



23rd August 2010

The Distortion of facts regarding 79 Belvedere Road

The following serves to clarify the misrepresentation of facts as portrayed in the recent article published in the *People's Post's* and includes an invitation to a public meeting. The lead article on Tuesday 3rd August 2010, written by Ms Fischer, was crafted to give a semblance of credibility yet with a clear objective to discredit Learn to Earn, create panic and hysteria by implying that Claremont, Belvedere Road in particular, is about to be inundated with unemployed people. It is a real pity that as per the *People's Post* own stated commitment to "honest, accurate, fair and balanced" investigative reporting that this has not been honoured.

Ms Fischer informed Holtmann Olden and Associates (Urban and Regional Planners handling our application) after more than an hour of reading through Learn to Earn's application that she did not have any questions as she was writing an investigative article and not a press release. Clearly neither was achieved as the facts below will illustrate;

For 21 years Learn to Earn has offered training and job creation for unemployed people at its centres in Khayelitsha and Mount Pleasant, Hermanus. On our website (www.learntoearn.org.za) our Annual Report and newsletters indicate recent construction activities at these centres to enlarge and improve the training facilities for the over 300 people that are trained yearly. Our approach is to take our training to our target market. Our premises at 79 Belvedere Road are not intended for training unemployed people. It would be in contradiction to our approach and physically impractical and impossible given the premises.

The secondary training indicated in our application (with course outlines, and photographs of our premises) clearly indicates that it is for organisational members of the Learn to Earn Association and those enquiring as to how do they, in their communities, go about effectively equipping and training unemployed people. There are 7 organisations around the country that use our model through which 80% of the unemployed people become economically active. This secondary training is correctly referred to in the article as "low key training" and as being "infrequently" as well. However not in juxtaposition to our training for unemployed people which happens on a daily basis from 8.30 am to 4 pm, Monday to Friday at our centres in Khayelitsha and Hermanus.

Tag Rugby's (www.tagrugby.co.za) use of these premises is for trainees based here to go out to schools all over the country to teach Tag Rugby and life skills. They also use our

boardroom/training room to run, infrequently, training courses for people that wish to offer these clinics themselves. They also supply requisite apparel for sponsors for these initiatives and corporates as part of their financial sustainability.

Prior to purchasing this property we rented space in the Riverside Centre for 3 years where our set up was similar in function. The centre management there could confirm that as a tenant we never used the space for training unemployed people.

Learn to Earn and Tag represents people who are resident in this community, who have children who attend school in this community and we have plenty of supporters residing in this community who are committed to appropriate development and care of this environment. However we do object to vindictive actions by some residents.

Since purchasing our property it has been categorically stated by a resident that everything will be done to make our lives a misery, which as experienced, at times means happily wasting city resources. We have had the building inspector here under the accusation of doing illegal building alterations. Before we had even finished unpacking the land use inspector came to see us based on a complaint which required us to install a residential component until our application was completed.

On two occasions we have had traffic inspectors here to attend to a complaint that our property and the "heavy duty" vehicles parked on it obscure the line of sight when entering Belvedere Road from Rembrandt Street. Recently we have had an inspector to address a complaint that our signage is offensive and exceeds permissible size. However, the neighbourhood watch have erected a sign on the side walk in front of our property that is in a hazardous position, of greater proportion and strictly not permissible.

We have had someone send their domestic worker to pretend she was unemployed and enquired what courses we offered on site. Needless to say we gave her a print out of our courses and a map to our centre in Khayelitsha where such training is offered.

Given the above we would gladly welcome all residents, Cllr Owen Kinahan, The Editor and Ms Fischer of the *People's Post* to attend a meeting at 6 pm on the 1st September 2010 at 79 Belvedere Road where you can ask questions, tour the facility and sign up for a field trip to our training facility and coffee shop in Khayelitsha.

Rev Roché van Wyk

Director

Learn to Earn

021 - 671 2230