



Ndiwelimilambo Enamagama

By Kelly Smith | December 29, 2011

In my language there is a saying “Ndiwelimilambo enamagama” (I have crossed famous rivers). It means that one has traveled a great distance, that one has had wide experience and gained some wisdom from it.” Nelson Mandela, A Long Walk to Freedom. Three months ago this quote defined my hopes for my travels. Three months ago I could only imagine living in the hip neighborhood of Observatory in Cape Town, South Africa. Three months ago Baphumelele was a name I couldn’t pronounce with a website that compelled me enough to travel across the world



Now a single word can define my existence in South Africa. That word is gratitude. I was continuously grateful for living surrounded by such beauty and amazing people and to have the same back home to miss. If ever there was a moment where I became jaded I just had to look up and stand in awe of living in the shadow of Table Mountain, one of the wonders of the world.

Now after a weekend away returning to Observatory felt like returning home. Life in Observatory quickly became natural. It was only a matter of weeks before I would walk down the street and be greeted by local store owners. However my family of interns were what was most meaningful about life in Observatory. It was so important to have fellow interns that were ready to share in all that life in Cape Town has to offer.



Now Baphumelele is the beginning to my career, the fuel to my passion and the home to those who inspire me daily. As an intern at Baphumelele Children’s Home I was given the trust and responsibilities to gain everything I could from my short three months. My coworkers took me in, put up with my lack of Xhosa skills and let me join in their vision for Baphumelele.



I know I will be back because South Africa has so much more to teach me. There are still experiences to be had and wisdom to gain that will make the distance worth the journey. Most of all South Africa holds the beautiful people and land that I will not go without returning to in my lifetime.