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## It Gets Better, Tutu and UCT members tell young people

**First local version of global video project delivers messages of hope and solidarity for gay South Africans**

Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu has joined University of Cape Town (UCT) students and staff, local civil society organisations and high-profile individuals, to create *It Gets Better – Cape Town*: a collection of 18 videos that form the first South African contribution to a global video campaign targeting sexual minorities who experience discrimination in secondary schools and beyond. The group includes the captain of the UCT Rugby Team, the editor of the Varsity student newspaper, members of the UCT Student Representative Council, university staff members and students.

*It Gets Better – Cape Town* was launched for free viewing on Youtube on Tuesday, October 11 2011. Later this month, part of the collection will be screened at Out in Africa: South African Gay and Lesbian Film Festival. Visit [http://www.youtube.com/results?search\\_query=It+gets+better+-+Cape+Town&aq=f](http://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=It+gets+better+-+Cape+Town&aq=f)

*It Gets Better* was launched in the USA in September 2010 by American syndicated columnist and author Dan Savage, with his partner Terry. They were responding to the suicide of a number of students who were being bullied in school. The videos, targeted especially towards young people who are considering suicide, explain that their lives will "get better". Since the first video, the It Gets Better Project™ has become a worldwide movement, inspiring more than 25 000 user-created videos that have been viewed more than 40 million times.

Creators of *It Gets Better* videos include US President Barack Obama, US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, UK Prime Minister David Cameron, actress Anne Hathaway, entertainers Adam Lambert and Ke\$ha, Facebook, Google and staff of Apple Computer.

The *It Gets Better – Cape Town* team shares unique messages of hope and solidarity for sexual minorities. Tutu states: "If you experience discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation, I want you to know that *It Gets Better*. There are people and organisations throughout this wonderful land that will support you. We should support one another as an act of true *ubuntu*."

The director and producer of the series is Andrew Barry, a Master of Philosophy in Education student at UCT. Barry says: "I want sexual minorities in Cape Town to know that there are individuals and organisations who will support them." He would like to see more South Africans create similar videos for *It Gets Better*.

Each video is unique in that each speaker gives a different message along the theme of *It Gets Better*. Charlie Keegan, an actor in the South African film *Skoonheid*, an Official Selection at the 2011 Cannes Film Festival, reminds young people that "the greatest people who ever lived were people who had to fight their way through times of pain and suffering and a feeling hopelessness. What made those people great was their ability to overcome obstacles that brought the most pain and the most fear."

Nokubonga Yawa, the head of the grade 9 Khayelitsha youth group at Equal Education, tells young people that "we have the Constitution protecting us ... We have a right to sexuality and no one has a right to discriminate."

Nick Fenton-Wells, the UCT Rugby Team Captain, states: "We look to encourage sexual minorities who'd like to play rugby to approach the UCT Rugby Club. They are more than welcome."

***ENDS***

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