

# GUIDING LIGHT

THE HANTAM COMMUNITY EDUCATION TRUST





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## MISSION STATEMENT

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### **Legal and moral purpose**

- To educate and develop members of the local community within the framework provided by the South African Constitution.

### **Goals**

- To invest in human capital through education, training, skills acquisition, health and community care.
- To do everything possible to enhance the quality of life of all the people in this rural area.
- Through our examples of replicable models, to improve education, and contribute to development more generally.





THE HANTAM COMMUNITY EDUCATION TRUST is a multidimensional education and development project based east of Colesberg in the Great Karoo. Begun in 1989 as a play school in a disused farm building, it now occupies a dedicated education complex comprising an Early Childhood Development Centre accommodating about 60 children a year, a primary school and intermediate school catering for about 200 learners a year, and other specialised facilities.

The Trust utilises advanced educational methods, including innovative new approaches to achieving functional numeracy and literacy, and helps its learners to access further education and training. It also manages effective parenting, community health and youth development programmes. In the process, observers widely believe the Trust has set new standards for rural development projects nationwide – an assessment confirmed by numerous awards, including one bestowed on it in 1997 by the late President Nelson Mandela.





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THE PROJECT is all the more noteworthy because of its location. The Karoo is one of South Africa's poorest regions; its dry scrub supports only sheep farming, and severe droughts sometimes even threaten this activity, presenting its inhabitants with a continuous struggle to survive. Its indigenous communities, composed of people of San and Khoi descent as well as later Xhosa settlers, are among the most disadvantaged people in the country; wages are often low, living conditions primitive, and education and other facilities rudimentary or non-existent. Rural children in particular face a future of poor and incomplete education at isolated and under-resourced farm schools, with many drifting into an underclass of unskilled, unqualified and unemployed people. It is this legacy which the Trust has sought to overturn.

THE PROJECT began in 1989 when the wives of three local farmers decided to establish a nursery school for the children of workers on their own and a few neighbouring farms. After consulting workers and their families, this facility was established in a vacant house made available by a farmer. Initially, 11 children were accommodated. Three local women were chosen as early childhood development (ECD) trainees. Following a pattern that became a hallmark of the project, these personnel were sent for specialised training, and the progress of both teachers and children was intensively monitored.



*Opposite: The HCET complex on Grootfontein Farm, east of Colesberg in the Upper Karoo. Above: Two learners hard at work in a Grade 4 class in the Umthombo Wolwazi Combined Farm School.*



*Lettie Martins (right), an ECD practitioner and Effective Parenting Programme field worker, briefs a young mother on how to stimulate her children mentally in their formative early years.*

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It was a unique facility for this area which began, for the first time, to unlock the potential of local children. However, this potential would not be fully realised if they could not attend proper schools. Thus parents began to appeal to the project's initiators to expand the nursery school into a primary school.

The project co-ordinators called parents and farmers together to discuss the proposal. They agreed to establish a school, but insisted that all parties should assume some responsibility for the project. Parents would have to help with building work and maintenance, as well as the costs of transport. Farmers would have to give workers time off to attend to school affairs, and help with transport.

Crucially, the project would also require the collaboration of the regional education authorities. They would need to register the school, pay some teachers' salaries, and provide basic equipment. They would also have to agree to commit these state resources while allowing the project to be privately co-ordinated – which they eventually did.

The school began in January 1991 in another vacant house, with two teachers and 60 Grade 1 and 2 learners. More classes were created as learners advanced to higher grades; in 1993 the Department of Education approved another teaching post, and in 1994 another. Learners from outlying farms were initially housed in hostels, established in renovated farm labourers' cottages. However, these facilities were eventually discontinued,



*Mothers from surrounding farms at an Effective Parenting workshop at the Trust complex. The Trust has also launched an intensive Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) awareness campaign, directed at learners as well as community members.*





## THE BASIC CONCEPTS PROGRAMME

*DEVELOPED BY Dr Louis Benjamin, and based on intensive research in previously disadvantaged communities on the Cape Flats, BCP is a structured metacognitive intervention for children – particularly those in disadvantaged communities – who experience language, information processing and socio-emotional barriers to learning. More specifically, it was developed to address the*

*cognitive and developmental needs of young children as they progress from the concrete thinking of pre-school to the more considered, logical, and reflective thought required for formal learning (reading, writing, spelling and mathematics).*

*Underpinned by contemporary cognitive educational theory, notably the work of Jean Piaget, Lev Vygotsky and Reuven*

*Feuerstein, BCP departs from the notion of a static, diagnostic classification of learning ability, moving towards an active, modifying and interventionist approach that aims to enhance thinking and learning processes. A belief in the ability of all children to learn is a central tenet of the BCP.*

- *For more information, see <http://www.basicconcepts.co.za/>.*



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and the transport system expanded instead. (Today, the Trust operates a fleet of 11 vehicles which transport all learners to and from school, and participants to and from other Trust activities.) As the project developed, its co-ordinators sought additional funding from South African and international donors. In 1993, it was formalised into the Hantam Community Education Trust.

THE SCHOOL was soon bursting at the seams; as a result, the management team began to think about housing the project in a complex of its own. This ambitious goal could only be achieved by carefully blending public and private resources, and soliciting the support of all role players.

Gradually, the key elements were put in place. A farmer agreed to donate 11 hectares of land. The site was deproclaimed as agricultural land, and registered in the Trust's name. Next, the regional Department of Education agreed to help fund two classrooms: it would also continue to pay five teachers, and provide standard equipment. As before, additional funds would be sought from domestic and international donors.

Building work began in 1994. In that milestone year, the Department of Education completed two classrooms, a book room, a staff room and principal's office, and an ablution block. Funds raised by the Trust were used to build three classrooms, an outdoor storeroom and a paved quadrangle. Four teachers' cottages were built, and other facilities followed.



*Young entrants to the Fundisana ECD Centre playing with educational toys. Parents are encouraged to visit the Centre.*



*Vuyokazi Katise with young learners in her Grade 00 class. In 2015, Vuyokazi won recognition as the best ECD practitioner in the Northern Cape, and the third best in the country.*



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In 1994 the school expanded to Grade 8, another teaching post was authorised, and the Umthombo Wolwazi Combined Farm School was formally registered. In 1995 the school expanded to Grade 9, the end of the General Education and Training band in the South African education system. Thereafter, learners complete the Further Education and Training band (Grades 10 to 12) at high schools in Colesberg, Middelburg and Bloemfontein. Since January 1999, the school has accommodated about 200 learners a year.

MEANWHILE, the nursery school continued at its original premises while funds were sought for a dedicated facility at the new complex. The Masakhane Educare and Foundation Phase Centre was completed in March 1998, accommodating children from ages three to six. Now called the Fundisana Early Childhood Development Centre, it caters for about 60 children aged three to six from the 30 farms in the Trust's catchment area. The centre is staffed by qualified ECD teachers as well as interns, who are assisted to complete their formal training. All ECD staff receive additional training as well as extensive classroom support. Parents are encouraged to visit the centre.

The Trust's ECD programme includes an Effective Parenting Programme (EPP), aimed at improving the parenting of young children on the 30 farms served by the Trust, thus improving their physical and mental development and their ability to



*HCET veteran Thembakazi Matyeka with learners in her Grade R class. She is one of several HCET staffers who have gained educational qualifications through distance learning.*

**Persona Dolls:** First developed in the US, Persona Dolls are lifelike, culturally appropriate girl and boy dolls made of cloth. They are given 'personas' or identities, thus transforming them into distinctive individuals with specific ethnic, cultural and class backgrounds. Used in group sessions, they are an effective tool for probing children's beliefs and attitudes about issues surrounding equality, identity, and racial and cultural diversity.

**THRASS:** First developed in Australia, the Teaching, Handwriting, Reading and Spelling Skills (THRASS) programme is a structured multi-sensory programme for developing speaking, reading, spelling and writing skills.

**Thinking Maps:** Thinking Maps are eight types of diagrams or visual patterns which correspond with eight different ways of thinking. They provide teachers and learners with a common tool for gathering, organising and using information. Developed by Dr David Hyerle, originator of the Thinking Schools movement, Thinking Maps are used in countries throughout the world. At the HCET, teachers are encouraged to utilise them in all content areas and at all grade levels. Indications are that they significantly enhance teaching and learning.



## SPECIAL TEACHING SYSTEMS

**Picturing writing:** Developed by the American educator Beth Olskansky, Picturing Writing is an art-based literacy system, aimed at developing learners' creative use of language by using pictures as a springboard for developing their own stories. Learners start by drawing or painting a series of pictures, and develop verbal stories around them which they present to their peers in

interactive sessions. The stories are gradually turned into written texts. Finally, the images and texts are combined in properly formatted, printed and bound books, authored by the learners themselves.

This initiative has been very popular and extremely successful, improving learners' use of language and self-esteem, and raising teachers' expectations of their potential.



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benefit from their schooling. EPP field workers visit the homes of farm workers to monitor the health and wellbeing of babies and young children, and provide their parents and other caregivers with various forms of support.

THE PRINCIPLES that underpinned the pre-school in its formative years now inform the entire project. All teachers receive intensive and ongoing training over and above that provided by the state, and state curricula and teaching aids are complemented by specialised systems, techniques and equipment (see facing page.)

The performance of teachers and the progress of learners are closely monitored. Since 1996, at the request of parents, all classes are taught in English. While prescribed state curricula are taught and assessed, high marks are not regarded as a primary goal; stimulating motivation, an ability to focus, problem-solving, and a strong work ethic are regarded as more important long-term objectives.

In early 1999 the Trust opened a library which is now stocked with more than 12 000 books and other teaching resources. These are available to both teachers and learners. The library also contains a technology unit equipped with computers for the use of teachers and learners. This is particularly intended to address the lag in mathematics, science, and technology among rural children.



*Opposite: Language teaching consultant Anne Hill with Grade 1 learners. Above: Hanna Phemba with a Persona Doll in her Grade 3 class. Hanna is one of several HCET graduates who have returned to the Trust and started a career in education.*



*Unathi Asiya in the senior special needs class. The special needs classes follow a pilot curriculum developed by the Trust which has been approved by the Northern Cape Education Department, and may be rolled out at other schools.*



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A prize-giving ceremony is held each year. Learners are also taken on trips to events such as the Grahamstown Science Festival as well as areas of educational interest elsewhere in the country – for many, this is the first time they leave the district.

THE PROJECT has also extended its influence in other ways. In 1992, teachers at eight farm schools in the district asked the Trust for assistance with their teaching practice. This led to the establishment, in 1993, of a Resource and Training Centre for servicing these and other schools. In 1995, the Department of Education closed four smaller farm schools in the area, and the Trust took in all their learners. In 1997 a dedicated Resource and Training Centre, funded by international donors, was built at the Trust's new premises.

From January 1999 to 2002 the HCET ran an outreach teacher development programme in 17 schools in the towns of Colesberg, Noupport and Norvalspont. A total of 217 teachers attended workshops on improved methods for teaching science, mathematics and technology. By 2002, the programme had impacted on some 6 800 learners.

FROM THE OUTSET, the Trust identified the achievement of functional literacy and numeracy as a central challenge. Accordingly, it invited Dr Louis Benjamin, an education expert then based at the University of the Western Cape, to introduce his



*Two learners engrossed in their work. While the atmosphere in the classrooms are relaxed, observers are commonly struck by the high levels of motivation and concentration.*



## LEARNER SUPPORT PROGRAMME

*THE TRUST has begun a programme of support for learners experiencing emotional difficulties, mainly comprising 'TLC camps' at Poplar Grove, a farm in the district with guest and conference facilities. Learners receive music and art therapy, and engage in various leisure activities.*

*The programme is aimed at increasing learners' awareness and agility; improving their concentration and communication skills; calming the mind and body through*

*focused and creative activities; building their self-confidence and sense of security; and providing them with guidelines for positive social and emotional behaviour.*

*Learners are tested, and their emotional wellbeing is assessed in group settings. The results are discussed with the Trust's management team as well as teachers, thus enabling them to better understand the children's learning styles and assist them with their emotional challenges.*

*The programme has shown significant results. Teachers are better able to help learners make the most of their strengths. Learners feel supported and nurtured, emotionally as well as scholastically. Their general health and well-being have improved, and they are better able to cope with their emotions.*

*Learners suffering from attention and behavioural disorders have also improved markedly, as evidenced by more positive behaviour, self-control and self-esteem.*



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innovative Basic Concepts Programme (BCP) for stimulating the cognitive functioning of younger children, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds (see page 6). BCP was piloted in the Foundation Phase (Grades R–3) over a period of four years, advancing by one grade a year. It has been highly successful; ongoing evaluations have shown that the BCP has significantly improved the literacy and numeracy of learners. As a result, the Trust has permanently absorbed this approach into its teaching systems. With the assistance of the Trust, the BCP is also being implemented in two state schools in Colesberg and Noupoort.

SOME CHILDREN who enter the Trust system cannot cope in normal classrooms. They include children suffering from Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD), or the effects of domestic trauma, malnutrition, and a lack of stimulation in their early years. These children are placed in special needs classes where they receive intensive attention, and follow a separate curriculum developed by the HCET. The BCP is also used in this remedial context. These youths are eventually steered towards the HCET's Youth Development Programme. The special needs curriculum has been approved by the Northern Cape Department of Education, and may be rolled out to other schools in the region. The Trust also holds remedial retreats, called 'TLC camps', for children experiencing emotional difficulties, often due to challenging circumstances at home (see facing page).



*Opposite: Learners attending a TLC camp at Poplar Grove enjoy an outdoors game. Above: The librarian, Petronella Masayile-Gavaza, in the newly refurbished library, which now houses more than 12 000 books.*

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*Above: Learners in a lively classroom session. The progress of all learners is closely monitored.*

IN 1995, the Trust began a bursary scheme for children of farm workers and other members of the local community wishing to proceed to further education and training. On average, it supports 25 students a year at high schools and tertiary institutions, and several teachers a year on distance learning programmes. In 1994 a milestone was reached when Simon Thiso became the first bursary holder to acquire a university degree. Many other bursary holders have graduated in various fields, and are gainfully employed. Some have returned to the Trust as teachers, or in other capacities. The Trust is inundated with requests for financial assistance.

THE SCHOOL has also sparked off various other activities. In 1991, parents attending meetings began asking for adult education. Classes began in 1992, and an official Adult Education Centre was registered in 1993. Classes were held at the school after hours. They were well supported; for many farm workers and their wives, this was a journey of discovery as they gained the capabilities associated with basic literacy. This programme was completed in 1999.

In 1992, following further requests from community members, the Trust began a skills training project for unemployed youths and adults comprising courses in woodwork, welding, cookery, knitting and sewing. Instructors were drawn from Colesberg; in this way the broader community was involved





*Marié Botha, principal of the Umthombo Wolwazi Combined Farm School, teaches a mathematics class.*



*Left: Grade 6 learners hard at work in a language class.*

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## BECOMING A THINKING SCHOOL

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*THE HCET has committed itself to becoming a Thinking School. Developed by the Cognitive Education Centre at the University of Exeter in the UK, this approach has had a major impact on schools in Britain and elsewhere,*

*and is spreading rapidly throughout other parts of the world.*

*A Thinking School is one which regards itself as an inclusive educational community whose members – administrators, teachers*

*and learners – share a common understanding and vision of learning and teaching, and work together to make this vision a reality.*

*It involves both staff and students learning how to think in critical and creative ways, and using these skills to develop a meaningful curriculum and associated activities. As a result, learners think more effectively, learn more, achieve more, and gain more enjoyment and satisfaction out of learning.*

*The Trust has commented as follows on this commitment:*

*‘The journey towards becoming a Thinking School will be a challenging one, and will take a lot of dedication and hard work.*

*‘Among other things, it will require us to re-examine all our ideas of why and how we teach.*

*‘However, given the educational challenges faced by the Trust and many other educational institutions in South Africa, we feel strongly that this is our best way forward.’*



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in the project, and its members given a chance to utilise their skills. Some participants were sent for further training. In 1997, courses were introduced in leatherwork and fabric painting. A dedicated Skills Training Centre was built at the Trust complex, funded with prize money received as part of its numerous awards. A small business development course was offered, as well as assistance with running co-operatives under the umbrella of the Trust.

These programmes were completed in 2007; however, the Trust has moved on to a Youth Development Programme, aimed at providing a future for young people who complete Grade 9 but do not advance to further education and training. Its main components are 18-month courses in hospitality services and industry-related computer training, offered by qualified trainers, and accredited by City & Guilds (United Kingdom).

A milestone was reached in 2011 when students and staff occupied a dedicated training centre in Colesberg. The latest addition to the Youth Development Programme is a Farm Workers' Apprenticeship Programme under which youths who do not progress to further education and training, and want to work on farms, are mentored by experienced farm managers and workers.

THE TRUST soon realised that the physical health of the surrounding community would play a key role in its wellbeing as well as the development and life chances of its learners.



*Learners and staff during assembly, held once a week in the spacious HCET hall.*

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*Hospitality services students with their instructor, Anekie Collier, at the HCET Hospitality Services Training Centre in Colesberg. The course has grown rapidly, and is having an increasing impact on employment prospects for young people in the area.*

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As a result, in 2000 the Trust opened a Primary Health Clinic and Pharmacy, housed in a disused farmhouse near the school. Services include access to eye and dental care, child immunisation, and family planning. The clinic is staffed by two nursing sisters and a pharmacist, who deal with about 45 patients on one morning each week. Field workers visit homes in the area to check on family health, and encourage healthy lifestyles. They also provide HIV / AIDS education and pre- and post-test counselling, distribute anti-retroviral medication, and monitor their use. The health of all children attending Trust facilities is closely monitored, and all learners receive a nutritious lunch every day.

IN THE LATEST component of its constantly unfolding model of sustainable development, the Trust is seeking to do more to address those factors beyond its gates that affect its educational efforts, and undermine the potential of its learners. Key among these is the disabling home environments of many children in the area served by the Trust.

Like those in rural areas elsewhere, many local households are poor and deprived, leading to high levels of alcohol abuse. As a result, worrying numbers of children suffer from Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD), or are traumatised by alcohol-induced violence in their homes. The Trust is seeking new ways of breaking through this self-perpetuating legacy.



*Hospitality services students prepare for a baking session in the fully equipped training centre.*





## THE ROUTE TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

*LESLEY OSLER, the HCET Project Co-ordinator, has commented as follows on its objectives, methods and experiences:*

*'We have learnt that development must be holistic; one cannot address aspects in isolation, and hope to succeed. Therefore, we have gradually expanded our activities until they encompass the education and development of children from birth through their formal education and training to the start of their working careers. We also support their fami-*

*lies and others in the broader community. This is the only route to sustainable development.*

*'Our ultimate goal is to help young people in this area to maximise their abilities, and become active and productive citizens. Besides benefiting themselves and their families, they also need to serve as role models, showing other young people that, if they are determined enough, they could also change their lives.*

*'We also seek to inform education and development more widely by testing educational and other models that could be taken to scale.*

*'While we don't necessarily believe our methods could be replicated everywhere else, we do believe they hold broader lessons for development in South Africa.*

*As a result, we hope, and believe, that they will be of value to policy-makers and planners.'*

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To this end, it has launched an intensive FASD awareness campaign, aimed at learners as well as the community. FASD field workers visit pregnant mothers in their homes, and stage community workshops where both men and women are alerted to the dangers of alcohol abuse by pregnant women. The programme has achieved significant results; in 2014, health workers reached all pregnant women in the area served by the Trust, and no new cases of FASD were reported.

FASD forms part of the Life Orientation curriculum for Grade 6–9 learners, and the Trust is planning to roll out a teenage awareness campaign to surrounding communities, in collaboration with an international project partner. It has also designed a programme for improving family lives in surrounding communities which would identify the root causes of family dysfunction, and address them in sustainable ways. Again, it hopes this programme will result in a model that could be replicated elsewhere, or taken to scale by larger agencies.

As in many other deprived rural areas, farm workers often have low levels of self-esteem. The Trust believes ways need to be found of giving them a new sense of self-worth which would enable them to function as more responsible workers and parents, thus enhancing the educational prospects and therefore the life chances of their children. This, it believes, needs to be a community effort – farmers, farm workers, and their families all need to play a role.



*Bulelwa Matyeka, an HCET graduate and bursary holder, while working as a teller for a bank in Colesberg.*



*Clinic manager and pharmacist Robert Preller, clinic assistant and health worker Nombulelo Matyeke, and nursing sister Phumla Joka in the pharmacy at the HCET clinic on Grootfontein Farm. Health workers visit homes to check on family health, and encourage healthy lifestyles. They also provide HIV / AIDS education and counselling, and distribute anti-retroviral medication.*



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IN LINE with the founding principle of shared responsibility, community members have been closely involved in managing the project. Parents are elected on to a school governing body, which takes decisions about school policy, fund-raising, staff appointments, and discipline. Ongoing control is exercised by a Management Committee comprising the Project Co-ordinator, Administrator, Financial Controller and Manager, as well as the school Principal and one staff member. A Board of Trustees oversees the Trust's management.

Within this framework, parents have honoured their initial commitment to help sustain the project. Besides contributing towards transport fees, they have raised sums which have been used for playground equipment, books and science equipment; parents themselves decide how these funds should be spent. They also contribute 'sweat equity' by helping to maintain and develop the complex. The project's finances are strictly controlled. Donors and Trustees receive annual audited financial statements as well as annual progress reports. Donor reporting requirements are meticulously observed.

THE TRUST has had a major impact on the lives of local people. It has drastically improved the life chances of local farm workers' children, with Thembinkosi Matyeka a prominent example (see page 27). Also, via their participation in the project, parents have learnt that it is possible to assume active control of



*HCET teaching intern Priscilla van der Ranse (left) receives her Further Education and Training ECD certificate from a representative of the Custoda Trust. The HCET assists staff members to obtain formal qualifications.*



Left: Language teaching consultant Anne Hill leads a teacher training session.

## LESSONS FROM DEVELOPMENT PRACTICE

*ADDRESSING THE third Carnegie inquiry into poverty and inequality in South Africa in June 2012, Lesley Osler, the HCET Project Co-ordinator, commented as follows on the Trust's experiences and their implications for sustainable development:*

*'Our project began as a pre-school play group aimed at preparing farm workers' children for Grade 1, based on the assumption that effective engagement with formal education would provide them with the best route out of poverty. This was confirmed by subsequent experience.*

*'The project eventually grew into a multidimensional development programme as it became clear that schooling needed to be amplified by effective parenting, health care and education, as well as ongoing support for graduates.*

*'A careful scrutiny of the trajectories of HCET graduates who have undergone further education and training and started working careers shows that the following factors played a key role:*

- *intensive early childhood development, aimed at preparing children for formal*

- education, and support for learners in their homes;*
- *high-quality primary and secondary schooling, accompanied by the ongoing coaching and professional development of teachers;*
- *sustained support for and mentorship of graduates;*
- *a sustained commitment to personal and professional excellence among project staff;*
- *community participation in school governance; and*
- *the support and co-operation of all major role players.*

*'Lessons to be drawn from this are that development must be multidimensional, and aspects of development cannot be addressed in isolation; various aspect of development must be well co-ordinated; successful and effective development work requires the sustained and unwavering commitment of all those involved in implementing them; and implementing agencies must be staffed by skilled and competent people.'*

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their and their children's lives. These perceptions have been echoed by independent assessments of the project's impact.

The school is no longer attended by farm workers' children alone. It is attracting a growing number of children from nearby towns and villages – an implicit recognition of its worth by other sectors of the local community.

The project has won numerous educational awards. Perhaps its greatest recognition came when, in 1997, it won the State President's Award for Community Initiative in the Northern Cape. A representative of the Trust received the award from President Nelson Mandela at a ceremony held in Cape Town in February 1998, and was a presidential guest of honour at the opening of Parliament. It was a special moment, following the hard work of the preceding decade.

In 1998 Manne Dipico, premier of the Northern Cape, and his executive committee attended the opening of the Masakhane Educare and Technology Centre, which was partly funded with the prize money forming part of the presidential award. Other awards since then include the Community Builder of the Year Award for the Northern Cape (2006); the Ashoka Community Based Initiative Award (2006); and the Impumelelo Platinum Award (2010).

Perhaps the project's biggest achievement has been its success in harmonising public and private resources, and in engineering a lasting consensus among local interest groups – in



*Thembinkosi Matyeka attended HCET institutions from pre-school to Grade 9. Utilising Trust bursaries, he completed his matric in Colesberg, and trained as a welder at the Pelindaba Skills Institute in Pretoria. A star pupil, he became junior South African welding champion, and represented South Africa at the Skills Olympiad in Helsinki. After several years as a senior welding instructor at the West Coast FET College, he now works as a specialist welder for Afrox in Germiston.*



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*Lesley Osler, the HCET Project Co-ordinator, receives the President's Award for Community Initiative in the Northern Cape from President Nelson Mandela, Cape Town, 1998.*

both instances, transcending traditional South African divides. In doing so, it has pointed the way towards new ways of addressing South Africa's development challenges. This has been recognised by the education authorities. One of the reasons why they have co-operated so readily with the project is that they regard it as a pilot for community-based education.

WHILE MUCH has been achieved, the project's co-ordinators now face the challenge of ensuring its sustainability. Besides limited state funding, the project has largely been funded with grants from the South African private sector and international donor agencies active in South Africa. However, seeking grant funding every year is a daunting challenge. International assistance to South Africa is winding down, and the funding environment is becoming increasingly difficult. At the same time, the project has created expectations it must continue to fulfil.

Accordingly, the project co-ordinators have established an Endowment Trust aimed at securing the project's future. All donor agencies, benevolent organisations and individuals are invited to contribute. While domestic developmental challenges remain overwhelming, the Hantam Community Education Trust presents funders with an opportunity to secure the future of a project that continues to redefine the possibilities for sustainable development in our new democracy.

For more information, contact  
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*Learners enjoy a nutritious meal, served at the HCET every day.*

