**PRESS RELEASE**

Official WeSolve4x Cleaning My Planet campaign to kick off in Katlehong

**23 April 2019:** From being a street vendor selling vegetables in Katlehong, to graduating with an actuarial science degree from the University of the Free State (UFS), inventing and patenting a system to deliver and manage education courses for students, entrepreneur **Tsietsi Ngobese** (24) is now launching an ambitious community clean-up programme to promote environmental awareness and the benefits of recycling in local communities.

The grassroots campaign will be launched at the Abram Hlophe Primary School in Katlehong at 10:00 on Saturday 4 May. The campaign has been endorsed officially by Miss Earth South Africa **Catherine Constantinides**. Miss Earth South Africa is a leadership programme that began in 2001, with the winner representing South Africa at the global Miss Earth event.

The campaign is based on a simple premise: Get community members to donate one hour of their time for cleaning duties every Saturday. The campaign aims to inculcate environmental awareness in local and global communities, as well as to promote the benefits of a clean and healthy environment for future generations.

A key driver for the campaign will be social media, with the main WeSolve4x Cleaning My Planet rubric dubbed WeSolve4x Cleaning My South Africa locally. This can be amended to wherever the campaign may be launched internationally. In South Africa, the campaign will focus on #Wesolve4xCleaningMyPlanet and #Wesolve4xCleaningMySouthAfrica to drive active citizen engagement across all social media platforms, such as Facebook and Twitter.

“As a passionate activist for waste, water, and climate change, I have seen first-hand the impact on our communities. This is both at a grassroots level, and across our continent. It was with great excitement that I learnt about the WeSolve4x Cleaning My Planet campaign,” Constantinides comments.

Perhaps the most ambitious element of the campaign, and which underscores Ngobese’s commitment to ensuring a better future for all, is that it is envisaged to continue for a period of 20 years, culminating in 2039. If 20 million people carry out cleaning activities for an hour each, the total figure of 20 million hours equates to 2 283 years. Multiply this by four times a month, it is 9 132 years; multiply by 12 months a year, it is 109 584 years; multiply by 20 years, it is 2 191 680 years.

“The beauty of the campaign is that it is based on one individual donating a single hour of their time once a week, with an exponential increase in the impact over time, given the number of active citizens that heed the call to save our environment and the planet,” Ngobese adds.

Community members are encouraged to congregate at a central meeting point, such as a school in their specific areas, on every Saturday of the month, with different departure times to ensure that all active citizens are accommodated. The campaign aims to be national and global, and will be rolled out in five key areas, namely Katlehong, Pretoria, Bloemfontein, Cape Town, and Ermelo. A larger aim is for the campaign to go viral, and even become a global phenomenon, Ngobese states.

Ngobese explains that his inspiration for the campaign came out about on World Clean-Up Day on 15 September 2018. “On that day, I joined my ordinary community members, using our own brooms and rakes, to clean up our environment. I think I saw it clean for the first time in 18 years.” Then he was struck by a singular idea: Why limit such an event to a single yearly occasion? Why not instead launch a grassroots campaign to galvanise local communities to take action, and to encourage environmental stewardship?

In addition to the weekly clean-up sessions, the campaign will also focus on school visits to teach learners about recycling and environmental awareness. Here it is hoped that different stakeholders and sponsors will come onboard to ensure the ongoing success and viability of the campaign. From the general public to schools, institutions, organisations, and even waste-management and recycling companies, Ngobese aims to reach out to as broad a spectrum of civil society as possible.

A long-term goal of the campaign is to eradicate what Ngobese terms ‘trash blindness’ in local communities by establishing a waste-collection system for households to turn recycling into both a resource and a business opportunity. “The biggest challenge facing the recycling industry at present in South Africa is the lack of separation at source, which is where a campaign like this is critical to both educate and empower community members.”

Ngobese began his entrepreneurial career in 2002 as a street vendor, selling sweets at school from Grades 2 to 12, and fruits and vegetables from house to house. He ventured into recycling in 2006, purchasing bottles, cardboard, plastic, tin, and metal from people in his community, and reselling it to recycling companies. He even ventured into the fast-food industry in 2008, and then entered the world of finance in 2010, with a key focus on online share trading, forex and cryptocurrencies, with a self-managed portfolio. The WeSolve4x™ company was established during this period, with Ngobese as CEO.

“My community in Katlehong not only has an illegal dumping site, but there is constant littering and trash piling up on a daily basis. This is not unique in South Africa, or even globally. When I was growing up, I even used to play at the dump site, which poses a serious health risk for children. My perception changed when I adopted the mantra of ‘trash to cash’ as the guiding principle of my recycling initiatives.” However, Ngobese notes with a smile that his parents quickly shut down his nascent business venture when it threatened to turn the yard of their house into a dumping zone.

“Throwing trash down and littering is a generational issue acquired from our parents and grandparents. We see it in both public and private spaces and places, and we are all guilty, from young to old. We need to not only inform our youth that this is no longer acceptable, but that they have a responsibility to ensuring a clean and healthy environment for the next generation,” Ngobese stresses.

Constantinides concludes: “I am truly grateful for the remarkable individuals who take it upon themselves to be the change we wish to see within our communities. Young men such as UFS graduate Ngobese, with his bold vision and dream for a cleaner and conscious environment, is certainly talking my language. We require such civic engagement and citizenship-orientated programmes, and I cannot wait to see his project and dream unfold.”

**Make sure to follow the WeSolve4x Cleaning My South Africa campaign on social media under the following hashtags:**

**#Wesolve4xCleaningMyPlanet**

**#Wesolve4xCleaningMySouthAfrica**

***Ends***

**Notes to the editor**

To download hi-res images for this release, please visit <http://media.ngage.co.za> and click on the WeSolve4X™ link to view the company’s press office.

**About** **WeSolve4X™**

At WeSolve4X™ we make maths, science, and accounting a worthwhile experience, reminding our learners of the fun, adventure, and delight of arriving at those tricky solutions, while they continue with their responsible research and innovation, based on their inherent natural curiosity. Our tuition service is refreshingly innovative and optimised to meet our national curriculum standards.

Our integrated facilitating programmes allow us to build strong relationships with our learners, while providing our services at competitive rates. Our facilitating team consist of passionate facilitators, graduates, professors, and consulting advisors to provide the guidance and quality of service that we believe is integral to personal growth and self-actualisation. Through our affiliated universities and institutions throughout South Africa, we are able to offer learners, graduates, and professionals a platform to connect as they amplify their proficiency and increased opportunities to help others achieve their goals.

Our goal is simple: Make learning fun, measurable, and rewarding.

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