

## IF YOU'D LIKE TO HELP:

Though we recognize that many Alumni are facing challenging financial times, there are some Alumni who may wish to assist the school with financial contributions. There are a few areas where help is needed.

- Due to the Covid-19 outbreak and resulting lockdown, a number of our families have lost income and will not be able to pay **school fees** for the foreseeable future. This will obviously place pressure on the school's budget and, while careful management of resources will be exercised, any funding support for loss of fee income would be very helpful. Deposit reference would be "SchoolFeeDonation".
- We provide help with uniform, stationery, books, etc. to more than a dozen students each year but will be losing the main funding for this at the end of 2020 and are looking for new funding and funders. Each **Student Support Bursary** is worth R5000 a year. Deposit reference would be "StudentSupportDonation".
- We were delighted to be able to award our first Alumni Bursary in 2020. Thank you to all who have contributed over the years. Well done! This bursary is derived from interest from the **Alumni Bursary Fund** capital so is self-sustaining. We would obviously like to offer more Alumni Bursaries in the future so would welcome any contributions to this fund as we seek to respond to the financial challenges of deserving students. Deposit reference would be "BursaryFundDonation".

If you'd like to contribute to any of these, you could do so by making a deposit to the school account: Pinelands High School, Standard Bank, Pinelands branch 036 309, Account Number 073 023 671. Alternatively, to make a donation to the Bursary Fund, you can also go to our website and under the heading "Development at Pinelands High School", click on "Donate to Pinelands High School" and then click on the "Donate Now" button which will take you to a secure site to make your donation. The advantage is that you can pay in the currency of your country and the funds will be converted to rands and deposited in our PHS account. Please contact [cfranck@phs.org.za](mailto:cfranck@phs.org.za) for any further information.

## FROM THE PRINCIPAL'S DESK

Dear Alumni

It was so good to see so many alumni at Founders' Day last month, when life was still 'normal'. In fact we held the assembly days before social distancing came into being, so we were fortunate to have had the opportunity for the annual event. We had a happy, vibrant assembly which was enjoyed by all.

That seems a long time ago now, and we are in a different paradigm. How have we as a school responded to the current crisis? Before the first case was recorded in the country we were encouraging our school community to practice good citizenship and correct hygiene in order to prepare them for the inevitable arrival of the virus on our shores.

Once schools were closed early we embarked on a programme of emergency distance learning for all of our students. Clearly, our Grade 12 class was our first priority, but we ensured that work programmes were drawn up for all grades for the extended break from formal schooling.

Work commenced in earnest on 31 March once the original week's holiday was over, and we are now in our fourth week of this new experience. We are using the Google Classroom platform which enables teachers to interact with their classes, to share videos and other material, to assess work, and to interact with individuals. Our teachers are finding the experience to be stimulating at the same time as they are learning quickly about appropriate pacing and work volume. Many students are enjoying the freedom to learn at their own pace, whilst others are finding the lack of human contact with their teacher and peers to be taxing. Teachers miss the subtleties and nuances that come with classroom interaction, and the ability to discern more closely whether a group or an individual is keeping up or understanding. On balance, however, the programme is running very well, and parents, students and staff are finding it rewarding. To quote from an email from parents:

*Just a note to say a big thank you to you both, your SGB and staff for the tremendous preparation and organisation that has gone into PHS's online schooling programme! We and our children have found the transition to be excellent, the pacing of work manageable, the simplicity of one organized Google platform, and the continuation of learning to be beyond our expectations. Your latest email is another example of the school's foresight, wisdom, concern for all the learners and wonderful planning and communication.*

We are aware of the privilege which we have to engage in online learning in this way. The



majority of schools in our country do not have this privilege. When schools are re-opened, we are aware that there may be a number of plans put in place in order to allow for academic recovery, and that some of the content which we have been engaged with may be cut. Our clear philosophy from the start has been simple: to keep our students learning fit and engaged so that when normal schooling returns we can make the transition as smooth as possible.

As a school we are also endeavouring to look after the mental and emotional health of our staff and student body through contact with our School Psychologist, through sharing helpful information and through remaining in touch with as many people as possible during this time. We are assisting families which are struggling with food security, and purchasing data for students who are data-poor in order that they may continue learning.

There is no doubt that this crisis is going to make a huge impact on the economy, and schools such as ours which rely heavily on parent fees will not be exempt from this. Our SGB has been working on scenarios which we will implement when needed. Our priority is to ensure that all staff members paid by the SGB continue to be secure (up to 60% of our workforce falls into this category). If the crisis continues for months we have contingency plans for savings which will kick in. We are fortunate to be in a relatively strong financial position at this time.

Our school is a resilient, robust organisation and we believe that these qualities will see us through this crisis. Our SGB and management leadership is strong, our staff members are determined and focussed, and our parent community is supportive.

We ask for your support at this time. Your thoughts, prayers and any contributions which you can make will be most welcome as together as a school and alumni community we weather this storm and emerge stronger when we enter the sanctuary of the harbour in the future.

*With warm regards, Dave Campbell*

## SOCIAL MEDIA



# PAST PRINCIPAL, COLIN THOMSON – A TRIBUTE BY DAN OVERETT

Colin Thomson passed away just before Christmas 2019 at the age of 78, leaving behind his wife Elizabeth and their three daughters, all alumni of Pinelands High School. He will be sorely missed by them as well as by his four grandchildren and numerous friends, and also by members of the Kleinmond community where he spent his last years in retirement.

Colin was a wonderful man, appreciated for his integrity and his strong Christian faith. He was a shining example to countless numbers of young people throughout his life whether as a family man, a teacher, a principal, a sportsman or as a youth leader.

Colin Thomson joined the staff of Pinelands High School as vice principal in 1973 and was notable for his commitment to mentoring and training both staff and students in leadership roles. He then was appointed Headmaster of Dale College in the Eastern Cape, serving there with distinction for a number of years. In 1982 Colin returned

to Pinelands High as the third principal of the school and during his leadership our school's reputation grew by leaps and bounds. He built up trust relationships with his teachers and student leaders and set them high standards, monitoring and supporting their progress and having the courage to reprimand where necessary; allowing the best to come out in each of his colleagues. Colin gave himself unstintingly to the school, keeping long working hours and always being visible in his support for the various sports teams and extramural events at the school.

Mr Thomson's time as Principal of Pinelands High School was not without its challenges. In the 1980s, following some peaceful protest action by PHS staff and students, Colin was threatened and then detained for interrogation by the security police, later being released with a warning.

After leaving PHS, Colin became Head of the High School section of Damelin College

in Johannesburg, later helping to found a Christian private school and finishing his educational career as its Deputy Principal.

While his sudden death has been a huge loss to so many people, Colin Thomson's most lasting and valuable legacy remains the countless lives of young people whom he strongly influenced for good – many of them represented among the Alumni of Pinelands High School. Thank you, Colin. We will miss you.



Alumni gathered in March to attend the Founders Day Assembly



Mr Campbell and the 2010 head prefects and 2020 Founders Day speakers, Hannah Gould (Ryan) and Mohapi Mohlamonyane, seen here with the 2020 PHS student leadership.



The boys and girls basketball first teams took part in the Annual Western Cape Top Schools Competition in March. The girls put in a competitive performance but were unfortunately eliminated in the semifinals, while the boys went on to win the tournament.

## ABDUL TCHOUFON EARNS BRONZE AT THE AFRICAN CHAMPIONSHIPS



Congratulations to Pinelands High School's Abdul Tchoufon who competed in the U20 African Championships (Wrestling) in Algeria earlier this year. Abdul achieved third place in the under 77kg category in Algeria. Abdul will now compete in the World Championships in Serbia during September 2020.

## RAINBOW CAMP

### BUILDING COMMON GROUND

Before the recent lockdown, PHS was able to host a Rainbow Camp. The first such camp was run in 1999, and since then the school has run numerous camps a year for Grade 11s.

Rainbow Camps deal with the issues of bias and prejudice, while encouraging pupils to look at who they are, and their place in contemporary South Africa. Each camp comprises a series of transformative workshops aimed at teaching our pupils the value of accelerating and participating in the country's process of integration, both at school and in their communities. Pupils spend time developing skills in tolerance and understanding, conflict resolution and peacebuilding; and they spend time learning about new cultures, in order to overcome prejudice and build common ground.

The content of the Rainbow Camps is refined constantly, in line with changes and developments in the broader South African political and social environment.



## MYSCHOOL CARD

Thank you to all Alumni who have signed up for a MySchool card and nominated Pinelands High School as beneficiary. For those who are holders of Woolworths Rewards Cards, your card can be linked to the MySchool scheme raising the same benefits for the school.

For further details and a quick sign up go to the site:

[www.myschool.co.za](http://www.myschool.co.za).

Every Swipe counts.



**Pinelands High School**  
Excellence | Leadership | Innovation