



TRUST NEWS

Winter 2021-22

Trust student set to campaign on climate change concerns

One of the students being supported by the Trust in its 30th anniversary year has voiced his ambition to help address the impact of global warming. **Zothani Mvelo Mthembu**, 24, told the trustees that his dream was “to see everyone ... playing their part in reducing carbon emissions so that the world [can] be a better place for all, including future generations”.



Zothani is studying for a Bachelor of Social Science degree, majoring in Geography and Political Science. He said he chose those subjects because he wanted to gain an understanding of the impact of humans on the environment. Writing ahead of the recent COP 26 climate change conference, he said he was focusing on how different countries contributed to carbon emissions and how they were managing them.

Zothani hopes to work with deprived communities on environmental challenges and improving food security. His initiatives will aim to provide suitable jobs for disadvantaged or disabled youths.



Zothani’s comments were among those received from the 15 students being helped by the Trust in 2021. The trustees are pleased to be able to share a sample of the students’ views in this newsletter.

***** Please give generously to support our students *****

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

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Some Trust students' reports...

Thubelihle Senamile Ngonyama, 21, told the trustees of her hopes to address food scarcity through the production of nutrient-dense crops.



The BSc (Honours) student in Biological Science said: "As a child, I was always curious how plants manage to grow with just water and survive changing weather conditions. Without even realising [it], the love and interest of plants grew within me."

She added: "Plants are my passion and in seven to ten years I hope to own a plant farm where I will be producing nutrient-dense crops."



Nomzamo Valencia Shusha, 23, is studying a BCom (Honours) course in Supply Chain Management, a field that has been brought into sharp focus by the pressures caused by the Covid pandemic. She has been researching how supplier relationships have been affected by the crisis.

"I love the whole idea of supply chain and how it literally moves the world," she says. She hopes her work will illuminate how mistakes in sourcing contractual agreements can be avoided in future.

Lona Mpepo, 23, a student of medicine, has given an insight into the challenges she has faced in her studies. The help she receives from the Trust was renewed from 2020. She featured in a previous issue of the newsletter.



Lona says she initially welcomed the reliance on online learning brought about by the Covid pandemic but when she moved on to studying surgery she found it difficult. "I learnt to appreciate interactive teaching sessions," she says. She values each day of experience in a hospital, having realised that "the best textbook is a patient".



Another MBChB student, **Thabo Phakamani Langa**, 22, says he was inspired to become a doctor because of his experience of coming from a deprived rural area with one clinic and a doctor available "once a week if you're lucky". He declares: "I want to contribute in shaping and improving our health system in my community and the nation as a whole."

He hopes to specialise in dermatology and focus on dealing with HIV/Aids-related skin conditions. He also aims to gain experience from working with Mediciens Sans Frontieres/Doctors Without Borders.

Female students looking to carve careers in engineering

Two members of this year's group of students being helped by the Trust are women seeking to enter the traditionally male-dominated field of engineering. One of them is **Nomathemba Buthelezi**, 22, who is studying for a BSc in Electrical Engineering. Her comments reveal a keen enthusiasm for her chosen field.

Nomathemba says her interest started while she was growing up. "I used to fix minor electrical appliances at home [such as] kettles, changing bulbs, etc, which made me want to see myself as an electrical engineer one day."



She says engineering is challenging "and I love being challenged". She discovered it is essential to have a grasp of science and maths to succeed as an electrical engineer. "These subjects were challenging," she says, "but I managed to do well in them and they have helped me improve the way I approach problems and ... come up with solutions."



Nomathemba says studying electrical engineering has made her "a fast thinker". She adds: "I enjoy being in a laboratory, doing my practicals (building circuits, power supply, generators, etc), because I get to put what I was taught into practice."

Her aim is "to become one of the best (female) electrical engineers in the field" by excelling in her work. As a problem solver, she hopes to help resolve all kinds of issues, including load shedding (the power outages often experienced in SA).

"I want to find more ways to generate electricity without causing harm to the environment," Nomathemba says. She hopes such initiatives will lead to a bright future.

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The Trust's website is at: www.ukznuktrust.org

In memory of co-founder Will Simpson

The trustees were saddened to hear news of the death of Trust co-founder Will Simpson on 7th July at his home in Wincanton, Somerset.

His wife June said the Trust's Summer newsletter, celebrating the charity's 30th anniversary and paying tribute to Will's part in its foundation in 1991, arrived just days after he passed away.

She said: "I remember how much the enterprise meant to him and how the group made every effort to get the wording right and to make the launch effective." She believes he would have been delighted to have known what the Trust is still able to achieve.

The trustees are grateful to June and the children, Harold, Lucy and Victoria, for a generous donation of £500 to the Trust in Will's memory. His contribution will not be forgotten.

The family lived for many years in Canterbury, where Will was Librarian for the University of Kent and fostered a relationship with the Cathedral Library. A message of condolence from the University said Will's time there "was characterised by forward-thinking and efficient management, together with a deep dislike of red tape and paperwork". It praised him for having been always approachable and helpful.

Please use CAF for online donations!

The Trust is urging supporters to use the online donations service provided by the **Charities Aid Foundation (CAF)**, following the closure of Virgin Money Giving. Please go to www.cafonline.org to donate. Use the Gift Aid option if you are a UK taxpayer.

Remember to give us any change of address

Out-of-date contact details mean our communications by email can be blocked and newsletters sent in the post end up being returned, with a waste of the cost of postage.

Please make sure that both **the UKZN Alumni Relations Office** and **the Trust** have your current contact information.

Remember to email any changes to:

alumni@ukzn.ac.za and info@ukznuktrust.org

NB Add the two email addresses to your online address book or contact list to try to avoid our emails being rejected as spam.