

MEDIA RELEASE

5 January 2018

START

A decade running: Christel House school for the impoverished surpasses national average

Christel House South Africa, a non-profit school in Ottery that serves impoverished communities in Cape Town, is celebrating a 97.8% percent matric pass rate – well above the national average for the 10th consecutive year. For the 46 jubilant matriculants, the positive results provide them with a chance to break free from a life of poverty.

The matriculants of Christel House in South Africa – one of nine schools founded by Christel DeHaan internationally with the purpose to break the cycle of poverty – announced the celebratory news following the release of 2017 matric results in the Western Cape earlier today. All of the learners come from extremely poor communities in Cape Town and had to overcome tough personal circumstances to literally make the grade.

The school also achieved a 65.2% bachelor pass rate, which is considerably higher than the national public school average of 28.7%. Christel House' curriculum promotes STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) subjects and Advanced English and significantly outperforms comparable public schools in these areas at Grade 3, 6 and 9 levels, and boasts with grade performances well above the national average.

Top student, Lauren Daniels from Delft, achieved six distinctions. She has enrolled to study toward her Bachelors of Commerce in Business Management at the University of the Western Cape in the year 2018.

Asked what her journey at Christel House SA has been like, Lauren Daniels reflected: *"My Christel House journey has been great. I cannot begin to describe the many opportunities that allowed me to grow as a person. Christel House has made me realise my fullest potential and I hope to make everyone proud as I now take on my tertiary studies"*.

Principal Ronald Fortune says he is extremely proud of the class of 2017: *"The class of 2017 has again proven to us all that the Christel House model works; a holistic, 'whole child development' programme that delivers a values-based curriculum with measureable outcomes. Our students are taught to dream, plan and achieve and they have done so with a near 98% matric pass rate."*

Unlike many schools or programmes of this kind, it does not select pupils based on academic merit alone but also according to financial need. Only pupils who are in dire financial circumstances are considered which makes the academic achievements more remarkable and a measurable result of a successful education model. A total of 755 students, from grade R to 12, are currently enrolled for 2018.

Non-Discriminatory Clause

Christel House admits students of any race, colour, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programmes and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, colour, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, scholarships and loan programmes, and athletic and other school-administered programmes.

Learners are transported daily (Mondays to Fridays and some Saturdays) from 20 impoverished communities to Christel House South Africa in Ottery, using 18 school busses for the daily return trips. Learners also receive nutritional meals, quality healthcare, professional social services and long-term career development.

An independent study done by Ernst and Young has shown that graduates at Christel House are more likely to be enrolled in tertiary institutions - 40% versus the national average of 16% - and are more likely to study or be employed later - 97% versus the City of Cape Town youth employment average of 31.9%. After grade 12, graduates are supported through a College and Career programme to help them gain work experience, acceptance into tertiary studies and further career development. It is thus evident that Christel House SA pupils will deliver a much greater economic impact as self-sufficient, employable citizens of South Africa.

As a non-profit organisation, Christel House SA is launching a Back-to-School fundraising drive to raise critical funds needed for the start of the 2018 academic year. Members of the public and businesses can assist by donating funds to purchase a pair of school shoes (R150), curriculum-based books (R500) or cover the cost of nutritional meals for one month for a student (R320). Donors can also sponsor a student for an entire academic year at a cost of R58 000 which includes total tuition fees, healthcare, social services, transport, uniform and other essential holistic educational needs. A 100% of all donations go towards Christel House's holistic human development programs and South African donors are eligible to receive a tax-deductible 18A tax certificate for the value of their contributions. As an accredited level 4 B-BBEE contributor, businesses can receive BEE points for their donations.

Donations can be made online at GivenGain or by contacting Francois Louw on 021 704 9400 or flouw@sa.christelhouse.org.

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NOTES TO EDITORS:

Supporting images and captions:

Image 1: The Christel House Class of 2017 celebrating their remarkable results.

Image 2: Top student Lauren Daniels, from the impoverished community Delft, has achieved an overall distinction pass rate.

Image 3: Christel House 2017 graduate Kesia Matthews (left) is fencing her way into the future, now ranked as SA's best in fencing. Awarded for her remarkable achievements in this unique sport, with Ms Althea Stephens (right).

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