

Does Youth Day really matter today?

By [Refiloe Khumalo](#), issued by [Wavemaker](#)

30 Jun 2021

It is 45 years later after students marched in Orlando, Soweto against an unjust system. Is the struggle still the same or has anything changed? How is the celebration of this day relevant to the youth of today?

Most South Africans can celebrate, acknowledge and validate the courage the youth of 1976 displayed on that chilling Wednesday; how they managed to cause such an impact, at a time when that kind of provocation could lead to losing their lives.

What propelled these young people, at that time, to use their voices to liberate themselves from a repressive structure?

Historically, the happenings of the past still loom in the present and give voice to movements that aim to have the same impact concerning the same cause.

As the youth of South Africa, to disregard June 16 would be to deny ourselves the opportunity it affords us to learn from our previous generation, on how we can claim our voices as effective tools in the act of freedom making. The implications of forgetting relevant historical events in our history that have contributed to shaping what South Africa is today is a great disservice to the general cause against social exclusion.

The youth is affected by 16 June in different ways. The South African youth unemployment rate is at its all-time high and mental illness is a serious reality in the lives of the youth.

Programmes such as the Wavemaker graduate programme offers graduates from diverse backgrounds an opportunity to not only gain work experience but to also diversify their skill set.

This is what Yondela Magadla, one of the graduate interns from Wavemaker South Africa had to say about Youth Day:

“ To me, Youth Day symbolises a period in South African history whereby South African youth decided to claim and control their futures outside the constraints of an oppressive government and by any means necessary. I believe the youth did not want their future to be determined by the government but rather for the government to enable them and give them equal opportunity to pursue their ambitions. This day continues to be relevant, considering the worsening state of public education in South Africa, its record high youth unemployment rate even by international standards, and opportunities only being accessible to people from privileged or elite backgrounds. As a part of the Black youth in South Africa, Wavemaker South Africa has empowered me by realising the existing personal and career growth opportunities both in the media industry and outside of it, through the systems development qualification. I have experienced this in a changing and fast-paced environment – which encourages skills development. ”





We honour the steps taken by the youth before, we move forward with the same spirit and fervor they had to see an equal and inclusive South Africa. The questions remain, solutions are being built. One tender conversation at a time with the knowledge that we can achieve our goal for a freer and more inclusive South Africa for all.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Refiloe Khumalo is an emerging cultural leader and Wavemaker South Africa's graduate intern

" **Wavemaker South Africa's CEO, Merissa Himraj voted as Most Admired Professional by Scopen Awards** 16

Feb 2024

" **The future of marketing in the AI era** 9 Jan 2024

" **Wavemaker welcomed 6 graduates to be part of the GradX programme for 2023** 5 Oct 2023

" **Wavemaker's Data and Analytics Department introduces digital solutions pillar** 19 Jun 2023

" **Wavemaker's Audience Solutions delivers personalised, data-driven insight** 2 Jun 2023

Wavemaker



One global family, positively provoking growth for our clients and our people. #GrowFearless Bound by our Purchase Journey obsession we help clients translate audience behaviors and insights into smart decisions today, for a prosperous tomorrow.

[Profile](#) | [News](#) | [Contact](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Facebook](#) | [RSS Feed](#)

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>