



# THE NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 2023

improving lives • creating sustainable solutions • making a difference

## GTO Telethon

In 2003, the employees of Golder Associates formed the GTO -- Generating Tomorrow's Opportunities -- (formerly the Golder Trust for Orphans). The GTO is a global employee-run charity which aims to improve the quality of life of vulnerable children and young adults in underserved communities. Following the merger of Golder into WSP in 2021, WSP has continued to support the GTO and with 70,000 employees in WSP there is a wonderful opportunity to continue the work of the GTO.

Since inception, GTO has remained committed to supporting the wellbeing, growth, and overall development of vulnerable children across the globe. Two decades later, we look back with a sense of pride and accomplishment. Through employee support and contributions, we've been able to do what we are passionate about – bringing smiles to little faces.

As we kick-off our 20<sup>th</sup> year anniversary we welcome you to join one of our regional telethons which will be held October 17<sup>th</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup> to learn more about the GTO, celebrate our accomplishments and support our fundraising initiative.

Watch the video to gain a better understanding of who we are, our core values, some of our past successes and initiatives, as well as how you can get involved.

Watch the video here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YqsWiUyIKdM>

Visit the website at: <https://gotrust.com>

We encourage you to join the telethon and play a part in one of the following ways:

- Pledge or donate an anniversary gift of \$20.
- Sharing the fundraising link with 20 friends:

<https://forms.office.com/r/mDCSrMdNf5>

We currently support NGOs *globally*



How to Donate  
[www.givengain.com](http://www.givengain.com)

# Telethon Schedule

	AUSTRALIA	CANADA	USA	SOUTH AMERICA	SOUTH AFRICA
HOST	Andrew Barker	Sue Longo	Manitia Moultrie	Jose Maria Barrau Peloché	Brent Baxter
DATE	24 October 2023	17 October 2023 (East) 18 October 2023 (West)	18 October 2023	18 October 2023	18 October 2023
TIME	4 - 5pm EST (Brisbane) 4.30 - 5.30pm EST (Adelaide) 5 - 6pm EST (Melbourne/Sydney) 2 - 3pm WST (Perth)	12 - 1pm (Eastern Standard Time) 12 - 1pm (Mountain Standard Time)	12 - 1 (Eastern STD) / 12 - 1 (Pacific STD)	12 - 1 (Eastern Standard Time)	12 - 1 (GMT+2)

## Bulembu Volunteer Trip



The GTO had an incredible volunteer trip to Bulembu, Eswatini, in September 2023. Eswatini, formerly known as Swaziland, is a small kingdom between South Africa and Mozambique. Unfortunately, the country has one of the highest AIDS rates in the world, which has caused a lot of suffering for families. However, Bulembu has been providing a safe haven for orphaned and vulnerable children to prosper since 2006.

At present, the site is taking care of more than 350 children. The volunteer trip was just one of many projects that the GTO has supported at Bulembu, and it was an extraordinary opportunity to witness firsthand the wonderful work being done to help these children.

The first GTO volunteer trip was organised post-COVID, and a team of four volunteers from WSP, including Nazila Bagheri (WSP Canada - Mississauga, Adelaide), Pierre Thabet (WSP Canada - Mississauga), Andres Pereira (WSP Chile - Santiago), and Meagan Schryburt (WSP Canada - Sudbury), participated in it. They were joined by GTO Trustees and members, including Brent Baxter (WSP Africa – Midrand), Andrew Barker (WSP Australia – Melbourne), Manitia Moultrie (WSP US – Tampa), Brian Senefelder, Sue Longo (WSP Canada – Calgary), along with the GTO Trust Manager and GTO Marketing Lead Jon Howcroft and Estelle Howcroft.

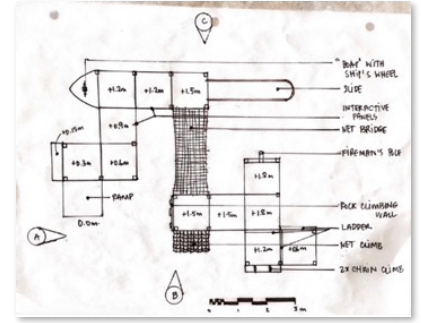
The primary objective of the trip was to design and construct a playground for the primary school in Bulembu. The team also created a GTO mural for the tool shed. The playground design was created by Teri Cantin, a landscape architect from the WSP Kelowna office, and her 11-year-old, who has some relevant experience. It included various modern playground trends, such as a firefighter pole, a climbing wall, and a net climb.



The team worked arduously in groups and received encouragement from the children during school breaks. They also attended the first assembly of the new school term, where they enjoyed dancing and singing with the students.



The volunteers got the chance to explore various aspects of Bulembu, including the museum, bakery, dairy, forestry, and essential oils business. They were impressed by the sustainable projects in the area, all supported by the GTO Trust.



Gogo Grace hosted the team and shared insights into Swazi culture, covering topics such as music, religion, kinship, and more.

The team visited a baby home and had the opportunity to learn from the house mothers, who provides a loving home environment for the 32 babies they take care of.

The headmaster of the high school in Bulembu showcased the IT Room sponsored by GTO before the pandemic. The school also offers training to local adolescents and adults after school hours.

It was a fulfilling and impactful trip with a mix of community engagement, cultural exchange, and a project.

## Read these testimonials from our volunteers:

“The caring and uplifting environment I experienced throughout the entirety of the trip was inspiring, instilling vital lessons and becoming the new pillars in which, I view life.” - **Maegan Schryburt**

“I'm so grateful for the hugs and lovely words that I've got from the kids and the little contribution I could make for the community.” - **Nazila Bagheri**

“Seeing them play on the playground after a whole week of hard work has been one of the most rewarding experiences I have had.” - **Pierre Thabet**

“Bulembu taught me of self-sufficiency, taught me of resourcefulness, resilience, but above all, it taught me about passion and vocation.” - **Andres Pereira.**

## The GTO 20/20 Vision

Since launching our GTO 20/20 Campaign earlier this year, a celebration of our 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary, we would love to invite you to be a part of it. We've created a video that showcases who we are, what we stand for, some of our past successes and initiatives, and how you can get involved in our campaign by becoming a GTO Office Champion.

Watch the video here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YqsWiUyiKdM>

Take action today and reach out to GTO to make a big difference in the lives of those who need it most!