



ANNUAL REPORT

RAISING THE NEXT GENERATION



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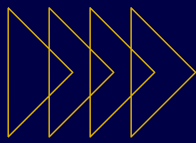
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ABOUT US

There is an abundance of opportunity for young people in underserved South African communities – opportunity that too often goes unrealised when the right structures are absent. Phakamani Young Minds Academy exists to close that gap: to ensure that geography, poverty, and circumstance are not the determinants of a young person's future

Vision



To empower a generation of young people with the knowledge, skills and opportunities to thrive, become responsible citizens and contribute meaningfully to society.

Mission



To deliver holistic, evidence-informed programmes that support youth development, academic performance and community transformation.





Systematic Response to Systemic Barriers

The Problem

Education



Poor Literacy

Family



Weak Support

Opportunity



Limited Access

Systems



Fragmented Services

Leads to Poverty & Unemployment

OUR FIVE STRATEGIC PILLARS



DELIVER

Quality Afterschool Learning

CAPACITATE

Career Pathways

EMPOWER

Family support

GROW

Early Childhood Development

STRENGTHEN

Organisational Capacity & Influence

Integrated Pathway

From early learning to employment, PYMA provides holistic support that enables youth to become educated, employable, and equipped to break the cycle of poverty.

OUR APPROACH

Community Outreach & Learner Recruitment

Target disadvantaged learners and families in Freedom Park.



Holistic Afterschool Programme

Academic tutoring, feeding scheme, life skills and mentorship for Grades 1–12.



Early Childhood Development Support

Training caregivers/educators and providing early learning resources.



Parental & Community Engagement

Workshops, family support and campaigns to empower parents and the community.



Youth Readiness & Career Preparation for NEET

Work readiness training, bursary support, internships and job placement.



IMPACT

Youth equipped to succeed academically and socially, empowered families and stronger communities.



BOARD CHAIR LETTER



Daniel Katanda
CHAIRPERSON

BOARD
MEMBER

As I reflect on the organisation, I do so with a deep sense of pride in what we have built together and strong confidence in the trajectory ahead.

What began in a single backroom with a handful of determined young people has matured into a nationally relevant platform for youth development, now reaching over 1,200 children and young people. Phakamani Young Minds Academy has moved well beyond an afterschool programme — it is now a catalytic ecosystem for unlocking potential and shaping real pathways into economic participation in a country still defined by deep youth unemployment and structural inequality..

I have witnessed not only the expansion of programmes, but the strengthening of the organisation's core. PYMA is defined by a culture of accountability, care, and ambition — a culture that continues to guide its work and amplify its impact. The role of the Board has been to ensure that this growth is supported by strong governance and strategic direction.

In 2025, our focus was on reinforcing governance frameworks, supporting executive leadership, and ensuring that the organisation's long-term strategy is built on a solid and sustainable foundation. These efforts position PYMA to scale its impact responsibly while remaining grounded in its mission.

As we reflect on the journey, we honour the many individuals who have contributed to this work — the dedicated staff, committed donors, and selfless volunteers who have walked alongside the organisation. Most importantly, we recognise the learners, whose resilience and potential continue to inspire and affirm the importance of this work. I have witnessed the organisation grow into a strong, values-driven institution and remain confident in its trajectory and future.

"The future is bright, and together we are building it."

BOARD MEMBERS



Daniel Katanda
Chartered Accountant



Mthusi Morebodi
Social Impact Specialist



Mymoena Ismail
Transformation Advisor



Nontuthezelo Pakade
Chief of Staff



Tebogo Nkwane
Chartered Accountant

Board Change

Tebogo Nkwane resigned from the Board during the reporting period. We sincerely thank him for his valuable service and contribution to PYMA and wish him well in all future endeavours.





ADVANCING OUR MISSION

Over the past decade, Phakamani Young Minds Academy has been building South Africa's next generation — providing learners in Freedom Park with the academic support, life skills, and opportunities they need to succeed. 2025 marks a year of deepened impact, expanded reach, and a sharper focus on the pathways that connect early learning to long-term economic participation.

Amidst widening inequality and persistent youth unemployment, PYMA has remained resolute in its mission to serve the young people who need it most. Our focus on whole-child development, community engagement, and systems strengthening has never been more urgent — and our results have never been more tangible.

In 2025, our efforts have been concentrated on carrying forward the momentum of our eleventh year and deepening every dimension of our work. We have laid the groundwork for continued growth, innovation, and impact. By championing partnership, data-informed practice, and fearless community commitment, PYMA remains steadfast in creating transformative opportunities for learners and communities in Freedom Park and beyond.

We are proud to share our journey in 2025 and to highlight some of the key moments and milestones in this Annual Report. We sincerely thank our funders, stakeholders, and partners for their unwavering support. Together, we are shaping a sector that thrives on collaboration, innovation, and impact.

“What began in a single backroom with a handful of determined young people has grown into a trusted anchor for over 1,200 children and youth. We are more than an afterschool programme, we are a launchpad for potential.”



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR LETTER



Bokang Mokoena

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

PYMA

As 2025 drew to a close, we reflected on the year with two defining sentiments: deep gratitude and a renewed sense of urgency.

We are grateful for the progress witnessed across our programmes. This year, learners who had been overlooked in overcrowded classrooms demonstrated remarkable achievement, with many transitioning into tertiary education and new opportunities. We celebrated milestones such as a young woman from Freedom Park completing her diploma and securing employment, as well as moments of transformation within families, where parents engaged in meaningful conversations with their children following participation in our wellness initiatives. These outcomes affirm both the relevance and impact of our work.

At the same time, we are reminded of the scale of the need. Demand for our programmes continues to exceed capacity, with a growing waiting list of learners seeking access. In a context where youth unemployment in South Africa remains critically high, the challenges facing the communities we serve are both persistent and urgent. This reality strengthens our resolve to expand our reach while deepening our impact.

In 2025, we focused not only on programme delivery but also on strengthening the organisation. We invested in our people, enhanced our systems, and embedded a stronger culture of data-driven decision-making. This has enabled us to better understand what works, refine our interventions, and ensure that our impact is both measurable and meaningful. We also deepened partnerships with stakeholders who share our commitment to long-term, sustainable change.

The theme of this report, Raising the Next Generation, reflects our mission: to equip young people not only to navigate their circumstances, but to rise beyond them.

We thank our learners, our team, and our partners for making this work possible.

Bokang Mokoena
Executive Director



2025 IMPACT AT A GLANCE

Afterschool Programme

246

Learners Reached

45

Tutors

94%

Matric Pass Rate

90%

Access to Tertiary

Youth Programme

650

Youth Reached

250

Jobs Created

60

Bursaries Issued

104

Certified in Ai

Early Childhood Programme

71

Supported ECDs

100

Trained Practitioners

500

Books Distributed

3 112

Children Reached

Strategic Special Projects

16 272

Meals Served

372

Reach – Sexual Health

180

Engaged Parents

115

Active Mentors

AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMME

The Afterschool Programme is the foundation of PYMA's work — the daily, structured environment where learners from Grade 1 through Grade 12 receive academic support, mentorship, and the consistent care that many of their home environments cannot provide.

In 2025, the programme reached 246 learners, with families demonstrating sustained trust through an 81% retention rate and attendance peaking at 260. Through 110+ tutoring sessions delivered each quarter, with small-group ratios maintained by 24 tutors and 21 volunteers, learners received targeted, personalised academic support.

Our results reflect this commitment: a 94% matric pass rate and an 83% internal promotion rate, with 75% of learners achieving promotion by Term 3.

Our greatest asset is our alumni. Many former learners now return as tutors and mentors, creating a powerful cycle of empowerment. They are living proof that success is achievable — inspiring the next generation simply by showing up and saying, "I was once where you are."



"PYMA was not just an afterschool programme — it became a second home. It gave me the guidance, values, and support to keep going."

— **Thapelo | PYMA Alumni, University of Pretoria**





MATHS & SCIENCE

The Mathematics and Science Programme is one of PYMA's highest-impact interventions — delivering measurable academic gains for learners in Grades 10 to 12, with a specific focus on closing the gender gap in STEM subjects.

Targeted afterschool support — delivered through structured Saturday sessions with qualified teachers — contributed to an average performance improvement of 18–25% across the year. Over 60% of participants achieved above 60% in both Mathematics and Physical Sciences, and top-performing learners attained distinctions, positioning them competitively for university entry in science-related fields.

The programme also drove strong retention, with over 85% learner attendance in afterschool sessions — a testament to the quality of engagement and the trust learners place in the programme.

We extend our sincere gratitude to Sawabona Africa and EOS for sponsoring and supporting this programme — your partnership makes this impact possible.



98%

Pass Rate 2025

25%

Avg Improvement

85%

Learner Attendance Rate

My journey with PYMA's Mathematics and Science Programme has completely changed the way I approach learning. The structured afterschool sessions and focused support in Mathematics and Physical Sciences gave me the skills, confidence, and discipline I needed to excel.

In 2025, all the hard work paid off — I achieved five distinctions in my matric exams, including top marks in Mathematics and Physical Sciences. Thanks to the programme, I am now pursuing a Bachelor of Engineering Technology in Chemical Engineering at the University of Johannesburg, something I could only dream of before.



ALUMNI

**Sthandiwe
Shabangu**

PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT



**John
Legoale**

PARENT

PYMA's impact extends beyond the learner to the families that raise them. For John Legoale, PYMA's Emotional Wellness Workshops became a turning point in his relationship with his daughter. What began as a space for learning quickly evolved into a deeply personal journey of reflection, growth, and reconnection.

Through guided discussions and shared experiences, John came to understand that supporting a child goes beyond providing for their academic needs — it requires emotional presence, openness, and consistent communication. Armed with practical tools, John began engaging his daughter more intentionally. Over time, their relationship transformed — becoming lighter, more trusting, and emotionally secure.

10

Parental Engagement

40

Hours Dedicated

75%

Attendance Rate

MENTOR SPOTLIGHT

Extending Learning Beyond the Classroom

At PYMA, learning does not end when the school bell rings. Our mentorship programme strategically bridges the gap between academic knowledge and real-world readiness, connecting learners with experienced professionals who guide, inspire, and model success. In 2025, 115 mentors actively engaged with our learners, providing support that extends far beyond classroom content—helping young people navigate critical decisions about their education, careers, and personal development.

Mentors like Jackie Vanmeyereren illustrate the transformative power of consistent, values-driven engagement. Over three years, Jackie has cultivated relationships grounded in trust, high expectations, and encouragement, showing that effective mentorship nurtures resilience, confidence, and purpose, alongside essential skills.



MENTOR

**Jackie
Vanmeyereren**

"The most rewarding moments are when learners gain confidence, clarity, and direction — not just grades. That is the real measure of impact."

Jackie Vanmeyereren | PYMA Mentor



ADDRESSING HUNGER TO ENABLE LEARNING

Hunger remains a critical barrier to learning in Freedom Park.

Learners cannot fully engage with extended learning opportunities when basic nutritional needs are unmet, limiting concentration, cognitive function, and academic progress.

The Kitchen Project ensured consistent access to daily, nutritious meals, establishing a garden-to-plate system that integrates fresh vegetables directly into learners' diets. Led by Princess, the kitchen team operationalizes this system with efficiency and consistency.

- 16,272 meals served to 246 learners, ensuring consistent access to nutritious food.
- Increased classroom engagement, with learners more focused and able to participate in lessons and activities.
- Improved attendance rates, as food security reduced barriers to daily school and programme participation.
- Enhanced academic performance, with measurable gains linked to consistent nutrition.
- Stronger participation in extended learning sessions, demonstrating that hunger reduction directly supports learning outcomes.
- Operationalized a garden-to-plate model, integrating fresh vegetables into daily meals and promoting sustainability

95%

Improved attendance rate



SEXUAL HEALTH & PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT

In 2025, PYMA strengthened its holistic learner support by integrating sexual health and psychosocial workshops into its afterschool programme. In partnership with Rich Learning, 260 learners were provided with a safe, structured space to engage on critical topics including sexual health, bullying, and emotional well-being.

These sessions went beyond awareness-raising. They equipped learners with practical coping mechanisms, built resilience, and created a culture of open dialogue within the programme. Staff were also supported through structured debriefing sessions – strengthening the overall care system within the Academy.

This integrated approach reinforces PYMA's commitment to nurturing the whole child – ensuring that learners are not only academically supported, but emotionally empowered to thrive.



"Working with PYMA has reaffirmed the importance of creating safe, structured spaces where learners can engage beyond academics."

Through these sessions, I have seen learners open up, build confidence, and begin to understand themselves better. This kind of holistic support is key to nurturing resilient, self-aware individuals."

— Tiyyiselani Mukhari | Social Worker & Programme Partner, Rich Learning Group



SAFETY – COMPONENT OF AFTERSCHOOL LEARNING

Ensuring learner safety is integral to extended learning. Without a secure environment, confidence, engagement, and participation are compromised, particularly for girls who face heightened risks in their daily lives.

The Power to Protect workshop series equips learners with practical skills to recognise unsafe situations, set boundaries, and defend themselves when necessary. Learners participated, with a focus on young girls most at risk. Sessions combine physical self-defence techniques with awareness-building, early warning recognition, and guidance on seeking help. Facilitators create a supportive space for practice and discussion, reinforcing both skill and confidence.



*“Before the workshop, I was afraid to walk to school and couldn’t focus in class. Power to Protect taught me self-defence, how to recognise danger, and assert my boundaries. I felt safe enough to tell my facilitator about a threat I was facing, and they acted quickly with my parent and local authorities. Now, I attend every session confidently and participate fully in class. I don’t just feel safer — I feel capable, in control, and ready to learn. This workshop didn’t just protect me; it gave me the confidence to thrive.” – **Anisha, 16 Years Old***

With thanks to our partner, whose support made this programme possible



145

Learners trained

4

risk cases addressed

92%

Gained confidence

BUILDING SYSTEMIC PATHWAYS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

In 2025, Phakamani Young Minds Academy strengthened its role as a launchpad for young people, transforming participation into meaningful skills, work experience, and long-term opportunities. By addressing structural barriers to youth employment and learning, PYMA's programmes equip young people to thrive in the Fourth Industrial Revolution and contribute to their communities.

We partnered with the Seriti Institute to create 100 meaningful work opportunities for unemployed youth in Freedom Park and surrounding communities. This initiative is part of the National Youth Service (NYS) programme, a flagship under the Presidential Youth Employment Intervention, led by the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA).

Transforming NEET Youth into Future-Ready Talent

Through this programme, young people:

- Build practical skills that enhance career readiness and employability.
- Contribute to community development, supporting public service delivery in local ECD centres.
- Earn a monthly stipend, supporting themselves and their families.
- Prepare for long-term pathways in employment, entrepreneurship, or further education.

125

Youth participated

42

Transitioned

66%

Employed & further studies





FROM NYS TEAM LEADER TO ADMINISTRATOR

Thato joined PYMA through the National Youth Service (NYS) programme, quickly standing out as a team leader, guiding peers and supporting Early Childhood Development (ECD) centres. Over six months, he gained practical leadership, facilitation, and administrative skills, building a strong foundation for his career.

Recognising his talent and dedication, PYMA offered Thato a role as an administrator, where he now manages programme operations, supports youth development initiatives, and mentors new participants. His journey demonstrates how PYMA transforms temporary youth placements into long-term, sustainable careers, strengthening both the organisation and the communities it serves.

"The skills and experience I gained through NYS opened doors I never imagined. Now, I can give back while growing professionally." — Thato, PYMA Administrator

Thato embodies how PYMA transforms time-bound youth engagement into long-term community impact, turning potential into leadership that strengthens programmes and communities.





STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES. IMPROVING EARLY LEARNING

Our ECD Programme represents a fundamental shift in how we think about early childhood development: not as a service delivered to communities, but as an economic engine built from within them. By linking youth employment directly to ECD infrastructure strengthening, we have created a model where every placement produces two beneficiaries — the young person gaining qualifications and income, and the children gaining access to better-quality early learning.

130 Unemployed youth are placed at partner ECD centres with Social Employment Fund stipend support — removing the financial barrier to participation while delivering real-world experience from day one.

Participants enrol in the SAQA-accredited NQF Level 4 ECD Practitioner Programme (delivered by Cotlands), alternating classroom learning with practical placement to earn a nationally recognised qualification.

Graduates exit as accredited practitioners absorbed into partner centres or as registered ECD centre owners — creating lasting community infrastructure

This integrated design means that learning outcomes at the child level are inseparable from employment outcomes at the youth level. A youth participant who completes all four phases does not simply gain a qualification — they gain the capability to create, sustain and grow a quality early learning environment.

71

ECD Centres

130

SEF Youth Placed

92%

Learner Attendance Rate

Qcobisa Ntwanambi, 27 | Founder, Nkanyezi Preschool | Freedom Park, Soweto

"Before the enterprise module, I thought running a centre was just about teaching children. Through PYMA's Stipend-to-Sustainability Pathway, I moved from being a SEF-placed practitioner to completing NQF Level 4 and Cotlands' enterprise module, gaining the skills to open my own registered ECD centre. I named it Nkanya's, meaning 'light,' because I want every child here to feel they have a future — and to remind myself that I do too."

— Qcobisa Ntwanambi

Our ECD Programme transforms early childhood development into a platform for youth empowerment and community growth. By linking youth employment to strengthening ECD infrastructure, each placement creates a dual impact: young people gain qualifications, skills, and income, while children benefit from improved early learning.

Through the Social Employment Fund, 130 unemployed youth are placed at partner centres, combining hands-on experience with the SAQA-accredited NQF Level 4 ECD Practitioner Programme. Graduates emerge as accredited practitioners, absorbed into centres or as registered ECD centre owners, building sustainable community infrastructure.

This integrated approach ensures that youth development and child learning outcomes are inseparable — equipping young people to create, sustain, and grow quality early learning environments that strengthen both their future and that of the communities they serve

-Lucas Gusengwe



ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT



Thapelo
Alumni

UNIVERSITY OF
PRETORIA

When I joined PYMA in Grade 10, I needed extra support in Mathematics and Physical Sciences.

I was struggling to keep up at school and didn't know how I would reach my full potential. PYMA was more than an afterschool programme — it became a place where I could grow, explore, and prepare for the future.

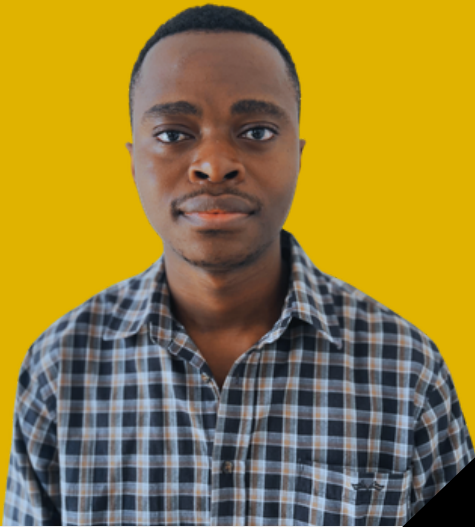
The guidance, mentorship, and support I received went far beyond academics. I learned to set goals, manage challenges, and believe in myself.

With the encouragement of tutors, staff, and my peers, I began to gain confidence in my abilities. I discovered that success isn't just about grades — it's about discipline, resilience, leadership, and having a vision for your life. By Grade 12, I had become PYMA's 2023 Top Achiever, and one of my proudest moments was delivering a speech at my matric candle-lighting ceremony. Standing there, I realized how far I had come — from a learner unsure of his future to a young person ready to lead and make an impact.

Today, I am a final-year BA student in Psychology and Criminology at the University of Pretoria, a student leader in my department, a residence student assistant, and a Dean's List candidate. The skills and values PYMA instilled in me — perseverance, curiosity, and confidence — continue to shape my journey.

PYMA taught me that afterschool programmes are more than academic support: they are pathways that prepare young people to transition successfully into higher education and leadership roles, equipping them to contribute meaningfully to their communities. I am living proof that with the right guidance, mentorship, and opportunities, learners can not only reach their potential but also become leaders ready to shape their own futures.

QUALIFIED MEDICAL LABORATORY SCIENTIST



Nhlanganiso
ALUMNI

MEDICAL
LABORATORY
SCIENTIST

When I joined PYMA in 2016, the programme ran from a small garage. At first, I didn't know what to expect, but I quickly realized this was a place that could change my life. PYMA showed me that STEM wasn't just for a few — it was a path I could take too.

Through challenging assignments, mentorship, and exposure to real-world problem solving, I learned how to think critically, approach science with curiosity, and set goals that seemed beyond my reach. PYMA gave me the tools to see a future in healthcare and research.

Because of PYMA's support, I earned a place at Tshwane University of Technology to study Medical Laboratory Sciences. Today, I am a qualified Medical Laboratory Scientist, contributing to healthcare solutions and making an impact in my community. Every success I have is rooted in the foundation PYMA helped me build — discipline, resilience, and a vision for my future.

I am not here because I had all the answers. I am here because PYMA gave me guidance, support, and belief in my potential.



PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

Why is it important for Momentum Group Foundation to partner with organisations like PYMA, and what about their model aligns with the Foundation's broader vision?

Partnering with PYMA strengthens Momentum Group Foundation's commitment to growing strong, confident, and capable young people. Our vision is centred on enabling success not only through the Group's solutions and advice, but also through education, mentorship, and community support.

Our long history of supporting youth organisations shows how strongly we believe in education as a pathway to a better future. While unfortunately we cannot meet every need across the country, we can create real impact by enabling our employees to volunteer their skills and time where it matters most. PYMA gives them a practical way to do that whether through mentoring, serving on the organisation's board, or supporting projects during work hours.

What is it about PYMA's work that resonates most deeply with Momentum Group Foundation, and why does it matter to you?

What resonates most with us about PYMA is their belief that every young person deserves the chance to succeed and that success doesn't happen alone. PYMA provides academic support, mentorship, guidance, and care to young people and their families, creating an environment where dreams feel possible again.'

This aligns with the Foundation's view that communities thrive when young people are supported, encouraged, and given the tools they need to grow. PYMA is not just improving school results they are building confidence, resilience, and hope.

Patronella Sono

Staff Volunteer Program Specialist,

momentum
group | FOUNDATION

Reflecting on your employee volunteering journey with PYMA, what has been the most transformative experience?

Our journey with PYMA has shown us what long-term, committed volunteering can achieve. Many of our employees began with once-off mentoring sessions, but as they saw the difference they were making, they chose to stay involved. Some have volunteered with PYMA for more than three years supporting learners through school, guiding them during difficult periods, and celebrating with them when they were accepted into universities. The stories from lockdown remain especially powerful.

For many of our employees, supporting a learner through to graduation has been one of the most rewarding experiences of their careers.

The Foundation has also felt this impact. Volunteers nominated PYMA for the Lesedi Awards, the Group's annual recognition programme honouring volunteers. Volunteers donated their match-funding winnings back to the organisation a strong sign of trust in PYMA's mission. Between 2023 and 2025, PYMA became one of the most voted-for organisations in our employee Payroll Giving programme, another initiative that encourages contribution. This demonstrates how deeply our employees believe in the work PYMA does.



OUR PARTNERS & DONORS

PYMA's impact is made possible by the generosity, vision, and commitment of our partners and donors. We are deeply grateful to every organisation and individual who has invested in the young people of Freedom Park. Your support is transformative.

- Auto-General Australia
- Bowmans
- Central Johannesburg College
- Coca-Cola Beverages South Africa
- Donald Gordon Murray Trust
- FirstRand
- FNB
- Forgood
- Freedom Primary School
- Freedom Secondary School
- Grow ECD
- Harambee Youth Employment Accelerator
- Hotslots
- JA South Africa
- Momentum Group Foundation
- MySchool MyVillage
- Nascee
- Old Mutual Foundation
- Phambano Technology Development Centre
- Santam
- Sawabona Africa e.V.
- Seriti Institute
- Standard Bank
- Stekhoven Family
- The Learning Trust
- Trust Law Foundation
- University of Johannesburg
- YD Collaboration





THANK YOU

RAISING THE NEXT GENERATION

Every young person deserves to be seen,
supported and given the opportunity to
thrive.

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