



AFRICAN SCHOLARS' FUND (ASF)

Non-Profit Organisation 002-838 (established 1970)

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ECONOMIC SLUMP VS SOCIAL SUFFERING (Newsletter 2011)
PUBLIC SCHOOLING – (fast becoming) PUBLIC ENEMY NO # (Newsletter 2012)

NEWSLETTER – NOVEMBER 2013

CHAOS MUST LEAD TO CONTEMPLATION, TO CONSULTATION AND FINALLY TO ORDER...

And so, despite the reports of unqualified, absent and abusive teachers; of ill-disciplined, underperforming, violent and sexually active learners; of mismanaged funds and lack of resources; of parents who are not committed and communities where moral standards, living standards and quality of life are in a downward spiral, there is a growing acceptance, a heightened awareness, that what is happening out there affects all of us on some or other level, and there is a renewed commitment to join forces with those of like mind to embrace *hope* and to bring about *change*. It is encouraging and it will take some time, but as it gains momentum it will cause the tide to turn. The responsibility lies also with Us (whoever we may be), not entirely with Them (whoever they may be). We will partner with all those who carry *hope* in their hearts and we thank you, our loyal donors, for walking this path with us.

IT IS NOT ABOUT THE MONEY YOU DONATE – IT IS ABOUT WHAT YOU HELP US MAKE POSSIBLE FOR THESE LEARNERS. THIS YEAR...

WITH YOUR HELP, we were able to support 2500 high school learners which enabled them to:

- Make payment to their school fund
- Buy items of uniform
- Buy the stationery they needed
- Focus on their schoolwork
- Feel valued and motivated to successfully complete their grade

YOU ALSO MADE IT POSSIBLE for us to help 160 students who enrolled at public FET colleges to:

- Pay their tuition fees
- Buy the textbooks they needed
- Complete their studies and become productive members of society.

With your help, all these amazing things happened - without your help, they would not have. Again – we say “Thank you”.

DONOR DATABASE AND RECRUITMENT CAMPAIGN

We have a loyal donor pool that allows us to continue with our work. However, we recognize that in order to meet the growing need, we have to raise additional funds and grow our database of donors. Part of this donor recruitment campaign involves the completion of the enclosed questionnaire. In order to keep the information on our donor database consistent for ALL donors, we ask that you too complete the Questionnaire and return it to our office.

We are again giving ALL donors the opportunity to go onto our new debit order system which is to be implemented as of January 2014. Should you wish to take advantage of having the convenience of being on our monthly debit order system, please complete the enclosed Debit Order Authority Form and return it along with the Questionnaire to our office.

PAST BURSARS This year saw an increase in contact made by past bursars. All of them reflect on the support and guidance received and the impact it made on their lives – the fact that we helped to shape their futures and their ability to now, finally, give back to the organisation and extend their support to another needy learner. Once a bursar leaves the ASF, it takes many years before they can give back to the organisation. We acknowledge this fact and we are inspired when 15 to 20 years down the line, past bursars become caring donors – loyal donors. We can say this about all our donors, whether they are alumni or not. Our family of donors are loyal – they are

loyal because they care, not purely because they now have the means. NO – you are not simply making a contribution to the ASF - at the very core of it, YOU give meaning to another's life. Know this, acknowledge this and give thanks for being able to be of service to another. It is in giving, that you too receive your gift.



Grade 9: "...I know your organisation has probably gotten a thousand letters just like mine, but the difference is I'm willing to do anything to achieve success in my life. If I didn't I would think of myself as a failure. A failure to myself, my parents, my family, my teachers and my community".

Grade 11: "...We are living in a one room house with one bed. I don't have my own space or room to study so I have to wait for everyone to watch their favourite TV programme or fall asleep and then I can start studying or doing my homework with my sister. Sometimes it is 12 o'clock midnight."

Grade 11: "I'm staying in informal settlements where everything is communal, communal tap, communal toilet etc. It's just too much for me, there are many distractions and my house is surrounded by six taverns, they always playing loud music you can imagine six different songs and one set of ears – what is that..."

Grade 8: "Where I live people have no jobs, they live with their grant money and pension money and we have some problems. We have no hall for the community, we have no proper roads, we have less classes for the learners in the primary and no yard in the school. Some people make a living with their cattle and chicken because they sell them to shops and people who want them. Our dream is to have jobs, something to eat, enough classes for the learners and to have proper roads."

Donations to the ASF fund are tax deductible.

Bank: STANDARD BANK

Account Name: AFRICAN SCHOLARS' FUND

Account Number: 071404104

Branch Number: 025009

JUNE EXAM RESULTS

Schools: This year we have 2500 bursars registered with the fund. 2183 (88%) Bursars sent us their June results of which 1429 (66%) qualified for their second payments. 754 Bursars did not receive their second payments because their marks were below what we require (although it may have met the school standard) OR because they did not send their reports on time. Besides the financial assistance, the fund distributes Advice Booklets to the grade 9 bursars (focussing on subject and career choice). The grade 12 bursars receive an information pamphlet giving advice on tertiary institutions and availability of bursaries towards further studies. 429 matriculants will complete their final year at school this year. We wish them well in their exams.

Further Education and Training Colleges: We are pleased to report a mid-year pass rate of 80%. To date bursaries have been awarded to 99 students, amounting to just over R430 721.64. We offer Student Support Workshops in March and October, where the focus is on ensuring that the student is better prepared for the world of work on completion of his/her studies. **FNB** and the **Nelson Mandela Metropolitan Municipality** continue to provide annual funding for our group of FET students in the Eastern Cape. Success stories of our students who have completed their studies and are gainfully employed are proudly reflected in our Annual Reports.

SPECIAL AWARDS

The Mears Merit Award - Presented to the learner, based in the Western Cape, with the best overall result in grade 10, last year went to Anzio Muller (Manenberg High School). This year Anzio was nominated by ASF and selected to receive a scholarship from the Yvonne Parfitt Trust. He will continue his studies in Mechanical Engineering at either UCT or Stellenbosch University. We are very proud of Anzio, especially in light of the fact that he comes from a gang-infested area, where this year schools were closed for a two-week period due to gang violence in the area. The Mears Merit Award 2013 went to Zimi Sigenu (Luhlaza High School). Zimi was also one of this year's Mary Livingstone Essay prize winners – 115 English essays were submitted from 41 schools. We thank Ruth Allsopp and Adriana Holleman for their continued commitment, their time and especially the valuable literary feedback they give to the entrants.

An excerpt from one of the winners' letters reads:
"I thank you for the award. More than that, I thank you for encouraging writing in African Schools – I thank you for caring about the future of writing. Receiving the award was a proud moment for me."

WE'RE HAVING TO CUT OUR INTAKE NUMBERS

Income is slow – not because our donors are not giving, but because they are not able to give as much as they would like to. The organisation has established a fundraising committee, so that we can turn our focus and effort to bringing in more funds. It is not an easy task – everyone is feeling the pinch, but without sustaining our income we cannot continue our outreach. Next year (2014) we will be forced to limit the number of learners we help to 2200. It pains us, but let us rather continue to help 2200 scholars than not being able to help any at all. We trust that our fundraising efforts will allow us to rather increase the intake numbers in the years ahead.

You are invited to visit our website at www.asf.org.za for photos and updates on school visits, workshops, donor news and more.

The trustees, staff and bursars wish you and your families a blessed Christmas and a peaceful New Year. Please consider continuing with your Gift by leaving a bequest to the ASF when you draw up your Will – thank you.

