



# Woodlands International College

## Junior College Newsletter

### 19 July 2019

*Dear Woodlands Family,*

Today I would like to talk about heroes. I guess this idea was inspired by the fact that we are celebrated Mandela Day yesterday (18 July). I think we would all acknowledge that Nelson Mandela is a worldwide icon and a hero. Why is that? What is it that we value? Someone's achievements or accomplishments? The kind of person they are/were? The example they set for us all? Well, in Mr Mandela's case I think it was all of the aforementioned points!

However, I think the world sometimes tends to make heroes of people who are not worthy of that status. I think of people like a well-known cyclist of a few years back, a well-known athlete, a well-known golfer, a well-known cricketer, well-known singers and actors, a well-known rugby player...I won't mention names, you all know who they were/are. All of these people achieved "hero status" in their lifetimes, only to come crashing down to earth soon after the facts of their indiscretions were made public...I will admit that I battled to believe the stories in the beginning. Especially the cyclist and the cricketer. How much of that "hero-worship" if you like, comes purely from what they've achieved? Some people believe that we should separate a person's sporting, or musical, or cultural achievements from their private lives, or their personal conduct...Should we? What about that idea of example set...? Should we make someone into a hero because they are an amazing soccer player, but as a person or individual their conduct is shocking? I think not. For me, the person should be the whole package: their achievements, as well as the kind of person they are, as demonstrated by the rest of their interactions with the world.

It's often interesting to ask a little person who their hero is. Very often they come back with the answer "Mom" or "Dad" or "Grandad". So why would that be? I guess because their dad, in their eyes, is strong and will always protect them, or their mom will always look after them? I think it also relates to the example set by their parents. Hopefully, it will be an example demonstrating strong moral values first... You, as a parent, are that hero for your child. Use that exalted position wisely.

#### **MANDELA DAY:**

A huge shout out to all our amazing parents who donated shoes to our Nelson Mandela 67 minutes campaign. The idea was to donate shoes that were too small or not being used anymore, not broken shoes...Well I was blown away, all of you parents donated lots of shoes! Thank you. Then our little people from Grade 1 to 6 spent their 67 minutes cleaning, washing and polishing all the shoes. Thank you to our little people and their teachers (who bought into the project in a big way), in particular Mrs Les Ponte, of our Outreach programme, who helped to coordinate the project.

The project started when I participated in an event where a number of children ran a 4km race, and although these guys were phenomenal athletes, they ran with broken shoes, the wrong shoes or no shoes. I decided at that point that Woodlands could assist and our 67 minutes Nelson Mandela project began. The following charities or organisations were assisted Tsakane Athletic Club, St Anthony's, Afrika Tikkun, Africa Believe Foundation. We decided not to publicize our efforts on Facebook or any other social media platform, in the spirit of Nelson Mandela, who would have preferred a humbler approach...



So remember, never, ever, give up.

*Dr G Pienaar*