

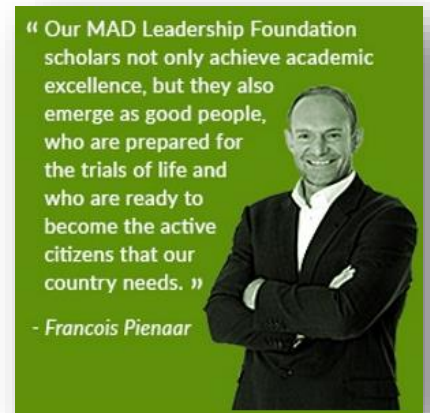
## GRADNECIA PLAATJIES

Gradnecia Plaajies is one of Hope and Lights much cherished foundational students. She started at Hope and Light in 2012 in the Pre-Primary School known as Speelnessie. From the age of 6, Grade 1, Gradnecia has received achievement awards for being top of her class for her academic performance and her overall hardworking nature. As such, over her time at Hope and Light, we have come to know her for her excellent academic performance, diligence, work ethic, leadership capacity and overall humility and kindness.

When Gradnecia reached Grade 7, 2020, she was elected as the Head Girl of Hope and Light Primary School by her teachers and peers. It was over the course of this year that an application was made to the MAD Leadership Foundation for a bursary to support her into her future.

## MAD LEADERSHIP FOUNDATION

Make A Difference (MAD) Leadership Foundation is a Non-Profit Company that strives to develop academically talented scholars with leadership potential into future leaders for South Africa. With this vision, they aim to develop carefully selected scholars as leaders in their chosen field through the platform of education. The scholars define their own parameters of leadership applicable to their lives, but they are all expected to step forward whenever there is a need to drive positive change. These leaders do what is right, not just what is popular; they inspire others and they Make a Difference, whatever their job title.



## THE APPLICATION PROCESS AND GOING FORWARD



An application was made for the FEM Education Foundation MAD bursary early in 2020. After the initial application consisting of an intensive written interview about Gradnecia and her personal life goals and ambitions Gradnecia was invited for a formal interview with the MAD Leadership team. She thereafter underwent several interviews, an IQ assessment test as well as personality tests to ascertain whether she was an appropriate candidate for the program. In August, 2020, I received a call notifying me that Gradnecia had stood out to them as a mature individual with an extraordinary intellectual capacity who proved to have a heart for making a difference. We were formally notified of Gradnecia having received the bursary in September, 2020.

The bursary provided her with a leadership mentor from the MAD program and encouraged her to go to any High School and University of her choice with fully paid for tuition, accommodation, transportation, and any other needs that may arise over the course of her academic future. Gradnecia has chosen to move to a very prominent school in Somerset West, Somerset College, that follows a Cambridge Academic Curriculum.

At this stage Gradnecia is unsure of her future educational plan and future career, however, we excitedly await an update on her progress and support her in her path toward her future and making a difference. She will be greatly missed by the Hope and Light family but we can be encouraged that we, Hope and Light NPC, have brought her to this point and helped set her up for her future going forward.