

MEDIA RELEASE

R600 000 Consumer Studies Kitchen Make-over Changes Lives At Severely Under-resourced Durban School

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A R600 000 make-over of a Consumer Studies Kitchen at a severely under-resourced Durban school has changed the lives of teachers and learners battling against the odds and has prompted the on-site development of food gardens and a lunch club to assist vulnerable learners.

Lakehaven Secondary School, located in Durban's Sea Cow Lake area, serves learners from impoverished communities in Siyanda, Richmond Farm, KwaMashu, Ntuzuma and Quarry Heights, but crumbling infrastructure and old, non-functional equipment has made effective consumer studies an increasing challenge.

The school's financial woes were recently brought to the attention of the South African Muslim Charitable Trust (SAMCT) and the organisation stepped into the breach with a mega-make-over and upgrade of the school's Consumer Studies Kitchen.

Commenting during the official hand-over of the spanking new facility, SAMCT representative, Mr Shabir Chohan said: "A sound and effective education is the right of every child and forms the foundation for success in life. Regrettably, so many KwaZulu-Natal learners do not yet enjoy the fair and equal educational opportunities they deserve.

Lakehaven Secondary School is just such an educational institution.

"This is an under-resourced urban school serving learners from severely disadvantaged backgrounds and consequently faces enormous financial challenges; challenges it battles daily to overcome. In spite of having to make do with crumbling infrastructure and inadequate equipment, this is a school which refuses to buckle under the constraints it faces. This is a school with a staff complement committed to delivering superior education in the face of immense limitations and, to their credit, the school's learners thrive under the educators' dedicated tuition," Mr Chohan added.

He said that although lacking the basic needs of a normal Consumer Studies facility, staff members 'pulled out all the stops' to ensure learners received the best education possible.

"In spite of lacking running water, suffering the health risks associated with blocked waste pipes and having to deal with old and often non-functioning equipment, the school has over the years consistently achieved a 100% pass rate in Consumer Studies. This is no mean feat, given the extreme conditions under which both teachers and learners operate at Lakehaven Secondary School."

"Their drive and determination is to be greatly commended. One can only wonder at the potential if the Consumer Studies Kitchen was able to run optimally," Mr Chohan said.

He stressed the need to ensure the best possible learning environment, teaching techniques and equipment provision in schools if children were to become capable of taking on and overcoming the challenges of life in the future.

Mr Chohan added: "Knowledge gained through education unlocks entrepreneurial and employment opportunities, which provide the financial wherewithal to enjoy an improved quality of life. A sound education is, therefore, key to escaping poverty and yet it continues being denied to so many of our young people. In view of this, the South African Muslim Charitable Trust was pleased to be able to intercede at Lakehaven Secondary School, providing for a complete make-over and upgrade of the Consumer Studies Kitchen, valued at R600 000. This, we believe, will make a telling difference to the school's Consumer Studies endeavours and will most certainly benefit the learners taking this course."

Created in 2008, the SAMCT provides funding, services and other resources for the improvement of the lives of the vulnerable, deprived and disadvantaged. It has successfully delivered sizeable assistance solutions throughout the country, irrespective of race or religion and works to support needy organisations in the fields of health, social development, poverty alleviation and education.

"We were extremely pleased to have learned of Lakehaven Secondary School's plight and to have been able to remove one of the major difficulties the school faced, creating an environment in which both teachers and learners may now thrive and realise their full potential. Importantly, too, the make-over will now enable the development of lunch clubs at the school for the benefit of the most vulnerable of its learners and, in this endeavour, will draw on its planned on-site food gardens for produce.

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For more information about SAMCT and its Lakehaven Secondary School Consumer Studies Kitchen make-over donation, please contact:

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