Funding Success... PTL!

Just proving that God is indeed faithful through prayer, the gap* has recently been the recipient of a number of funding awards. Currently totalling in excess of £12,000 with the potential of more to come, this has been a direct result of the gap*s investment in a part-time fund-raiser - and lots of prayer!

This boost of finance comes at a crucial time for us as income has been slipping over the last few years which in turn has caused the Trustees to seriously look at how our funding is gained. Getting a professional perspective has opened doors that we previously considered as being closed to us.

Some of the income is item specific (office rent, equipment etc) but some of it can also be used for core funding (wages, running costs etc). This news has also been bolstered by responses to our Supporter’s Meal held back in February (see below) where our ‘144 Days of gap*’ campaign was launched. The 144 indicates the amount of sessions we have at the Venue drop-in over the course of a year. Anyone wanting to support the work of the gap* for one year can choose to do so either as a one off gift or a small monthly contribution by Direct Debit.

We want to say a massive thank you to everyone who has signed up or supported this initiative as well as to those who have been supporting us in both financial and prayerful ways over the last five years or so. We hope to carry on promoting this Campaign through local churches and church based groups throughout the rest of the year. If you run a group and would like us to come and talk about the work we do please contact Hannah on hannahhughes.gap@gmail.com or by phone 07599 912670.

...oh, what a night!

Friday February 20th saw our first ever Supporter’s Meal held at the URC church hall in Sutton Coldfield. The 80 attendees were treated to a short updates on the work of the gap* from trustees and staff, a buffet style meal, a testimony from a young person whose life has been impacted by the work we do, encouraging feedback from a volunteer plus some ‘home grown’ live music. The food was provided by the very fine catering team at the United Reformed Church and desserts/cakes by our own senior youth worker, Hannah. The night was deemed a success on a number of levels as new people heard about the gap* for the first time whilst the more ‘seasoned’ supporters were thanked and given feedback on the work of the Venue, the pastoral support of young people, Mission Romania and some of the gap’s future plans.

We also were able to take the opportunity to launch our ‘144 Days of gap* initiative (explained above) and we even had a cake baked (see pic left) especially for the occasion by a gifted young person – maoossive grats to Julia!! The response from the night has been hugely positive on many levels, as a number of people have signed up to 144 Days...we have had a number of one off gifts...and more people have signed up to be Prayer Supporters (receiving fortnightly updates) as well as a couple of churches inviting us to come and speak about our work at their services. The success of the night has given us the encouragement to make this an annual event in the gap* calendar...we at gapsville can’t wait!
Mental Health Support Network for young people

The gap* have been planning to develop an initiative that would help young people who suffer from mental health issues. This would involve us training staff and volunteers in awareness of mental health and mental illness where young people are concerned. This would then allow us to support these young people on a one-to-one basis whilst assisting them in seeking professional help. Funding has been applied for and, if successful, would, allow us to employ local training from Fairway Training Healthcare who are tailoring a programme specifically for the young people we work with. Once we are up and running we would be looking to promote this through schools and GP’s surgeries and other community outlets.

Schools

Our schools work is at a very exciting stage, we have made some great contacts and are waiting to hear back from some of our local schools to see if we can support them including working with young people who may be struggling with mental health issues. Our mentoring is still going well in Arthur Terry and we are also talking with other schools about similar ways to work together.

Prior to Easter some of our young people helped assemble Easter hampers for families in need as part of the Lent-a-Hand community project. This involved wrapping up household goods and Easter eggs which were then delivered to the families just before Easter Sunday (photo below). This was carried out in partnership with Our Place Community Hub.

We are pleased to say that one of our young people, James, has now got an apprenticeship as an Activity Instructor. After doing his training in Wales, he is now working at a centre in Ashford, Kent. He has promised to come back to Sutton to run the GMFR on behalf of the gap* at the end of May...

... the Venue has become the recipient of a new football table! All the way from Germany, this piece of equipment is more robust than the previous one and should be set to give hours of entertainment to all our more footie-minded visitors.

It’s that time of year again, when some of us consider donning our running shoes and doing some training in time for the annual GMFR. This year we have a number of people running on our behalf (go you guys!). So if you are running it or know someone who is and you haven’t yet chosen your Charity, then why not consider us? There is also the opportunity for people who aren’t running or can’t run to still be part of the event in the form of a Steward. The gap* gets awarded something for each Steward that it puts forward. Should you be interested in this role contact David on 07565 542967

North Birmingham Youth partnership

Gap* is to be a part of the NBY which is a group of youth leaders from churches in North Birmingham. It involves us partnering with local churches to put on events for young people. We are very excited about the first NBY (North Birmingham Youth) event due to start in July. It will be a space for young people to come and socialise, worship, and have fun. It allows us to invite young people from the Venue to experience something of God.

Some thoughts from Ed Heritage who worked as a volunteer at the Venue. Back in 2012.

The last few years have been exciting and lots has happened in that time, I’ve spent most of them studying Theology at St. John’s College, Durham University. I’ve been really involved with college life and have been working hard with my degree and playing sport. Over the last three years I’ve played rugby, hockey, cricket, squash and darts, mixed in with a few other things! I’ve been attending King’s Church Durham, which has a good mix of students and ‘normal’ people - I’ve really enjoyed it there and it’s been great to see what God has done during my time at university.

My Theology degree has been interesting and I’ve just finished my dissertation - a study of Fair Trade, Worker Co-operatives and Micro-finance. At the time of writing I have just my exams left to take, and am revising for them now. In terms of what’s next, I’m not so sure! I think I will take time over this Summer to work out what my next steps might be, and what sort of job I think I might enjoy and be good at! When I’m back in Sutton Coldfield I hope to pop into the Venue to see how it’s all going.

For any information about the gap* please contact David on 07565 542976 or email gap.huboffice@gmail.com

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