

ANCHOR NEWS



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ANINA'S* STORY

Anina's mother passed away when she was three years old. She has since lived with her father, sisters and extended family in Slovo Park outside Westbury. The rows of tin shacks are packed tightly in the dust and darkness of yet another neglected informal settlement.

Lucky for Anina, Virginia, the social worker in the Westbury programme, saw her potential and knew she had to intervene. She became concerned about the effect the environment was likely to have on her matric studies. The settlement has no electricity, is very densely populated and her living environment allowed her no privacy to study.

She was offered the opportunity to move to Langlaagte voluntarily, even though the lack of a court order meant that there would be no subsidy to provide for her care.

But Anina grabbed this chance with both hands. Her eyes sparkled brightly as she told of the joy of studying with electricity and not by candlelight, to have running water and to wake up in the morning to a breakfast waiting for her before leaving for school. She loved being with her peers and to have a house mother who was concerned for her. She was also impressed with having her own room with a table

“ I am so grateful for the chance to come and live at Langlaagte. It changed my life! **”**

and chair where she could study. She passed matric with a mark of 70% and a distinction in one of her subjects. She is ready and eager to register for BCom Accounting at the University of Johannesburg.

Anina has this to say about her turn in fortune: "I am so grateful for the chance to come and live at Langlaagte. It changed my life!"

She will do well in her studies provided she receives some support.

The gift of a future for Anina was in the hands of numerous donors, who supported the organisation sufficiently that we could take her in. Together with Anina, we applaud you. ▶

OF CONCERN

Babies in care are not able to identify and respond appropriately to facial expressions of adults and have become terrified of teeth. Toddlers who turn two in March 2022 have never seen adult faces without masks. They often cry when staff take off their masks and stop when they put them back on again.

ACADEMIC CHALLENGES DURING 2021

The education of children continued to be an uphill struggle during 2021. Most of the schooling took place at home for periods of time and at school on alternate days for the rest of the time. For many learners, this was not enough. With homework and instructions arriving via email or WhatsApp, caregivers and children found the amount of homework and the difficulty levels of the material exhausting.

Yet there was a definite silver lining for the educational practices at Abraham Kriel Bambanani. Thanks to the devoted care staff, all children in residential care managed to pass. Campus manager Riana Marx put her teaching background to good use, while Ernesta Snyman took the lead at Maria Kloppers. At satellite homes, the house parents were the ones to bear the brunt of this challenging task.

Our community service programmes tried their best, and 396 out of the 519 learners managed to pass.

Unfortunately, the community service programmes in Westbury and Soweto faced more obstacles. The lack of access to reliable internet, coupled with caregivers being barred from in-person visits to beneficiaries, lessons often did not reach the learners. Meaningful resources to do homework were few and far between and no alternatives were made available to help the children deal with the demanding curriculum.

At Westbury, the pass rate was 63% and in Soweto 82%. Abraham Kriel Bambanani's staff are ready to aid with schooling and the necessary support to help each learner stay engaged with their studies and work towards their dreams.

One of the major obstacles we have encountered – and we foresee this becoming ever greater in the future – is the missed learning opportunities and the disadvantage this places today's learners at. Children have asked for extra classes in Maths and English. We strive to give our beneficiaries a good grounding and a well-rounded education. But we need committed volunteers who can help provide additional lessons on an ongoing basis. We are desperate for volunteers. ▶



SOME STATS*

Programme name	Number of children attending school	Number of schools attended
Maria Kloppers Campus	30	8
Langlaagte Campus	54	11
Seven satellite homes	65	25
Westbury Family Care	161	13
Soweto Family Care	379	24

*Data includes pre-school learners

Thabo receives six distinctions in his BCom Law first year.

Tanya enjoys her inhouse training to care for the elderly

Tendani is one step closer to a diploma in Public Relations with success in her first year

Simona begins her Zuma year as a nurse

Nikita achieves 81% in her Early Childhood Development course

Rhonda passes her Beauty Therapy course

Andrew finished a 6 month course in Sound Engineering

Masego, Ayanda, Lungile, Snenhlanhla, Mapontsho and Zandile all passed their studies and are looking forward to their futures.

Millie passed her BA Psychology first year at NWU

LIZA AND ANINA WILL START THEIR TERTIARY STUDIES IN 2022

Masego finished her first year for a diploma in Human Resource Management

BUT NOT ALL IS DOOM AND GLOOM

- ▶ Little Jabulani* failed grade 1 in 2020. Guided by the class coordinator, she showed great improvement and passed grade 1 in 2021 with a mark of 81%. Sometimes children are simply not ready yet.
- ▶ In the Soweto programme, 14 kids performed very well indeed, despite the difficulties accessing learning materials. They achieved an average of more than 70%.
- ▶ In Westbury, five beneficiaries received certificates for outstanding academic performance.
- ▶ Aside from Anina*, whose story is on page 1, another

learner from Langlaagte excelled and achieved an average of 81% in 2021.

- ▶ Nine-year-old Danny*, who stays at the Martha Street 90 House, was selected for a provincial cricket team. He also excelled in martial arts.
- ▶ Right in the middle of the final 2021 exams, Wendy*, a grade 7 girl, was admitted to the Kempton Park East satellite home. She had missed almost an entire year of school. Thanks to the school providing all the learning material and the house mother's coaching, Wendy managed to pass Grade 7. Day saved!

*The real names of children under eighteen were not used in this newsletter



WHAT WENT DOWN AT THE EMDENI SKILLS CENTRE DURING 2021

It was business as usual at Emdeni at the beginning of 2021. Then the Delta variant reared its ugly head. All courses had to be suspended and postponed. The outcome? Learners were not able to finish their respective courses in time. These courses have now resumed.

The pandemic also made it impossible for a proper graduation ceremony to be held. No large gatherings were possible, so students who completed their courses received their certificates in small groups. We hope one day those Instagram likes will turn into audible applause – perhaps even hard cash earned.

Many of the students at the Emdeni Skills Centre are unemployed and disadvantaged. It became clear fairly early on that some of them needed help to survive. They were included on the food parcel list. Most of them received three parcels per quarter.

We provided some students with clothes, sanitary towels and toiletries. Transport fares were given to students who were called for interviews. We never stop trying to help these young adults find their feet.

Pheli Baduza, campus manager at the Emdeni Skills Centre, was only too aware of the outbreak of a second pandemic among

students, namely gender-based-violence. She acted as an intermediary between victimised students and POWA (People Opposed to Women Abuse).

A wonderful initiative was the 4TH year social work students from UJ, who worked with the Emdeni students in individual counselling and group therapy for roughly eight weeks at a time. Issues such as violence, abuse and other social behaviours that affect the students were discussed and unpacked.

Strategies to cope with these stressors help empower students to become the pillars our society needs for a prosperous future. ▶

NEWS FROM THE JOHANNA MALAN EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT CENTRE

Johanna Malan ECDC had 55 children at school in 2021. This was as a result of funds being raised during the literacy campaign in September last year. We hope to accommodate as many as our infrastructure and finances allow during 2022.

Our Grade R teacher tested positive for Covid, which led to the school having to close early for the December holidays. To our great sadness, this meant that the Grade Rs could not have their graduation ceremony. It was a massive let down for the children and their parents.

We wish each and every one of these little champions only the best. ▶



HOW STAFF COPEd

Care staff in the residential care units became increasingly isolated and found that this contributed to general fatigue. They had few breaks, since the children were at home all the time. In the mornings, when they would ordinarily have some time to themselves, the children would need them to help with lessons and homework. Homework at age 50+ is no joke.

It was heart breaking to be separated from family and friends for long periods of time, particularly in times of grief when, say, a loved one passed away. While to this day we have not lost a single staff member or direct beneficiary to Covid-19, we have all experienced the loss of loved ones.

The remarkable nurses and managers at the Langlaagte and Maria Kloppers Campuses made sure all staff and children were kept informed about Covid health protocols and regulations – these were adhered to at all times. Healthcare staff visited the homes regularly to check that all the children were well. This contributed to keeping infection rates low and campuses healthy.

Social auxiliary workers in the community programmes reached out to family members of beneficiaries and the



beneficiaries themselves, motivating them to comply with Covid-19 protocols and to be vaccinated. They provided reputable learning materials about the virus and vaccinations.

The child caregivers from the community programmes became increasingly

frustrated with the limitation placed on them in terms of home visits. They could see the children did not really cope well enough without the support they had previously relied on from the drop-in centres. This reconfirms that AKB has been established as a force for good in vulnerable communities. ▶

DISTRIBUTION OF FOOD PARCELS DURING COVID 19

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
No of Direct beneficiaries	600	591	588	579	575	572	572	570	565	550	551	551
No of Family Members	1175	1150	1144	402	381	374	378	375	369	366	363	363
No of Over 18 beneficiaries	15	9	9	11	8	8	8	8	8	9	9	9

	Jan – March	April – Jun	Jul – Sept.	Oct – Dec.
No of Food Parcels Delivered	855	861	857	846
No of Fruit and Veg Parcels Delivered	855	1023	1711	1692
No of Breakfast pack Parcels Delivered	855	861	857	846
No of Meat Parcels	261	–	277	459
Parcels to Community members	–	–	39	89
Emergency outreach	–	–	2	2
Parcels to Emdeni Students	116	147	89	30

