

PRO BONO & HUMAN RIGHTS ALERT

IN THIS ISSUE

CDH JO'BURG CELEBRATES HUMAN RIGHTS MONTH

In celebration of Human Rights Month, and the centenary year of one of our country's greatest leaders, Nelson Mandela, the Pro Bono and Human Rights Practice (the Practice) kicked off the month of March with an interactive Human Rights campaign.

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As part of the campaign, CDHers were provided with an opportunity to share their thoughts on Human Rights Day by writing on one of four expression walls placed on the ground floor.

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As part of the campaign, CDHers were provided with an opportunity to share their thoughts on Human Rights Day by writing on one of four expression walls placed on the ground floor. Messages written on the walls ranged from inspirational quotes to words of encouragement and personal reflections.

On 20 March 2018, a remembrance event was held on the ground floor in honour of Christine Jesseman, founder of the Practice. The event was well attended by former colleagues of Christine and those who have since had an opportunity to work with the Practice. Attendees were welcomed by Attie Pretorius, after which William Midgley paid a moving tribute to Christine's life. Our new Chairperson, Thabile Fuhrmann, also shared some fond memories of Christine. Candles were also lit in Christine's memory.

The campaign furthermore provided support staff with an opportunity to enter a lucky draw, the prize being an all-expenses paid trip to the Apartheid museum and a morning away from the daily grind of the office. The winners of the draw were selected at random and 34 support staff members were selected to participate in the excursion.

Excitement filled the air on the morning of 28 March as the bus arrived early at the Apartheid museum. After introductions by the guide, each of the staff members received an entrance ticket which arbitrarily classified them as "white" and "non-white". Depending on the classification on the ticket, staff members had to use different entrances to the museum, one for "whites" only and another for "non-whites". Staff members using the "whites" only entrance were permitted to use a ramp, while others



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The Apartheid museum has many unique exhibitions, including the Mandela exhibition which celebrates the life and times of Nelson Mandela through six themes – character, comrade, leader, prisoner, statesman and negotiator.



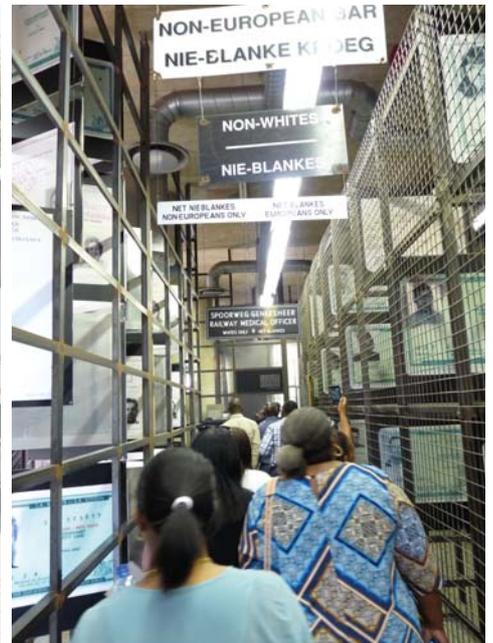
using the “non-white” entrance had to use the stairs. This demonstrated how the apartheid era cruelly and forcibly separated people and the inequality, indignity and brutal racism suffered by those who were classified as “non-white”.

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The duration of the tour was roughly two hours and it ended with the “new Constitution” exhibition where the symbols of South Africa’s new nationhood was

displayed in the form of a flag and the national anthem. Here, staff members were encouraged to take a stone from a pile on the right and place it on a growing pile on the left to demonstrate their commitment to fighting racism and discrimination in the new South Africa.

Staff members expressed their gratitude to the firm and management for providing them with this unique opportunity and indicated that they were proud to be part of a firm that provided their staff with such opportunities. Most of the staff found the visit extremely insightful and indicated that it provided them with a greater understanding of the history of apartheid. For others it was a painful reminder of the past and it brought back many hurtful memories of lived experiences.



CDH JO'BURG CELEBRATES HUMAN RIGHTS MONTH

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Staff members hope that the Practice and the firm will continue with these types of initiatives and they look forward to the next Human Rights Month campaign in 2019!



During feedback sessions with staff, the following was expressed:

"I found the trip very interesting and insightful. I was very little in the late 1980's, early 1990's and do remember a few things happening on television but seeing what actually happened, according to how we learned it at school was very emotional. The layout of the museum and the tour itself, is so symbolic and gives you a sense of what it was like. The highlight of the trip for me was seeing the caspir in reality, as I remember seeing them on television and knowing that I need to be scared of it, my heart jumped a bit when I saw it. We live in a time where everything is fairly equal now and we are quick to forget the intensity of the atrocities of the past. I think that as a CDH staff initiative, it was great and I'm grateful for the opportunity. I do think that we should keep these types of trips as part of the Humans Rights month going forward. I am proud to be a CDHer and to be a part of a firm that offers these kinds of opportunities."

"The Apartheid Museum was an emotional experience that was well worth the visit. It is an Absolute must see, especially for anyone wanting to understand and experience what South Africa was really like, a visit to the Apartheid Museum is fundamental."

"I found this an emotional experience right from the entrance. The museum does an excellent job at educating you about apartheid and most importantly highlights the brave people that fought for equality and the rights of all to be treated as a person."

"We all left feeling a bit more informed and extremely sad for the brutality and bloodshed that has been in this land. It's a pity we couldn't take pics inside the museum. I found the history amazing, and left with a much better understanding of what happened, and the hope that it will never happen again."

Staff members hope that the Practice and the firm will continue with these types of initiatives and they look forward to the next Human Rights Month campaign in 2019!

Tricia Erasmus



Best Lawyers 2018 South Africa Edition

Included 53 of CDH's Directors across Cape Town and Johannesburg.

Recognised Chris Charter as Lawyer of the Year for Competition Law (Johannesburg).

Recognised Faan Coetzee as Lawyer of the Year for Employment Law (Johannesburg).

Recognised Peter Hesseling as Lawyer of the Year for M&A Law (Cape Town).

Recognised Terry Winstanley as Lawyer of the Year for Environmental Law (Cape Town).

Named Cliffe Dekker Hofmeyr Litigation Law Firm of the Year.

Named Cliffe Dekker Hofmeyr Real Estate Law Firm of the Year.

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BBBEE STATUS: LEVEL THREE CONTRIBUTOR

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