2013 Grade 12 learners:

This is your opportunity to make your dreams come true

Grade 12 is a challenging and demanding year for learners. You need extra support and good advice. This booklet seeks to motivate and encourage current Grade 12 learners by providing the success stories of some of the learners who did well in past National Senior Certificate Examinations. These learners share their stories by first giving their backgrounds, highlighting the strategies that they used to ensure good results, and then providing words of encouragement and motivation.

It is hoped that, upon reading the stories of these successful NSC candidates, you will be encouraged and convinced that, irrespective of your situation and the challenges that you face, you can achieve success if you work harder and smarter.

Zintle Kolo Matric 2009

My name is Zintle Kolo. I am 17 years old and looking forward to being a first year student at U.C.T this year. Last year I was a matriculant at Thandokhulu High School in Mowbray. I stay in Samora Machel near Phillippi and I attended Weltevreden Valley Core Primary School.

I live with my mom, my little brother and 6 other extended family members. Being in grade 12 had its challenges and at first it was as if I'd never make it but through hard work, sacrifice and support from my family and teachers, I managed to make it. I am proud to say that I got 5 A's and 2 B's, with maths at 90%. Pressure and expectations from my family, school, and the society were some of the things that made me scared. I feared that I wouldn't do as well as was expected but at the back of my mind I knew that there was only one person who's expectations I had to meet, and that was me. I also had to worry about what I was going to do after matric. I knew that my mom; who is a single parent, could not afford to send me to varsity but there were other options. I had to apply for financial assistance, write benchmark exams at U.C.T....there was just so much to do and very little time and I had to sacrifice my spare time to do all these things. I knew that whatever sacrifices I made were for my own good. Besides all of that, there was academic pressure..... so much work to do.....and for poor me, a very limited amount of time and study space. I live in a township where there is lots of noise and disruption. I also had house chores to do so I decided to sacrifice at least an hour or two after school to study and do my assignments, sometimes with friends or on my own. I took advantage of every extra tuition time I got, got books from former matriculants and I asked them to help me in every way they could. For me, it was no longer "5 school days a week" but it was "7 days a week". I thank my school teachers for holiday, Saturday and Sunday classes. I also thank friends who would ask me for help after class on Saturdays because through helping them I also managed to get extra lessons. Being in matric is not as difficult as it may sound. One just needs to avoid pressure by studying on a daily basis and avoiding procrastination. The most important thing is not to allow circumstances to determine how you are going to survive...but it is facing challenges with a positive attitude and knowing that to every problem there is a solution. It is also important to ask God for wisdom and he will give problems to solve, by solving those problems you will not only get wisdom but you will get bravery as well. GOOD LUCK!

Aboo-Bakr Sadick Benjamin – Matric 2009

Being in matric was a real challenge for me. It was the most exciting year of my life although very challenging. I had fun, but at the same time I worked hard. My challenge was not just academically but also my circumstances. I come from a poverty stricken community where you see people suffer. All around me I see crime, rape, teenage pregnancy and other social ills. I motivated myself, saying and promising that I will rise above my circumstances. I also wanted to be a beacon of light and a role model to other young people so that they can see that their circumstances must not hold them back or use it as an excuse. They must reach for their dreams no matter where they come from. Coming from a family with 8 children and 2 parents (10 in our household), the house was pretty crowded. Although my father (Redewaan) worked in a factory and my mother (Shahiedah) was unemployed, they always motivated me and told me to achieve. They were there for me, always, and they supported me right on till the end which I personally encourage all parents to do. They told me to take all the opportunities that come my way because they never had the chance. They believed in me. The teachers at my school were also very supportive especially my principal, Mr Najaar. All the teachers encouraged me to do well and they always told me to persevere no matter how difficult the challenge. I always tell people to study smart not hard. That was my study strategy. I revised the work I knew and focused more on the work I did not understand. Every night I set two hours aside to study individual subjects. When I had homework I did it (it helps believe me). I studied for a test a week before the time and before examination I revised and worked through question papers. I also loved to tutor individuals because while I am explaining the work I get new insight into it as well and the concept gets clearer and clearer. I also

made sacrifices for instance less TV-time and less hanging out with friends. My advice to Grade 12 learners is that they must make sacrifices. This is the turning point in your life. It is what you make of it. I also advice you to communicate, more especially with your parents. Tell them if you need help with anything. I am sure they will help you and make exceptions. I will also encourage you to work hard (although smart) because matric determines what directions your life will take. Do not look at the negative side of situations because every situation has a positive side. Do not use anything as an excuse. Go for your dreams. All you need to do is believe in yourself and all your abilities. You will achieve beyond your limitations.

Nabeelah Harris – Matric 2010

My name is Nabeelah Harris and I am from Crawford, situated in Athlone, Cape Town. My 12 years of education began humbly at Thornton Road Primary School, a small school near my home, where many of the learners came from children's homes and other unfortunate circumstances. Because I hardly knew any people that had attended university, I grew up with the impression that it was some vague dream that only materialises for people who went to the right schools and whose parents had the right jobs. It was 10 years into my school career and two schools later that I realised that was not true.

I started at the Cape Academy for Mathematics, Science and Technology in 2008 and although I had always been a dedicated student, I feel that this was when I started working towards receiving the 8 distinctions I did at the end of my grade 12 year. It was here that I realised my potential

My success in 2010 was built on many of things, ranging from dedicated teachers and parents to my own personal ambition for achieving something great. With this in mind, I would like to advise all grade 12 learners of 2011 and beyond, to make a point of using every opportunity they are given to build towards their respective futures. Adjusting your attitude in grade 12 is just as important as studying regularly and by having the correct mind-set during the year you will be able to pull through some of the most stressful matric moments.

It is true that grade 12 can easily be called the most challenging year of anyone's school career. But this does not mean that it is impossible to pass and to pass well. Remaining on track with your work in each and every subject each and every day from the very first day of classes and being responsible for your own education by taking it upon yourself to pre-read, study and make sure you understand exactly what you should know instead of waiting for others to tell you to, should be some of the most crucial aspects to your matric "game plan". Doing past papers and reading through the examination guidelines can really clear up any uncertainties you may have – and these resources are readily available from the internet and your teachers.

Grade 12 does not only put forth the challenge of having to pass your examinations, but also to get into your desired tertiary institution and sometimes to obtain a bursary. It is extremely important to apply early, make sure you write all admission tests and forward all necessary documents on time.

To the grade 12s, good luck with your examinations. Be prepared to make sacrifices, tackle every challenge head on and have a firm belief in your abilities just when you think you might doubt them. Know when you should take a break – and when you shouldn't. This year is your opportunity to shape your life. Approach it with passion and you will not regret a single moment.

Tyrone van Balla – Matric 2010

It is often said that life can be compared to an interesting journey. Just like a journey may consist of twists and turns, high peaks, and deep valleys, life consists of unforeseen events, opportunities, highlights, and even low moments. Matric on its own can also be viewed from such a perspective – there are unexpected happenings, plenty of opportunities, moments that you will never forget, both good and bad, add to that a lot of pressure and expectations, and Matric can turn out to be one very demanding journey. But like any journey, the way in which you choose to complete it, will ultimately determine where you end up.

My name is Tyrone van Balla, I am 18 years old and am about to enter the University of Cape Town as a first year student in Electrical

Engineering. I have successfully completed my high school career at South Peninsula High School in Diep River, obtaining 8 subject distinctions. During my matric year, I lived with my parents, a younger brother, and a grandmother. My father, who is self-employed, was the only breadwinner of the family. From a young age I was already instilled with the qualities I have today. I never had anything handed to me and I was always encouraged to work hard for something I wanted. I was also taught to be respectful, helpful, trustworthy and reliable.

Motivation is something that I have always just possessed. My desire to want to achieve and to do my best is what can be considered as the major driving force behind me. Also, knowing my family circumstances, I knew that if I wanted to further my studies I would have to be awarded a bursary. This also pushed me to work harder. Another key factor in my motivation is my desire to use my God given gifts to their fullest potential.

Matric for me was the best year of my high school career. It was filled with many challenges and opportunities, but it was also very stressful and I could not help but feel pressured all the time. One of the things I highly recommend to anyone in matric is a good support system. Friends and family are vital during this year as they will keep you going when things look bleak, and continue to believe in you, when you occasionally do not. Many people would often wonder how I was able to achieve the results that I achieved. I always give the same answer: through hard work. There simply is no substitute for it. During matric it's important to start working from day one. This will ensure that you are thoroughly prepared by the time you reach finals. Sacrifices will have to be made, but they will be easier to make once you fully realise that you are doing this for yourself and no one else. I sacrificed my weekends and a lot of 'free time' to attend extra classes, but I know I made the right choice when I look at what I achieved.

It's true that sacrifice is important, cutting down time spent on socializing and entertainment, but what is even more important is to ensure that you have a balanced lifestyle. I personally enjoyed this year as I got involved everywhere, just to get my mind off things now and then. I also kept on enjoying my hobbies throughout the year but being the person I am, I knew when it was time to get serious.

In all honesty, matric is not difficult. If you know what you want, and know what is required to obtain it, then it is just up to you to decide whether or not you are willing to put the extra effort in. Set yourself goals throughout the year, and remain focused. Ask for help immediately if you need it. Surround yourself with positive people and ultimately make the most of it. Hold on to your dreams, no matter how outrageous they may seem. And always remember: Hard work is ALWAYS rewarded.

Best of luck and keep in mind that success is the sum of small efforts, repeated day in and day out!

Angela Wu – Matric 2011

Matric is most probably the most important and exciting year of your schooling career. It is the year that may lead to countless opportunities.

Prior to Grade 11 I took part in minimal extra-curricular activities, a choice that I regret the most. Joining the hockey team was the best decision I had made. Embrace your final year of high school, try new things and be involved! Cherish the time you have with your friends and enjoy being a high school student. I credit my family, friends and educators for my achievements, as I would never have made it far without their support. It is vital to realise that you are learning and preparing for your future and that it is up to you to take action. Set goals for yourself and to try fulfil them; you will not regret it if you work hard.

I recommend working consistently throughout the year and studying hard for the supplementary exams, as it is an opportunity to see which areas you need to improve on when you have educators to guide you. Listening attentively in class will help improve your understanding and make revision of work easier.

The exam study period presents a wonderful personal growth experience, and I wish all the matriculants well in their endeavours. Carpe Diem! "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world." – Nelson Mandela

Charl du Plessis – Matric 2011

My final year of school at Stellenberg High was both exciting and challenging. At the beginning of the year I had made a decision to inspire others by using what I had learned from those who inspired me. I am fortunate to have had many pleasant experiences as I endeavoured towards achieving the success that I had always imagined.

I soon realised that perseverance was a key ingredient in working toward your goals. There are times when you may feel under much pressure but with determination you will reach the end with much success. When I prepared for examinations, I planned ahead and managed my time in the best way that I could. I started by focusing on the most important areas of the work. The most rewarding way to study for subjects such as Mathematics and Physical Science is by continued practice. Make the work your own and strive towards solving as many questions as possible. Often you will not immediately see the correct answer but you will learn much by applying your knowledge in trying to find it. I always tried to maintain a positive attitude as I studied. It is important to see the value in the work that you are doing. Be passionately curious by gaining as much knowledge as possible and seeking new challenges every day.

Enjoy the exciting and memorable events that you will experience throughout the year. Work hard and make the best of the opportunities that you have been given. I wish you a successful and enjoyable year.

Ashraf Moolla – Matric 2011

My name is Ashraf Moolla, and I matriculated from Rondebosch Boys' High School in 2011. For me, matric was a memorable, challenging but fun journey, and if you make the most of the year, it can be the same for you.

That said, matric may seem daunting right now. The focus on academics – and results – only intensifies as the year progresses and you may start feeling pressured. My advice to you is to work hard and consistently, right from the start. Try never to fall behind, and strive to clear up any misunderstandings or doubts you have about work as soon as possible. Keep practising, whether it be by solving problems, reading, writing or speaking. If you are on top of your work, you will be less anxious and more confident – and this will not only make your year far more enjoyable, but will also allow you to perform at your full potential.

Take part in extramural activities if you are lucky enough to have the chance, even if you've never participated before. You can gain skills from extramurals such as debating, competitions and drama that will definitely boost your school marks, and even if your chosen activities don't directly help you with schoolwork, they certainly will build your character and serve you well for the rest of your life. Remember that you may never have the chance to do some of these things ever again, and that you are allowed to take time out from studying to do something you enjoy.

Towards the exam period, work through past papers as they give you a good idea of what is expected of you and will make you feel better prepared going into the exams.

By now you may have realised that your teachers want you to succeed – rather embrace their support than fight it. Work with your friends and motivate each other. Set goals for yourself, and whenever you need motivation, remember the reason you are working so hard – to allow yourself to pursue your dreams in the future. If you find yourself struggling, do not give up; remember that throughout history, people have beaten seemingly insurmountable odds through sheer hard work and determination.

With everything going on, it's sometimes possible to forget that life goes on after matric. The final school bell may mark the end of a memorable part of your life, but it is also the start of an exciting new journey. Remember to spend time during the year figuring out what your plans for the future are. Also remember that there are things that are more important than results, so allow yourself to take some time out to bond with friends, try new things, and forge unforgettable memories.

I wish you the best of luck, a year to cherish, and that you go on to realise your dreams.

The learners below all attended the Telematics programme and were interviewed after receiving their results.

Lukhanyo Rintsana and Bulumko Xoli

At Manzomthombo Secondary in Mfuleni, two learners, Lukhanyo Rintsana and Bulumko Xoli received A's for Life Orientation and Life Sciences. Lukhanyo also scored an A for Maths and Physical Science. The Life Science teacher encouraged them to 'find their passion, to enjoy school and to believe in themselves'.

Lukhanyo will be studying Pharmacy at UWC and would like to eliminate obesity in his community whilst Bulumko will be studying Computer Studies at UCT.

They attended all the Telematic classes and found it 'refreshing' as they could sit back, relax and absorb everything. On Sundays they usually rushed from church to the Telematics classes and encouraged learners from other schools to accompany them. These two best friends enjoyed competing and were available to assist their peers. Better equipped science labs are what they would like learners to be exposed to.

Their tips for Grade 12:

- Stay motivated
- Manage your time well as Grade 12 is not difficult, but the volume is enormous
- Proper preparation prevents poor performance

These learners like so many others in the Western Cape are truly passionate about education, they love learning and have impeccable attendance records.

Wade Rosant and Mon-Cheri Baatjies

Wade Rosant and Mon-Cheri Baatjies from Elsies River Secondary each obtained four A's.

Despite Wade's challenge of not being able to study at home during the day due to lack of personal space, he attributes his A's in Physical Science, Maths and Afrikaans Home Language largely to Telematics, the motivation he received from his teachers and the church. He maintains that, 'die lewe is baie moeilik, maar deur harde werk, vroegtydige voorbereiding en deeglike beplanning kan meer leerlinge sukses behaal'.

He says the Telematic lessons not only assisted to prepare him for the exams, he replayed the explanations given by the presenters in his mind's eye whilst writing the Accounting and Maths exams,

Mon-Cheri attended most of the Telematics Broadcasts which were beamed to 120 schools in the Western Cape after school hours and on Sunday afternoons. She was able to secure an A in three of the four subject broadcasts she attended, i.e. Life Sciences, Afrikaans Home Language and English FAL. She attributes her success to a caring mother, the teachers and principal.

Their tips for Matrics

- Prepare from day 1, work consistently throughout the year – breaks are for after the final exams
- Never blame poor results on your circumstances
- Hard work is the only key to success and reach out for help... it is always available
- Always do your best as only the best is good enough and never settle for mediocrity.

GOOD LUCK TO ALL 2013 MATRIC LEARNERS

Matrics, your teacher is your guide, don't be shy to ask your teacher for advice.

Ask your teacher for a content outline on what you should cover in the year.