

Change a life

SOUTH AFRICA - A GROUP EFFORT!

By: Ursula Du Plooy

When the Laos Cycle Challenge first came up, I saw it as an opportunity to make a difference; to use one of my great passions, cycling, to make a personal contribution to Computershare's Change a Life initiative. It was a chance to join hands with colleagues from across the world and, as one team, make a significant financial contribution to a good cause. I was really pleased, but not surprised, when five other South Africans volunteered. Computershare people here are always ready to rise to a challenge, particularly when their efforts will benefit others.



Team photo of participants and fundraisers

I was thrilled that three of our volunteers, myself included, were chosen but not a little daunted by the task of having to raise R112,000 (A\$20K, US\$14,800, €12,000, CAD\$18,500, £8,000). Stan Lorge, our CEO, organised fundraising activities like a military campaign. He drafted in the leadership team to approach their suppliers most of whom were not slow to come to the party. Within a few days we had pledges, both cash and in-kind, for more than half the amount, and a little friendly persuasion helped to keep the contributions flowing.

Internally, we settled on a "month of casual" for November. In return for a R50 (A\$9) contribution, staff could come to work dressed casually for the entire month, with the usual proviso that client-facing staff dressed appropriately. Within the business, departments organised their own activities, one of which was a weekly raffle for a Friday afternoon off. By popular demand, December also became a casual month and within a short time we had reached our target.

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Team South Africa in training

The addition of our fourth participant, Allan Botes, saw another flurry of fund raising activity. Again our suppliers and staff came to the party and Stan donated a prize of four days at Sun City for a raffle, entries for which are still coming in.

What at first glance seemed to be an almost insurmountable task, raising such a large amount of money, with some ingenuity and hard work, turned out to be, if not a walk in the park, then a cycle through it!