

NEWSLETTER – NOVEMBER 2014

EXPRESSIONS OF “I AM” AN ASPIRANT STUDENT, A VALUED EMPLOYEE, A RESPECTED CITIZEN, AN EQUAL HUMAN BEING IS EVIDENCED “FAR AND WIDE”

And every expression is experienced not only by the individual, but also the family - the community – the country and in some respect, the world at large. Nothing happens in isolation any longer. More and more individuals are primed to look past their own, immediate needs and take the bigger picture into consideration. If we can, for just one moment, set aside what is fed to us by mainstream media; if we can look past the chaos that is reported in the newspapers and shown on our television screens, we might just be able to see into the hearts of the people. We might just recognise that their outcries are nothing more than “growing pains” – part and parcel of a necessary cycle – nothing other than a person, a nation, civilization, in fact - the human race - maturing.

When we reflect on the learners in the North West Province having suffered closure of their schools for months, due to their parents’ protests against poor service delivery, do we see irresponsible parents OR do we understand their sacrifice in taking this unprecedented step in expressing their and their childrens’ right to a more dignified experience of daily life. The learner that we support on the ASF programme comes from marginalised and impoverished families. We understand their seemingly never ending struggle and applaud their commitment when we take them on as one of our bursars – more so when they join our growing number of alumni and become donors themselves.

Our success stories reflects the full circle many have come (see www.asf.org.za) and you, our loyal donors are the catalysts to this transformation. Your investment encourages a pool of talented future employees, helps create potential clients to enter the world of the consumer and meaningfully partake in growing the economy of our country. The ASF offers the lifeline to those in need – you, in turn, are the life blood of the organisation - thank you.

THE ORGANISATION IS FURTHER EQUIPPING ITSELF TO BETTER COMMUNICATE & SERVE THE EXPECTATIONS OF BOTH ITS DONORS AND IT’S BENEFICIARIES:

After many years at the helm of the ASF Board of Trustees, John Gardener, former Principal at Bishops Diocesan College, on 12 June handed over the reigns to Geoff Everingham, Professor of Accounting at the University of Cape Town. Prof Everingham brings a wealth of experience of serving on a number of Boards to the ASF. We warmly welcome the Prof and are pleased that John remains in service as a Trustee of the organisation. The founder of ASF, Dr Margaret Elsworth is not yet ready to simply potter around in her garden and it is with much enthusiasm that she volunteered to contact donors and engage with them regarding their continued support. More importantly, to extend our gratitude in being part of the ASF legacy.

Eliciting corporate sponsorship requires a “corporate approach” – one that affirms our track record, sound governance, sustainability, relevance, reach and impact. Such a message needs to be relayed briefly, yet visually, succinctly and creatively. Very soon, we will be able to share our professionally produced corporate video with you - made possible through the generous sponsorship from the Capespan Group (Pty), in partnership with Solid Ground Media who are so taken with the ASF story that they agreed to an unheard of 50% discount on production cost. The video features a current bursar, supported by one of our past bursars who is also a regular donor. In addition to the video, a corporate brochure is being produced – one that could very easily “disappear” from your coffee table if you are not mindful ☺. And we have modernised our logo so that, at a glance, it informs the observer of our work.



The ASF has transformed the lives of so many and has played such a crucial role in their journey from poverty to employability – it is time that we showcase this, do you not agree? We will be contacting our donors in the New Year to extend an invitation to join us for a modest finger luncheon where we will do exactly that. It will be an opportunity to joyously reflect, acknowledge, celebrate and extend our gratitude.

PARTNERSHIPS WITH OTHER ORGANISATIONS:

Asset Trust: Saturday classes for our selected gr10 – gr12 learners in the Western Cape, plus bursaries for qualifying gr12 learners that are registered for tertiary studies.

Reap: 12 month learnership programme for our gr12 learners to ensure that they are academically and psychologically ready to embark on their tertiary studies

SA Travel & Tourism College: Full sponsorship of a year long training programme that presents qualifying grade 12 female learners with an internationally accredited qualification.

VW South Africa – Uitenhage: The opportunity now exists for our Engineering and Business Studies FET graduates, who meet the VW criteria, to partake in their 3-year learnership programme.

Groote Schuur Primary School: The ASF have been invited to serve as one of two external adjudicators on their panel to select a current gr6 learner who is to receive the Anton Meyer Scholarship award to go towards completing his/her upcoming gr7 year at GSPS.

SPECIAL AWARDS:

Yvonne Parfitt Trust: We are annually invited to nominate an ASF bursar, and again this year the gr12 bursar we put forward, Zimie Sigenu from Luhlaza High School, was successful in securing sponsorship to continue her tertiary studies. Zimie intends to go into the medical field or as a second choice complete a degree in Political Science. In 2013 Zimie was presented with the Mears Merit Award and was also one of last year's Mary Livingstone Essay prize winners, so we are not surprised at this achievement.

Mary Livingstone (English essay competition): Our first prize winner, Maxine Diedericks, comes from Delft Technical School, based in the Western Cape (2nd year running). The 2 x 2nd prize and 2 x 3rd prize winners were from the Eastern Cape. This year 151 English essays were submitted from 25 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

Mears Merit award (top three gr10 learners – WCape): Cosat and Harry Gwala Senior Secondary Schools this year produced our top achievers.

JUNE EXAM RESULTS

Schools: This year we have 2011 bursars registered with the fund. 1700 (84%) Bursars sent us their June results of which 1169 (69%) qualified for their second payments. Adequate performance is necessary for ASF to continue providing support – interestingly the largest percentage drop-offs occurs with the gr8 learners, clearly indicating the difficulty in transitioning from primary to high school.

Reports received after our cut-off date can unfortunately not be considered - included in this number are 10 bursars from three schools in the Northern Cape, where schools were closed due to service delivery protests. Learners at the affected schools did not get to write their June exams – parents, along with the Department of Education reached consensus that it be best that the learners retake their grade in 2015.

The ongoing SA postal services strike also had a rather unhelpful effect on the delivery of June reports and 2015 applications. We have taken this into account, contacted the schools and learners in order to have reports faxed. In having done this, we are assured that we will meet our 2015 intake number of 2000 bursars.



In addition to the financial assistance and the benefits that will be passed on to our bursars with the Asset Trust and REAP partnerships, the fund continues to distribute 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.

284 ASF sponsored matriculants will sit for final exams this year - we wish them every success.

Further Education and Training Colleges: We are pleased to report a mid-year pass rate of 75%. In the first half of the year, bursaries have been awarded to 41 students, amounting to just over R207,329.06. 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. We are extremely grateful to the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan Municipality who continue to provide annual funding towards our group of FET students in the Eastern Cape.

We have had numerous requests for assistance at FET level in the Western Cape and rather than have our learners fall through the cracks, the ASF are committed to assisting a maximum number of 10

bursars at FET level in this province. One of the main criteria being that these learners completed their matric under the auspices of the ASF. The 10 selected students will also be privy to the Student Support Workshops presented to our Eastern Cape ASF students.

Success stories of our students who have completed their studies and are gainfully employed are proudly reflected in our Annual Reports and featured on our website.

THROUGH YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO INCREASE THE AWARDS TO LEARNERS FROM R800 – R900 IN 2015

Grade 11: "...When I applied for a bursary in Grade 8, I was focussing on getting financial support to finish my high school career. I was so fortunate that African Scholars Fund turned out to be a family I can rely on instead of just my bursary handout. The ASF team has played a big role in my life when it came to advice. I am happy that the team is still by my side".

Grade 11: "...also, at home things have been quite well, you might be wondering why am I always saying things about my family. The truth is it really helps me to unload some of my things that seem to bother me and by writing and sharing them with you helps me a lot."

Grade 12: "...I am so grateful for all the support I received from the African Scholars' Fund team since the first time I applied. I can proudly say the African Scholars Fund played a big role in my academic successes throughout high school. You have motivated me in a way, knowing that somewhere out there is a company of people who are willing to go out of their way in helping learners finish their studies. Thanks to you and my sponsor for encouraging me to do my best. I appreciate it..."

Grade 8: "...I paid my school trip and all the things that are needed to be paid at school. Thank you. I will always be grateful for everything you have done. I promise that I will do my best on my December report."

Grade 10: "...I am sure if your bursary was not there for me, I would not be having some of the things I need for school and I would not be motivated to go to school Thank you my family."

Grade 12: "Again I am grateful for the Information Pamphlet you sent me and at this period I am up and down applying at different universities. Thank you..."

A LONGSTANDING DONOR SUPPORTS HIS LEARNER THROUGH TO GRADUATION !!!

Choadré was assigned to one of our many loyal donors, Bob Jordan, when he entered gr10 at Orion High School in de Aar (Northern Cape). Upon matriculating in 2009, he was accepted by North-West University (Potch) to read for a BCom Degree, obtaining a full NSFAS bursary. Bob wished to

continue supporting this student so re-directed his ASF donations to Choadré to help meet his day-to-day expenses. The 5yrs spent at university were not without their challenges. Choadré had to bear the tragic death of his father in 2011 and soon after the loss of a very close aunt and later again when the head girl with whom he had been joint head boy died of diabetes.

In 2012 matters of finance, hostel accommodation and other psychosocial challenges arose. Because Bob cared enough, he stepped in when matters came to a head with the likelihood of serious depression looming. The wonderful caring relationship which had blossomed between the two enabled Bob to help Choadré pick himself up and turn his focus back to his studies. Because of the renewed effort Choadré then displayed, he will soon be graduating BCom and we have just heard that he has been accepted for Honours next year.

Thank you Bob, for being the Light – the Love, for bringing Hope to young Choadré. Bob insists that all the credit is due to Choadré for a magnificent effort against enormous odds. He also points out that without ASF support making his continued schooling possible, this result would have been beyond reach.

WE ARE GRATEFUL THAT THE NUMBER OF ASF DONORS DONATING VIA EFT & DEBIT ORDER ARE GROWING – see excerpt below:.

SANGOnet Newsletter – Nov 2014: "The strike by the South African Post Office employees was not good news for South Africa, including the nonprofit sector. While it is obvious that the unprotected rolling industrial action crippled the Post Office, sympathising with workers, who demand a 15 percent salary increment and the conversion of casual workers into permanent employees, only makes sense.

According to the Southern Africa Institute of Fundraising (SAIF), thousands of good causes and charities are experiencing deep financial difficulties as the strike impacted severely on the sector that relies heavily on public generosity to support their work through direct mail. Devastation and despair is the message coming out of the nonprofit sector after months of postal strikes and non-delivery of mail.

Our appeal is that you keep your charities of choice in your consciousness, consider the many challenges they face, celebrate the work that they do - the transformation they bring about, and that you resolve to not allow them to become part of the statistics.

Donations to the ASF fund are tax deductible.

Bank: STANDARD BANK
Account Name: AFRICAN SCHOLARS' FUND
Account Number: 071404104
Branch Number: 025009



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.