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## MONDESA YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES NEWSLETTER



A Swakopmund Rotary Club Project





Mondesa Youth Opportunities represents the idea that quality education can change the destiny of a child. It is an idea that is shared by Nelson Mandela in his famous quote: *“No country can really develop unless its citizens are educated. Education is the most powerful weapon you can use to change the world. Education is the great engine of personal development.”*

As the new manager at MYO, I have had many wonderful experiences during this exciting first term. One such experience reinforced that idea shared by Nelson Mandela and MYO. Lucia, a bright Grade 7 student, proudly announced to me one day that it was her birthday. I asked whether she had received any presents. She said the only gift that she had received was from her friend who gave her N\$5. Five Namibian Dollars isn't the biggest gift in the world and could barely buy a small chocolate, however I immediately thought of the valuable gift of education that MYO offers her. Her future looks bright because of MYO.

It's in this light that we heartily welcome the new Grade 4 class in this newsletter, as well as our new math volunteer, Sebastian. We'll also share some news about an exciting robotics demonstration at MYO, a reunion with MYO alumni and about our vibrant music program at MYO.



## Introducing the new Grade 4 Class and Sebastian Pahl, our new maths volunteer.

Every year we have new students join MYO in our Grade 4 class. We had a wonderful time meeting their parents at our annual Parents Evening and we're excited for their journey at MYO. Mrs Fulvia is doing a wonderful job as their class teacher and we are happy to report that they are a well behaved class that's eager to learn.

Sebastian teaches the Grade 4, 5 and 6 classes mental and practical maths. Larry Martinek said, *"Children don't hate math. What they hate is being confused, intimidated and embarrassed by math. With understanding comes passion, with passion comes growth - a treasure is unlocked."* At MYO we endeavour to teach our students to understand and love maths.

*In this newsletter, we have tried to give you a summary, in a nutshell, of our experiences in the first term of 2019. We enjoyed a number of heartfelt moments, and exciting events.*

## Grade 5 and 6 Afternoon Trips





Our Grade 5 class went to the Swakopmund Museum and the Jetty for their afternoon trip this term.

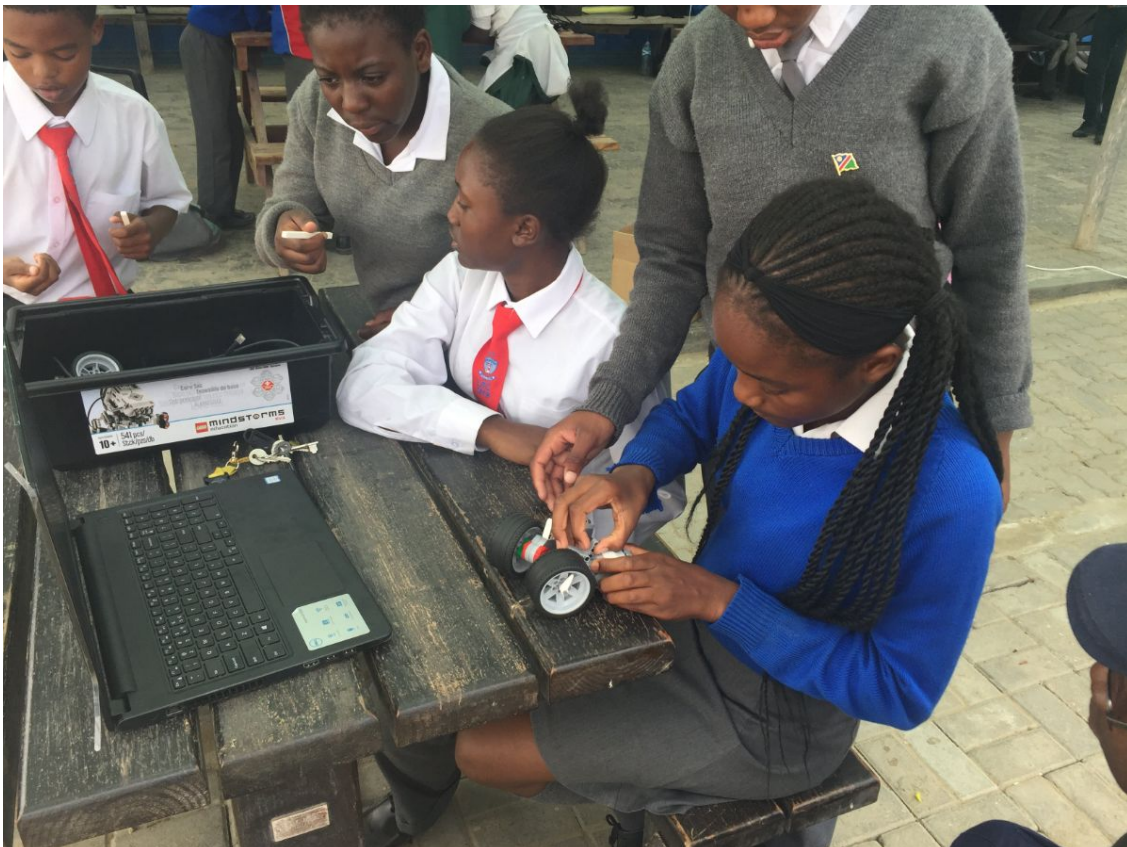
At the Swakopmund Museum they filled in a questionnaire about the history and environment of Swakopmund. Thereafter Mrs Strijdom taught them about the history of the Jetty.



Our Grade 6 class went to the Woermann Tower and Living Desert Snake Park for their afternoon trip this term.

At the Woermann Tower they learned about the history of the building and could enjoy the views from the top. The Snake Park gave the students a presentation on all of the different reptiles found in our desert.

## Minds In Action Robotics Demo



On the 22nd of February, Minds In Action came to MYO to teach our Grade 7, 8

students an opportunity to learn about robotics and how to apply this knowledge in their contexts.

During the Demo, science and maths concepts were combined with technology and engineering principles through the process of building and programming Lego Mindstorms EV3 robots. Our learners loved it!



## Unseen Advantages

A few days ago I was in conversation with our Grade 8 class as a whole, asking them if they could help me with some visitors during the holiday. Our conversation lead to other matters and when the young students continued to their classes, I was left with a feeling of such positive energy and empathy from them all. They spoke to me respectfully; easily offered their help and cooperation, were charming and easy to converse with and they were so impressive as a group of young teenagers that I decided to add this little article to our newsletter.

MYO is all about education. We know that our Namibian students are robbed of the sound education that we all took for granted in our school days, and our purpose is to add this value to their school days via our work in the afternoons. Our focus is on academic prowess, on teaching good understanding of educational principles, and of developing the intelligence which they have been blessed with, as much as we can. We do this well, we think, and our clever and critical learners often tell us that they clearly see the value and the addition which we make to their academic lives. As a result the the majority of our grade 4 intake is generally still with us at the end of grade 8 – the students know that they are well guided and advantaged by staying with MYO, no matter how tiring the days become with school in the morning, and then MYO in the afternoon.

But just like an iceberg, which has most of its mass hidden below the water of the ocean, so it is with that which MYO gives these learners. It is not by accident that the high-school teachers tell us that an MYO learner stands out. Via the good examples which our teachers set as role models, via the professional and ethical way that we handle our teaching and our organisation and via the lessons which we teach, our learners turn into decent young

understanding, and from a wider knowledge gained through their varied and wide reading experiences. They gain a confidence and ability which is a result of their wider intelligence base, and their MYO experience.

At the end of every term, when our cumulative marks are assessed, they are the tip of the iceberg. The submerged mass is that which cannot be measured by us, but is by far, the most important.....the making of the 'whole' child.

***Vera Leech***



## Music at MYO

Music forms an integral part of the Mondesa Youth Opportunities Trust curriculum. Although music as a subject is not available in many public schools, MYO recognises the benefits of music classes for learners. Music allows learners to try something new and develop confidence as they master singing or playing an instrument, hence building their self-esteem.

In addition, music helps learners improve their listening and Math skills. This is particularly evident with the recorder and marimba classes that



statistics show that schools with music programs have higher graduation rates.

The dexterity required to play instruments such as drums or marimba is a valuable skill developed in these classes. Music theory is also taught to introduce learners to the rudiments of the subject. It is without doubt that music at MYO has and continues to help develop the “whole” child.

*Isaac Chikosi, English Teacher at MYO*



## Long-time MYO supporter reconnects with MYO alumni who travelled to Germany in 2018!

Mrs Christine Hofmann has been an MYO friend, supporter and donor for many years. She hails from Darmstadt in Germany and visits Swakopmund annually.

In 2018, four MYO alumni were lucky enough to be selected to go to Germany. Three MYO Alumni - Justin Brandt, Diana Hamalwa and Ilaiza Hanse, were selected to participate in an environmental exchange programme and a fourth alumni, Moses Mwalundungwe, won an all-expenses paid trip after an

Christine met with these alumni in 2018, where their plans and destinations were discussed, and she gave them some pointers as to what to expect in Germany.

This year, on March 1<sup>st</sup>, Christine again met up with 3 of the 4 alumni (Moses was out of town on an environmental conservation trip).

A beach picnic was enjoyed while German conversation flowed freely and easily as the MYO alumni told of their experiences with their German host families. Many interesting and funny comparisons were made about various things that are better or worse in Namibia or Germany!

Justin and Diana were in costume as an “English Day” had been held at Namib High School and they had gone dressed as book characters.

These three alumni have all been seriously bitten by the proverbial “travel bug” and have set their sights on more international travel! Let us hope that their dreams will come true.....

***Sue Wagner***



## How can you help?





**Dear MYO Supporter:**

Please would you sponsor a learner through MYO?

It is such a worthy act, to contribute towards the good education of another person who cannot fend for himself. We are so privileged in our lifestyles, so comfortable and so well set up, that really, it does not cost us much to reach out and do a good thing.

We have never needed to ask before this, as we had a good sponsor, but our sponsor has fallen on hard times and closed down. Difficult as that is for us, we appreciate and thank them sincerely for the good years.

This newsletter of ours goes out to supporters in Germany, America, Australia and Africa. It is not a difficult decision, really. You know our integrity, you know our work, and you understand the cause. Please, simply go to your computer and donate for the education of one child.

If/When you do so, please contact MYO and let us know so that we can keep good records. ([myotrust@iway.na](mailto:myotrust@iway.na))

***At MYO, we are very proud of our financial efficiency.***

We spend approximately 97% of every dollar donated on goods and services that directly serve our core mission of educating students. We educate 120 learners at one time, and MYO's running costs, are approximately N\$1,6 million per annum despite our best cost cutting efforts.

needs. But due to the current economic conditions in Namibia, we now find we need to seek funding from our international supporters.

**You can sponsor an MYO learner for the cost of:**

N\$ 14200/year (N\$1180/month)

USD \$182/year (\$15/month)

Euro €213/year (€18/month)

Learner sponsorships can be paid annually or in monthly instalments, and of course you are free to choose a donation amount that suits your budget.

On-line donations via credit card can be made at: <http://mondesayouth.org/how-you-canhelp/donations/>

**Donations can also be made via PayPal or direct bank transfer at:**

Mondesa Youth Opportunities Trust

Standard Bank Namibia

Branch Code Number: 082-172

Account Number: 240206363

Swift Code: SBNMNX



MYO receives many visitors and they are always welcome. They see first-hand what it is we do, and they understand, far better than any brochure can explain, our work and energy. They see MYO 'alive and vibrant' and they are able to speak to, and share with, our learners. Many of them make donations: sometimes money, sometimes school items, sporting goods, and so on.

To all – thank you for your interest, thank you for your support and thank you for your input. It is all valued and appreciated.

**Thank you to all our visitors and donors!**



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