

From the desk of **Shane Kidwell**



12 January 2020

NEW BOYS DAY 2020

Ladies and gentlemen and newboys of 2020, welcome to St Alban's College.

And welcome to what will be the most exciting time of your life as you embark on this journey with us.

I am sure you cannot believe that you are finally sitting here at the newboys luncheon on the St Alban's campus. Time continues to fly and after speaking to many of you during 2019, I know that you were keen to put your Preparatory careers behind you and move on to the final phase of your school career. The problem with this is that, not too long from now, you will most probably be in the same situation as our Matrics from last year, who are at a University welcome tea this morning. It all rushes by very quickly, so savour the moments!

We have young men from 40 different school here this morning – from all around the world. I would like to pay tribute to those who have travelled the furthest. No, it's not Polokwane – Liam Schniewind joins us from Fulham School in the UK and Musa Mlangeni from Geneva in Switzerland.

We recently invited an Alumnus, Dion Chang, to address our academic staff members on the topic: *THE SECOND WAVE OF DISRUPTION AND THE SKILLS AND MINDSET REQUIRED TO SUCCEED IN THE FUTURE*. Dion is a strategic thinker, keynote speaker, a walking ideas bank and professional cage rattler.

He lectures Foresight and Innovation Implementation modules for executives and senior management at various business schools, including GIBS, UCT's Graduate School of Business and Duke University in the USA. He has devised and hosted three trend conferences and published three trend books.

IT TAKES A SCHOOL WITH VISION TO PREPARE A YOUNG MAN FOR LIFE

Physical Address 110 Clearwater Road, Lynnwood Glen, Pretoria

Postal Address Private Bag X01, Lynnwood Ridge, Pretoria

Contacts t. +27 348 1221 www.stalbanscollege.com





Dion has an interesting story and one from which we, as parents, scholars and schools should learn. We are extremely proud of all he has achieved. We are proud of the impact and way his research and foresight continue to influence businesses and individuals around the world and we are proud that he is an Old Albanian. Before I tell you more of his personal story at St

Alban's, I would like to share six things Dion says you should do to **future proof yourself**. Obviously, this is applicable to all of us but mostly I would like the 128 young men who join us this year to sit up and take note of these 6 tips as they enter this next important and challenging phase of their lives:

If you want to be successful in the future, says Dion, you should firstly realise that:

1. Managing your personal brand is critical

Shakespeare wrote: 'all the world is a stage' and the internet has created a stage like no other before it. People can find groups of people to speak to easier and faster. They can research information and form opinions more efficiently. Ultimately, the internet gives people an opportunity to share their views easily, giving people the opportunity to influence others. The digital age means that nothing is a secret. The messages you send each other tell a story about your values, your thought processes and ultimately what your opinion is on a range of topics. I do not need to tell you how this can go wrong. Whether you like it or not, young men, this can define you or it can haunt you for the rest of your life like we have recently seen at another leading boy's school in the country. Our motto is 'Custos Veritatis' and it means Guardian of the Truth and that is what we will expect from you – most of all you will need to be true to yourself and build a brand which speaks to authenticity, empathy for others and honesty. If you do not, you WILL be found out!

2. Future proof yourself by being Digitally Fluent.

Digital fluency is the ability to leverage technology to create new knowledge, new challenges, and new problems and to complement these with critical thinking, complex problem solving, and social intelligence to solve the new challenges. Digital fluency also requires excellent communication skills, new media literacy, and cognitive load management to address the issues, and concerns we face today and in the future. You are about to embark on the most important 5 years of your lives and I would encourage you, Class of 2024, to be committed and engaged. Those who immerse themselves in the broad range of activities on offer here, those who dare to be vulnerable and try things they have never tried before and those who are courageous enough to try something even though they may fail are successful here. Become digitally fluent: join the public speaking club or the choir, or build a solar car and race it to Cape Town, or join the tour to China or help find a solution to a complex problem at one of our partner schools as one young man did last year. In short – get out of your comfort zone, find new challenges and leverage technology to enable you to make a difference in the lives of others!





3. Future proof yourself by Finding a Tribe.

As I have said: we have young men from 40 different Preparatory schools here this morning – don't just gravitate to those you know. Make connections, learn to network, make friends outside your normal friendship group but most importantly find the things you love, explore, investigate and be curious. Our boys talk about the brotherhood and being part of this brotherhood has more to do with belonging than fitting in. Fitting in means you have to conform to a stereotypical mould but St Alban's is not like that. Steve Jobs said: *Here's to the crazy ones, the misfits, the rebels, the troublemakers, the round pegs in the square holes... the ones who see things differently — You can disagree with them, glorify or vilify them, but the only thing you can't do is ignore them because they change things... they push the human race forward, and while some may see them as the crazy ones, we see genius, because the ones who are crazy enough to think that they can change the world, are the ones who do.*

Young men of the class of 2024: We will be disappointed if you are not determined to be yourself but more importantly the best version of yourself you possibly could be.

4. If you want to future proof yourself - Make sense of complexity

Whether we like it or not, we live in an interconnected and complex world and we will need to be able to deal with complexity. You may feel overwhelmed in your first few weeks here but keep assuring yourself that with disciplined effort and focus you will be able to deal with the complexity of a new environment, new ideas and a new rhythm. Life at St Alban's is busy but don't get busy doing nothing. Find time to ensure that you are grounded, purposeful and focused and learn to drown out the noise.

5. If you want to be future proof be resilient

As much as I would like to give you the assurance that your time at St Alban's will be a bed of roses, we both know that this will not be the case. You will face challenges. You will get things wrong. You will fail and trip yourself up. But, ultimately, you will be defined by how you react to this. You will need to get up more times than you fall and dust yourself off and try again. Parents, your role when things go wrong is not to seek blame but to constructively encourage and point out that life is not perfect, life is not fair and to ensure that you encourage your sons to tackle the difficult situations with courage and determination to learn from the inconsistencies we are all faced with.

6. To future proof yourself, learn to solve problems and provide solutions

Forget about certainty and be curious. Know and understand that life can throw many problems at you - Seek out these problems and solve them. Chang says we should be mystery solvers not puzzle solvers. Find problems to solve, create problems to solve. One beautiful intervention which will help with this is our Journey in Form 3 – this experience will teach you that nothing is certain and perfect and agility and the ability to adapt quickly will stand you in good stead.

Parents, thank you for entrusting St Alban's to care for your sons on this journey. We understand that as you sit together as a family today, you have specific hopes and dreams, particularly for your young man who joins us. He is your unique gift and your hopes and his dreams about the future are real and precious. At St Alban's we understand and treasure this





and although we (and you) will not always get it right, we endeavour to partner with you as your son becomes more independent on his journey to adulthood.

We would like to remind you that this journey is not a finite one. It is not one which is only defined by winning or Matric results. This journey (of learning) is a game which never ends – it is infinite and you will need to remind yourself of this as we progress. There will be happy times and sad times, achievements and disappointments, but one thing is certain – every young man who engages in the rich tapestry which is St Alban's College will be changed forever and will certainly be future proofed.

I said I would share with you Dion Chang's personal journey. He Matriculated in 1982 – a different time and era, was forced to take Maths, Science and Biology by his Headmaster who poo poed the arts and creativity but he persevered and has become one of the most successful and leading trend analysts and designers. Your sons are entering a very different world to the one you entered at their age. What worked for you will not necessarily work for them. What got you here, will not necessarily get them there in the future. What was good for you will not necessarily be good for them. Your interests and passions may not be their interests and passions. As parents, you will need to trust us, partner with us, and you will need to unlearn and relearn as we enter the second wave of disruption. Don't try to vicariously live your lives through your sons. Don't try to coach your son from the side-lines, whether it be Maths or rugby. The one thing that I am really proud of at the College is that each boy is seen for who he is. Each of your sons is unique and different. Each of them will mature at different rates and each of them will, with God's help, find their element and begin to explore and discover their amazing talents which may be very different from yours or mine.

So, as we embark on this partnership, I remind you to give your son as much support as possible, to focus on the little things, to listen to his stories when he gets home, to hold him accountable but not to place too much pressure on him. Be there, for him, not to interfere but to watch him play sport, or sing in the choir or act on the drama stage and savour the ordinary moments over the next five years.

William Martin said:

*“Do not ask your children
to strive for extraordinary lives.
Such striving may seem admirable,
but it is the way of foolishness.
Help them instead to find the wonder
and the marvel of an ordinary life.
Show them the joy of tasting
tomatoes, apples and pears.
Show them how to cry
when pets and people die.
Show them the infinite pleasure
in the touch of a hand.
And make the ordinary come alive for them.
The extraordinary will take care of itself.”*

IT TAKES A SCHOOL WITH VISION TO PREPARE A YOUNG MAN FOR LIFE

Physical Address 110 Clearwater Road, Lynnwood Glen, Pretoria

Postal Address Private Bag X01, Lynnwood Ridge, Pretoria

Contacts t. +27 348 1221 www.stalbanscollege.com





You see...St Alban's is a school which is happy yet rigorous; it is a school which is modern yet grounded in traditional values; it is a school which is real yet compassionate; it is a school which lives in the present yet prepares for the world of tomorrow; it is a school which values individuality yet understands the importance of the team and the brotherhood; it is a school where we value listening; it is a school where diversity, respect and tolerance lives; it is a school where thinking is encouraged; it is a school where dreams are fulfilled; it is a school of brothers and it is a school which exposes you to possibilities hidden within! Trust me, the extraordinary will take care of itself!

I look forward to the journey with you!
God Bless!

IT TAKES A SCHOOL WITH VISION TO PREPARE A YOUNG MAN FOR LIFE

Physical Address 110 Clearwater Road, Lynnwood Glen, Pretoria

Postal Address Private Bag X01, Lynnwood Ridge, Pretoria

Contacts t. +27 348 1221 www.stalbanscollege.com

