

Background and My First Winter School

By Sinenhlanhla Buthelezi

I am happy to finally participate in the Winter School. As a reader, Khanya College has inspired me to read more and more while helping me to engage better in social justice. I was introduced to Khanya through the Jozi Book Fair (JBF). The JBF was the first of many events that have been informative and have youth involvement, that I participated in through my contact with Khanya.

At the time when I first linked up with the College, I was in the process of launching my book club, the Daveyton Book Club. Through Khanya, I gathered the relevant information and have had access to resources such as the Karibu newspaper.

Following this, I joined the Forum for Activist Journalists (FAJ) which improved my writing and social skills. Additionally, being a part of the FAJ increased my love for writing turning it to passion. It is an honour to have to write about the unknown issues and heroic stories of my community.

I come from a township called Etwatwa/Emaphupheni, sa section of Daveyton, east of Johannesburg. This township is commonly known as Vutha. The area is plagued by social problems such as active gangsterism. The violence is both offensive and defensive as the community has often taken the law into its own hands in dealing with the gangs.

Khanya emphasises the importance of history and active engagement in our communities. I have learned about the three moments of social change. These are a common understanding of the sources of the problems in the community, the activists must develop a common analysis and then organising against the issues. They also have to understand the context of history and memory.

Through the study groups, I have learnt about social reproduction and neoliberalism. This has opened my eyes and taught me about how the working class is struggling but has also helped me understand that change is possible no matter how long it takes.

This is my first time attending winter school and I am very curious. Being in a space of Khanya has always been productive and informative, the winter school will hopefully be another opportunity to learn. I hope I will be able to express myself and talent through art while actively gathering information and solutions to help the working class.

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