Thandulwazi
MATHS AND SCIENCE ACADEMY

NEWSLETTER
January to April 2024

As we embark on another year of empowering our students and teachers with the benefits of education, we're thrilled to share with you the latest updates, highlights and accomplishments from the past three months at the Thandulwazi Academy.

In this edition, we delve into the inspiring stories of our students, celebrate the dedication of our educators and explore the innovative initiatives driving positive change within our communities in Gauteng and Limpopo. Join us as we reflect on our progress, embrace new challenges and continue our commitment to shaping a brighter future through education.

Donate to Thandulwazi: https://www.stithian.com/give-to-st-stithians/thandulwazi-maths-and-science-academy or scan the QR code.

All donations are eligible for a Section 18A Tax Certificate.

Saturday School Snippets

While many of our stakeholders are familiar with the emphasis on Science and Maths in our Saturday teaching curriculum, some may not be aware of the additional elements that define our approach.

Each Saturday at Thandulwazi Academy begins with a special assembly, reflecting the ethos of our Methodist school, where prayer sets the tone for the day. Dr Hlatswayo, our esteemed Deputy Head, leads these assemblies, often presenting a theme that he discusses with the students before leading them in prayer.

Assembly time serves as a vital opportunity for communication, celebration and reflection, mirroring the essential aspects found in any educational institution!

Did you know that you can view our annual reports online? Visit https://www.stithian.com/thandulwazi/content/page/annual-reports

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Thandulwazi Academic Awards

The first term of the new year is an opportunity to celebrate the successes of 2023 by honouring the remarkable academic accomplishments of our beneficiary teachers and learners across our four academic programmes.

The morning was brimming with joyous music, courtesy of the vibrant performances by the Thandulwazi Choir and Marimba band, setting a lively atmosphere that had everyone singing and dancing along. Guiding us through the festivities with charm and wit, our MC, Mnqobi Ka Ntombela, kept the energy high, while our guest speaker, Farai Ntuli, stirred our souls with an empowering message, urging us to seize control of our circumstances and become catalysts for change in our nation.

The outpouring of support from the audience as the awardees received their well-deserved accolades was both loud and heartfelt, a testament to the deep sense of camaraderie and pride among peers and mentors alike. It was truly heart warming to witness the genuine love and admiration demonstrated for those who have excelled.

Throughout the day, tears of joy flowed freely as we celebrated the triumph of excellence, serving as a powerful reminder that with dedication and determination, anything is possible. The event was a resounding affirmation that when we set our minds to it, we can indeed achieve greatness.

Saturday School and Teacher Training Angels

Parents within the St Stithians Community have united to support the efforts of the Thandulwazi operational and fundraising team by generously providing a light snack for both our students and teachers every Saturday. Spearheaded by dedicated volunteers Khumo Khekana and Samantha Nupen, this team efficiently coordinates the donation of food on a weekly basis, ensuring that donors are informed of drop-off locations and volunteers are equipped with the necessary information to prepare the food. Many students leave their homes without a chance to eat and this is a welcome meal mid-morning.

Managing the entire school feeding programme has not only ensured the provision of nourishment but has also relieved the programme managers and fundraisers of this responsibility, allowing them to redirect their efforts towards other crucial areas of school management and fundraising.

To donate to the Saturday School feeding scheme, please visit: https://www.stithian.com/give-to-st-stithians/project/thandulwazi-feeding-scheme

Dear parents and SMB owners

We're reaching out for your support. Right on our doorstep sits the remarkable Thandulwazi Maths and Science Academy, a beacon of hope for over 1,100 underprivileged children who gather here for over 30 Saturdays each year to attend our Saturday School Programme. Their dedication to learning, reflected in the name 'Thandulwazi', is inspiring. However, many face ***hurdles such as hunger and lack of access to sanitary products***, hindering their education journey.

Most of these eager learners, predominantly girls, travel long distances via public transport to benefit from our programme. But ***their basic needs often go unmet***.

That's where ***you can make a difference***. We're seeking donations of the items listed alongside.

Your contribution, ***whether in goods or funds***, will directly impact these children's lives, ensuring that they have the resources they need to thrive.

Please consider reaching out to our Thandulwazi Angel, ***Khumo Kekana***, who is very generously driving this inititiative, at khumoadmin@gmail.com to explore donation opportunities for your company or as an individual. Alternatively, you can use this link to access the Thandulwazi Giving page: https://www.stithian.com/give-to-st-stithians/project/thandulwazi-feeding-scheme

Together, let's support our community and empower these young minds to reach their full potential. Thank you for your generosity and compassion.

Warm regards, Khumo

Please assist us with donations of the following:

- Sanitary towels
- Paper cups for juice and tea
- Tea, instant coffee, sugar, long-life milk, and creamer
- Oros
- Cup-a-Soup
- Plastic wipeable tablecloths (size 137 mm × 213 mm)
- Disposable catering gloves and hair covers
- Chopping boards
- Butter knives (second-hand welcomed)
- Dishcloths and dishwashing liquid
- Large plastic storage bins

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Appeal placed in the school newsletters and distributed via PTA/class rep parent WhatsApp groups.

Sam Kirk "Making a Difference" Fund Launch

In 2023, St Stithians College student Samantha Kirk passed away after suffering a traumatic heart event linked to a syndrome called Long QT. At the time of her passing, the family requested that donations in lieu of flowers be made to the Thandulwazi Maths and Science Academy. The family felt that, in line with her legacy of making a difference in other people's lives, helping students from our Thandulwazi Maths and Science Academy would be a fitting way to honour Samantha's memory.

The Kirk family requested that the generous contributions, from a number of donors, be used to create more awareness and to up-skill our Thandulwazi students and teachers with essential life skills by facilitating training of CPR, first aid and the use of automated external defibrillators (AEDs). It was therefore fitting to formally launch this programme on 16 March 2024 at our Thandulwazi Saturday School assembly and touching to see each student receive a bracelet made by our Thandulwazi and St Stithians community engagement students as a reminder of the importance of first aid – and of course – of Samantha.

The launch and roll out of the First Aid Training Programme is what was celebrated on this day. Our Superintendent Chaplain Rev Elroy Kekana opened the morning in prayer. The programme included speeches by Head of Thandulwazi Mr Velaphi Gumbi, Head of Advancement Mr Alistair Stewart, Sam's sisters, Jenna (16) and Maxine (13), and their mother, Lorna. Hayley Rosenthal of Hayley First Aid Training added some wise words on the benefits of knowing basic first aid. The heart-warming event was concluded by our Rector of the College, Celeste Gilardi, and was a fitting way to honour Sam.

To date more than 190 learners and teachers from our Thandulwazi Saturday School have already experienced this training by Hayley Rosenthal of Hayley First Aid Training and the programme will continue to train our Thandulwazi learners and teachers, giving them these life-saving skills and turning them into everyday heroes!

Academic Scholarship Programme

Our 13 Academic Scholarship students (the highest number ever!) looking smart for their Term 1 commencement.

Extracurricular Activities at Saturday School

Saints Sports Fest 2024

The Annual St Stithians Saints Sports Festival provides a wonderful opportunity for the Thandulwazi football (two teams) and netball teams to compete against other schools from across the country.

This year Hyundai Bryanston offered to sponsor smart new players team kit, and the Team Thandulwazi looked smart and ready for action at the Festival. All players received their kit and sponsored bags.

Chess

A friendly chess competition was held between the Thandulwazi Saturday School Chess Club and the Boys' and Girls' College Chess Clubs.

Making Marimba Music

Marimba Band is very popular at St Stithians College and is also offered as an extra mural for Thandulwazi Saturday school students. Thandulwazi was keen to spread some marimba magic with some of the rural schools where our interns are placed in Limpopo.

With the assistance of the St Stithians Marimba Director, Mr Mike Sibanda, a competition was held to establish which school would receive a set of marimbas donated by Thandulwazi.

The winning school was Mmera Full Service Primary in Lephalale and a Thandulwazi delegation of Velaphi Gumbi, Mike Sibanda and Bongani Thabete travelled to Lephalale to hand over the instruments and to provide guidance to the students and teachers on making marimba music.

What a joyful day it was for all involved!