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HERSCHEL SENIOR SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

No. 12 – 5 November 2021

Dear Parents

The WCED NSC Matric examinations are under way, and we wish our matrics well as they sit their final school examinations. They have put a lot of time into preparation and we wish them the success that they deserve. It is worth bearing in mind that the purpose of an examination is to assess what candidates know as opposed to what they do not know. Positive positioning is key in the approach to writing exams.

BEST WISHES FOR YOUR FINAL EXAMINATIONS!

We would like to encourage the matrics to keep trusting in the process.

Matrics, you have studied extensively and deserve to receive your 'personal bests'. Wishing you well for the rest of your exams. Remember that hard work always pays off. Your results will be a testament to your school career, ambition and self-discipline.

Take care and remember that your best 'weapon' in an exam is a fresh and well-fueled brain! Rest well and eat healthily to sustain your mental and physical health and focus.

Some wonderful news and a really great achievement for our very own **Aria Ward** who has been chosen for the Gallagher Foundation Scholarship. Each year the foundation receives over 1000 applications nationwide. This prestigious scholarship is only awarded to 5 candidates in South Africa.

Applicants were asked to submit 4 essays as part of their application. This year's essay topics ranged from the value of honesty to the vision they have for the future and their country. Following their application, 12 students were shortlisted and invited for a 1.5-hour interview, during which they were asked about their background, views on democracy and its limitations, how they plan to contribute to their community, and what urgent issues they intend to address in the next few years.

They then shortlisted and chose 5 students from across the country. "The process was quite nerve-racking and filled with anticipation", Aria said.

What a fantastic accolade this is and so well deserved. We are so proud of Aria and of all that you have accomplished. We shall follow your career with interest, and we wish you the success that you so richly deserve.



Grade 10 parents and students will be delighted to know that the preparation for Grade 10 **Stepout** is well under way. I know that the Grade 10s are eagerly awaiting this opportunity to get away and to experience the diverse landscape and activities on offer. A large staff team is involved in Stepout and I have no doubt that they are equally excited to participate in an off-campus excursion.

In three weeks' time we plan to embark on our 12th annual Herschel Stepout (albeit 8 months late). Even though there is the hurdle of 3 weeks of exams, there is definitely a Twitter of Stepout anticipation around the corridors. Activities, accommodation, guides, transport, and menus are being confirmed whilst students gather their essential equipment. Loud shouts and much arm waving can be detected on the grounds during bike skills practice. Stepout 2020 returned in March last year to a world gripped by a pandemic and hopefully Stepout 2021 will be successfully enjoyed between the third and possible fourth wave. (Stepout Coordinator Mrs Sandy Rule)



Herschel Centenary: Please note that the week of 14 - 18 February is the school's Centenary celebration, with the focus being on Friday 18th where we will celebrate Founder's Day. The following weekend, 25 – 27 February will be the Preparatory School Carnival weekend which will be expanded to include the senior school and all members of the Herschel community as a part of the school's centenary celebrations.

We also look forward to August 2022 being a month in which we celebrate the empowerment of women and will focus on creating awareness around issues challenging women, as well as on the incredible successes of women in various sectors and spaces.

Given the fact that we wish to make a visible difference in keeping with our tagline "Learning to make a difference", please look out for some requests that we will be posting and also areas of possible contribution and participation. We want this to be a whole school celebration and commitment to making a difference. As we look back to see where we have come from and work on understanding the complexity and uniqueness of this, we need to acknowledge that we have a responsibility and commitment in looking ahead to see how and where we can make a difference going forward, starting with a focus on our school environment and ensuring that this is a safe and nurturing school which supports a genuine sense of belonging!

Sport: There were a few fixtures that were played this week. It was wonderful to hear the support on the sidelines – the claps and shouts of encouragement!

The Grade 10s and 11s, having started exams this week, have not participated in the sports programme. Please refer to the SOCs app for updated results on all fixtures. For parents who have not downloaded this app, we encourage you to do so as you will find all information pertaining to the sports programme on the app.

On Tuesday 26th October 2021, **Herschel Girls Senior String Ensemble** under the directorship of Mrs Carla van Wyk, presented *An Evening of Strings* in the Concert Hall of the Inkwenkwezi Music Centre. The players delighted the audience with compositions from Pachelbel, Dvorak, a chamber ensemble playing music from the motion picture *Secret Garden*, ending off with Carlos Gardel's fiery tango *Por Una Cabeza*. The highlight of the evening was no doubt the Monn Cello Concerto, featuring the remarkable French cellist, David Pinoit. Congratulations to Mrs van Wyk and the Herschel String ensemble for a truly memorable evening of music.



A special meeting with His Grace, Archbishop

Makgoba: Two weeks ago, we were privileged to attend a meeting at the Archbishop's residence in Bishops court. We discussed some of the challenges facing our school community and examined where we stand as an Anglican School. The meeting granted us insight into the role of the church with respect to liturgy and ethos, as well as social justice and we look forward to more regular meetings with His Grace as we plan ahead and focus our strategy on the holistic education of girls and young women and at building community to enrich our appreciation of what it means to be connected as South Africans.

Vaccinations:

A good percentage of our Herschel staff members have been vaccinated and many of our current Grade 12s and senior students have also been vaccinated. To avoid disruption to grades – and we have experienced this in Grade 10 and Grade 11 – we would welcome your participation in the vaccination programme. We have been fortunate in not having had too many students away as a result of Covid-19, but now that we have the vaccine available we are in a position to be proactive, especially with the possibility of a 4th or 5th wave in 2022. If we have a high percentage of staff and students vaccinated, we will mitigate the need to shut a grade down, supporting the continuation of 'in school' learning which is favoured both by students and staff.

We ask that parents take this into consideration when making decisions about their children being vaccinated; and to view the decision as one made within a community setting too; in this case the Herschel community. The Department of Health is encouraging the vaccination of children so as to support the continuation of education without disruption. We would therefore ask that you consider this choice carefully, taking into consideration the rationale for the uninterrupted delivery of education.

Generosity is the most natural outward expression of an inner attitude of compassion and loving kindness. (Dalai Lama)

It is that time of year where we ask for contributions for those in our communities who do not have the access we have. Thank you in advance for your generosity of spirit! There are a number of activities/projects that students will be involved in and we would be so appreciative of your support. Importantly we really want to thank our Herschel staff for the incredible work that they do in the areas of grounds, maintenance, cleaning, catering and security! This school requires significant input in many areas of expertise and care and we are blessed to work together as a large team, in providing this educational space for your daughters. We are grateful for the donations made to the school for this purpose – thank you!

Elections – a ‘first time’ for some of our matrics!

It would have been a first for some of the matrics who voted in Monday’s municipal elections. They have exercised a fundamental democratic right in doing so and it is appropriate to pause and to remember the cost at which this has come for the majority of South Africans, as well as to be conscious of the responsibility which each adult South African has in exercising a right to vote.

The candidate lists in the various municipalities have been up for some time and given the extensive lack of governance and service delivery in far too many municipalities we hope that research and careful consideration has been taken in the process which will, we hope, see fewer promises and more deliverables.

We hope that you are enjoying the **spruced-up gardens** at Herschel. Mr Monde Sibizo, Estate Manager, and the Grounds Staff team have been hard at work maintaining the gardens and planting flowers and shrubs which contribute to the beauty of our campus. We do not take for granted the beautiful surroundings in which we get to work and connect.

