

MEDIA RELEASE

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Christel House breaks the cycle of poverty, one gold medal at a time.

Christel House South Africa, an education-based charity that serves severely impoverished students in Cape Town, held a Special Assembly on 18 April to celebrate the recent achievements of the school and to welcome its new Chief Executive Officer, Adri Marais. With 'Going for Gold' as the theme of the event, special awards were given to students and teachers who achieved winning results inside and outside of the classroom over the past year.

Christel House enrolls 755 students from 20 impoverished areas in Cape Town such as Philippi, Langa, Manenberg and Gugulethu, with the purpose of breaking the cycle of poverty. More than 120 delegates, including student sponsors and project partners, filled the Christel House school hall in Ottery to witness the morning's proceedings, which included encapsulating performances by the school's 300-piece brass band, combined school choir, drum majorettes and dance groups.

In 2017, the school achieved a 98% percent matric pass rate, 32 subject distinctions and a 65% bachelor pass rate – well above the national average for the 10th consecutive year. In Economics, it achieved seven distinctions and an average of 83%, both statistics are the highest in the district. Its Grade 9 class outperformed some of the most affluent private schools in the Peninsula with a collective math average of 88.7% in the systemic tests.

Bringing extensive experience in education and not-for-profit management to the Christel House team, newly appointed CEO Adri Marais reflected on this outstanding achievement: "In a world where the schools in the communities we serve have a lower than 5% pass rate in mathematics, our support system allows for a spectacular 88% pass rate. This shows that South Africa has amazing talent amongst its youth, but it does need the opportunity to excel, and the Christel House model shows that it can be done."

The new Christel House Robotic Systems program earned the school additional accolades in the 2017 academic year. Two Grade 10 students, Storm S. and Siyamthanda N. – fondly called the Robo Knights and first-time entrants - brought home the provincial gold in the Explorer Junior category at the World Robot Olympiad (WRO) in Cape Town last year. Christel House has a strong focus on science, technology, economics and math and is proud to be one of only five Microsoft Showcase schools in the Western Cape.

"Today was a wonderful opportunity to showcase to our friends the work we do – but equally, it was a privilege to be able to be a member of the audience and to experience the power of our collective efforts in not just improving the opportunities

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.

in poor communities, but to sustainably work towards breaking the cycle of poverty," Marais added.

Christel House is a registered, global charity that operates eight learning centers around the world of which the school in Ottery (Cape Town) is the only one in Africa. The school has been running for 17 years and provides quality education, health care, daily meals, guidance counselling and college and career support to its 755 students. Unlike many other schools of its kind, one of the main criteria for entry into the school is a combined monthly household income of R1 500 or less. Using 18 buses, all of its students are transported daily from twenty impoverished communities in Cape Town to Christel House.

Christel House SA nurtures and develops young people to take their rightful place in society, with 91% of its graduates either studying or working – delivering measurable benefits in support of South Africa's development path.

A 100% of all donations benefit Christel House's projects and 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.

For any queries, contact Kristen Matthews on 021 704 9417 or k_matthews@sa.christelhouse.org.

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Video Link: <https://we.tl/hvk1E8cKuD>

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