



UNITY COLLEGE

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UNITY COLLEGE ANNUAL UPDATE 2009

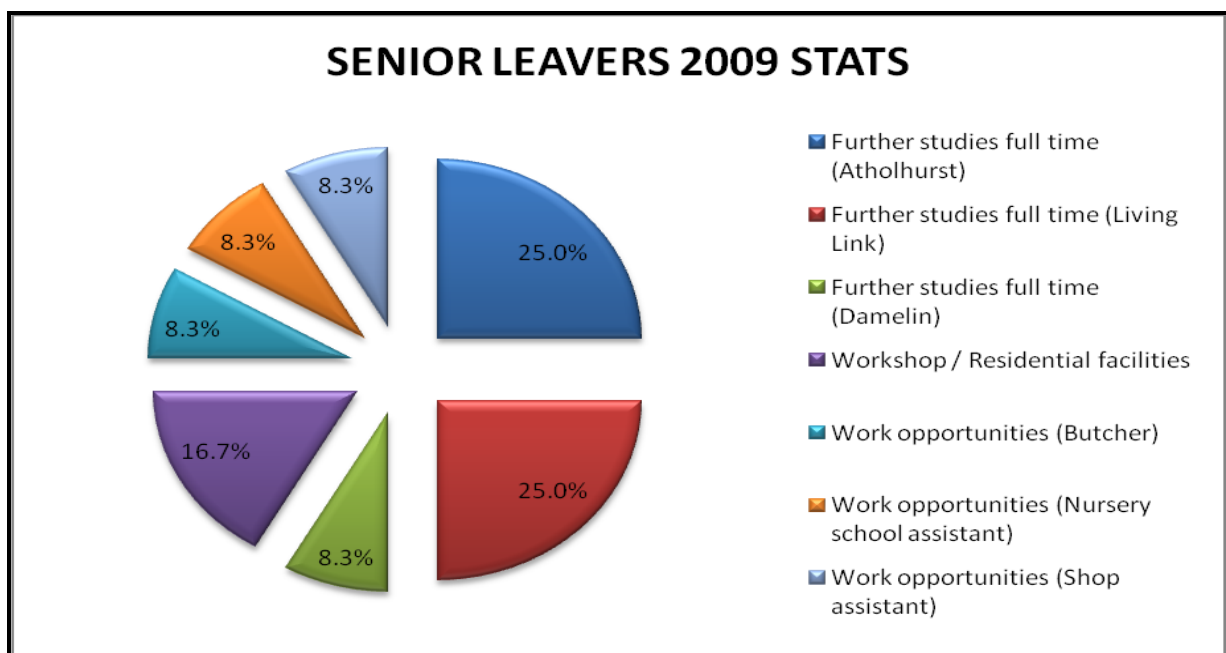
It's hard to believe that another year has come and gone and has brought with it a kaleidoscope of achievements and challenges.



HEADS REPORT:

At the beginning of the year we learned that the environmental impact assessment (E.I.A) needed to begin again and this would delay the start of the building process. The E.I.A was eventually declined in December 2009 and an appeal process immediately started. We had thought the new school would be completed and we would have moved into facilities that provide us with classrooms, workshops and catering facilities, to promote vocational training and the skills necessary for independence for our very special learners. We remain optimistic about the appeal but have decided to consider other options should the appeal to build on the chosen site be unsuccessful.

SENIOR LEAVERS 2009:



Key strengths of the school remain the individual development plan created for each learner which aims at academic, social and emotional growth being achieved. Our integrated therapy approach means that goals achieved in individual or small group therapy sessions are transferred into the classroom. Limited numbers of learners within each class equates us getting to know each learner really well, their likes, dislikes and style of learning. Vocational training options offered in our senior phase continue to add value in offering our seniors a chance at employment and further study opportunities when they leave Unity. Senior learners continue to try their best with the writing of exams and achieving formal qualifications.

EXAM RESULTS:

ABET Literacy – level 1, 2, 3 – 14 learners wrote & passed exams.

ABET Numeracy – For the first time ever, 2 of our children this year will work on and write their level 4.

Knowledge network (computers) – There are four levels within the computer range, 70% being the pass. 26 learners successfully graduated with this national certification.

Assistant chef – Award in food safety in catering and the Award in healthier food and special diets – 70% is also the pass mark for this course. 5 achieved the first award, and 2 the second. This gives them an international qualification.

It is always amazing to me how the general public come to our aid with support and assistance. We are amazingly blessed to have a number of Unity Angels. Jenny Broughton volunteered as a classroom assistant in our intermediate 2/3 combined class on Monday's Wednesday's and Friday's. Jenny Broughton commented that she developed a passion for these very special children. She worked with empathy, understanding, patience and a deep understanding of the learner's lives at school. "Thank-you Unity College, all staff and children for giving me such a wonderful opportunity to gain experience in such a nurtured environment". Claire Yorke completed her psychology internship at Unity. Coming from a mainstream educational environment, working at Unity was an eye opening experience.



Then we were joined by twelve "bright young ones". Students studying their Masters in Business Leadership. UNISA assigned two projects; one to assess the operational requirements of the school and secondly to create a sustainable fund raising event for Unity. A spectacular winterball hosted by Oakfield Farm set business people's feet dancing to the tunes of Panama's Latin-American music. The students achieved 80% for both assignments and raised R65 000.00 towards our school fee assistance programme. This gives identified special needs learners from the nearby locations an opportunity to attend Unity.

Three German students spent six weeks at Unity assisting and learning to support our learners. Their assistance at the Unity concert as well as in classes was an asset to the school.

Our learners had the opportunity to participate in a SETA accredited horticultural course. The children worked through modules on basic plant structure, watering, soil preparation, fertilizer, lawns, propagation, weed control, irrigation, etc

Exciting additions to the curriculum occurred within the intermediate section of the school, adding interest groups to their week. Included were photography, survival skills, event planning, music and singing, container gardening, eco-awareness, crafts and poetry; these add to the breadth of learning.

It remains an incredible honour to be part of the Unity team. We continue on our quest of being the school of choice for intellectually challenged learners.

Thanks for your time and commitment to Unity.

Handwritten signature of Val Witt in black ink.

**Val Witt
Principal**