



## 2017 End of Year School Highlights

*Dear Friends & Supporters of Christel House Europe,*

*It has been another busy but fruitful year for Christel House around the globe, and a lot has happened over the last 12 months. We hope you will enjoy this round-up of highlights from India and South Africa.*

*As none of this would have been possible without your friendship and support – a heartfelt thank you!*

*With very best wishes,*

*All at Christel House Europe*



### **INDIANA'S FIRST LADY INSPIRED BY CHRISTEL HOUSE INDIA**

The children of Christel House India welcomed Indiana's First Lady Janet Holcomb to the Bangalore learning centre – and gave her a warm experience she says she'll never forget. The First Lady was travelling with her husband, Indiana Governor Eric Holcomb, who was visiting India on a trade mission. The First Lady was impressed with the school and the students. "The kids are getting a world class education and the school is helping break cycles of extreme poverty in this region," she said. The First Lady shared her love of music, reading and art with the children. "The arts are universal and I left so inspired by this visit." As a memento of her visit, the school presented her with a beautiful painting produced by a Christel House India art student.

**92% of Christel House India graduates are going to college or have a job.  
Nationally, less than 10% of Indian students graduate from high school.**

## ***CELEBRATING SUCCESS AT YEAR END IN SOUTH AFRICA***

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The annual end of year assembly at Christel House South Africa is always an energetic and joyous celebration of the achievements of the school year. In addition to outstanding student music and dance performances, this year's ceremony recognized the amazing success of the school's new Robotics team, which won gold medals in its very first competition at the World Robot Olympiad. Nicky Sheridan, CEO of the school in Ottery, was also honoured for his years of service. Students surprised the out-going school leader by presenting him with a beautiful portrait painted by the art class.

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## ***CAMP ROYAL A HOLIDAY ADVENTURE***

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68 eighth graders at Christel House India - Bangalore, were invited guests to the Royal Goan Beach Club in Goa, for an all-expenses paid 'Camp Royal' holiday, sponsored by the Karma Group. An annual event since 2002, 'Camp Royal' visits include accommodation, meals, swimming, painting, magic shows, games, competitions, and of course, play time on the beach. Esperanca Patricio, President & Managing Director, Karma Group, India & the Middle East noted, "The children are always so amazing and so full of joy. It is wonderful to have them stay and I have no doubt that we are all much better people after they visit. Thank you Christel House for sending them to us!"

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## ***PARENTS ARE LEARNING AT CHRISTEL HOUSE, TOO***

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Technology can open opportunities. So, when a group of parents at Christel House South Africa showed an interest in learning basic computer skills, Chamelle de Silva, the Learning Support teacher, volunteered to create a program for them. Dozens of parents have benefited. The free course is taught on Saturdays, helping the adults to improve their communication skills through technology, and ultimately helping to make them more marketable in the workforce. Michele Wiener, Deputy Principal at the school, also volunteers teaching and finds it fulfilling. "Seeing adults achieve is as rewarding as seeing our little ones excel," she says.

**For the 8th consecutive year,  
100% Christel House South Africa students passed their graduation exams.**



## ***HARSHITHA SHARES WHAT SHE LEARNS AT CHRISTEL HOUSE***

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Harshitha has been attending Christel House India – Bangalore since she was a little girl, and now she shares what she has learned with others. This seventh grader is very grateful. “Christel House has taught me how to study. They have taught me how to read.” Now, Harshitha takes what she learns at Christel House back to the less fortunate children in her neighbourhood. She even teaches them how to speak a little English. “Everyone should be happy. Everyone should get an education,” she says. To see Harshitha’s video, please visit: <http://christelhouse.org/our-stories/263/harshitha-shares-what-she-learns-at-christel-house/>

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## ***SOUTH AFRICA STUDENT AWARDED FIRST BURSARY AWARD***



Success in the making! A leading international property company has honoured a Christel House South Africa 12th grader with its very first scholarship. Lauren D. was awarded the recognition from Growthpoint Properties through Growsmart, the company’s school literacy initiative launched in 2010. The bursary will fund and support Lauren as she begins her post-secondary studies at Stellenbosch University, one of Africa’s leading universities. Coming from a very poor family, Lauren recognizes that the opportunity to go to college is the next step in an amazing journey of hope. “Lauren is a natural leader and mentor to several classmates,” said Nicky Sheridan, CEO at the school. “This is a well-deserved honour and you can bet your bottom dollar, she will grasp the opportunity with both hands and excel not just in university but in the commercial world thereafter as well.”



## ***CHRISTEL HOUSE EXPANDING TO JAMAICA***

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Christel House will be opening a new learning centre in Jamaica, scheduled to commence in August 2019. The Memorandum of Understanding entered into with the Government of Jamaica, will see Christel House Jamaica being built in phases, starting with kindergarten to grade 2. Classes will be added each year, eventually serving about 840 students through grade 13. Jamaica is the second most-impoverished island in the Caribbean, and the new facility will be built on a 10-acre parcel of land near Kingston. The full story can be found at: <http://christelhouse.org/press-release/65/christel-house-expanding-to-jamaica/>

**At Christel House, Character Development is just as important as Academics**  
**100% students participate in service learning programmes annually**



## **ROBOTICS TEAM BRINGS HOME GOLD**

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A team of grade 10 students from Christel House South Africa brought home the gold when they won the World Robot Olympiad in Cape Town. The amazing engineering accomplishment is even more impressive because it's the first time, students Storm S. and Siyamthanda N., had ever competed in a robotics contest! For the competition, the teammates were required to work together to assemble a robot to solve a specific problem. The fastest robot around the course that completed all the assigned tasks successfully was then declared the winner. "We won, we actually won," declared Storm after the event. "The Robo Knights" from Christel House South Africa are now the top ranked team in the country and competed in the national competition in Johannesburg. Coach Cedric Esterhuizen said the students were very excited to represent their school at such a prestigious event. Esterhuizen is proud of his student's dedication and their talent. "Teamwork is essential in this competition. It's a 21st century skill we nurture at Christel House South Africa."

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## **STUDENTS AND THEIR SIBLINGS EXPERIENCE COMPUTERS FOR FIRST TIME**

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Many youngsters in India have never seen a computer before, but now students at Naya Raipur are getting a hands-on introduction to the technology. A new computer lab was waiting for classes when they returned from their summer break. All students from kindergarten through grade 3 are getting time in the lab. Teachers have noted that even though the children have never used computers before, they have an instinctive understanding and are comfortable using the mouse. As part of a community outreach programme, older siblings are able to benefit too. Twenty-three older siblings who attend government schools now visit Christel House twice a week to receive computer training. It's a special educational opportunity as most government schools in India, especially in rural areas, do not have computer labs. The project has been so successful, with 100% attendance, that the school plans to continue the outreach program and enrol another group of sibling students soon.

**At Christel House, students get two nutritious meals and a snack daily, 80% of their daily nutritional needs, which means family members at home have more to eat. In 2016, 293,200 meals were served to students at Christel House South Africa & 453,380 in India.**

## **ZAHRAH'S DREAM INSPIRES CROWD**

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Zahrah A. has big plans for her future. The Christel House South Africa 9th grader will study to be a lawyer when she graduates. But this bright, focused student aspires to do more — she wants to become President of South Africa! Zahrah's comment drew applause when she spoke at the 2017 Christel House Concert in Indianapolis. Growing up in Manenberg, one of the most dangerous and poorest townships in South Africa, Zahrah feels the legacy of apartheid has created a wide gap between the rich and poor. Christel House offers hope. "Christel House gives us hope because of the many opportunities and experiences they expose us to. They believe in us. They believe that we can actually become something one day and break the cycle of poverty."

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## **SOUTH AFRICA GRADS OFFER THEIR EXPERIENCE TO STUDENTS**

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A couple of Christel House South Africa graduates, Xolisa Wulana and Zola Maphila, have started a mentorship programme for grade 12 learners at the school in Ottery. Xolisa Wulana, a recent Bachelor of Commerce graduate said "as graduates of this amazing school, we felt we needed to do something to contribute to the Christel House circle of life. This mentorship program is our way of giving back." Wulana shared his story of joining Christel House with the crowd. "I walked through the gates of Christel House in 2002 as a shy seven-year-old boy. Coming from a township like Langa, where a child is more likely to do drugs and go to prison than to school, Christel House saved me and gave me the best possible education. Everything I am today is thanks to the values Christel House has taught me." The alumni mentors are working with 2017 grade 12s to help them make the transition to secondary education or employment. The mentors and their mentees have met several times and are in constant contact.

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## **NAYA RAIPUR INAUGURATES NEW SCHOOL FACILITY**

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Christel House India – Naya Raipur inaugurated its new school building on February 10, 2017. The ceremony was overseen by Dr. Raman Singh, Honourable Chief Minister, Chhattisgarh (seen here with students) and Christel DeHaan, Founder and CEO of Christel House.

**The College & Careers Programme, unique to Christel House, guides students for up to five years after they graduate. And it works!**  
**93% of graduates globally are working, studying or both.**