



TRUST NEWS

Winter 2016-17

Your help needed more than ever at critical time

Alumni and Trust supporters will share the Trustees' concern about the on-going student funding crisis at South African universities including the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

The gravity of the situation was clearly acknowledged by UKZN Convocation President Fanle Sibisi at a recent Alumnus Association event at South Africa House in London. He said universities could not meet students' demands for lowering or abolition of fees and it could only be hoped a political solution would be found.



Trust Chair Roger Smith writes: Some Trust supporters may be tempted to walk away, given violent incidents, disruption to studies and damage to property – but I would argue that is the wrong response to the situation. Students believe the Government once promised them reduced or no fees. With high unemployment and inflation in SA, many are unable to pay. All the students helped by the Trust fall into this category.



If we want to see matters improve for young people, the wider community, the universities and South Africa, we need to continue to engage and to provide whatever help we can. ->

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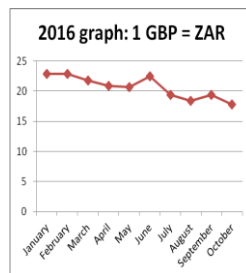
Student funding crisis...

-> I believe we should take our inspiration from the lawyers who have responded to an arson attack on the Law Library by pledging to try to replace lost books. The incident drew widespread condemnation, including from student leaders.

The Trust calls upon alumni and supporters every year to give as generously as they can, given the massive need – but that call is now more pressing than ever. Even the smallest contribution can make a crucial difference.

The Trust is facing extraordinary new challenges – not only from the situation in South Africa but also here in the UK, where the effects of the Brexit vote in the June referendum will continue to play out for years to come.

The Trust benefited from a favourable exchange rate for a very long time. This hit more than R24 to the pound last January. It meant donors' money stretched further in funding the Trust's bursaries and the Margaret Thomas Scholarship. We were able to help 14 students this year.



But the collapse of the pound since June has seen the rate tumble to below R17 to the pound at the time of writing. That is a massive cut of 30% in the value of your donation.

Please increase your giving accordingly if you can so that the Trust will be in a position to maintain bursary funding at the present level, if not actually increase it, in 2017.

Raise money for the Trust

You can use Virgin Money Giving to create your own online sponsorship pages in aid of the Trust.

We urge you to bring in donations to the Trust through sponsored activities from walks to marathon running or sponsored events from birthday appeals to concerts.



Simply set up your page following the instructions at www.virginmoneygiving.com and let friends, family and other potential sponsors know, as well as the Trust. We will be glad to assist.

Students helped by Trust give voice to their hopes

The messages of thanks from students to the Trust for the aid received paint a picture a world away from media headlines about student protests. Many speak of an ambition to improve their lot and that of their families and communities through their education.

Nkanyiso Mpanza, studying for a Bachelor of Pharmacy degree, says in an email:



"I am very honoured to be awarded this bursary.

"I am a 19-year-old young man, currently doing my second year in Pharmacy. I grew up at Esikhawini, a township in Richards Bay ... I was raised by a single, unemployed father as my mother passed away while I was still very young.

"I have three siblings – one brother and two sisters – and I am the oldest ... I plan to lead by example not only to my siblings but to all young people out there in our community.

"I finished my matric in 2014 and got distinctions in all of my subjects – seven distinctions in total. My passion for pharmacy began at a very young age, seeing how they treated people ... at public clinics.

"Despite my good results, I had no bursary the whole of last year. Knowing very well that my family couldn't afford to pay off my university fees, I knew I had to work hard.

"My hobbies are sport and reading. I am a soccer team captain at a local school residents' league team. I also read a lot of historic sport articles and biographies. I was very happy when they announced our very own Duane Dell'Oca [sports commentator] as the Olympics Opening Ceremony voice for Rio 2016.

"I appreciate what the UK Trust is doing for us – and may many more hardworking students reap [the benefit] from it."

In a separate message, Nkanyiso says he chose his course of study "so that I could give back to the community that has helped me grow into the young man I am today".

He is committed to bringing "quality medical care and treatment to all people regardless of their finance, race or position in society".

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Students write to thank Trust...

Another Pharmacy student, **Siphesihle Mazibuko**, 19, hopes to do research: "I aim to discover new chemicals or medicine that may work against a certain disease or improve one's lifespan". He says: "For me, pharmacy is not about the status or salary but the love and passion which drive me to do it even ... at my worst times."



Ayanda Kunene, 21, studying for a Bachelor of Social Science degree majoring in Psychology and Criminology, speaks of her fascination with human reasoning. She hopes to study further and publish her research.

Chemical engineering student **Sanele Mkhize**, 20, tells of his enjoyment in being able to apply physics, chemistry and maths in his studies. On graduating, he hopes to be able to make a difference to his family's situation in particular.



Nqobile Nkongo, 19, studying for a Diploma in Music Performance, is an accomplished singer and pianist. He speaks of his love of opera and desire to star on the world stage – so he can prove wrong those people who don't believe a music course can deliver a successful career.

Please give generously so the Trust can continue helping students.

Connect with the Trust on Facebook!



Please find us on a **new** Facebook page at:
www.facebook.com/UKZNUKTrust

Trust Chair Roger Smith welcomes contacts from UK alumni and supporters via **LinkedIn**. See: www.linkedin.com/in/rogersmithuksa

The latest news about the Trust, as well as information for donors, is on the charity's website at: www.ukznuktrust.org

Keeping in touch

Please make sure the UKZN Alumni Relations Office and the Trust have your up-to-date contact details, including for email.

Remember to email alumni@ukzn.ac.za and info@ukznuktrust.org with any changes. Add these two email addresses to your online contact lists so emails are not rejected.