruit and a shoulder massage provided by Mangwanani Spa.

The prize-giving dinner was a huge success, with all of the incredibly generous participants going out of their way to boost our fundraising efforts. Some offered the prizes they had won for auction and these attracted bids way beyond our expectations. There was such a sense of kindness and generosity in the room.

We raised **R330,000.** Our thanks go out to our sponsors and all of the participants, who made the day such a success and who contributed so freely to our goal of inspiring hope through the power of dreams.







GOLF DAY: BLOEMFONTEIN

In November, we hosted our golf day in Bloemfontein in partnership with Spar – and were blown away by the incredible support we received from Spar, the sponsors of the individual holes and all of the participants. Everyone enjoyed a fun and festive day of golf.

The prize-giving dinner was hosted by Shandor Potgieter of OFM and featured an amazing array of prizes and items for auction. Through the generosity of sponsors and participants, we were able to raise **R260,000**, funds that will be used to fulfil dreams for children who have been diagnosed with life-threatening illnesses.

A sincere word of appreciation goes out to Spar for its amazing sponsorship and support. Thank you for being a catalyst of hope to our dreamers.

























REGIONAL STORIES

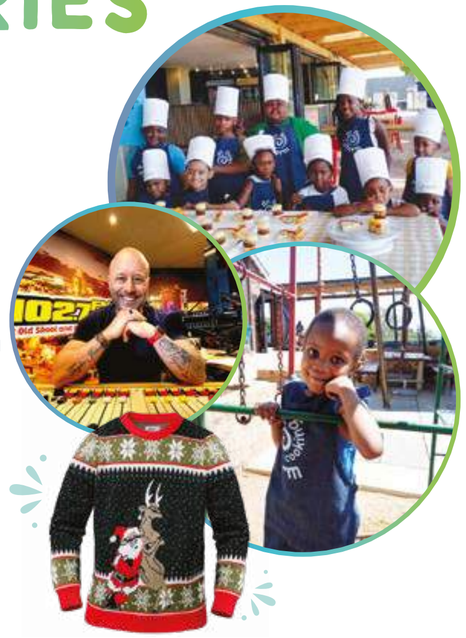
GAUTENG

PILGRIMAGE PARTY
In a moving tribute to the late Mark Pilgrim, the team at Hot 102.7FM curated an unforgettable night filled with music, nostalgia and the fulfillment of dreams. The event was a resounding success, selling over 800 tickets in just 48 hours, a testament to the enduring influence of Pilgrim's legacy in the radio industry. The Johannesburg-based radio station raised and donated **R102,000** to Reach For A Dream, a cause championed by Pilgrim throughout his lifetime. His memory lives on through such acts of generosity, echoing his lifelong commitment to making a difference.

JUMPER FOR JOY
We rang in the festive season with a joyful jersey knitted to make a difference. Created by The Nicoll Foundation and Jonsson Workwear, the Jumper For Joy made more than a statement. It also changed lives and spread joy where it's needed most. The profits from the sale of each Jumper for Joy contributed to the work we do to inspire hope and make dreams come true, as well as the life-changing work done by The Jonsson Foundation.

SWEET SATISFACTION
Ten members of our Dream Club participated in a delightful baking experience enthusiastically whipping up sweet treats and garnering a wonderful sense of accomplishment in the process. The fun-filled baking session demonstrated the transformative impact of the Dream Club project, highlighting Reach For A Dream's commitment to bringing joy to resilient youngsters living with serious illnesses.

DISNEY MOVIE PREMIER
Twenty Dream Club members and their families enjoyed a wonderful night out when they attended the premier of Disney Animation's movie, Wish. The outing, sponsored by Disney, gave them an opportunity to relax, have fun and enjoy the enchantment of childhood.



KWAZULU-NATAL

TICKET TO DREAMS
Reach For A Dream proudly partnered with the Sharks to present an exciting campaign called Ticket to Dreams. Sharks fans who purchased one or more tickets stood a chance of winning 50% of the money raised with the remaining 50% going to Reach For A Dream. We raised **R16,300** from this initiative.

ADVENTURE VALLEY
We had the opportunity to treat 10 dreamers to an exhilarating day at Adventure Valley, where they went on a hike, zip-lined through the trees and even got to deploy a parachute on the final zip. This was followed by a delicious meal, sponsored by Adventure Valley, bringing the day of energy and excitement to a fitting close.

SPUR GATEWAY PARTY
In October, Spur Gateway invited 60 of our dreamers and their families to share its birthday with them. The excited kids were all treated to hamburgers, chips and milkshakes, followed by ice cream. Happy birthday, Spur Gateway – thanks for inviting us to share your special day with you.

FREE STATE

KERLN MOUNTAIN BIKE RACE
In October, the Reach For A Dream team and several dreamers had the opportunity to take part in the Kerln Mountain Bike Race, an annual fundraising event that benefits a number of charities in the Free State. After a fabulous day of biking and entertainment, we celebrated the 10th anniversary of the race and watched the Rugby World Cup final.

FREE STATE'S FIRST DREAM ROOM
In March, we had the joy and privilege of opening the first Dream Room in the Free State, which is located at Universitas Hospital. The Reach For A Dream team was joined by the hospital management team, doctors, nurses and the children receiving treatment at the hospital for the event. They couldn't wait to get into the room and explore all the books, toys and crafts in this beautiful space. The room will be used by the children in both of the paediatric wards at the hospital, giving them a safe, creative space in which to play and dream.



EASTERN CAPE

HERALD CYCLE TOUR

The annual Herald Cycle Tour, which was held in February, saw nearly 200 kids and their families pedalling their hearts out in two separate events to raise funds for Reach For A Dream.

The 5km Junior Mountain Bike Race was held on 12 February and the Junior Road Race, also held over a course of five kilometres, was held on 17 February. Both days featured a 500m Toddler Dash, with toddlers on three-wheelers and bikes with training wheels bravely taking on the course to the delight of everyone present. The proceeds from the junior and toddler races – together with generous donations from participants in the adult events – raised **R30,000.**

ALGOA FM'S 25TH BIG WALK FOR CANCER

Reach For A Dream was a proud beneficiary of the Algoa FM Big Walk for Cancer, which took place on 28 October 2023. Nearly 12,000 people laced up their takkies in Gqeberha, East London and George. A generous donation was made to Reach For A Dream to provide laptops and tablets for children undergoing long-term treatment in hospital.

REMAX BAY SPRING HIGH TEA

The annual REMAX Bay Spring High Tea, meticulously organised by the REMAX Bay rental department, was a resounding success. The afternoon featured a delightful programme of games and giveaways sponsored by various companies in the area, creating an atmosphere filled with joy and camaraderie.

As tea was served, two dreamers who'd survived serious illnesses shared their stories, recounting how Reach For A Dream had brought hope into their lives while they were receiving treatment. With generous support from several sponsors, we raised over **R29,000** to make dreams come true.



WESTERN CAPE

ART JOURNALLING

The launch of our Dreamer Journal was one of the highlights of the year in the Western Cape. For many of the dreamers who attended, it was their first outing since having been hospitalised and was a celebration of their resilience and courage.

The event, which focused on emotional literacy, encouraged dreamers to use the journals to explore and embrace their feelings. A special highlight was an acrylic pouring class, which proved to be a transformative experience for the children as it enabled them to make artwork they had never imagined they could create.

STELLENBOSCH FLYING CLUB

In November, the Stellenbosch Flying Club, the Classic Car Club and Spur Steak Ranches teamed up to deliver an exhilarating experience for 41 dreamers. The kids first took to the skies on their own charter flight and were then treated to a spin in a luxury car. This was followed by hamburgers for lunch and a giggle-filled facepainting session.

At the end of the outing, each child was presented with a certificate of membership from the Stellenbosch Flying Club, a dream badge to signify their membership of the Dream Club, and a dream path unique to each child. The delight on their faces as they received these positively lit up the room.

PROM NIGHT

We hosted a fairy-tale Prom Night in December, tailored for teens going through similiar treatment journeys. The magical journey began at the Westin Hotel with a fabulous styling session where they donned their stunning evening attire. A classic car ride then whisked them off to the grand event at the Peninsula Hotel. They walked down the red carpet to the cheers of their loved ones, and then danced the night away. This night was a testament that joy can triumph over illness, even if just for an evening.



MEDICAL MIRACLE MAKERS

A myriad of medical professionals across the healthcare spectrum has unfailingly endorsed and facilitated Reach For A Dream's outreach to their young patients. No matter how busy their schedule, no request for help or advice has ever been turned down to make a dream come true. The Foundation extends thanks to each of the country's hospitals and staff who have worked alongside our team throughout the past 35 years.

> **In all the years I've been here, Reach For A Dream has brought in love and hope, not only for the children but also for their families and us, the healthcare workers who deal with pain and suffering every day. It makes us feel that our load is shared.** – Prof Gita Naidu.

> **I was always touched to see the excitement of the children when they had a dream fulfilled. Over the years, many requests have been very modest – a teddy bear, a visit to the sea, the chance to shake Siya Kolisi's hand. But such simple desires mean so much to each recipient.** – Prof Vincent Harrison.



HONOURING OUR NURSES

On International Nurses Day, we honoured the remarkable commitment of South Africa's nurses. They play a vital role in caring for children with life-threatening illnesses, providing not just medical care but also emotional support and a sense of comfort during the rigours of treatment.

Together with our generous donors – The Star Foundation, Wimpy and Krispy Kreme – we put together 600 care packs and handed them out to nurses nationwide. These were small but heartfelt gestures of gratitude for their tireless work and unwavering dedication.





OUR VOLUNTEERS

AT REACH FOR A DREAM, WE'RE BLESSED WITH SOME AMAZING INDIVIDUALS WHO HELP US BRING JOY TO OUR DREAMERS.

Volunteers are involved in all aspects of our work, from presenting dreams our team has prepared for each dreamer, to assisting in outings or fundraising events. Thank you to our dedicated team of volunteers who give tirelessly of themselves and without whom it would not be possible to inspire the hope that we do.



VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

One such gem is **Oyama Gajana**, a dedicated volunteer who has been helping bring dreams to life in East London for the past six years. ***"The most memorable moment was when I did a ward dream. He was very critical, but he managed to stand up to give me a hug, followed by a big thank you. That moment really warmed my heart and was very fulfilling."***

Christelle Gantz has been a volunteer for 15 years. One unforgettable dream Christelle helped realise was arranging a surprise visit for a little girl who yearned to see her grandparents after a year of separation. The joy and astonishment on her face when her grandparents walked into the room was a moment etched in her memory.

Lee-Ann Josephine Scott makes the impossible possible every day. For three years, she's been an unstoppable force of love and hope, reaching out to uplift young dreamers battling life-threatening conditions. She shares: ***"It fills me with such joy and overwhelms me with gratitude knowing that for a moment or a lifetime, I was able to bring hope, happiness, and love to a child's heart and soul."***



OUR STORIES WOULDN'T EXIST WITHOUT THE SPECIAL SPIRITS OF OUR VOLUNTEERS. THEY ARE THE REAL-LIFE SUPERHEROES.



BECOME A FRIEND

OUR WORK AT REACH FOR A DREAM IS MADE POSSIBLE BY THE SUPPORT OF INDIVIDUALS, SCHOOLS, BUSINESSES AND CORPORATES THROUGHOUT SOUTH AFRICA.

Their constant contributions, no matter how big or how small, enable us to fulfil so many wonderful dreams every year. Join us in our mission to inspire hope and bring joy to children with life-threatening illnesses. Become a Friend of the Foundation.

WAYS TO GIVE OR GET INVOLVED:

- **Make a once-off or monthly donation.**
- **Refer a child with a life-threatening illness.**
- **Become a volunteer.**
- **Make a donation in honour of someone special.**
- **Nominate Reach For A Dream as one of your company's CSI beneficiaries.**
- **Join our employee giving programme.**
- **Activate Reach For A Dream as your charity of choice on your MySchool MyVillage MyPlanet card.**

Find out more by visiting **www.reachforadream.org.za.**



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TO ALL OUR COMMUNITY DONORS – THOSE BUSINESSES, MEDIA, CELEBRITIES AND INFLUENCERS, AND INDIVIDUALS WHO SUPPORTED THE FOUNDATION IN 2023, WE SALUTE YOU. THANK YOU FOR YOUR UNWAVERING SUPPORT. YOU ARE VALUED DREAM-MAKERS!

2023 ANNUAL REVIEW

A special thank you to Ren-Form CC and Peters Papers for sponsoring the printing and paper for our 2023 Annual Review.















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