



TRUST NEWS

Winter 2023-24

Praise for extraordinary generosity of two donors



The Trust has received a major boost from significant injections of funding provided in separate instances by two very special people, both alumni.

The Trustees wish to express their gratitude to artist and sculptor **Gwyneth Price**, who we are sorry to report is gravely ill with cancer. Our thoughts are with her, her husband Graham and family. You can read more about Gwyn in this newsletter and on our website at ukznuktrust.org

We also wish to honour the memory of **Ralph Bennett**, who passed away in 2014. He left a bequest that was paid to the Trust in July, more than eight years later. A brief tribute to Ralph is on page four, with a full version on the website.

The contributions from Gwyneth and Ralph will underpin the Trust's work of assisting students in need at the University for a while to come. But further donations from supporters would help maintain and even expand the support the Trust can provide.

The Trustees hope you will be inspired to give as generously as you can. Please also consider leaving an amount to the Trust in your will, as Ralph did. Helping students in need can provide a fitting legacy, making a difference for them, their families, communities and South Africa.



TRUSTEES: Roger Smith (Chair); Erin Bargate (Secretary); Richard Cooper (Treasurer); Sheralee Ghione; Shaunel Gounden; Penny Holmes.

POSTAL ADDRESS: Church House, Yr Allt, Llantrisant, Pontyclun, CF72 8EF.

Web: ukznuktrust.org Tel: 07968 142671 E-mail: info@ukznuktrust.org

Hear the voices of some of our students

We usually give as much space as possible in the Winter newsletter to comments from Trust students receiving assistance in the current year. We regret having to restrict to one page a small sample in this issue. More comments can be found in an article on the website.

Thobile Khuzwayo, recipient of the Trust's Margaret Thomas Scholarship, is studying for a Bachelor of Education Honours degree in technology education. She says she always has been passionate about teaching. She wants to be "an agent of change", helping "learners to be problem solvers and individuals who can make informed decisions and contribute to making SA and the world a better place".



Sthembile Gumede says she chose to study for a BSc in dietetics and human nutrition because of loved ones suffering from diabetes who had passed away. "I wish to educate my community ... about the importance of a healthy diet as I come from a disadvantaged area."

Liso Fikeni is studying for a BSc in Computer Science and Statistics as it is a degree "for the future". He says: "Our times are changing ... For an individual to thrive, they should have digital skills." He aims to develop his knowledge of e-commerce, focusing on "data modelling, visualization of end results, fact checking and decision making".



Nompakamiso Mkhabela says she chose to study medicine (MBChB) because there is a need for young doctors in South Africa. She enjoys studying anatomy because she says it helps her to understand the human body better. She hopes to specialise in gynaecology as she feels more needs to be done "about the high rate of neonatal deaths".

Zibusiso Mathe, studying for a BA in Music, says: "Learning about music, with all its complexities and technicalities, is like learning a new language – but somehow it's your favourite language." She would love to teach music and produce and direct performances "but songwriting and singing is my number one passion".



Remember to give us any CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Out-of-date contact details mean our attempts to keep in touch with alumni and supporters may be wasted. Email about any changes to: alumni@ukzn.ac.za and info@ukznukstrust.org

Trust thanks sculptor Gwyn Price

The Trustees would like to pay tribute to artist and sculptor **Gwyneth Price** (nee Westwood) for an extraordinary gesture of support for the Trust's work of assisting students in need. Despite her serious illness, Gwyn said she was delighted to know her donation would be of good use and might change lives in a significant way.



Gwyn studied for a traditional degree in Sculpture at the Fine Arts Department on the Pietermaritzburg campus of the University in the early 1960s. After being awarded an Emma Smith Scholarship, she came to London and went to study at Croydon Art College. It then had a very new sculpture department, headed by Richard Sladden.

It was much later that she learned she had been accepted for Chelsea Art College but the news had not reached her. She was sorry to have missed the chance to study under the great woman figurative sculptor Elizabeth Frink, who was teaching at Chelsea then. Gwyn said: "My life might have taken a very different track." But she had continued her studies at Croydon "and went on to find I loved teaching kids".

After a solid career in teaching, Gwyn retired with her husband Graham to live in South Wales. She declared: "Finally, I did get to make some significant work as a member of Sculpture Cymru!" She described this as "a late flowering".



In a 2021 Sculpture Cymru brochure, Gwyn said: "At the present time artists try to make visual comments on the conditions in which we find ourselves – climate change, migration, conflict, pandemics. We are living in an age of extinction.

"I have attempted here to make objects both intriguing to look at and carrying a powerful message about our situation."

Gwyn's listing on the Sculpture Cymru website can be found here: sculpturecymru.org.uk/gwyneth-price/

The trustees hope you will be inspired by Gwyn's example to give as generously as you can to help students in need at the University.

*** Full version of this article can be found on the Trust's website ***

In memory of Trust benefactor Ralph Bennett (1926-2014)

The Trustees wish to honour the memory of alumnus **Ralph Bennett** after the Trust received an unexpectedly generous sum through a bequest in his will – more than eight years after he passed away in London at the age of 87.

The Trustees were sorry to find that we knew very little about him. The University's records showed that Ralph obtained a Bachelor of Science degree in 1946, a Master of Science in Chemical Technology in 1948, and a Ph D in Science 1950, all while studying on the Pietermaritzburg campus.



We are indebted to Ralph's niece, Shelley de-Honri, for helping fill in some of the gaps, and to a former neighbour for passing on a photo and a eulogy given at Ralph's funeral in 2014 with a warm, personal account of the man.

He clearly was a very bright, extraordinary individual who appears to have led a quiet, private and solitary life. Unfortunately he never was very good at keeping in touch with family, many of whom moved from SA to Australia. Yet he appears to have had a generosity of spirit that extended to wanting to help students in need at his old University through the Trust, many, many years after he graduated.

Ralph was born in 1926, one of six siblings. He attended Marist Brothers' College in Durban where his early promise became clear, allowing him to skip a year or two of school studies. Immediately after gaining his doctorate in 1950, he sailed on a ship to the UK. He only returned to visit South Africa two or three times during his lifetime.

Despite having excelled in his studies, it appears that he did not pursue a career in science but worked in hospitality until he retired. Perhaps it is not surprising that, given this course, his reclusive nature and neglect of family contacts, some thought of him as eccentric. But many who encountered him found him to be warm and engaging.

*** Read the eulogy provided by Ralph's former neighbour in the full article which can be found on the Trust's website at ukznuktrust.org ***
