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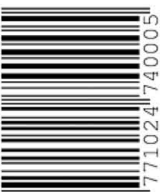
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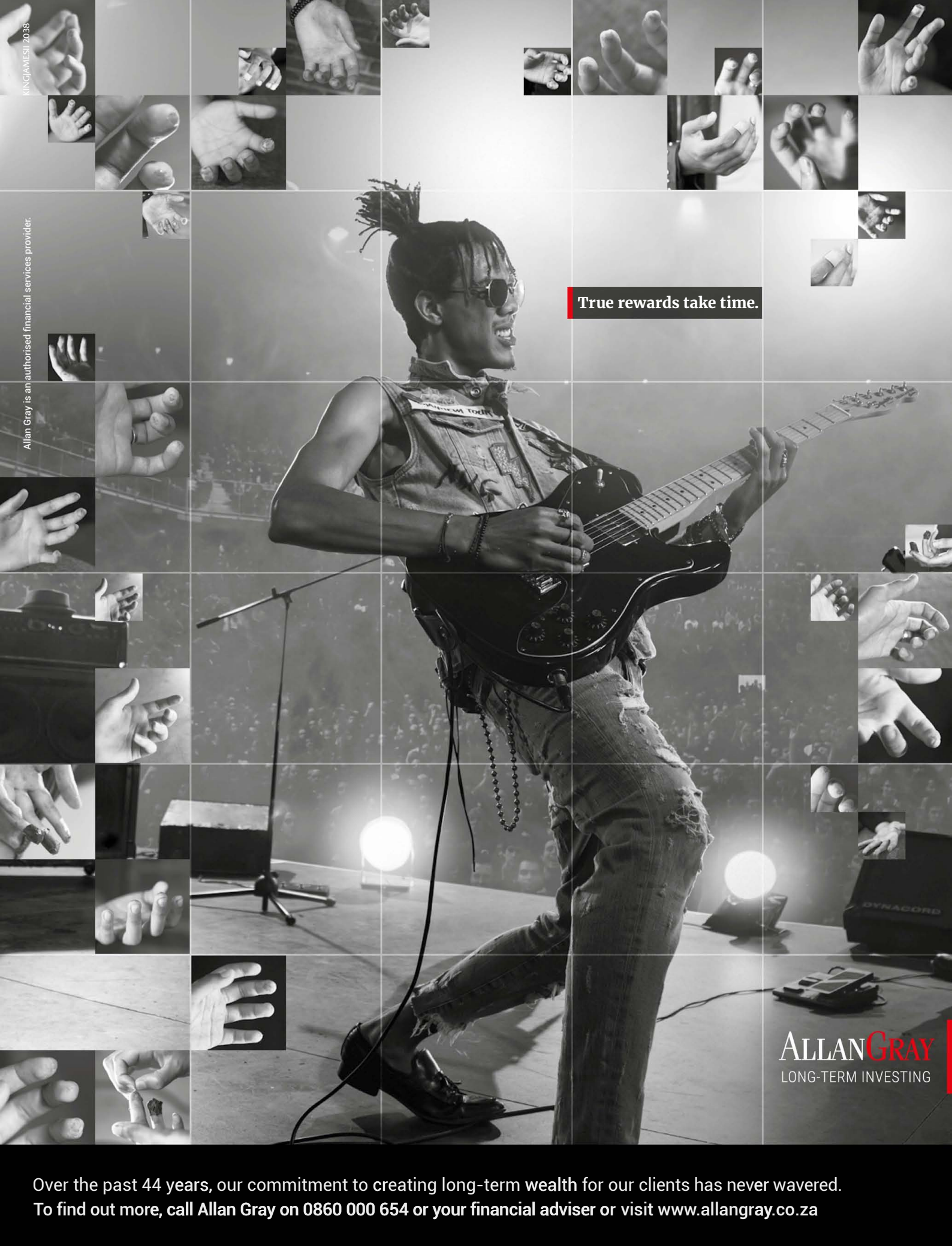


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from the editor

ANNELI GROENEWALD



As important as it is, I am tired of reading every Tom, Dick and Harry's views on Bosasa. Can't we stop talking and start doing? All good, you might say. But how do we start "doing"?

I think I might have a good example.

In the town where I grew up, our accounting teacher, Mr Du Plessis, was a bit of a legend (he still is). A quiet, humble guy, he managed to go almost unnoticed. Readers who have about 20 years on me would truly appreciate his nickname: "Die Skim".

Apart from accounting, Mr Du Plessis also taught typing – arguably two of the handiest sets of skills one can have. He was already in semi-retirement at the time (now already 20 years back), and had about three decades earlier also been my mom's accounting teacher.

In his quiet way, Die Skim would have kids blush with shame for not having done their homework (or for handing in untidy work). No punishment, no harsh words; merely visible disappointment in the way that he would half-sigh before signing next to your work.

At the time, he had just obtained his PhD – I struggle to recall what it was on, but I seem to remember the topic of education. Not being one to talk about his achievements much, he remained simply "Die Skim", or Mr Du Plessis.

One day, towards the end of my matric year, Mr Du Plessis posed a question to the class. I can't remember how big the accounting class was, but we couldn't have been many more than 25 kids – many of whom had gone on to study accounting and build successful careers on the back of their studies.

He paused (he paused a lot) then asked that those who "knew *exactly* what they wanted to be one day" put up their hands. With an alarming sense of certainty (for a bunch of 17 and 18-year olds), quite a few eager hands shot up.

"Thank you," he told the eager ones, "however, today I am not talking to you. I am talking to those who don't yet know what they want to become. It's okay. I am 65, and I still don't know what I want to be one day."

Maybe someone had just handed in such disappointing work that it made him doubt all his life choices. Maybe he really never figured out what he wanted to become, despite obtaining a PhD in a specific field. Regardless, for literally generations, Die Skim went to school on a daily basis and instilled basic knowledge of accounting into the minds of the teenagers who grew up in this small town.

"Doing", I think, is to get up every day and go to work and to continue to work diligently to get the task at hand done. And to take pride in it.

Had Die Skim not done that, despite his own doubts, myself and many other Bredasdorpers would have been seriously limited in terms of career options. ■

* If you're reading this edition of *finweek* in hard copy, do not miss the booklet on logistics in Africa, bagged with this magazine. Also be sure to get a copy of the next edition of *finweek*, which will include a similar industry focus on the property sector.

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