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## **Afrisam Steps In To Create Possibilities For Maths And Science Learners & Teachers In Kimberley**

Leading construction materials group AfriSam, has partnered with the Maths and Science Leadership Academy (MSLA) to create possibilities of quality education aimed at learners and teachers across 38 schools in Kimberley.

AfriSam's commitment to the initiative is in line with its Corporate Social Responsibility objectives of empowering and equipping communities with adequate knowledge and skills, as well as providing them with the tools and facilities to become self-reliant and sustainable.

MSLA will work closely with AfriSam's Ulco cement operation and assist in contributing towards the cement factory's mission of producing highly skilled engineers from the surrounding communities.

"We are proud to be part of this remarkable initiative. Our hope is for the Programme to encourage learners to stay in school and get an education, with the vision of a better future for themselves and their communities. Our role as AfriSam Ulco is to create possibilities and uphold our legacy of building communities by making it possible for our people to realise their dreams for the future benefit of the Northern Cape and hopefully South Africa as well," says Angus Towell, General Manager at AfriSam's Ulco cement factory.

A total of 440 learners between Grade 7 and Grade 12 from disadvantaged communities are set to benefit through the MSLA Maths Pi-oneers Programme which aims to provide them with opportunities to develop Maths problem-solving skills. The Programme will also empower 20 Maths teachers by strengthening their content knowledge and bringing about change in their own approach to teaching Maths.

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The programme, which is conducted on Fridays and Saturdays, is designed to develop the passion for maths in learners from an early age, increase the number of learners who opt for maths at Grade 10, increase the pass rate to more than 50% and increase the supply of students who register for Engineering, Scientists and Medical Practitioners at Tertiary Institutions.

The MSLA Maths Pi-oneers Programme has been a successful feeder programme to the academy's Grade 9 to 12 Maths and Science programme since 2010. Learners who progress to tertiary level are also offered support in registering and obtaining bursaries to further their education.

"The Maths and Science Learning Academy is extremely proud to have established this partnership with AfriSam. We are most grateful to have the means to provide our youth with greater opportunities that will cement their futures as engineers and professionals of calibre. We salute AfriSam for being a company that is passionate about making a difference through investing in education," says Anne Maclean, Managing Director and founder of MSLA.

AfriSam's sponsorship of the programme includes contributing towards operational costs, transportation for the learners, food, stationery, teacher's wages, internal staff costs and prizes for top learners.

On 29 August 2015, 376 learners from 40 schools across Kimberley participated in the first Grade 7-11 event sponsored by AfriSam. The learners and teachers gathered at Diamantveld High School for the Maths Pi-oneers top achiever's award ceremony. Top learners in the programme were awarded with cash prizes, certificates and AfriSam goodies including caps, back packs, examination pads and stationery. The top learners will be shortlisted for the 2016 bursary selections upon receiving their final Matric results.

"We are looking forward to the brilliant engineers that this programme will produce in the near future," says Towell.

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## **ABOUT AFRISAM (PTY) LTD:**

Founded as Anglovaal Portland Cement Company Limited in 1934, AfriSam is today the leading black-controlled building construction materials group in Southern Africa. With operations in South Africa, Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland the company has nearly 2 000 employees and an annual production capacity of over five million tons of cement. It has six cement production facilities, eight cement depots, 17 quarries and aggregate operations, 42 readymix concrete plants and a Ground Granulated Blast Furnace Slag (GGBFS) milling plant. The company also has a 66.6 percent interest in Tanzania-based and listed, Tanga Cement Company.

## **ABOUT THE MATHS AND SCIENCE LEADERSHIP ACADEMY:**

The Maths & Science Leadership Academy (MSLA) is a non-profit organisation that, in partnership with the Northern Cape DoE and with funding from sponsors, has been running maths, science and leadership programmes for learners with potential from poor backgrounds in Kimberley since 2007 with great results and many “WOW” stories. The organisation started from very humble beginnings as a direct response to the challenges facing maths and science education, especially in the Kimberley area. MSLA currently operates from a very small campus in Kimberley which is home to 316 Grade 9 – 12 learners participating in the maths & science programmes.

Since February 2015 the organisation’s impact has spread beyond Kimberley to include a maths and science programme run Boshof targeting 200 Grade 9 & 10 learners at 2 different schools. Since 2009 the organisation has been running the Maths Pi-oneers Programme targeting 440 Grade 7 – 12 learners, as well as 20 maths teachers. In 2014 this programme was extended to include 300 Grade 4 – 6 learners and 18 teachers from schools in Kimberley. Each year MSLA runs very exciting STEM

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programmes during National Science Week targeting Grade 6 – 11 learners, teachers, professionals and the broader public.

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