

THE GREEN MACHINE

VOLUME 1 • MARCH 2025



Message from the Acting Principal, Mrs Weigelt

Dear GHS Community

We have had a wonderful and eventful first term, filled with numerous events and activities. Our theme for this year is "Be Honest, Be Kind, Be True". Honesty is the foundation of trust and the key to building strong, meaningful relationships. Being true to yourself means embracing who you are, without fear or compromise, and living authentically. Kindness is a simple yet powerful act that can brighten someone's day and create a ripple of positivity. We carry this theme throughout the year as a reminder of how we should constantly strive to be.

We are proud to announce that the Class of 2024 performed exceptionally well in their matriculation results, achieving an overall pass rate of 99.5%, a Bachelor's Pass rate of 92.7%, and 382 distinctions in various subjects. We also celebrate those educators who maintained a 100% pass rate in their respective subjects for the Class of 2024. Without our dedicated educators, this would not have been possible. We salute their efforts and commitment.

This term we were pleased to host the Academic Awards Ceremony for grades 8 to 11, with inspiring alumna speaker Anele Ndlovu presenting the awards as our honoured guest speaker. Anele served as Deputy Head Girl for the Class of 2003, and is now the Founder and CEO of Active Citizen. As a professional public speaker, mental health advocate, and aspiring public servant, Anele embodies the very qualities she spoke about, and her message was both uplifting and motivating.

This term also marked several firsts for our school. The East Coast Radio Breakfast Show broadcast live from our campus, creating a vibrant atmosphere enjoyed by all. We also had the privilege of welcoming Mr Price representatives, who brought a feel-good experience for our girls, who enjoyed a surprise performance by local musician Scotts Maphuma. In addition, we collaborated with the Rise Against Hunger Africa team, working together to pack thousands of food parcels for those in need. We deeply appreciate the involvement of many in making this initiative so impactful.





As a school that advocates for women, we were especially proud to host our third annual STEM Fair, further strengthening our commitment to empowering young women in the fields of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics.

As we draw to the close of this busy term, we kindly ask parents to ensure that their daughters are collected promptly in the afternoons. For security reasons, our school gates will be locked at 4:30 p.m. each day. We also encourage parents to have discussions with their daughters about using social media responsibly and sensibly. Let us work together to educate our learners about the consequences of their online actions and the impact they can have on others. Our learners should understand that social media can be both a powerful tool for connection and a potential source of harm and thus should be approached with caution. Hate speech, slander, and posting images or content of others without permission are behaviours that we should not condone. We urge parents to support us in fostering this understanding at home, while we continue to do the same within the school environment.

While this term has been filled with exciting milestones, it has also been a deeply sad one for our community. We lost our 12th Principal, Mr Andrew Graaf, whose impact on our school was immeasurable. Mr Graaf was not only a vibrant leader but also a colourful and vivacious personality who brought energy and warmth to everything he did. He had a unique ability to connect with learners, staff, and the wider community. His passion for education and his dedication to the well-being of his learners will be remembered by all who knew him. Mr Graaf had a special way of making everyone feel valued and encouraged, and his legacy will live on in the hearts of all who had the privilege of working with him. In his honour, we held a special assembly to reflect on the incredible man he was and the profound impact he had on our school.

Lastly, please mark your calendars for our upcoming Parents' Afternoons. These sessions provide an opportunity to meet your daughter's educators and discuss her performance across various subjects.

Wishing you all a restful and peaceful break.

Warm regards
Esmé Weigelt



Sport

This term has been marked by significant progress and dedication within our school's sports programme. Our athletes have demonstrated exceptional commitment both on and off the field, engaging in intensive training to enhance their skills and fitness. This comprehensive approach has led to improved performances, with teams displaying resilience and determination in competitive events.

Participation and Engagement

- The number of learners participating in sports has increased compared to last year.
- Sports offered this term include hockey, netball, swimming, water polo, canoeing, athletics, cross country, table tennis, tennis, squash, badminton, volleyball, chess, and indoor hockey.
- Attendance at both training sessions and matches has improved, reflecting greater student engagement.
- Injury management has also progressed, with Livhuwani Mudimeli now overseeing the injury process, ensuring athletes receive timely and effective care.

Achievements and Performance

- Our teams took part in various prestigious events, including pre-season netball festivals, the PSI Indoor Hockey League, the Midlands Schools Tennis League, inter-school swimming fixtures, the aQuellé Athletics Series, Umgungundlovu High Performance Hockey, squash friendlies, and pre-season hockey fixtures.
- We successfully hosted our annual Night Gala, with the support of The Wykeham Collegiate, who was kind enough to make their venue available to us.
- Notable achievements include winning the Riverwood Gala and our 1st Team Water Polo's outstanding 16-0 victory over Curro.





Several individual learners have been selected for District teams.

District Tennis:

- Aphile Sithole – U19A
- Regomoditswe Phokio – U19C
- Yukta Singh – U15A
- Andisiwe Bhebhe – U13A

Umgungundlovu Swimming:

- Cailyn Clowes
- Grace George

Participation and support at Durban Girls' High Derby Day on 08 March was electrifying.

- Netball: Won 1, lost 3
- Chess: Lost
- Volleyball: Won 3-2
- Tennis: Won 4-2

Development Initiatives

- A Squash development session takes place every Friday afternoon, aiming to build the skills and participation in this sport.
- We have strengthened our partnerships with junior schools, which has allowed us to introduce an U14 swimming team this year following a successful development programme in 2024. The upcoming Junior Schools' Festival offers an ideal platform for talent identification and marketing the school.
- Water Polo development sessions are ongoing at MCS every Friday, helping athletes refine their skills and grow in the sport.

We remain committed to the advancement of GHS sport. With the continued support of our athletes, coaches, and stakeholders, we are confident that we will achieve even greater success in the future.





Academic Awards Ceremony

A community that celebrates academic excellence is one that will always thrive. This spirit was evident as proud parents, teachers, and learners gathered at our Community Centre to honour the achievements of our bright young minds.

Our grades 8-11 learners of 2024 took centre stage at the Academic Awards Ceremony, a testament to their perseverance, creativity, and brilliance. GHS has always been more than a school; it is a family built on encouragement, shared pride, and steadfast support.

Adding to the occasion was a special guest, Anele Ndlovu, a distinguished alumna and former Deputy Head Girl (Class of 2003). She captivated the audience, opening her speech with the GHS War Cry, "From Coast to Coast", igniting excitement and unity. Anele emphasised the importance of embracing individuality, the power of vision boards, and staying true to oneself.

As the founder and CEO of Active Citizen, a public speaker, and a mental health advocate, Anele embodied the very qualities she spoke about. Her presence and words left a lasting impact on everyone.

The day was a wonderful celebration of talent, hard work, and boundless potential. Congratulations once again to our outstanding achievers.





East Coast Radio

East Coast Radio's *Live Breakfast Show* was broadcast live from our school, bringing the dynamic *MySchoolRules* campaign to life and highlighting the importance of supporting education. Learners and staff came together for this exciting event, showcasing how small contributions can have a significant impact on education.

The live broadcast added an extra layer of excitement to the day. Learners had the opportunity to engage with the team, take part in live segments, and discovering ways to support the campaign's success. The GHS Cheer Squad energised the crowd, while the Wind Band delivered a remarkable performance, creating the perfect atmosphere for the event.

Our Acting Principal, Mrs Weigelt, and the Circuit Manager, Mrs Dlamini, were also interviewed live on the show, where they shared insights into our school and highlighted the many opportunities it offers.

A standout moment of the day was when our Head Girl, Zemvelo Phewa, participated in the *MySchoolRules* challenge. She answered ten questions correctly, thereby earning R10,000 towards her school fees.

We are exceptionally proud of Zemvelo and grateful to East Coast Radio for bringing the *MySchoolRules* campaign to our school, inspiring us all to support education and contribute to a brighter future.





Rise Against Hunger Africa

We had the privilege of collaborating with Rise Against Hunger Africa, a non-profit organisation dedicated to eradicating hunger and promoting food security across the continent. Through their steadfast commitment, they not only address immediate food needs but also implement long-term programmes that empower communities, improve nutrition and create opportunities for self-sufficiency. Their vision of developing sustainable solutions to hunger served as an inspiration and played a crucial role in the success of this campaign.

The collective efforts of the GHS community led to an outstanding achievement. With the dedication of our staff, learners and their families, we successfully assembled 50,430 meal packs. These meals will provide essential nourishment to over 200 children, ensuring they receive five meals per week for an entire year. Each meal is enriched with vital nutrients, helping to support the physical and cognitive development of the recipients, many of whom rely on these meals as their primary source of sustenance.

Beyond the numbers, this initiative was a powerful reminder of the strength of unity and the difference we can make when we work together towards a common goal. The atmosphere on the day was filled with energy, enthusiasm and a shared purpose, as volunteers worked tirelessly to pack each meal with care. The experience not only fostered a spirit of service but also deepened our understanding of the realities faced by many vulnerable communities.

This accomplishment is a testament to the generosity, compassion and outstanding dedication that define our GHS community. Each meal pack represents more than just food; it embodies hope, kindness and a shared commitment to making a tangible impact in the lives of those in need.

Together, we have demonstrated the true power of community and service. The impact of this initiative will undoubtedly resonate throughout the year, reinforcing our dedication to creating lasting change. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to everyone who contributed, whether through time, effort or resources. This initiative has shown that even the smallest act of kindness can create ripples of positive change.

We look forward to continuing our partnership with Rise Against Hunger Africa and furthering our mission of making a meaningful difference in the world.



Third Annual STEM Fair

Our school hosted the third annual Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Fair, an event dedicated to fostering innovation, exploration, and inspiration. The school welcomed the top ten female Grade 7 science and mathematics learners from local primary schools, providing them with a unique opportunity to engage in hands-on STEM activities, connect with like-minded peers, and gain insights from inspiring role models in the field.

The STEM Fair reflects the school's ongoing commitment to nurturing a passion for science and technology among young women. Through interactive workshops, engaging experiments, and thought-provoking discussions, participants were encouraged to develop their critical thinking and problem-solving skills — essential tools for future success in STEM fields. Learners explored a wide range of activities, from robotics demonstrations to coding challenges, providing them with real-world applications of STEM concepts that sparked curiosity and creativity.

At Pietermaritzburg Girls' High School, we believe in empowering the next generation of female leaders in STEM. By providing platforms such as this fair, we aim to inspire and equip young learners with the knowledge, confidence, and enthusiasm needed to excel in science and technology. Our commitment to creating an inclusive and supportive environment encourages young women to see themselves as future innovators, leaders, and trailblazers in these fields.

The event was a resounding success, with participants not only expanding their understanding of STEM but also building connections with industry professionals and mentors. Their enthusiasm was evident throughout the day as they engaged with the various exhibits, worked collaboratively on problem-solving tasks, and shared their newfound knowledge with one another.

We look forward to continuing this tradition of excellence and inspiring even more young women in the years to come. The future of STEM is bright, and we are proud to play a part in shaping it.



100% Pass Rate

We have a number of teachers who achieved a remarkable 100% pass rate in their respective subjects for the Matric Class of 2024. Their dedication and commitment to academic excellence were rightfully recognised at the National Senior Certificate Excellence Awards, where they were honoured for their outstanding contributions to education.

This achievement is a testament to their passion, perseverance, and outstanding commitment to nurturing and empowering learners. It reinforces the belief that excellence is not merely an outcome but the result of hard work, expertise, and a deep devotion to the profession of teaching.

The success of these educators is a reflection of the positive learning environment they create, where students are encouraged to challenge themselves and reach their fullest potential. This achievement not only highlights the strength of our teaching staff but also demonstrates the school's broader commitment to fostering an academic culture of excellence and resilience.

Once again, our school stands as a beacon of academic success, driven by exceptional educators who continue to inspire and uplift generations of learners. As we celebrate this remarkable milestone, we look forward to even greater accomplishments in the years to come.





Vibing with Mr Price

Our school was honoured with a visit from the renowned social media influencers Sphokuhle.N and Scotts Maphuma, courtesy of Mr Price. Their presence brought an undeniable energy to our morning, captivating both learners and staff with their charisma and star power. The excitement in the air was palpable as they engaged with our learners, leaving a lasting impression on everyone present.

Although the visit alone would have been thrilling enough, Mr Price went above and beyond by surprising our entire school with generous vouchers. This unexpected gesture was met with immense gratitude and joy, further elevating an already unforgettable morning.

One of the most remarkable aspects of this event was the element of surprise. For weeks, meticulous planning had taken place to ensure that this moment would be a delightful and uplifting experience for our learners. With tests just around the corner, the goal had been to provide a moment of inspiration and motivation, and it is safe to say that this mission was successfully accomplished.

We extend our heartfelt appreciation to Mr Price for their generosity and for making this experience possible for our learners. Such moments reminded us of the power of community and the joy that comes from shared experiences. This event will undoubtedly be remembered as a highlight of the school year, leaving a legacy of excitement, gratitude, and inspiration among our learners.



Societies' News

Interact Society

This society attracted many new members, primarily welcoming Grade 8 and Grade 9 learners, thereby strengthening its foundation and ensuring involved continuity in the years ahead.

The girls participated in the Rise Against Hunger campaign at GHS, an incredible and rewarding experience where they worked together and sacrificed their Saturday morning to prepare packed meals for less fortunate families.

On Valentine's Day, the girls created heart-shaped pink and red messages of self-affirmation and encouragement, which they displayed on the board in the societies' corridor.

Among the ongoing projects for Term 1 and the rest of the year was The Candy and Snack Drive, which encouraged GHS learners to donate sweets for the children at Mama Ntombi's Community Centre.

The Easter Egg Drive also began in preparation for Easter, with plans to share the collected eggs with the children at Ekujabuleni. Additionally, the girls actively gathered used and unwanted stationery, reusable recyclable materials, and old clothes to support Siphakeme Educare.

Recycling Society

The Recycling Society at our school saw rapid growth, with many new learners eager to join. To manage this increase, the society was divided into two groups, each overseen by a dedicated committee member. The leaders ensure the smooth running of the society and motivate learners to continue their efforts.

As the society grew, additional resources were needed, including another recycling bin. After consulting with Mandy Hiralal from RecycleM (the company that collects our recycling), it was suggested that large bags could serve as a temporary solution, although the existing frame would need to be extended.

We reached out to the GHS Estates team for assistance and are awaiting their response. The society continues to thrive, with learners showing passion for environmental responsibility through recycling.



Gospel Choir

The Gospel Choir delivered an unforgettable performance at GHS's annual Awards Ceremony, captivating the audience and leaving a lasting impression. A particularly moving moment occurred when the guest speaker stood up and became completely immersed in the energy of the performance, highlighting the profound impact the choir had on the event. In an effort to continue growing and diversifying, auditions were held to recruit new talent and expand the choir's numbers.

The choir had been busy organising the much-anticipated Gospel Festival, which took place on Wednesday, 19 February. The event aimed to bring together local choirs from surrounding schools, providing them with a platform to showcase their talents and further celebrate the power of music.

In addition to the festival, the choir visited Villa Assumpta, a home for the elderly, on 24 March. This visit was part of their outreach efforts, offering an opportunity to share their talents with the local community and bring joy to the elderly residents through their uplifting music.

Looking ahead, the choir has plans to host a workshop with the UKZN choir. The workshop aims to provide valuable learning opportunities, where choir members hope to explore new warm-up techniques and refine their vocal skills, continuing their pursuit of musical excellence.

Computer Monitors

The committee prepared an exciting video for the Societies Assembly. Many new members showed interest in the society. The committee also hosted a stall at the STEM fair early in the term, where they kept the young Grade 7s engaged with the Scratch coding programme.

The girls attend online lectures on Sunday evenings, followed by laboratory sessions in which they apply coding through practical exercises. Our current members have remained actively engaged in the online lessons, demonstrating strong commitment.



Windband

The Wind Band had a busy and exciting term, participating in numerous events that showcased their talent and dedication. These included the East Coast Radio Live Performance, Information Sessions, the Senior Awards Ceremony, the STEM Fair, the Wartburg Concert, the Valentine's Event with Maritzburg College, and performances for the Department of Sports, Art, and Culture.

One of the major highlights was the East Coast Radio live performance, which took place after just two rehearsals in the second week of the term. Despite the limited preparation time, the girls had the incredible opportunity to perform three songs live on air. The atmosphere was filled with excitement, making it a memorable experience.

Another standout event was the Wartburg Concert, held at Wartburg Kirchdorf School. This collaborative concert featured a visiting concert band from Germany. Our learners performed alongside 25 high school students from a school in Oldenburg, Germany. Both groups had rehearsed their pieces separately for months and finally came together to create a spectacular performance.

The Valentine's Event with Maritzburg College offered a casual opportunity for the two schools' music departments to come together. Maritzburg College brought their Jazz Band and Choir to perform, and the girls enjoyed a relaxed atmosphere with pizza, coke, and background music.

Overall, the term was filled with remarkable musical achievements, highlighting the Wind Band's growth and commitment to their craft.



Debating

The GHS Debating Society had an outstanding start to the season. Across all divisions, Seniors, Juniors, and Grade 8s, our teams maintained a consistent winning streak, proving their skill and dedication in every round.

In addition to our victories, GHS debaters continually secured Best Speaker awards, showcasing not only our strong teamwork but also the individual excellence of our speakers. With plenty of debates still ahead, we were excited to see our debaters dominate in the Pietermaritzburg league.

Choir

The choir hosted a successful workshop on 31 January and 1 February, where the girls participated in games designed to foster teamwork and camaraderie while learning new music. The weekend was both enjoyable and productive, setting a positive tone for the term.

Auditions for new choir members were held, and it was inspiring to see so many grade 8 students eager to join the choir and contribute to its continued success.

The choir is preparing for the ATKV Applous Choir Competition in May, as well as upcoming performances with St Charles' and the Midlands Youth Choir. These events offer great opportunities for the choir to showcase their talent and further develop their musical abilities.

String Ensemble

The String Ensemble had a term filled with excitement and anticipation as preparations intensified for the tour to the South Coast in March. Rehearsals were diligently focused on refining the ensemble's repertoire to ensure they were fully prepared for the performances scheduled during the tour.

The ensemble performed at South City School, Bethany Lutheran Church, and Anerley Haven, showcasing the school's vibrant musical talent to a wider audience. These performances stood as a testament to the dedication and skill of the musicians involved.

In preparation for this exciting opportunity, the String Ensemble and Tour Orchestra came together for a workshop on the 1 March. This session provided the final chance to refine and fine-tune an engaging and dynamic programme, ensuring that the tour was a memorable and impactful experience for both the performers and the audiences they engaged.



Entrepreneurship

The year kicked off with an enthusiastic group of new learners eager to join the Entrepreneurship Society and develop skills relevant to the business world. Our first session was led by committee members who provided a user-friendly introduction to business plans. A wide range of topics was covered, and subsequent sessions explored key aspects of business, including product sales, stock quantities, and sales indemnities.

One of the highlights of the term was the fun-filled Valentine's Day market, where learners sold various homemade products. The event was a resounding success, with the girls enjoying the experience of making their first profits while showcasing their entrepreneurial spirit. Plans are underway to expand the Entrepreneurship Society, in hope of setting up a designated weekly or bi-weekly Market Day.

This initiative aims to provide the girls with a platform to market and sell their products, teaching them responsibility and business management. Additionally, we hope to encourage the learners to take their skills beyond the school walls and to apply their entrepreneurial skills in the real world.

Exciting developments lie ahead as we continue to nurture these future "boss ladies"!

Art Society

This term, the Art Society was pleased to announce the appointment of its new committee members: Aadya Sarupen (Head of Society), Rhiannon Pillay (Deputy), Misokuhle Cekeshe (Secretary), Ntokozo Nxumalo, and Lwandile Dlamini. Their leadership brings fresh ideas and continued growth to the society.

In an exciting collaborative effort, the GHS Art Society hosted the Maritzburg College Art Club for an afternoon session of drawing and sharing. The session, facilitated by Mr Pretorius and Miss Dodo, provided an opportunity for young artists to engage with one another, showcasing their creativity and artistic skills.

The artists began by collaborating to assemble a still life, which served as the inspiration for their drawings. The session concluded with a valuable critique, allowing participants to reflect on their work and share constructive feedback. It was an enjoyable and productive afternoon, offering a much-needed opportunity for relaxation and creative expression.



MSA

It was an eventful start to the year for the Muslim Students' Association. We successfully recruited our new group of grade 8s into the society. To welcome them, we held our "Bonding Session", giving them an exciting glimpse of what to expect for the rest of the year. Students from other grades also attended this fun and relaxing event.

On Zoom one evening, we hosted our first guest speaker of the year. She spoke about the significance of one of our holy nights and incorporated valuable lessons on character development into her talk.

As Ramadaan approached, we shifted our focus to preparation for this spiritual time. Our efforts were directed towards organising prayer meetings and encouraging greater devotion to God. We were grateful to have hosted two guest speakers at GHS to enhance the Ramadaan atmosphere.

Marketing Society

The Marketing Society at Pietermaritzburg Girls' High had a highly productive term, contributing to a variety of school events and initiatives. They played an important role in the *Vibing with Mr Price* event and at the school's Derby Day, where their creative photography and engaging content captured the energy and spirit of both events.

They also represented the school at expos at Laddsworth and Chelsea Primary, engaging with grades 6 and 7 learners and parents, and sharing the school's offerings. At the GHS Night Gala, the society beautifully captured moments of the evening through photos and reels, adding a dynamic touch to the event.

In addition, the society contributed to the Rise Against Hunger Africa initiative, helping to prepare food packs and assist with event setup. During the STEM Fair, they supported the registration process, distributed popcorn, and created engaging content to document the event.

At the Academic Awards ceremony, the society showcased learner achievements, producing captivating content that highlighted the significance of the celebration.

Throughout the term, the Marketing Society demonstrated creativity and dedication, bringing the school's events to life and providing a platform for learners and parents to relive these special moments.



Performance Company

On 1 March, the Performance Company had the incredible opportunity to showcase their talent at the Midlands Dance Theatre Centre (MDTC) Expressions Fundraiser, held at the prestigious Hilton College Theatre. This highly anticipated event, dedicated to raising funds for the dance centre, brought together a diverse range of performers, and our dancers rose to the occasion with grace, passion, and professionalism.

The evening was a true celebration of dance and creativity, featuring captivating performances from various schools and companies. Our Performance Company took to the stage with a dynamic and emotionally charged piece that mesmerised the audience from the very first movement. Their precision, storytelling ability, and commitment left a lasting impression on all attendees.

Months of dedicated rehearsals culminated in a performance that not only demonstrated technical excellence but also embodied the expressive power of dance. The choreography was executed with authenticity and depth, beautifully aligning with the essence of the event's theme. It was inspiring to witness the confidence and synergy of our dancers as they seamlessly translated emotion into movement.

Beyond the stage, the MDTC Expressions Fundraiser provided an invaluable platform for our learners to connect with a broader artistic community. The experience was both enriching and inspiring, reinforcing the Performance Company's reputation for excellence. Their participation in this event stands as yet another testament to their steadfast dedication, artistry, and pursuit of perfection in their craft.

A heartfelt thank you goes to the organisers of the fundraiser for extending the invitation to us, as well as to the parents and supporters whose encouragement and belief in our dancers make such opportunities possible. We look forward to many more moments of artistic brilliance from our Performance Company in the future.



Welcome to New Staff



Mrs Monica Nkwinika
Maths/
Maths Lit Educator



Ms Pamela Sikhosana
Sports Coordinator/
Phys Ed Educator



Ms Deandi Scholtz
Afrikaans
Educator



Ms Nondumiso Ndawonde
Receptionist/
Admin Assistant



Mr Nikeel Hirallal
Business Studies/
EMS Educator



Ms Danielle Dyson
Maths Intern



Ms Pamela Sokhela
House Mother



Mr Bandile Mbuyisa
Sport Department Intern



**Ms Thandolwethu
Hlongwane**
IT Intern



Mr Lungelwa Xaba
Junior IT Technician
(Audiovisual & Sound)



MsThandekile Mthalande
Marketing Assistant

Staff News

Farewell



Ms Nomthetho Mkhize

House Mother
(2 years' service)



Ms Siphindile Mathonsi

House Mother
(1 year service)



Mr Philasande Mkhize

IT Technician (Audiovisual &
Sound)
(2 years' service)

Retirement



Ms Busisiwe Mdluli

Cleaner
(13 years' service)