



# AFRICAN SCHOLARS' FUND (ASF)

Non-Profit Organisation 002-838 (established 1970)

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## NEWSLETTER – NOVEMBER 2012

### PUBLIC SCHOOLING – (fast becoming) PUBLIC ENEMY NO #

Many public schools are no longer a trusted place of learning, a place of safety, a place of imparting moral values, a place of hope - a place that inspires our children. Instead it has become a place where our children are exposed to violence, disrespect and complacency. The many social ills that were once "out there" has crept right into the hearts of our children at school. School - the one place where parents hope and believe their children will be guided, better educated and better equipped to make a success of themselves. I don't know who is more disillusioned – the parent or the child. Even teachers are disillusioned – their students don't seem to have much respect for them and they don't display the discipline that is needed to ensure successful imparting of knowledge in the classroom. Accusations run rampant and fingers are pointed in every direction, The result: disruptions on all fronts – with the students, the teaching staff, management of schools, availability of resources and funding. Who is to be held accountable? Does it even help to exhaust ourselves in trying to lay the blame somewhere or with someone specifically?

Deep down, every human being's desire is to help (one can feel that tug at your Heart), but then we start rationalising (we toss the why and why not around in our Mind). The action we eventually take will be determined by what has the stronger pull: the Heart or the Mind. I would ask that we acknowledge that not all parents can provide what is best for their child. Let us have the courage to step out of the fear of possibly not having enough for ourselves and our families. Let us bring ourselves to "want for others what we want for ourselves". Learners that are taken under the ASF's wings excell – despite the many challenges they face. They become aware of their own potential and the possibilities that come with hard work and good results. They strive to become role models, rather than look for role models. Not all of them are immediately STARS, but every single learner starts to realise that they can reach for the stars and that their hopes can become their realities. They grow not only academically, but their moral compass, the role they play in the home and in their communities start pointing in the right direction. It is wonderful to observe the transformation.

**This year, again, we received in excess of 6000 new applications.** About two-thirds of them had to be turned away because they did not meet our academic criteria (gr 7 = 60% and Gr 8 – 12 = 50% average). The close on 2000 applicants that were provisionally accepted will have to send us their final (December) report to be assured of our support in 2013. Having to say NO to a desperate, yet hopeful learner is very difficult, but it makes us more humane when we become aware of the challenges that are faced by others – especially when they are young children or elderly grandparents.

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Grade 9: "...I used to live with both my parents. Now I live with my aunt and her husband and 2 kids. We are a happy family, now they accepted me with warm hands. My parents are both addicted to alcohol, that is why my aunt took me. I don't care if they don't care about me, because my aunt is taking care of me although my support grant is being paid to my mother. I thank God for giving me such an aunt."

Grade 11: "I live with my 2 cousins and my grandmother who earns pension. I don't see my mother she is looking for work in Port Elizabeth. We depend on my grandmother's pension. If I get this bursary, I will use it to buy school uniform. I promise that I will work hard so that I can come with good results at the end of the year."

Grade 9: "I live in the location with my grandmother, cousin and older sister. We are supported with the old age pension. My mother passed away and I don't know who my father is."

Grade 7 : "My parents live in Cape Town. We live with my grandmother in the Eastern Cape. My father

is doing odd jobs and my mother is looking for work. We live with the social grant."

Grade 9 : "My father went to Plettenberg Bay to look for a job. My mother is taking care of us at home. She is growing vegetable garden to sell. We are only supported by child support grant which is not enough for us to eat properly."

Grade 11: "At home we are six. My mother is the mother of 3 boys. She is a maid. When she is away at work, our uncle looks after us. My mother is the breadwinner. We live in a hut and a floor made up of mud".

Grade 8: "I live with my mother and sister in my grandmother's house. We live in a gang infested area. Sometimes when they shoot we have to drop down in our own house. This is a huge problem when I need to get to school. My sister finished school last year. My mother and my sister are both looking for work. My grandma is a pensioner and a cancer survivor. My hope for next year is to improve in English and Physical Education".

**JUNE EXAM RESULTS**

**Schools:** This year we have 2805 bursars registered with the fund. 2372 (85%) Bursars sent us their June results of which 1662 (70%) qualified for their second payments. 433 (15%) Bursars did not send their reports at all. 710 Bursars did not receive their second payments because their marks were too low or because they failed to 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.

**Further Education and Training Colleges:** We are pleased to report a mid-year pass rate of 88%. To date bursaries had been awarded to 99 students, amounting to just over R444 000. The demand for bursaries was lower this year, due to the fact that NSFAS approved bursaries to a larger pool of students. We offer two 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.

**SPECIAL AWARDS**

**The Mears Merit Award** - Presented to the learner, based in the Western Cape, with the best overall result in grade 10, this year went to Anzio Muller (Manenberg High School). The cash prize, framed certificates and dictionaries were very well received.

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**The Mary Livingstone Essay** – This year 112 English essays were submitted from 38 schools. A 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and two merit awards were decided on. Ruth Allsopp and Adriana Holleman again were the adjudicators and we thank them for their commitment, their time and especially the valuable literary feedback they give to the entrants.

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**The SA College of Tourism** – A further two ASF bursars received full scholarships to attend the 12 month course in 2012. These past 2 years has seen 4 of our young ladies successfully graduate from the college. We congratulate them and thank the SA College of Tourism for their belief in and support of ASF learners.



**Individual donors** – it is you who keep this work and the hope of our young bursars alive – hope that seem to be trampled on by the very entities that are supposed to ensure opportunity and success. A large number of our donors continue to celebrate birthdays, anniversaries and other special occasions by requesting that family and friends make donations to ASF in lieu of gifts. Although these are tough

economic times, we beg you to continue giving. We cannot do this without you.

**FNB** continues to provide annual funding for 20 FET students in the Eastern Cape. This year again one of our students was nominated to be presented with a laptop and printer/copier/fax machine when identified as being one of FNBS top achievers.

**Nelson Mandela Metropolitan Municipality** This year again provided funding for FET students in their Metropole.

**St Georges Grammar School** Although we made the appeal rather late in the year, the management and learners at the school responded graciously and hosted a Civvies Day to raise funds for the ASF. Thank you so very much for squeezing this last minute event into your fundraising schedule.

**Protea Hotels Head Office (CPT)** 13 Learners from Mfuleni High School were fortunate in receiving sponsorship from Protea Hotels. They were further treated to a lunch at the renowned Fire & Ice Hotel and were thrilled when taken on a site inspection where they gained insight into the many departments within a hotel (from front of house to house keeping). To top it all, the grade 11 and 12 learners were encouraged to enquire about job shadowing and vacation work. Learners each went home with their goody bags and eager to hand over the R500 grocery voucher received, to their parent(s). Just three days after the outing, we received the first “thank you” letter from one of the learners – “a day we will never forget” she said.

**DG Murray Trust** It is with much regret that we have to accept that a loyal and longstanding donor of 33yrs (1979 -2012) have discontinued their support of the organisation. A new Board resulted in revisited strategies, a new vision, and new opportunities for organisations that now fit their mould. We thank the Trust for the impact made on literally thousands of lives during their time with the ASF. May you continue to make an impact, not merely in size, but in the profound transformation of even one individual.

**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 so much.

You are invited to visit our website at [www.asf.org.za](http://www.asf.org.za) for photos and updates on school visits, workshops, donor news and more.