



SAHETI ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – WEDNESDAY 07 JUNE 2017
REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN HELLENIC EDUCATIONAL AND
TECHNICAL INSTITUTE

In Memoriam 2016 /2017

1. Mrs Dixi Nicolatos (August 2016) - Alumna
2. Mrs Lynette Ellis (September 2016) –wife of Father Ellis (Founding Head of SAHETI School)
3. Mrs Katy Zervos (October 2016) - Grandparent
4. Mrs Ria Kotze (November 2016) – Former parent
5. Mrs Thembi Muofhe (November 2016) – Former educator, parent and grandparent
6. Mr Costis Stephanopoulos (November 2016) – Former President of the Hellenic Republic
7. Mrs Anna Molfese (December 2016) – Former grandparent
8. Ms Maria Skosana (January 2017) – Long standing member of staff
9. Mr Nicolas Leonsins (February 2017) – Friend of SAHETI
10. Mr Panayiotis Manikas (February 2017) Former parent and stalwart of SAHETI
11. Mr Manoli Stratoudakis (February 2017) – Former grandparent
12. Mr Manoli Yiannoulakis (February 2017) – Former grandparent
13. Mr Vasili Lambropoulos (February 2017) – Former grandparent and parent of staff member
14. Mr Albert Kirstein – (April 2017) – parent of staff member
15. Mr Dimitri Nicolopoulos (April 2017) - Grandparent and parent of alumni
16. Mr Cosmas Cavaleros (April 2017)- Great Benefactor and former parent
17. Ms Rejoice Moyo (May 2017) – Member of staff
18. Mr Christos Bantounas (May 2017) – Former chairman of the Greek Community of the Vaal Triangle
19. Mrs Evthokia Vostanis (June 2017) - Past parent, grandparent and former treasurer of the Ladies Committee.

Good evening all and thank you for taking the time to be here with us tonight.

It gives me great pleasure to address you at our annual general meeting and review the year that has just passed. It is indeed a pleasure because it has been a successful year, very busy, without major controversies, where all the energy input, from board members and staff has been positive and yielded great results for the school.

For this, I have to thank my team, all the board members who have volunteered their time and expertise toward serving the school, and particularly the Executive team who have made a more direct contribution to the affairs of the school. I do consider myself fortunate to have a team of professionals around me. A special mention to the school's senior management and in particular Mr Warwick Taylor

for their passionate approach in everything concerning the school. This is what separates us from any other school.

I feel honoured to be the custodian of SAHETI's culture and ethos and I will do my utmost to enhance its characteristic identity which is that of a family and a caring place. A place where people will not get attracted because they will receive the highest salaries or achieve the best marks, but where they will be taken care of and assisted to reach their full potential.

Our performance as a school should be measured in relation to our strategic plan, risk management and sustainability (Economic, Environmental and Social).

Our strategy, comprises of seven pillars:

1. **Advancing our students:** this is the core of our existence and everything we do should directly or indirectly aim at this focal point. Our matric results, university entrance levels and general carrier success of our scholars are testimonials to the good grounding SAHETI offers.
2. **Developing our teachers:** a substantial amount of time and money is being invested into the development of our staff. In this regard, our budget has allowed in the region of R1.5 million rand annually for 2016 and 2017. We take pride in the high standard of our teachers. SAHETI staff is very sought after and the promotional positions offered to them by other schools are proof of their high standard.
3. **Supporting Hellenism:** the Greek ethos and culture are the bases of SAHETI's DNA. The twinning with the community schools of Bloemfontein and the Vaal Triangle, and more recently with Doukas school in Athens are prime examples of supporting and promoting Hellenism. I would like to read an extract of the letter received from the Doukas school after the visit of our group of students and educators earlier this year. The Greek support plan, which takes place on Saturdays at the school premises is well established now. This year we have around 70 children from the different communities.
4. **Sporting excellence:** lots of emphasis has been given in this field over the last few years and the sporting results of 2016 and 2017 so far demonstrate we are on the right trajectory.
5. **Cultural excellence:** the school's house play festival and the very recent success of SAHETI reaching the FEDA competition finals, is testimonial to the school's high standard. The well-established Bouzouki band and all the other cultural activities of the school provide a rich diversity for the scholars to get involved with and enrich themselves.
6. **World class facilities:** the official opening of the Hellenic Center and the nearly complete perimeter wall are the latest additions to our facilities. The traffic decongestion project is currently underway and expecting finality before the end of the year. Mr Taylor and his team are currently working on the list of the facilities required over the next few years, which will be tabled for the board's consideration and planning.
7. **Supporting our outreach programme:** this is reaching out to our Greek and broader South African community. We believe that diversity is not a nice-to-have but an integral part of the sustainability and it is entrenched into the SAHETI constitution. A substantial amount of energy and money is invested in the form of subsidies, bursaries, donations and other activities, thus making a significant contribution to the broader community.

The above strategy is currently under revision by the strategy sub-committee and proposals for current additional requirements are expected for submission to the Board for consideration. In this regard, I

would like to thank Advocate Naki Stylianou and Mr Warwick Taylor for driving this process, as well as everyone else who is taking part.

The Economic sustainability of the school is on solid ground. The policy of only spending what we have is still adhered to. Therefore, the school remains debt free. However, as the financial report will highlight, given the current tough economic climate in the country, we are concerned about several parents who might not be able to pay their fees. In this regard, I am glad to say that the SAHETI Trust is now registered. We are expecting the Trust to be able to provide some financial assistance to the school community soon. Sincere thanks to our Life Vice President, Mr Spyros Bylos who chairs the committee, and all the trustees who are making their expertise available. At this point I would like to emphasise that the financial sustainability of the school is not the sole responsibility of the Treasurer and/or the Chairman, but that of every member of the board. Every board member has the duty to care, act in good faith and be diligent while being a board member.

The two PTAs continue to be an integral part of the school's activities and, besides raising the much appreciated funds, they keep the energy of the parents positive and give them the right channels to express it for the benefit of the school. Many thanks to the two chairpersons and their committees.

Our heartfelt thanks to the Ladies Committee who every year make a significant contribution of funds through their annual ball toward SAHETI's infrastructure. On 4 June 2017, they hosted yet another successful event, even with the limited number of debutants they had this year.

The Alumni office is also well established, hosting several activities during each year. The organised events are fun, reunite ex-SAHETIANS and raise funds for current parents who are in financial need. It is impressive to witness so many alumni visiting South Africa from overseas to take part in reunion functions to see their school and meet old friends again. They are impressed by how far the school has developed over the years. Congratulations to the chairman of the Alumni office, Mr Gary Ttappous and his team.

The George Bizos SAHETI Scholarship and Bursary Fund committee is working tirelessly with the planning of several events to celebrate Advocate George Bizos' (Life Vice President), 90th birthday. All proceeds will go to the fund to assist children in financial need, to obtain a good education at SAHETI. Our thanks go to the chairman Prof Damon Bizos and his team.

Reviewing the past year, there is a fundamental question we need to ask ourselves: How are we smarter as a board and school than we were a year ago?

Finally, on a very positive note, I would like to quote Mr Terrence Quick, the deputy foreign minister of Greece who, in his recent visit to South Africa stated that he has not seen another school like SAHETI in the Greek diaspora and that the Greek community of South Africa must be very proud.

For this, I would like to end my address with a big thank you to everyone who has contributed towards establishing and growing SAHETI.

Dr Andreas Stephanou

Chairman-SAHETI Board