



# SHAW CENTER

MARY ANN SHAW CENTER FOR PUBLIC & COMMUNITY SERVICE

To: Whom it May Concern  
From: Pamela Kirwin Heintz, Associate Vice President & Director  
Mary Ann Shaw Center for Public and Community Service (Shaw Center)  
Syracuse University  
Re: Letter of Support and Recommendation for Inkululeko  
Date: February 2021

It gives me great pleasure to write this letter of support and recommendation on behalf of Inkululeko. The goal of our recommendation is to provide insight into the viability and soundness of the organization; endorse Inkululeko's ability to achieve and sustain its goals and program; and, most importantly, convey our respect for and trust in its sustainable impact and leadership as an NGO.

Pure happenstance brought Jason Torreano, Inkululeko executive director, into the Mary Ann Shaw Center for Public and Community Service (Shaw Center) at Syracuse University in 2010. Working for a Syracuse nonprofit at the time, he joined his director on a visit to the center seeking mentors for their program. The vision of Inkululeko Jason shared with myself and staff that day continued to bubble up in our heads leading to us connecting with Jason to explore how we could partner in helping him achieve his vision. Things snowballed from there.

One of the main goals of the Shaw Center when it was launched in 1993, was to serve as a resource for making critical connections between the University and community - local, regional, national and global - as we tackle "wicked community problems". Our partnership with Jason and Inkululeko is one of the best examples of the kind of reciprocal relationships we envisioned. All stakeholders in the ongoing Syracuse University and Inkululeko collaboration have participated in the development of this incredible NGO, forging relationships and making an impact that will outlast us all. Through this strong partnership, students from across the globe have touched and impacted each other's lives in ways neither Jason nor we could ever have imagined. And we are just getting started! Faculty have been invigorated, students have changed lives - at SU and on the other side of the world - and none of us will ever be the quite the same again!

We began to work with Jason in 2010, as he shared his vision, talked about the practical steps he knew he needed to take, and we explored how the Shaw Center and Syracuse University might become viable partners. As part of academic affairs, it is necessary for the Shaw Center to connect community requests and needs to specific colleges, departments, courses and faculty. It was clear to us, Jason's vision and Inkululeko had numerous connecting points to the University that we needed to parse one at a time. We made connections with a faculty member in our nationally ranked Entrepreneurship and Emerging Enterprises program in the Martin J. Whitman School of Management (Whitman School). The idea for including Inkululeko as one of the SU Abroad Programs was hatched by one of the student teams in his class, and as they say, the rest is history. Along the way, we were able to connect Jason to courses, projects and centers in the S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications, Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, David B. Falk College of Sport and Human Dynamics, and the SU Law School, to name a few SU partners. During this process, we watched Jason work with students, faculty and staff, and were impressed by his organizational ability, commitment to his vision, and persistence often in the face of significant challenges, and his ability to mentor students.



# SHAW CENTER

MARY ANN SHAW CENTER FOR PUBLIC & COMMUNITY SERVICE

Numerous meetings, negotiations, cross-campus connections, and requirements involved in the many different projects Jason was working on with Syracuse University for Inkululeko continued to grow. Jason's leadership as a collaborator allowed for impactful connections that provided sustainable resources and increased capacity for local social enterprises, as well as additional learning opportunities for Syracuse University students and faculty. Jason's authentic personal commitment to and interest in reciprocal relationships and building social capital wherever he happens to be, as well as his personal sense of responsibility, continues to reflect the impact and future potential of Inkululeko.

Jason and Inkululeko will continue to grow and thrive providing Grahamstown youth the opportunity to address the challenges in their lives and communities on a more equal footing. While Jason continues to pursue collaborations across the globe, as well as sustain his partnerships right here in Central New York, Syracuse University and the Shaw Center intend to stay committed to partnering, exploring and supporting collaborations and opportunities. This is a partnership and an enterprise that has great promise to continue impacting those on both sides of the globe.

Regards,

Pamela Kirin Heintz  
Associate Vice President & Director