



SOUTH AFRICA

CHRYSALIS ACADEMY

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Ds



"Strelitzia" is the name of one of the Chrysalis Academy's four dormitories (it is currently not used for student accommodation). The dormitories are named after South African flowers.

Chrysalis Academy

Where chrysalides transform into South Africa's leaders of the future

- ▶ A unique social inclusion project offering disadvantaged young people from Cape Town a chance to start over.
- ▶ The academy is situated in the Tokai forest and was previously a detention centre.
- ▶ 200 students face a daily routine based on military discipline and training courses.
- ▶ The academy deepens the resilience of its students unleashing their mental, physical and spiritual potential.
- ▶ The Chrysalis Academy is where disadvantaged and at-risk youngsters transform into role models and agents of positive change.

#GENERALNEWS #SOCIALISSUES #EDUCATION



Every Saturday, usually at 11am, students carry out "grooming activities", helping one other to shave their hair in their rooms or in the common spaces of the Academy.



South Africa, Cape Town, Tokai Forest, Chrisalys Academy. The final part of the Academy programme, which lasts three months in total, is the skills phase that provides professional training for the students. There is a wide choice of courses, including training as a welder, electrician and as a hairdresser.



Many students who attend the academy belong to the Xhosa ethnic group. Corbin Gertze is one such student. The cream on his face is to protect him from the many hours of exposure to the sun's rays during the outdoor activities.



The snooker table in the cafeteria is reserved solely for the instructors, educators and members of staff.

Chrysalis Academy is a unique educational establishment for young people aged 18 to 25 from disadvantaged backgrounds marked by poverty or violence. The students originate from inner city tower blocks, desolate rural areas or the townships built years ago to divide one ethnic group from another.

The academy helps the youngsters by deepening their resilience and unleashing their mental, physical and spiritual potential. As its name suggests, it serves as a protective cocoon where the transformation from larva into butterfly can take place: the youngsters, who come from at-risk backgrounds or experienced serious social disadvantages, can go on to become role models and agents of positive change.

Chrysalis Academy is a former state reformatory situated in the beautiful Tokai forest inside Table Mountain National Park. It was turned into an academy in 2000. The structure that was originally created to imprison its occupants is today an extraordinary and truly unique project that is supported by the South African government and private sponsors.

Every day almost 200 students follow a routine based on military discipline, physical exertion and cast-iron rigour. The typical day begins at 4.30 am and is organised into a sequence of daily activities designed to strengthen not only the body, but also the mind. Eleven hours later the afternoon programme begins, consisting of marching under the hot South African sun, fitness tests, yoga and meditation, artistic activities, but also courses and classes to prepare students for graduation day. After graduating from the academy the youngsters are accompanied for a further five years through a programme of work placements.



All of the students assemble in the main quad to listen to the head instructor. Due to a breach of academy discipline, they all face a punishment of a round of press ups under the hot sun.



Students say their thanks through prayer before entering the canteen in rigorously ordered lines.



Some students learn the rules of rugby. One of the professions taught during the training phase is that of sports coach.



The unused dormitories, like Sterlizia, are used mainly as spaces in which to store the academy's supplies and equipment.



The alarm call is at 4.30am and students must be ready to begin the morning's physical activities at 5am. At 6am every student returns to the dormitory and has one hour to tidy the room, beginning by meticulous folding their bed linen and concluding by cleaning the floor ahead of the 8am inspection. This is followed by breakfast.



From the stand in the main quad, students watch the rehearsals of those selected to perform the music at the graduation ceremony. The preparation for the graduation ceremony is one of the most eagerly anticipated moments of the course. This takes place during the Skill Phase (the final part of the course) during intervals between the various afternoon lessons. It involves drill practice and the selection of the musicians who will perform during the final parade.



One of the classrooms where lessons take place.



All of the instructors are former alumni of the academy and complete a training course in order to qualify. All of them are assigned their own room, as are trainee instructors.



A group photo of the 2020 intake of the "19 Charlie" course for young men.



The Disha dormitory.



A student relaxes during one of the few moments of free time.



The students of the academy perform drill practice in front of the dormitories.



Approaching the end of the course, the students are visibly fatigued. One of the students laughs on the floor of the dormitory.



The students of the Protea dormitory stand to attention while one of the instructors explains the afternoon activities.



A student draws a self-portrait during the "Trauma Release" course.



A group of students relax after dinner before returning to their rooms in the Protea dormitory.



The afternoon session of physical training.



The room of one of the academy's instructors. On the wall are photos of his parents.



Student Ian Van Der Schuyff leans against the outside wall of his room.



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