

Heather Chronicles



Heather Secondary School



27 Heather Crescent, Northdale

heather.org.za

4 October 2024



Can you believe it - it is Term 4 already !!!

Wow! Where has the time gone? Welcome to the 2nd issue of our new newsletter - Heather Chronicles! Your feedback on our first issue was very encouraging. Our third term was spectacular, riveted with celebration of our learner's talents across sports, culture and academics, and sets us up well to finish 2024 in style.

Our fledgling website - heather.org.za - continues to grow daily visitors as we share activities of what's 'hip and happening' in our school and of the community in which it exists. More recently, we have taken to sharing some items on our Facebook page. If you haven't had a look through our website as yet, we'd encourage you to page through it - for those that have had the privilege of walking through our hallways, it may be a

welcomed walk down memory lane as you stroll through our web pages. This initiative remains as a new capability for us, and we welcome your constructive feedback on how we can improve it to better serve our schooling community.

As you will note, despite our best efforts, we do not have all the information of our school's journey, nor some of the notable events...maybe you have some information that can help us close the gaps - an awards ceremony program or media clipping - in any event, we encourage you to send us your thoughts by email to community@heather.org.za

Enjoy the newsletter!

*Heather Chronicles
Crew X*



In this newsletter you can expect:

An update from
the school's
leadership

CareerFest 2.0
Highlights

Celebration of
our Women

Focus on
Sustainability

Former Educator
Spotlight

Memories from
our Games Day &
more...



A word (or two) from our Principal

Dear Heather Secondary School Community,

As we continue through this academic year, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude for the dedication and perseverance shown by our learners, staff, and parents. The momentum we've built since the beginning of the year has been truly remarkable, and it's exciting to see how much we have already accomplished in such a short time.

Term 3 began on 9 July, with Mrs R Erradu returning from bereavement leave, and we remain grateful for her ongoing commitment. Tragically, we also mourned the loss of Mr Suvash Singh, our SGB Deputy Chair, whose presence will be dearly missed.

July and August were eventful months, filled with opportunities for growth, learning, and leadership. I am happy to announce the new state-paid Level 1 **educator appointments** of Ms R Roopnund, Ms P Naicker, and Mr S Chutterpaul as of July 2024. I have every confidence that they will bring the energy, enthusiasm and excellence we need to raise our collective performance.

Our **CareerFest 2.0**, held in early August, was a resounding success. It gave our learners invaluable insights into career paths, preparing them to make informed decisions about their futures. Thank you to Ms K Naick and Ms R Roopnund for their tireless efforts in organising this event. Judge President of the KwaZulu-Natal High Court, Judge Thoba Portia Poyo-Dlwati, made a special appearance at the CareerFest. It was a fantastic way to kick off our **Women's month celebrations**.

Our **Games Day** was another highlight, as learners demonstrated their athletic and intellectual prowess in various sports and activities, including soccer, netball, chess, and even a Spelling Bee. Events like these remind us of the importance of teamwork, community spirit, and a healthy balance between academics and extracurricular activities. A special thank you to our sponsors, *Motor City and Kara Nichha's*, for providing meals for all present.

Safety and well-being remain a priority for us at Heather Secondary. In August, both academic and support staff participated in a **First Aid and Fire Marshal course**, equipping them with essential skills to manage emergencies effectively. I would like to thank Mr Amar Singh, a former learner, for his course delivery and *Vast* for sponsoring this critical training. As we look ahead, ensuring the safety and well-being of our learners will remain central to our strategic initiatives. We will continue working closely with our local authorities, especially the Mountain Rise SAPS, to maintain a safe schooling environment.

I am also pleased to share that we have **successfully transitioned from chalkboards to whiteboards** across all classrooms, a much-needed upgrade made possible by the Department of Education. This change, alongside the ongoing installation of GammaTVs, is helping us create a more interactive and future focussed learning environment.

The remainder of the year holds much promise. Our **Grade 12 learners are now in the final stretch** of their high school journey, and we continue to support them through academic interventions and mentorship to ensure they are well-prepared for the upcoming NSC examinations.

As we continue with our Strategic Management review process championed by Nithia Naidoo and *ProEdX*, **our goal remains to strengthen Heather Secondary's role within the community and enhance the educational excellence experience we deliver**. With the collective support of our educators, learners, and parents, I am confident we will continue to elevate our standards and enrich the lives of all our students. I encourage each of you to remain committed to our shared vision of educational excellence.

Thank you for your continuous support and contribution toward ensuring that Heather Secondary School is an institution we can all be proud of.

Let's keep pushing forward with enthusiasm and purpose.

Yours by concord and harmony,

Mr S Reddy

Principal
Heather Secondary School

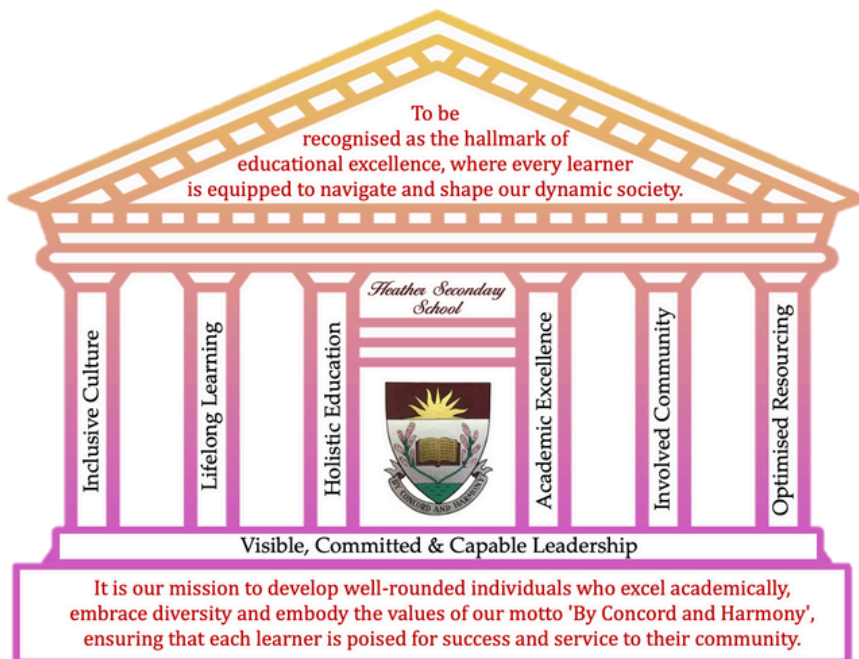
School Governing Body update of the Strategic Management Review underway

In our first newsletter of the year, we shared that we began a partnership with Nithia Naidoo, a matriculant of 1993, and ProEdX, a non-profit organisation he's created, to help us become the best version of ourselves. Nithia has been investing his time, energy and resources, at no cost to the school, to enable improvements in practices at Heather Secondary School.

Here's a brief synopsis of the work championed by this alumni in the interests of improving our community, with active engagement from our Principal, Mr S Reddy, his School Management Team (SMT) and our capable educators and staff.



Our heartfelt thanks and appreciation go out to Nithia and ProEdX, the organisation he has founded to advance educational excellence, for their investment in the process of making Heather Secondary School a beacon of hope in our community.



The school and its various stakeholders are embarking on a journey to ensure that the school is well equipped to take up its rightful place in a rapidly changing future. The adjacent schematic is a representation of our Vision, Mission and Strategic pillars - an artefact that will increasingly become the cornerstone, not just of WHAT we do; but more importantly, of WHY we do it.

Let's work together to create an educational environment where learners can thrive and succeed.

Thank you and God bless.

Mark Naidoo
SGB Chairperson



Please help us reach more people that belong to the Heather Community!

Share our newsletter with those you know



We are keen to get in touch with our former learners

Scan the QR code

<https://forms.office.com/r/FTmvYXyrFr>

Fill out the Alumna form



We are keen to get in touch with all our educators too!

Scan the QR code

<https://forms.office.com/r/igRnL5w7j2>

Fill out the Educator form

We are using a Microsoft Office 365 form to capture your data. Your data is important to us and we treat it with the confidentiality and high regard it deserves!

Alumni

We are keen to get in touch with our former learners...

Getting to know our school's Alumni

...and our esteemed educators across our brief history...

We want to honour the STAR that you are in the Heather Educator Community...

Industry Speaker Education

Merusha Mangalparsad
Accounting Educator
Heather Secondary School

CareerFest '24

Merusha Mangalparsad, a Heather matriculant of 2008, is an inspirational Accounting educator at Heather Secondary School since 2016. Merusha pursued a BComm in Accounting and a PGD in Accounting from UTM, followed by a BEd from UBC. Celebrated

University Applications
What is the process?
Application Strategy
Monday, 15 April 2024

Industry Focus: Health and Medicine
Commerce Education
Tuesday, 16 April 2024

Industry Focus: Law
Engineering Information Technology
Wednesday, 17 April 2024

Heather Secondary School hosts CareerFest 24

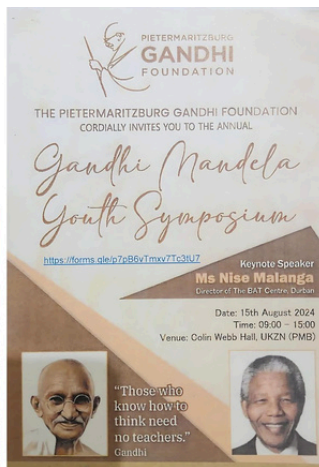
Public Eye NEWS APRIL 16, 2024

Heather Secondary School celebrated a successful CareerFest 24, featuring over 3000 students and 120 speakers from various industries. The event was held at Heather Secondary School and was a great success. The school's principal, Dr. [Name], and other staff members were instrumental in making the event a reality. The school's success in hosting such a large-scale event is a testament to the school's commitment to providing a high-quality education and preparing students for the future.



At a glance...

CareerFest 2.0, which took place on 3rd August 2024, built on the momentum of our April session and surpassed expectations with its focus on exploring diverse career pathways and spotlighting Further Education and Training (FET) opportunities. The day was marked by a series of inspiring talks, interactive workshops, and engaging exhibitions, all aimed at broadening our learners' understanding of the myriad career opportunities available to them.



On 15 August 2024, Heather Secondary's Grade 11 learners participated in the Gandhi Mandela Youth Symposium at UKZN, hosted by the Pietermaritzburg Gandhi Foundation. The event featured speakers addressing key challenges faced by youth, such as peer pressure, unemployment, and mental health.

Grade 11



At Heather Secondary, we are proud to highlight the efforts of our Eco-Club, founded by Cherese Naidoo (Grade 11A), a learner driven by her passion for environmental sustainability. Cherese approached Mr. A.D Stoffels, who provided valuable guidance in kickstarting the program. Together with a group of like-minded students, they formed the Eco-Club with the inspiring motto, "Eco not Ego"



To ensure our school continues to focus on health and safety, on 24 August, both academic and support staff participated in a First Aid and Fire Marshal course, sponsored by Vast and delivered by Mr Amar Singh, an alumni of our school. This training equips our staff with essential skills to respond effectively in emergencies.



Meet Mrs YD Govender, a remarkable educator whose passion for teaching has touched countless lives. Born on October 4, in Pietermaritzburg, she embarked on her teaching career after matriculating from Woodlands in 1976. Over the next 22 years, she enriched the minds of young learners at Woodlands with lessons in Physical Education, Natural Sciences, and Biology. She then spent 18 years at Heather Secondary School, where she dedicated herself to teaching Mathematics, Maths Literacy, and Life Science. Mrs Govender's commitment to education goes beyond the classroom — she is a loving wife, a mother of two daughters, and a doting grandmother to a two-year-old grandson. Her lifelong dedication to learning and teaching continues to inspire both learners and fellow educators.

IN HER WORDS...

LEARNING NEVER STOPS

Thank you for allowing me to share some lessons I've learned along my journey. I consider myself a lifelong learner because life never stops offering new experiences and insights. Each day brings something new to discover, making my life more inspiring and joyous.

VANAKKUM TO MY HEATHER SCHOOL FAMILY

"Vanakkum" to my Heather School family. My mother always greeted everyone with this Tamil word, and it's only now that I've realised its deeper significance. According to the Tholkappiyam, one of the oldest surviving Tamil grammar texts written over 3,000 years ago, "Vanakkum" is more than just a simple greeting; it's a profound expression of respect,

acknowledging one's soul and their connection to the creator.

My parents interacted with people from all walks of life—different ages, races, and social statuses. From them, I learned to treat everyone with good manners, love, respect, and dignity, always seeking to see the good in others. They taught me to do everything from the heart, not for praise or reward, and to keep God at the centre of my universe. I believe in the principle of karmic action—doing unto others as you would have them do to you. I've also learned to value my name and identity deeply. If I respect and love myself, I can extend that same respect to others, valuing their views and feelings, even when we don't agree. One key lesson I've learned is that once words are spoken, they can never be taken back, and the way you make someone feel can stay with them forever. Learning to listen and to mind my own business are skills I'm still acquiring.

FOMO AND LIFE EXPERIENCES

Many of you know that I've always had FOMO—the fear of missing out. Whether in school or on holiday, I've always been eager to soak up every experience, enjoying every minute of teaching and learning. On holiday, I'm like Speedy Gonzales, rushing to capture every beautiful scene, often leaving my family behind with no photos of us together because I'm too busy photographing the attractions.

A recent experience on Mount Sinai in Egypt, however, taught me a valuable lesson. I couldn't rush up the mountain as I usually would because the journey started at midnight, and I had to follow the guide slowly up the 10 km rocky path to the summit, where Moses received the Ten Commandments. From this, I learned to slow down, appreciate the beauty around me, and create a personal "11th commandment": Thou shall not rush.

A LIFETIME OF DISCIPLINE AND JOY

For many years, I've followed simple rules that have brought joy and ease to my life. Making my bed each morning transforms my space, and

Former Educator Spotlight: Mrs YD Govender

I've stuck to an exercise routine five times a week for over 50 years, which has kept me healthy, reduced stress, and allowed me to maintain the same dress size. I challenge all of you to try the Zen Swing, as taught by Troy Casey, the "Certified Health Nut" on YouTube, for one month. It will energise your mind, body, and soul. My motto is inspired by Regina Brett: **"No matter how you feel, get up, dress up, and show up."**

Dancing has also been an integral part of my life. I've enjoyed various styles, from classical ballet and Bharatnatyam to Spanish, ballroom, and modern dance. For the past 15 years, I've been passionate about line dancing, which not only keeps my body fit but also sharpens my mind with its demanding coordination and thought, while keeping me connected with many friends.

REFLECTIONS AND GRATITUDE

Over four decades as an educator, I've gained many nuggets of wisdom from my colleagues. One that stands out is how male colleagues can disagree on certain issues and remain great friends, resolving conflicts quickly without taking things personally. This has taught me to fight my own battles, mind my own business, and remember that what others think of me is their opinion, not my reality. As educators, we have valuable knowledge and experience that we must use to guide, support, and motivate our youth to become better members of society.

To all the incredible women in my life, I salute you. We've shared magical moments together, supporting each other through challenges and celebrating our joys. You are always close to my heart, and thinking of you fills me with tremendous joy.

Wishing you all God's abundant blessings of love, laughter, and happiness.

Yours truly,

Mrs YD Govender



At a glance...

Heather Secondary has also joined hands with the Rotary Club of Chatsworth, led by Mrs. N Naik, to support their Bottle Cap Initiative. Learners are encouraged to collect plastic bottle caps and bread clips, which are donated to provide wheelchairs for those in need. For every 40kg of caps collected, a company donates a wheelchair, which can be reused and refurbished as needed.



Judge Poyo-Dlwati's speech was a masterclass in motivation, drawing from her own remarkable journey from a rural upbringing in Nkwenkwana, Eastern Cape, to becoming the first female Judge President of KwaZulu-Natal. Her message emphasised the importance of perseverance, self-belief, and the transformative power of education.

The Principal's Only Leadership Summit facilitated by Nithia Naidoo focused on the growing challenges and responsibilities of educational leadership in a rapidly changing environment. Through interactive discussions around cutting edge content, the summit served as an invaluable opportunity for school principals to revisit the importance of visionary leadership, strategic planning, and fostering a culture of collaboration and innovation to thrive in the 21st century.



Runner up



Meet Vishi Maharaj
Her hobbies include drawing and reading. This is the first poetry competition that she entered and was able to unlock a new talent. Success in this competition has encouraged her to continue writing poetry. Well done Vishi!

Runner up



Meet Sohail Hoosen
His hobbies include swimming, artwork, fixing computers, writing poetry. Thoroughly enjoys learning languages, including English and Afrikaans. Has a very creative mind and dreams of a career in art... Well done Sohail!

Competition Winner



Meet Talia Ryan, our Women's Day Poetry Competition winner!

(pictured with Mrs D Mmaning)
Talia is a trained boxer whose hobbies include writing poetry and is an avid reader. She enjoys English and History...and it shows!

Congratulations Talia! Trusting that you and your favourite aunt will enjoy the Taste of Thai experience!

As part of our Women's month celebrations, we hosted a school-wide poetry competition, providing learners with a platform to celebrate the 'Women that matter to them!' Learners across all grades participated, with a panel of judges comprising senior educators evaluating the submissions based on originality, depth, and artistic expression. Talia's poem about 'Her favourite Aunt' took home the Taste of Thai experience prize for her and her aunt.



Heather Life in stills

