

# EXECUTIVE REPORT OF THE AMULUATI General Meeting

**SEPTEMBER 30, 2023** 



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## President's REPORT

#### Introduction



**Ms. Nicole Noel** Chair of the 2023 SFGCA AGM



Ms. Lois Herrera Chair of the Local School Board and SFGC Alum



Ms. Hazel-Ann McLean Member of the NA Network and former Board Chair of WRAPTT



Ms. Pasha Lalla-Seecharan Principal of the SFGC



Mr. Darren Ramirez President of the PTA

Our Team, the 2022-2023 SFGCA Executive Members.

My dear Francois sisters, at home and abroad. Good afternoon everyone, welcome and thank you so very much for attending this afternoon's SFGCA Annual General Meeting.

This 2023 AGM is indeed a unique one, as this year all eleven Office Holders on the Executive are demitting office.

I would like, at this juncture to thank the nine (9) nominees who have indicated their intent to serve. From a review of the names, it would appear that most, are persons who have served on the Executive in the past, persons on whom shoulders we have stood, persons with the requisite skills, competencies, networks, contacts, resources and/or access to resources and who will be able to continue to effectively and successfully take this Association forward.

On October 1st, 2022, the following Executive members assumed responsibility for the SFGCA:



Valisha Sylvester President



Carlene Jeffers-Bilal Assistant Secretary



**Alana Sampson**Public
Relations
Officer



Nicole Noel Trustee (II)



Sonia-Ria Williams Vice President



Stacy Christopher Treasurer



Asha Stewart Assistant Public Relations Officer



Patricia Hinds Trustee (III)



Esther Callender-George Secretary



Sherry Hazel-Loney Assistant Treasurer



Pamela Baptise Trustee (I)

Stronger Together

This year was characterized by several challenges and as some of us would simply say "Life Happens".

On this Executive of eleven (11) persons, and our various committees we experienced so much loss. Loss of a Father, Father-in-Law, Brother, Aunt, Grandmother, relatives, colleagues, friends and François sisters.

We were therefore especially happy and excited to welcome our new baby girl into the loving SFGCA Executive Family (de chile have Aunties fuh so).

#### The Context

This year was indeed a year of balancing/juggling Work, Alumnae, Other issues and Family. In our team, some members got promotions to positions of greater responsibilities, some changed jobs, others started up their businesses, some assumed leadership roles in Professional and Voluntary Organizations, others started Programmes of Studies, while some were managing and taking care of ailing parents, family members and a new baby.

These circumstances understandably took a toll on the work of the Executive and some of the initiatives which we had earmarked for 2022-2023 unfortunately were not implemented.

These affected members' ability at times to attend meetings or follow up their SFGCA responsibilities.

Most persons were feeling the stress of competing demands and feeling really guilty for not being able to give of their best to the Alumnae.

It even resulted in the resignation of our very creative Assistant PRO, Ms. Asha Stewart in January 2023. This loss occurred right on the heels of our flagship North American Chapter announcing its decision to dissolve in December 2022. (Please note that a copy of the interview with Dr. Astril Webb re: the dissolution of the Chapter is available).

Additionally, we have recognized that some of the challenges we face now as an Alumnae (getting our past students to become members, getting more hands-on deck, getting stakeholders on board) have existed throughout the years, as noted in the reports of past presidents.

#### 2019-2020 - Tammy Cato

 We only have one fundraiser each year which we struggle to get even the school to patronise.

#### 2015-2016 - Salisha Gomes-Andrews

- Inability to get past students involved and interested in participating in Alumnae activities
  - Alums giving several reasons why they cannot be part of the Alumnae rather than indicating how they can get involved.



These issues continue to plague us, however we forged ahead trusting and believing that it would get better and dedicated to completing the respective tasks... totally committed to St. François Girls' College.

## Tirtute Tera



### **Workplan 2022 - 2023**

The Work plan for 2022 – 2023 was developed and included the following projects related to:

- Strategic Planning and Policy Development
- ✓ Public Relations and Branding (Visibility of the SFGCA)
- ▼ Finance and Fundraising
- ✓ Students' Welfare
- **M** Administration

## Committee Reports



#### Finance and Fundraising

The team's objective was to raise funds for the Executive so that we can provide assistance to the School. The main fundraiser Taste of Christmas was less successful than the previous years due to an increase in price of \$25.00.

This change in price was necessary due to an increase in the caterer's price and other incidentals. Nonetheless, \$20,000.00 was donated to the school for payment to TSZ for the assessment and installation of the much-needed security system after two break-ins.

The committee began planning a Pastry-Box sale; however, the event was postponed as there were other competing School's fundraising activities. E.g. François Fun Fest and the Cooler Fete.

Suggestions from the committee are as follows:

- There is a need to revamp the fundraising committee, ensure that there are less persons from the Executive on the committee and the committee should contain a mix of skills in marketing, event management, financial accounting.
- Fundraising committee will need additional support persons who are reliable and resourceful
- More collaborative relationships and activities required with the school's management





## Public Relations and Membership

This Committee continued its efforts at trying to create interesting social media content aimed at engaging potential and current members. Other tasks included updating of the Membership form, planning for the Girls in Green Gold Black and White (GGBW) Series, cleaning of membership database, promotion of Alumna activities and School matters on Facebook and Instagram pages, promotion of SFGCA merchandise and memorabilia.

Recommendations going forward include implementing a Mother's Day Artisan Market, the Introduction of a Quarterly Newsletter and the continuation of the GGBW Series with a new host, Michelle Borel.



## Policy Planning and Implementation

This Committee, as stated in previous reports was established to enable the Executive to continue the process of structuring the organization for sustainability.

This Committee also provided oversight and monitoring of all other Committees.

The focus this year was on addressing the Roles and Functions of the Executive (Office Holders', Terms of Reference) as well as a review and ratification of the Executive Committees and other initiatives, listed in the Achievements Section of this report.

## SFGC Alums

We continue to recognize and celebrate the several Alums (N=28) whose work and achievements came

to our attention this year. We are so very proud of our SFGCA women who are making their mark wherever they are placed. We wish to thank the various persons who

brought the information to our attention, shared pics and even

put us in touch with some of these Alums.

Additionally, we do hope that these ladies would be able to take an even more active role in the Alumnae, and school, going forward.

In our outreach to year groups this year, we wish to recognise and specially thank Valgene Hinkson, Class of '71, Sandra Jones, Class of '74, Shannon McDonald, Class of 2013, Portia Golding-Alleyne, Class of '78 and Selma Golding, Class of '75 for their donations to the work of the Welfare Committee.

To the several other year groups e.g., the class of '72,'75, '76 and '80 who have indicated their intent to become more involved in the Alumnae, we thank you for stepping up.

















Arlene Hamlin-Paul





Fleur Callender



We will continue to reach out and interest other year groups, class groups and friendship groups to get on board with us.



#### Welfare

The Welfare Committee liaised throughout the year with Ms. Andrea Richardson and her Committee who are responsible for coordinating assistance for girls in need at the school. Ms. Richardson indicated that they consistently assist five (5) students with food vouchers or hampers and transportation to school.

The Executive, through the Welfare Committee agreed to give \$3,000 initially per term. This was able to assist, not only with the recurring needs identified above but also the preparation of seventeen (17) Christmas Hampers at the close of the December term. Subsequent donations of \$3,000 in February and a cheque for \$3,500 in September were made (A total of \$9,500 was given to the School's Welfare Programme for 2022-2023).

The Committee felt that a more structured, consistent approach could be worked out after the planned Stakeholder's Meeting.

Ms. Richardson and her team however were unable to attend the Stakeholders' Meeting in July 2023, so a Meeting was rescheduled for the Welfare Team in September, 2023.

The Committee's suggestions going forward are as follows:

- an "Adopt a Sister" initiative which would allow general membership to sponsor specific students
- that individual members pledge to assist monthly or bimonthly to help offset the girls' needs (Pennywise and grocery vouchers)
- The Alumnae Executive donate a fixed sum every two months up from every term
- A guestionnaire to be administered to the School's Welfare Committee Members. The responses will form the basis of a SFGC Welfare Committee backgrounder document that can be referenced for future support and sponsorship



Hazel-Ann McLean







Simmone Edwin













## so very Proud of our 83FGCA Women

## Other SFGC Alums

#### **Queen's Royal Gollege**

Esther Callender-George, our Secretary worked tirelessly this year to rekindle the relationship between Queen's Royal College (QRC) and SFGC. Our girls were able to participate in two projects as a result of her efforts. These were, the Transformative Leadership Boot Camp, and She's Royal.

#### 2. Fatima Old Boys Association

We were invited this year to collaborate with Fatima Old Boys Association (FOBA) on their fundraising Aura Cooler Fete. We also made a commitment to participate in their October Fest, scheduled for October 14, 2023.

We continue to value these strategic alliances as these provide the opportunity for collaboration, building camaraderie and more importantly for us to learn, grow and function more effectively as an Alumnae

## **Updates**, Activities and Highlights for the Period Under Review



Initiated a Workshop on "Strategies for Coping with Anxiety and Examinations". This Workshop which targeted students from Forms one and six was facilitated by our very own Dr. Astril Webb with a donation from Comedian and Alum Cindy-Ann Boisson.



Responded to a request from Mrs. Maxine Archer - Ferreira, Sixth Form Dean to assist her with the "Becoming HER" Project for Sixth Formers. Persons have already indicated their willingness to support implementation of that project.



Began discussions and pledged support to Form 3 Teacher, and Alum Ms. Tamara DaBreo who wants to implement a Retreat with the Form 3s this academic year.



Continued to give support to Dr. Donna-Mae Knights and her team (Class of '79 and other year groups), who remain committed to the Implementation of the Character Development Programme (CDP), now in its third year with the Form 2s.

#### Updates, Activities and Highlights for the Period Under Review



Held a Meeting with Principal Mrs. Pasha Lalla-Seecharan to discuss the security needs and issues of the school (Val and Sonia-Ria). Also convened a follow-up meeting with the Principal, the IT Specialist and Security Provider TSZ (Val and Pat).



Reached out to several SFGCA Year Groups, Class Groups, and Friendship Groups to encourage them to assist and support the various Departments. The intent is to have the respective groups commit to funding the Wish Lists being completed by the various Heads of Departments as well as provide ongoing support.



Offered again this year to support Teachers' Professional Development. Last year the Programme was facilitated by Patricia Hinds, our Trustee with a Co-facilitator. This year the Executive received two offers of support for the school, one from Pat to do an intervention with the SFGC Management Team, the other from Naima Thompson in Vietnam to conduct a Virtual Professional Development Session for the Teachers.

In discussion with the Principal, we were told that the focus of the Professional Development (PD) for the start of this school term in September was on Classroom Management and it is expected to be done by in-house capability (Teachers). The Principal stated however that the offers would be addressed in the new year.



Engagement of Aisha Sylvester, former PRO in May 2023 to support the Public Relations and Communications Aspects and coordinate the acquisition, launch and promotion of new memorabilia/branded items. The New Merchandise (Merch) for sale was launched on September 27<sup>th</sup> 2023.



Liaised with the Principal to source Teachers and Staff for the Youth and Adult Mental Health First Aid Certification Courses scheduled for October 2023. This program has been sponsored by and will be facilitated by Dr Astril Webb.



The Meeting with Ms. Andrea Richardson and Team of the School's Welfare Committee took place on September 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023 resulting in agreement of a more collaborative, structured approach moving forward.

### Where Are We as an Organisation?

We can confidently say that as we pass the baton on to the new Executive, we are handing over a more robust Organization. The focus for the last three years, as previously stated was on structuring the Organization for sustainability.

We have also been building on the work of former Executives. Coming out of our Mid-Year Review Workshop and reviewing the AGM reports of Past Presidents, from as far back as 2015 – 2016, we have recognized that we really do need to develop different strategies to sustain the SFGCA.

Even as we work more diligently to build our membership, we feel the **Past Presidents Club** and the Former Executive Members "**Keep them Close**" Committee are ways in which we can constantly keep past members who may still wish to help, who have the skills,

expertise, networks and the institutional memory but are no longer able to give dedicated time, close and "in the loop" supporting, advising, directing, etc. where necessary.

The new in-coming Executive may wish to consider this strategy. We do believe that when we work together and develop a culture of collaboration, we are indeed "Stronger Together" and our beloved St. François can only benefit.



#### **Achievements**

Despite the many challenges experienced this year, the 2022 – 2023 Executive would like to place on record the following achievements:

- ✓ Preparation of an annual Work plan to guide the work of the 2022-2023 SFGCA Executive.
- Continued commitment to evaluation and reflection: Conducted Post Mortems of all Projects e.g. The 2022 AGM, the Taste of Christmas, the Mid-Year Review Workshop, the Stakeholders Meeting, and completed the relevant Evaluation Reports.
- ✓ Completion of the various Committees' Terms of Reference and drafted the various Office Holders' Positions Terms of Reference (TORs).
- ▼ Developed specific Systems and Structures for operating.
- ✓ Developed and revised templates.
- **▼** Began organizing the Data base on the membership.
- ✓ Compiled relevant documents, current and historical (Documentation and Information Store).
- ▼ Financial Donations to all the School Activities
  - Assistance to Substitute Teacher: \$4,500
  - Support to the Welfare Committee Christmas Hamper Drive: \$2,000
  - Donations from comedian Cindy-Ann Boisson to implement Workshop facilitated by Dr. Astril Webb: \$1,000
  - Assistance to the Character Development Programme (CDP): \$2,400
  - Tuning of Pans: \$8,000
  - Purchase of a Tenor Pan for School Panorama: \$4,500
  - Contribution to the ongoing work of the Welfare Committee at the beginning of each term: \$7,500
  - Contribution to Teacher Appreciation Day: \$500
  - Contribution to Security Solutions \$20,000 (TSZ)
  - Contribution to the Francois Fun Fest: \$500
  - Contribution to the Cooler Fete (Boat Cruise): \$6,000
  - Contribution to the A/C repairs, upgrade \$20,000
  - Contribution to the Mental Health First Aid Certification Courses: \$13,650

#### A Total of over \$90,000.00 was donated to the School for the 2022 - 2023 period.

Funds were closely monitored and prudently allocated to ensure a balance in the account for the execution of much desired SFGCA 2024 Carnival Cooler Fete, which when costed can run into over \$125,000.00 without collaboration or sponsorship.





Donation of Tenor Pan





- Circulation of a mid-year update on contributions and projects via an infographic
- ✓ Liaised with the former Vice Principal to get the Heads of Departments to complete their Wish Lists (ongoing support by Year Groups, Class Groups, Friendship Groups).
- Convened the first in the Series of Stakeholders' Engagement Meetings with: The Principal, Deans of Form 1 and Form 6, Heads of School Programmes E.g. Welfare, Social Events, the Chairman of the Local School Board, the President of the PTA, Team Lead of the Character Development Programme, the Librarian, the Guidance Officer as well as School Social Worker, the Safety Officer, the Student Rep on the School Board and the 2023 Head Girl. Please note that the second in the series of Stakeholders' Engagement Meetings will target the leaders of the extracurricular activities and programmes in the school.
- Elicited feedback on the performance of the 2022 2023 Executive from **Past Presidents** and Former Executive Members "Keep Them Close Committee".
- Conducted the Annual Mid-Year Review Workshop.
- Supported the Guidance Officer, Annette Joseph with sourcing persons for Career Day 2023 (*Theme: Careers* 2023 and Beyond).
- Y Presented on the functions, work and achievements of the Alumnae at the 6th Form Orientation.
- Maintained contact with members of the Former NA Chapter, now NA Network, Portia Golding-Alleyne, Joanne Phillip-Spencer, Margaret Lo Hing, Dr. Astril Webb, Hazel Ann McLean and Fleur Callender.
- Motivated and Mobilized some Year Groups, Class Groups and Friendship Groups to get on board, and involved in the Alumnae to support our school.
- ✓ Organized a new batch of Memorabilia, Branded items and established an online store, with the assistance of the dynamic Aisha Sylvester, ably assisted by Esther Callendar-George, Sherry Hazel-Loney and Valisha Sylvester. Launched the SFGCA Merchandise.
- ✓ Creation of the Donation Drive, "fundmetnt.com" initiated by Hazel-Ann McLean for easier access to contributions for persons abroad and locally. NB: The goal is \$120,000 TT.
- ✓ Initiated discussions with Fleur Callender, former NA Chapter focal point in New York on a potential fundraiser a Boat Cruise in New York in spring, next year, 2024.





By True Grit, Courage, and Strength, we can conquer the world, hold it in our hands and make it our own.

## Approach Going Forward in 2023-2024

We do appreciate that the new incoming Executive may adopt a different focus to address the work of the SFGCA however this outgoing Executive wishes to recommend that the following be continued:





Completion of the **Background and History** of the SFGCA. We need to document our history.

Implementation of a **Team Building Workshop** within the first quarter October - December 2023.

Implementation of a **Mid-Year Review** at the end of the second quarter: March 2024.

Office Space: We still strongly feel that the Alumnae needs a presence on the School's compound. We believe that having a SFGC Alumnae Office on the school compound will help our little sisters to appreciate the concept of the SFGC Family and the significance of giving back to the school that nurtured them. Let us therefore continue to lobby for Alumnae space in the school. We know that some Alums will see the vision and be willing to partner with us to realize this dream of having an Alumnae Office in school.

We wish also to assure the new Executive of our support as we see SFGCA only growing from strength to strength. Discussions on the nature of the support can continue at the Hand-over Meeting, post AGM.



Samples of **SFGCA** merchandise



Glosing and Acknowledgement

In closing, please permit me to say a special thank you to the Members of this current Executive. Some of us have been together on this Executive for over six years. We have really grown to know, understand appreciate and love each other.

I truly value being part of this sisterhood of strong, vibrant, talented, intelligent and supportive women who I am very proud to call my sisters. It was an absolute pleasure working with all of you. We served. We did our part sincerely, responsibly and well; and, it is now time to pass on the baton.

Appreciation also goes out to all Committee Members, Past Presidents and former Executive members of the "Keep Them Close" Committee. Our Executive was richer from having your support.

To our sisters overseas, thank you for continuing to show unwavering interest and willingness to work with us (as the new NA Network) to advance the goals of SFGC.

To the Terrific Trio who took the lead this year and initiated the "School Supplies and Toiletries Drive". Thank you very much. We do hope, going forward that more Alums would come on board and take example from Vanessa, Gillian and Salisha. This initiative, from all reports, was a huge success and worthy of replication.

To all the persons who graciously brought greetings at our AGM this afternoon, Ms. Lois Herrera, Chair of the Local School Board, Mr. Darren Ramirez, President of the PTA and Ms. Hazel-Ann McLean, Member of the NA Network and former Board Chair of WRAPTT. Thank you so very much. We look forward to continued, fruitful collaboration.

To my awesome on-site AGM Team, my heartfelt thanks to you all.

To those who assisted quietly, even anonymously and to those who we inadvertently omitted to mention, thank , thank you, thank you.

Your support, assistance, suggestions, presence and love went a very long way in making some things happen this year. We know that we still have a lot more to do. So we urge you to continue mobilizing your François networks at home and abroad.

To our dear Principal Mrs. Pasha Lalla-Seecharan and the hard-working Staff of SFGC let us continue to work collaboratively together to meet the needs of the students, our little sisters. Looking forward to actioning the School Engagement Committee and placing on the school's calendar our annual Stakeholders' Meeting.

To all SFGC Past Students who may not as yet be involved in the Alumnae, let us this year please commit to reaching out, getting on board and supporting our beloved school.

St. Francois Girls' College needs us. We are ALL VERY PROUD TO BE ST. FRANÇOIS

We see great things in the future for **SFGCA** and **SFGC**.

We remain "SFGC STRONG".

We know for a fact that we are indeed "STRONGER TOGETHER". It is our mantra.

We also stand by our Motto - "VIRTUTE VERA"

and finally

We resolutely affirm that it is and will always be ...

#### "MY ST. FRANÇOIS, YOUR ST. FRANÇOIS, OUR ST. FRANÇOIS"

Thank you!

Best Wishes to all

Valisha Sylvester Valisha Sylvester

President 30.09.23













#### For the period July 1st 2022 to June 30th 2023

#### **Overview**

Good afternoon and welcome again to our Annual General Meeting.

We held our Annual Fundraiser, a Taste of Christmas last December on the school's grounds. Our profits realized of \$9,500 were less than that of the previous year, this was as a result of less ticket sales and increased overheads,

We thank you for your continued support with this fundraiser.

We donated \$20,000 to assist the school with some major expenses associated with the need for increased security via Surveillance Cameras.

We also continued to support the Character Development Programme, Pan and the School's Welfare Committee and other school initiatives.

## **Subscriptions**

We have seen an increase in subscriptions this year and we continue to encourage everyone to pay any outstanding dues.

#### Donations

We would like to personally thank all those who have made donations, special mention to Ms Jennifer Pitt and also Ms Carla Boyd.

Stronger Together



#### For the periods July 1st 2022 to June 30th 2023

All Figures in TTD

#### **DETAILS**

#### 01.07.22 TO 30.06.23

#### **GENERAL**

Bank Balance 226,111.10 Cash Balance 252.00 Receipts for the period 64,664.86 Less: Disbursements (84,415.51)

#### **ENDING BALANCE**

#### 206,612.45

#### **RECEIPTS/INCOME**

5,400.00 Member's Fees/Subscriptions Loans/Contributions 12,764.00 **Donations** 3,925.00 Sale of Memorabilia 42,575.00 Fundraisers/Events 64,664.00

#### **TOTAL INCOME**

#### **DISBURSEMENTS/EXPENSES**

AGM Charity **Fund Raisers** 33,056.00 Miscellaneous 1,200.00 Other Alumni Zoom & AGM 3,918.81 **Petty Cash Inputs School Contributions** 45,800.00 Zoom Access 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations Tokens for former Executive **Public Relations Initiative** Training - Finance Team Bank Charges 440.00 **Loan Payments** 84,414.81

#### **TOTAL EXPENSES**

#### **NET INCOME**

## Get in Touch



#### **EMAIL:**

stfrancoisalumnae@gmail.com



#### **FACEBOOK:**

St Francois Girls College Alumnae @ sfgcalumnae



#### **INSTAGRAM:**

@ sfgcalumnaett



#### **CALL THE PUBLIC RELATIONS TEAM:**

Alana - 1 (868) 384-7163