



# TRUST NEWS

Winter 2019-20

## Trust student's illness inspired him to study to become a doctor

One of the 13 students being helped by the Trust in 2019 has given the Trustees a powerful account of how the challenge of living with his own health problems led him to study medicine.



**Tshepo Khene**, 25, says he chose to pursue a MBChB degree "mostly because of personal reasons as I was born with some chronic illness". He declares: "I was curious and wanted to understand more about the illness so that, in turn, I could ... assist those people like myself with this illness."

Tshepo tells of growing up in a remote rural area and having to travel a long distance to see a doctor. "At times I would be in excruciating pain and would be forced to stay in our local hospital for the whole night, whilst waiting for a doctor to come to see me – and many other patients before me – in the morning."



*Nelson R. Mandela Medical School, Durban*

He says he wants to be able to make a difference in his community and inspire young people to follow his example, "to dream big and that... ->

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

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# Would-be doctor's tale ...

-> ...everything is possible". Tshepo adds: "Sometimes you need to be your own role model." He would like to study further after graduating and hopes to specialise in neurosurgery or oncology.

Tshepo's story finds echoes in some of the accounts given by other students of medicine being helped by the Trust.



Andile Makhwana, 24, also speaks of coming from a poverty-stricken rural area where people have difficulty accessing health care.



He says: "I love medicine. Ever since I was a little boy, I wanted to become a doctor. I grew up in an area where getting to a health facility is a problem because it is very far. I've seen people suffer because of that."

Andile says he wants to provide "a helping hand" to his community. He wants to specialise in family medicine and rural health and dreams of opening a community health centre.

Mnqobi Ntuthuko Ndwandwe, 22, says: "I chose medicine because where I grew up in Nongoma there were no doctors ... People in my community, even my family members, paid a lot of money for doctors in town because in our clinics there are no doctors."



It became "a dream for me to make a difference in my community", he says, adding he wants to be a role model to show a career in medicine is possible "even if you come from a poor background like me".

## ***Keep 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](mailto:alumni@ukzn.ac.za) and [info@ukznuktrust.org](mailto:info@ukznuktrust.org) with any changes.

Add these two email addresses to your online address book or contact list so our emails are not rejected as spam.

# Self-help and women's empowerment seen as key

Many of the students being helped by the Trust come from impoverished rural communities. A common theme in their submissions is a determination to make a difference and put something back into their communities. A few examples:



Sbahle Thusi, 27, says she chose to study for a Bachelor of Community Development Studies (Honours) degree "because I grew up in an underdeveloped community where people have a lack of resources, lack of access to clean water, lack of skills, unemployment and no proper houses". She declares: "I want to make a difference in people's lives and in the community as a whole."

"My goal is to work with the community and help them to identify their assets and how they can utilise them. As there is a high unemployment rate, communities should take charge of themselves instead of waiting for the Government to do things for them."

Sbahle hopes to start her own local organisation with meaningful participation by the community, "especially women". She says: "I want to empower more women in rural areas and make them aware there is more to life than child bearing and rearing." She enjoys researching data and would like to focus on health education.

Senamile Ndimande, 21, who is studying a BSc (Geology) course, speaks of her love for nature and the outdoors but wants to help with the work of "sustaining resources for society and future generations".



She adds: "I believe it is my responsibility to protect [from] or raise warnings about natural hazards, for example, floods, landslides and drought, which are of much concern ... nowadays."



Nokwazi Bulose, 20, says his concern about the "vulnerability and degradation of the natural environment" led him to pursue a BSS (Geography and Environmental Management) degree. He hopes "to develop new ways of saving the natural environment and creating a sustainable environment for my community, city and for my country". Nokwazi wants to organise in his own village to achieve these aims.

**\*\* Please *give generously* to help support the Trust's students \*\***

# Trust Chair interviewed by UKZNTouch

An interview with Trust Chair Roger Smith about the work of the charity is due to appear in the next issue of UKZNTouch, the magazine aimed at keeping alumni informed about developments at UKZN and “in touch” with one another. The Trustees are pleased to have been given this opportunity to raise the profile of the Trust among alumni.



The publication with the interview is expected to be made available in due course on the University’s website at [www.ukzn.ac.za](http://www.ukzn.ac.za) and the alumni affairs sub-site at [alumniaffairs.ukzn.ac.za](http://alumniaffairs.ukzn.ac.za). Alternatively, you may wish to contact the Alumni Relations Office at [alumni@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:alumni@ukzn.ac.za) to make sure you get a copy.

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

The Trust’s website is at: [www.ukznuktrust.org](http://www.ukznuktrust.org)