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THE ALLAN GRAY ORBIS FOUNDATION UPDATE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: Identifying the most suitable candidates for the Allan Gray Fellowship is one of the key challenges facing the Allan Gray Orbis Foundation. Anthony Farr explains the selection process, and describes how the Foundation's programme is gaining momentum.

At the Allan Gray Orbis Foundation we believe we are taking small steps to make a difference to the broader scheme of the challenges that face South Africa. We remain convinced that our consistent nurturing of talent and development of the next wave of leaders and innovators will not only ultimately achieve our mission of value and job creation for society, but also empower many others to create a more prosperous future. One of our greatest challenges is finding the right candidates for the opportunity.

The selection process

In terms of selection for the Allan Gray Fellowship, the Foundation has a simply defined objective: to identify up to 100 of the most suitable candidates. Implementing this has proved challenging, given our uncompromising approach to the quality of candidates we are looking for – individuals with academic and leadership abilities as well as entrepreneurial characteristics. Our challenge is compounded by the poor performance of the South African educational system.

Following four years of selection experience, the Foundation's approach has been refined into three selection campaigns:

1. Early selection – aimed at key schools

The first campaign is known as 'early selection' and is open to the Foundation's 'Circle of Excellence' schools (see **Table 1**, on page 18). These are the schools that have established the best track record for producing Allan Gray Fellows. These schools nominate applicants at the start of the year. This year, we received 212 applications in this targeted campaign. Following our selection process, which involves assessment of application forms, competency-based interviews, psychometric and academic testing and a final three-day selection camp hosted in early April in the Free State, 17 Allan Gray Fellowship offers were made.

The selection camp has a profound impact on attendees, with one commenting that they had 'become part of something revolutionary by being on this camp. I spent time with the future leaders in South Africa and seeing their creativity and character gave me a good feeling about our future'. Another reflected that the 'most amazing aspect was the simple fact that we were surrounded by the greatest young minds in Africa'.

2. Mainstream Grade 12 campaign

The second campaign is the 'mainstream Grade 12 campaign' and is open to all matriculants in the country. The Foundation

Circle of Excellence schools

The Foundation's Circle of Excellence was established last year to honour those schools that historically have produced the strongest candidates for the Allan Gray Fellowship. The Circle of Excellence also provides a platform for working with these institutions to find and develop the country's talent. In the past, these schools have produced around 60% of our selection camp candidates despite representing only 1.5% of the high schools in the country. An initial 73 schools were included in 2008. Twenty-seven new members have been included this year, bringing the total membership to 100 schools (see Table 1 on page 18). Over the last year, principals of member schools were given facilitated strategic workshops by Chantell Ilbury using the 'Mind of a Fox' framework developed by Clem Sunter and herself. This year the Foundation will be working with these schools around the principles of Jim Collin's 'Good to Great'.

creates awareness of this opportunity through a nationwide media campaign – styled this year under the caption ‘Dream Big’. In addition, the Foundation has completed over 100 school visits, educating pupils both on the opportunity and the importance of having an entrepreneurial orientation in life. Finally, we send email and postal correspondence to a further 526 schools.

During the first stage of this campaign candidates write an academic test (known as AARP). At the time of writing, over 2 000 individuals had registered for this test.

3. Campaign for first year university students

The final campaign targets first year university students at the seven placement universities involved in the Allan Gray Fellowship. In 2009, about 2 000 students attended 12 presentations hosted at these campuses. The initial awareness campaigns were built around the phrase ‘Could this be you?’.

Constantly improving the programme

The Foundation continues to seek ways to enhance the journey of development that it embarks upon with the Allan Gray Fellows. This year we built an important new aspect into the programme: second year Allan Gray Fellows participated in a ‘Safari’ experience. The group was taken to the Cederberg for three days in January to foster a common bond, explore the notion of the hero’s journey, and shape their vision and future expectations of the Fellowship.

We believe that all the elements of the programme contribute to the growing achievements of the Allan Gray Fellows. These achievements include:

- Being selected as members of the ‘Brightest Young Minds’ (a summit which brings together the country’s brightest young minds from diverse backgrounds for a week of training and development)
- Winning national budget speech essay competitions
- National innovation fund competition placings at undergraduate level
- Acceptance into international universities
- Placements on international secondments

Honouring the first eight graduates

The Foundation’s inaugural graduation was held in February 2009, where we proudly awarded the Allan Gray Fellowship to the first eight graduates from the programme.

The reflections of these first graduates were perhaps best expressed by one of their number in a recent newspaper article on the Allan Gray Fellowship:

‘At the end of the programme you realise that there is actually a greater responsibility which rests on you. It is to fulfil the vision of the Foundation, which sees a link between entrepreneurship and job creation and poverty alleviation. So this is what I need to give back, not only to the Foundation, but to the country as well.’



The first eight Allan Gray Fellowship graduates.

The Allan Gray Scholarship campaign for placement in 2010 has recently concluded. This campaign started with nearly 7 000 applications. Following assessment of application forms, numeracy and literacy testing, telephonic and face-to-face interviews, and individual school reviews, 45 Allan Gray Scholarship offers were made. This means there will be a total of 78 Allan Gray scholars at 16 schools in 2010.

One of the Allan Gray Scholars at Selborne College captured the significance of the opportunity in a recent letter to the Foundation: *'I constantly remind myself of how lucky and fortunate I am to be in the position I find myself in every day. I want to express my deepest gratitude for all that you have done and your faith in us to succeed in life.'*

TABLE 1 Circle of Excellence schools 2009

GAUTENG	Hershel Girls' School	Durban High School*
Benoni High School*	Livingstone High School	Epworth Independent High School For Girls
Bracken High School*	Paul Roos Gymnasium	Estcourt High School*
Bryanston High School	Rondebosch Boys' High School	Glenwood High School
Cornerstone College	Rustenburg High School For Girls	Hilton College
Crawford College, Pretoria	South African College School (SACS)	Inkamana High School
Crawford Sandton School*	St Cyprian's School	John Ross College
Glenvista High School*	The Settlers' High School	Kearsney College
Greenside High School	Tygerberg High School	Kingsway High School
Hyde Park High School	Westerford High School	Ladysmith High School*
Iona Convent		Maritzburg College
Jeppe High School For Boys	NORTHERN CAPE	Michaelhouse
King Edward VII High School	Kimberley Girls' High School	New Forest High School*
Krugersdorp High School*		Northwood High School*
Loreto Convent School	EASTERN CAPE	Pietermaritzburg Girls' High School
Metropolitan RAUcall	Alexander Road High	Pinetown Girls' High School*
Northcliff High School	Clarendon High School For Girls	Port Shepstone High School
Parktown Boys' High School*	Collegiate Girls' High School	Ridge Park College
Parktown Girls' High School*	Graeme College Boys' High School*	St Catherine's High School
Pretoria Boys' High School	Grey High School	St Francis College Marianhill
Pretoria High School For Girls	Hudson Park High School	Tonga Secondary School*
Queens High School	Newton Technical High School	Westville Boys' High School
Roedean School For Girls	Port Rex Technical High School	Westville Girls' High School
Sandringham High School	Selborne College	
Sekolo Sa Borokgo	St Andrew's College	LIMPOPO
St Alban's College	Stirling High School	Capricorn High School*
St David's Marist Inanda*	Theodor Herzl	Harry Oppenheimer Agricultural High School*
St Dunstan's College*	Ugie High School*	Khanyisa Education Centre
St John's College	Umtata High School*	Mbilwi Secondary School*
St Stithians College	Victoria Girls' High School	
St Mary's School, Waverley	Victoria Park High School*	FREE STATE
The Hill High School*	Westering High School*	Eunice Education Centre
	Zingisa Comprehensive High School*	St Andrew's High School*
WESTERN CAPE		
Bergvliet High School	KWAZULU-NATAL	NORTH WEST PROVINCE
Bishops (Diocesan College)	Carter High School	Potchefstroom Boys' High*
COSAT (Centre of Science and Technology)	Crawford College, Durban (North Coast)	Tiger Kloof Educational Institution
Deutsche Internationale Schule Kapstadt*	Domino Servite School	
DF Malan High School	Durban Girls' High School	

* New schools for 2009