

EUNICE HIGH SCHOOL

*JOCK MEIRING STREET
PARK WEST, BLOEMFONTEIN*

*TEL : (051) 444 1765
FAX : (051) 444 1760*

PRESS RELEASE

DATE 23 November 2009

TO VOLKSBLAD 051- 4306949

*SENDER MR PAUL CASSAR – HEADMASTER – EUNICE HIGH SCHOOL
082 651 6396 / 051 - 444 1765 / FAX: 051 - 444 1760*

Eunice's headmaster, Mr Paul Cassar, and two award-winning teachers, Mrs Saretjie Musgrave and Mrs Rae Gagiano, returned from Brazil recently where they were guests at Microsoft's Innovative Education Forum held at Salvador's Pestana Bahia Hotel. On the north-east coast of Brazil, Salvador was the country's capital for 200 years in earlier days.

Microsoft has selected Eunice to join its global community of 30 'Pathfinder' schools all of which attended the four day conference. Eunice is the only South African school which is now linked on a regular basis to both other selected schools and to the world's top education minds provided by means of 'Virtual University' Live Meeting training sessions. A virtual university session is basically a conference call, along with a powerpoint presentation so that the presenter can share slides while talking through his or her presentation.

Eunice has had the opportunity of sharing best practices in schools so as to drive innovation and technology integration in a range of 2010 projects.

The Brazil Conference had two tracks; one for award winning teachers from throughout the world and one for the 30 Microsoft Pathfinder schools.

Mrs Rae Gagiano's Art Anytime Anywhere project gained national and African recognition in Johannesburg and in Mauritius which earned her the chance to present her material to a selection of the world's best teachers.

Mrs Saretjie Musgrave, who has accepted a post at the University of the Free State to lead innovation in the province's schools, earned her a trip to Brazil through international acclaim for her Spread the Sunshine project which featured Grade 10 learners providing technology solutions for the challenges of disabled people. Her project was so well received that, in the last year, she has been invited – all expenses paid – to conferences in Accra, Hong Kong, Mauritius, Washington, Atlanta, Salvador and Doha.

Commenting on the Brazil Conference and on Eunice's inclusion in an elite community of schools, Mr Cassar said: " It was a truly humbling experience to listen to the foremost education minds in the company of uniquely successful schools from such a variety of settings. Nothing drives innovation more than positive energy and Eunice has that in abundance. Anyone who visited the recent Christmas Market or saw a performance of Eunice's Aladdin, two innovative projects right at the end of a busy year, cannot but witness that infectious positive energy. It's the lifeblood of world class education."

Mr Cassar also reported that Anglo American, through its Epoch and Optima Trusts, had recently followed up its R 440 000 investment in Eunice Mathematics in 2009 with a R 270 000 grant in 2010. This sponsorship has funded a Mathematics Computer network, SMART interactive boards, extra Maths camps and extra tutor teachers among other initiatives.

Reza Bardien, South African director of Microsoft's Partners in Learning Programme, writes: "Locally we've been thinking hard about which South African school best represents the potential to grow further into a world class academic institution based on the level of innovation, creativity, progressive thinking and courage to re- imagine learner-centered education which is locally relevant and impactful. To date, Eunice High School has instilled nothing but hope and confidence and we're pleased to have (you) embrace both the challenges as well as the opportunity to engage with other Innovative Schools worldwide as equal partners."

Yours sincerely

Paul Cassar
Headmaster

Photograph attached:

Mrs Rae Gagiano (left) and Mrs Saretjie Musgrave with Mr Paul Cassar, Headmaster of Eunice, on their return from Salvador in Brazil where Eunice was included in Microsoft's elite community of 30 global Pathfinder schools.