



TRUST NEWS

Winter 2015-16

Gratitude of Trust bursars shines through



UKZN students (file picture)

The Trust has received many messages of thanks from the 16 students it has helped through its bursaries and the Margaret Thomas Scholarship this year. Their letters and emails provide a real insight into their lives, the difficulties they face, their hopes and aspirations and their determination to succeed.

It is a different picture from that seen in recent media coverage of student protests about tuition fees. We believe it is important to hear the voices of individual students who have their own stories to tell.

The protests have served to underline the seriousness of the crisis in student funding. The Trust's role in providing help for needy students is more vital than ever and we call on alumni and supporters to give as generously as they can to allow the Trust to continue its work.



Keagan Naicker, 19, who is studying for a Bachelor of Commerce degree, writes to say he and other bursars wish to thank the Trust and its donors "for this opportunity to make our dreams a reality despite the hardships many of us face in life". He says his dream is to become a chartered accountant but "every day is challenging". ->

TRUSTEES: Roger Smith (Chair); Tess Marsh (Secretary); Richard Cooper (Treasurer); Penny Holmes; Lorna Nimmo.

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Trust bursars' appreciation...

-> Keagan's experience of coming from a one-parent, low-income family is typical of many students helped by the Trust. He and his younger sister were brought up by their mother, a secretary.

"It has been a hard journey to get to this stage of my life but my mum has always done the best she can for us," he says. He wants to be a success so that he can care for his mother and sister.

Keagan declares: "I would like to say that the Trust gives many students like me the chance we would not otherwise have had to complete our studies and become something great in our life."



He ends by quoting **Nelson Mandela**:

"It is through education that the daughter of a peasant can become a doctor, that the son of a miner can become the head of a mine, that a child of farm workers can become a president of a great nation."

Another 19-year-old student, who does not wish to be named, tells of being brought up by her grandmother. She never knew her father, while her mother left to try to find work far away, never to return.

She insists she does not want to be pitied, saying: "We might be struggling financially at home but granny has always been there for me and for that I don't think there is any reason for me to complain."

Thanking the Trust for her bursary, she says: "It means so much to me and has given me so much hope for next year as I thought I wasn't going to register for 2016 due to lack of funds. I very much appreciate what the UK Trust has done."

Raise funds 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 look to education for route out of poverty

The accounts given by students in their messages of thanks to the Trust support the view of some observers that a university degree offers the only hope for many young people in South Africa to lift themselves and their families out of poverty.

Thobani Hlela, 19, studying for a Bachelor of Pharmacy degree, is another student raised by his grandmother as his parents were absent. He praises his granny for making sure there was always food on the table and because she “told the best stories”.



But it is an experience that has made him determined in the future “to work hard for my children”. He says that at school “I had good teachers who instilled in me that hard work always pays off”.

Thobani embarked upon his chosen course of study after observing the impact of HIV and Aids in the region and the role of anti-retroviral drugs in combating the virus. He praises the drug makers as “unsung heroes” who have “changed the lives of many people for the better”.

He says that at university he has had to learn to digest and implement information speedily, to be more assertive and punctual, and to work efficiently and productively alone and in groups. He says it has led him to grow as a person and have clearer goals.



Eunice Mokoena, 22, was awarded the Margaret Thomas Scholarship for 2015. She is studying for a Diploma in Music Performance, singing opera.

She says after her parents died she and her two siblings were left in the care of a guardian who is unemployed and has five children of her own. “It has been so difficult for me financially because she can’t support all of us,” says Eunice in thanking the Trust for its help.

She says she is passionate about music and believes in working hard to achieve her best as a performer.

After completing her degree, Eunice would like to give something back to her community “by helping the younger generation to believe in themselves and strive for the best”. She would like to study further and share the knowledge she has gained at university.

Budding writer voices her thanks

Senzekile Khwela, 20, studying for a BA degree, wants to use her education to make a difference for others, declaring: "I cannot think of a better way to do this than through teaching."



She confesses that a couple of years ago she thought only of herself: "Yet teaching requires responsibility that is a learned virtue."

"My late mother was an educator and I remember the mounds of work she would bring home, the dedication she reserved for her job and ultimately the reward she received – marked clearly in the cheerful photos of her with her students."

Thanking the Trust, Senzekile says: "Ever since I received this bursary, I have been indebted to the people who made it possible. Because of them, my story does not simply become 'struggling student' – it becomes future teacher, avid learner and budding writer."

She declares: "The people responsible for this bursary have given me a faith that the universe does not hand out carelessly. Faith in having a future is a privilege."

Please give generously so the Trust can help more students in 2016.

Follow the Trust on the web

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



A Facebook group, Friends of the University of KwaZulu-Natal UK Trust, is at: www.facebook.com/groups/ukznuktrust

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

Keep in touch!

We remind alumni and supporters to make sure the UKZN Alumni Relations Office and the Trust have their up-to-date contact details, including an email address.

Remember to email alumni@ukzn.ac.za and info@ukznuktrust.org with any changes.

It is a good idea to add these two email addresses to your online contact lists so that emails are not rejected.