

The uBAMBISWANO BULLETIN

MAY 2021

CELEBRATING

30
YEARS

INDEX



A Letter from the Head - "Soft Heart, Strong Mind"	Pg 2
Staff News - Farewell and Welcome	Pg 3
uBambiswano Alumnus - Amukelani Manda	Pg 4
Community Service Task Team Activity	Pg 4
Academic Awards Assembly	Pg 5
uBambiswano and the Tomorrow Trust Partnership	Pg 6
Scholarships	Pg 6
Yoga Classes & Learn to Swim	Pg 7
Alumni News	Pg 8
Public Speaking and Debating Course	Pg 8
Founders' Day and Healing Service	Pg 9
uBambiswano Contact Details	Pg 9

A GLIMPSE INTO THE PROGRAMME

- uBambiswano is a [Saturday School programme](#) run by St Andrew's School for Girls in Gauteng
- The programme is attended by students from [schools in Daveyton and Etwatwa](#)
- We have a [30-year track record](#) of contributing to the lives of over 1000 students
- On average, [100 students from grades 6 to 9](#) attend the Saturday School over a four-year period
- While [literacy, numeracy, educational and life skills](#) are our priority, additional [enrichment activities](#) such as music, swimming and cooking are included in the programme
- Our students call uBambiswano, [a place of 'hope'](#) as they believe the programme provides them with the hope of a better future.



St Andrew's School
— for Girls —
SKILLED FOR LIFE

A LETTER FROM THE HEAD - "SOFT HEART, STRONG MIND"

Dear uBambiswano family,

Now more than ever, parents and educators are realising that it is not enough to raise happy children who are academically successful. We need to be raising resilient children, who are flexible to change and able to find pockets of joy in difficult times.

This approach – which we call the **soft heart, strong mind** approach – is at the heart of uBambiswano’s philosophy. We follow a path from Grade 6 to Grade 9 where our emphasis is on the development of the whole child. To this end, our educational focus is on the academic, cultural, emotional and physical areas of each student’s development.

Our aim is to grow students who are well-rounded, happy, poised and able to move on with confidence to any new environment. We want to help shape young people who embody character, integrity and belief in the power of relationships.

Every generation has their version of “in my day, we did such-and-such this way and we turned out fine.” And, while that may be true (and the vast majority of us did turn out fine), we have to take a step back and acknowledge that the world our children live in, and the world that they will be our age in, is a totally different one.

We want what is best for our children, and that is why we urge them to pursue academic success. But what of the child who is kind? The child who cheers loudly and without envy for the winning sprinter? The child who defends a bullied peer? The child who loves to read well into the night? The child who can explain every film angle of every film ever made? The child who understands game theory better than any adult with a rudimentary understanding of gaming? The child who loves to cook, or sew, or paint, or dance?

These are all valuable gifts to be nurtured and encouraged, not as hobbies that are secondary to academic success, but parallel to it. We need to give our children the confidence to enjoy their own natural affinities and to find out what brings them joy and pleasure in life.

We also have to redefine what ‘success’ looks like. There is a sense that success looks like a business suit and a smart car. But that may not be for everyone. Perhaps if we focus on overarching principles rather than trying to control the small details for our children, our advice will be more useful for them. So, instead of being specific about what we want them to achieve, we can give them guidelines. Here are my ideas.

We want our children to have:

- Somewhere safe to live
- Food to eat so that they are never hungry and always healthy
- Access to good healthcare and other essential services
- Respect for themselves, respect for others, and to have the respect of others
- Enough money to pay for their needs
- A sense of community and giving
- A willingness to constantly learn and grow as a person
- Awareness and grace so that they treat people decently and sleep soundly at night knowing they have done no harm.

That last point is especially important to me. Did you know that practising kindness – just the simple act of being kind – is good for your health? Studies have shown that kindness can reduce anxiety and stress. It’s even good for your heart! Kindness releases oxytocin (the same ‘love’ hormone that is released at childbirth), which can reduce inflammation and even blood pressure. Kindness also leads to better relationships, which are strongly associated with a longer and happier life.

So, it would seem that having a **soft heart** can literally lead to a **strong mind and body!**

Wishing you a good year, filled with kindness and grace – for yourself as much as for others.

Siphiwe Vilakazi
uBambiswano Head



Mr Siphiwe Vilakazi (uBambiswano Head)

STAFF NEWS - FAREWELL AND WELCOME

Farewell

At the end of 2020, we said goodbye to our Grade 8 and 9 Natural Sciences teacher, **Vittoria Jooste**. Vittoria and her family relocated to Durban. I wish to thank Vittoria for her commitment to uBambiswano and for her willingness to go the extra mile for students.

We also bid farewell to **Zama Madonsela** who taught Grade 8 and 9 Maths. Zama is an uBambiswano alumnus, was a Math intern at St Andrew's School for Girls, and worked in the Boarding House also. Zama completed her undergrad studies at the end of last year and was offered a full-time teaching position at St David's College Inanda. We wish her well and thank her for the contribution that she has made in the lives of our uBambiswano students. We have no doubt that she will continue to achieve great things.



Vittoria Jooste



Zama Madonsela

Welcome

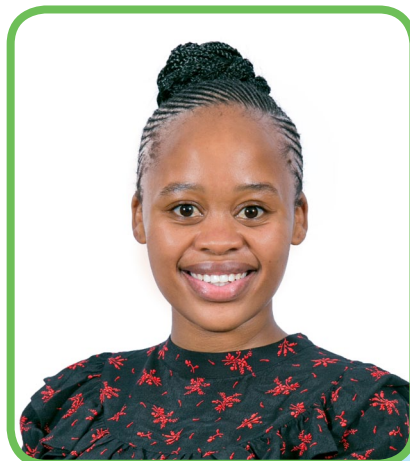
We welcome **Marta Gasper**, who is no stranger to the uBambiswano family. Over the past few years Marta has been involved with helping our Grade 9 students with their performances for our annual prize-giving ceremony. Marta has taken over from Vittoria and will teach Grade 8 and 9 Natural Sciences. In the short time that she has been teaching Natural Sciences, she has already built a good rapport with her students. We wish Marta a happy stay at uBambiswano.

Sibulele Zingitwa is also familiar to the uBambiswano family. She is a St Andrew's School for Girls intern and worked with Zama last year teaching Grade 8 and 9 Maths. We have been impressed with her superb teaching skills. Sibulele will now be the Lead Maths teacher for Grade 8 and 9. We wish her all the best in this new role.

We are also delighted to welcome **Wendy Sibeko**, who joined the St Andrew's Maths Department as an intern at the start of this year. Wendy will co-teach Grade 8 and 9 Maths with Sibulele. We wish Wendy a happy stay at uBambiswano.



Marta Gasper

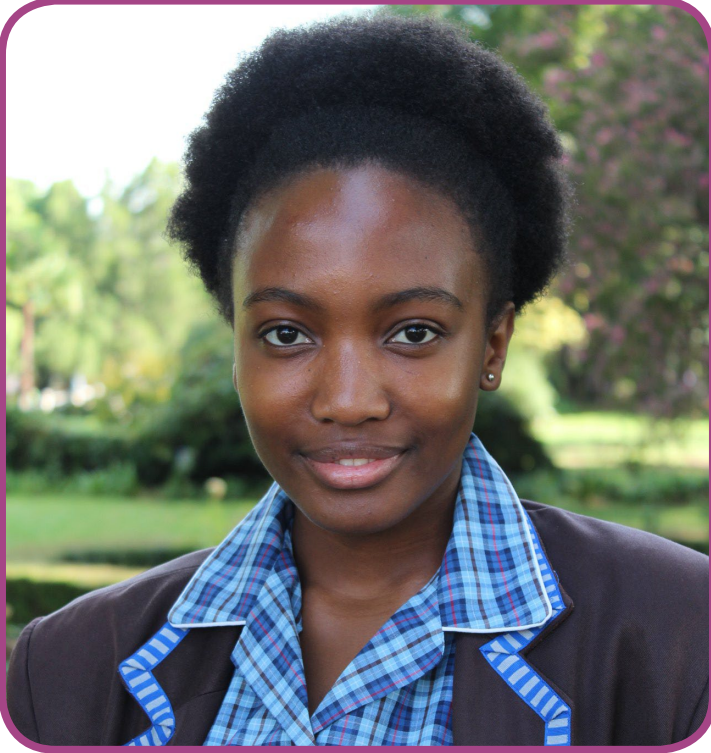


Sibulele Zingitwa



Wendy Sibeko

uBAMBISWANO ALUMNUS - AMUKELANI MANDA



Amukelani Manda

Congratulations to uBambiswano alumnus **Amukelani Manda** for achieving excellent results. Amukelani was a student at uBambiswano from 2014 to 2017. She joined St Andrew's School for Girls in Grade 10, where she has thrived for the past three years. Amukelani has not only shone academically, but she has also continued to give back to her community, staying involved with uBambiswano on Saturdays. Our students enjoy interacting with her and we are so proud of her. We wish Amukelani well in her future endeavours. We have no doubt that she can achieve anything she sets her mind to.

COMMUNITY SERVICE TASK TEAM ACTIVITY

On 6 March 2021, the community service task team hosted a make-your-own-mini-garden activity for the uBambiswano students. The goal was to encourage sustainable living, and empowering the students to teach others at home how to start their own vegetable gardens. The activity also coincided with celebrating International **Plant-a-Flower Day**, which we celebrated on 12 March 2021.

This activity involved the cutting and decorating of two-litre bottles, followed by putting in soil in these bottles, and later planting spinach and tomato seeds. The students were encouraged to take care of their mini-gardens by watering them and taking photographs to record the growth of their plants.



ACADEMIC AWARDS ASSEMBLY

On Saturday 13 March 2021, we hosted an awards assembly to celebrate the achievements of our 2020 Grade 6 to 8 students. Our special guests were **Dean Moodley, Sanele Dlamini and Biko Mlambo**, who all come from similar backgrounds to those of our students. They shared their journeys of becoming successful pilots and how they overcame the challenges they faced along the way. Their talk was inspirational and so well received by our students and staff. The awards ceremony was such a heart-warming occasion, and has energised us all for the rest of this school year.



Dean Moodley, Biko Mlambo and Sandile Dlamini (SA Express Pilots)



L-R Sandile Dlamini, Siphwe Vilakazi (Head of uBambiswano), Ivanka Acquisto (Executive Head of St Andrew's School for Girls), Dean Moodley and Biko Mlambo



Xolani Buthelezi (Awarded a Certificate of Diligence for English) and Biko Mlambo



Trophies for Top Achievers in each Subject



Amukelani Kheswa (Awarded a Certificate of Diligence for English) and Sandile Dlamini



An Solot (Grade 6 + 7 Maths and Coding Teacher)

uBAMBISWANO AND THE TOMORROW TRUST PARTNERSHIP

Our partnership with Tomorrow Trust on the Saturday School programme continues to be mutually beneficial. The Tomorrow Trust offers our students an extension of the Saturday School Programme from Grades 10 to 12, including a Holiday and Post-Secondary Educational Programme. The classes take place at St Andrew's every Saturday from 8h30 to 15h00. The students are provided with breakfast and a cooked lunch.

The programme provides comprehensive academic support to students in English, Mathematics, Life Science and Physical Science. This focused support ensures that Grade 10 to 12 students pass with improved results at the end of the year.



SCHOLARSHIPS

Congratulations to the following students who were selected to write the entrance assessments for the Grade 8 St Andrew's School for Girls Trust Scholarship: **Alicia Morgan, Buhle Mkhwanazi, Thandolwethu Nkosi, Buhlebukhona Vilane, Mmakgotso Monareng, Siphokazi Mhlanga, Michelle Mphahlele, Sandisile Mbata, Amukelani Kheswa, Lesedi Malatsi and Nthombiyethu Zwane.** The entrance assessments were followed by an individual interview with each student. The recipient/s of the scholarship will be announced later in the year.

The following students were invited to write the entrance assessments for the Oprah Winfrey Leadership Academy for Girls (OWLAG): **Noluthando Dhlamini, Lindokuhle Motlamelle, Asanda Nkosi, Amohelang Thekiso, Noxolo Msiza, Neyma Khambule and Nnyana Nyapotse.** We are incredibly proud of students for being invited to write assessments for this prestigious scholarship, which receives applications from countrywide.

Congratulations to **Thandolwethu Nkosi** and **Siphokazi Mhlanga** who both were selected to write assessments on 10 April to be considered for the Jeppe Girls High School scholarship. We wish them the best of luck.

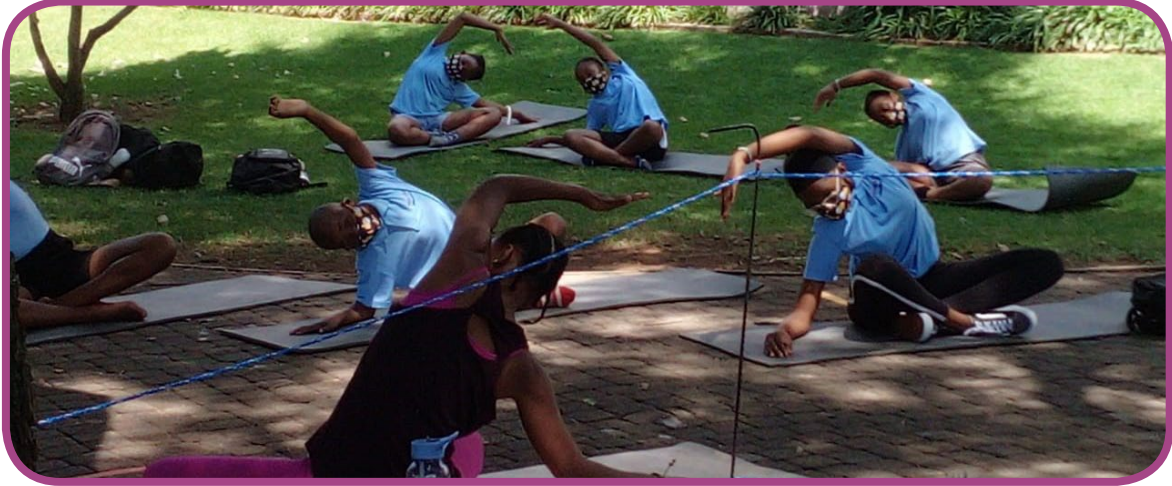
Well done to **Neyma Khambule** who was shortlisted for the Make A Difference scholarship. We are so proud of her.



YOGA CLASSES

As part of our whole student development programme, we are pleased to announce that we have introduced yoga classes for our students as one of our co-curricular activities.

We would like to thank **Yoliswa Mphahlele** for kindly availing herself to run the yoga classes for our uBambiswano students. Yoliswa is a PR4 teacher at the St Andrew's Preschool, and also a member of the uBambiswano committee. Our students have already enjoyed their first yoga classes (and for many of them, it really was a first – ever!).



LEARN TO SWIM

We are delighted that we will be continuing with our Learn to Swim programme, particularly with our new Grade 6 2021 intake. Learning to swim is a very important life skill and it ensures that our students are water safe. We would like to thank the St Andrew's School for Girls Sports Department and Community Service Task Team for making this possible.



Coach Stacey with her eager swimmers



ALUMNI NEWS



Siphon Nkomo

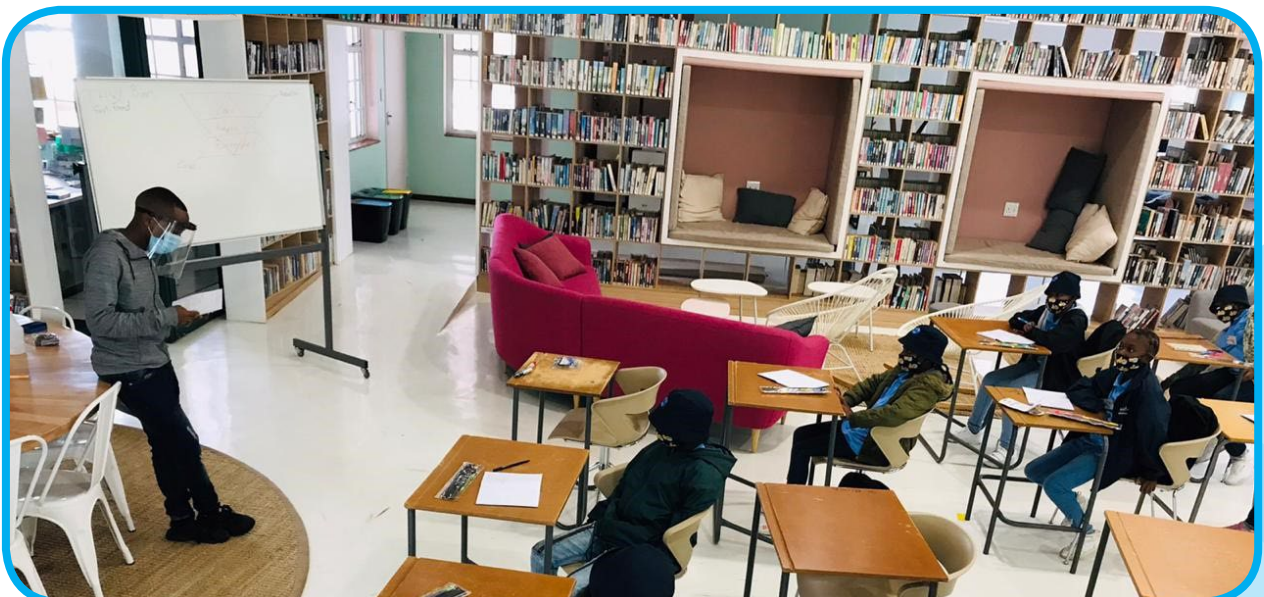
Siphon Nkomo who was a top academic student in Grade 9 in 2006 reached out to us needing some assistance with his university application fee. Siphon had applied for Bachelor of Education specialising in Foundation Phase at Unisa and he was offered a place. He needed R5 500 for his registration fee and he managed to raise R1 500 in his personal capacity. We were pleased that we could assist Siphon with the remaining balance from the Head of School discretionary fund. Siphon was able to register and resume his studies, and has indicated that he would like to be more involved with our programme.

PUBLIC SPEAKING AND DEBATING COURSE

We have been running a new and exciting Public Speaking and Debating course called iSpeak 1.0. This course is offered to us by the Coach Itu Academy and is offered to all students from Grade 6 to Grade 9. This course will be most valuable to the students as it prepares them for a wide range of public speaking scenarios: impromptu, toasts and prepared speeches. It will also prepare them for their various subject orals, and eventually their Matric orals in both their First Language and their Additional Languages. The students will also be able to use this certificate for their President's Award portfolios.

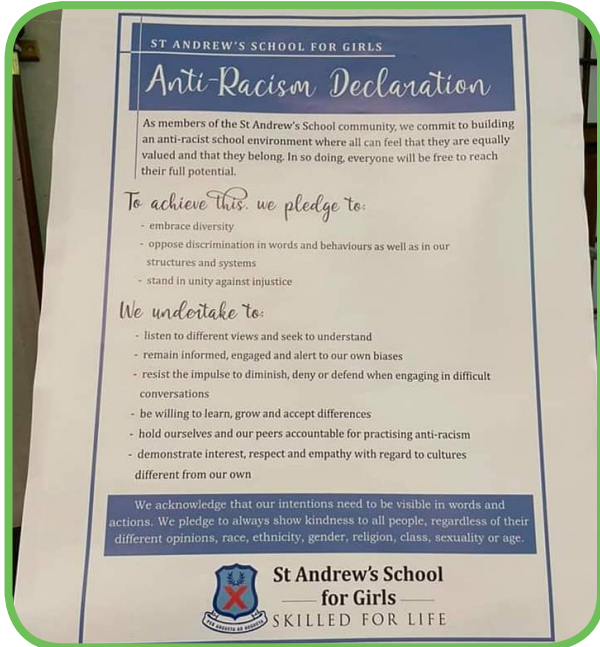


Besides needing to be an accomplished speaker in the classroom, it is an essential leadership and business skill to be able to present oneself well, and skilfully navigate through life verbally. Thus, these are skills for life.



FOUNDERS' DAY AND HEALING SERVICE

On 25 March 2021 we celebrated St Andrew's 119th birthday at Founders' Day, as well as hosting a healing service. This event was an opportunity to celebrate the school's birthday and the vision of our founders in a service of thanksgiving. This year, focusing on the theme of 'Building Belonging,' the service included prayers for continued healing in our community, pledging to celebrate our diversity and to solve conflict with love, open communication, mutual understanding, patience, and faith. Four of our students represented uBambiswano during the service and also participated in lighting the candles, which represented the past, present and future. We also handed in our anti-racism declaration to the school's archivist, Mrs Alison Orpen, to store in the archives.



#Giveback: WAYS OF GIVING

OPPORTUNITIES FOR INVESTMENT IN EDUCATION

The programme relies on external funding, mainly in the form of fundraising by St Andrew's School for Girls and external donations. The funds are used to pay for the teaching of the students, rather than the running of the environment, and includes learning and teaching resources, teachers' salaries and stipends for volunteers, outings and camps, transport, catering and student uniforms. Donations can be given in the following forms:

- A lump sum to support the overall programme
- Sponsorship of a child to attend the Saturday School annually
- Sponsorship of an uBambiswano fundraising event
- Contribution of in-kind products, services and networking opportunities
- Opportunities for post matric skills, training and internships.

Funding is also required in the form of bursaries and scholarships for our students to attend top-quality high schools.

UBAMBISWANO CONTACT DETAILS

We would love to introduce you to this worthy programme.

Our contact details are as follows:

Tel: 011 453 9408

Email: holdinghands@standrews.co.za