

RUTH FIRST EDUCATIONAL TRUST

UK Charity No. 1019975

Trustees: Barbara Ewin (Treasurer), Cheryl McEwan (Secretary), Lotte Shankland, John Tierney, Michael Thompson (Chairman)

Patrons: Sir Thomas Allen (Chancellor of Durham University), Bill Bryson (writer, former Chancellor of Durham University), Prof. Christopher Higgins (former Vice-Chancellor of Durham University), Gillian Slovo (writer, former President of English PEN, daughter of Ruth First)

School of Modern Languages & Cultures, Durham University, Durham DH1 3JT m.p.thompson@durham.ac.uk

ANNUAL REPORT 2015-16

The aims of the Trust are:

- To enable southern African students from historically disadvantaged backgrounds to undertake postgraduate study at the University of Durham.
- To educate and inform students and staff at the University, as well as residents of the area, about educational and development issues in southern Africa.
- To raise funds to support these activities.

Southern Africa is defined for this purpose as comprising the following countries: Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Republic of South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

This report gives details of activities undertaken by the Trust in the year ending 31 July 2016 in pursuit of these aims.

The Ruth First Scholarship in 2015-16

The Scholarship was awarded to Tendai Makamure from Zimbabwe, who took an MSc in Public Policy and Global Health. She lived in St Chad's College accommodation at Trinity Hall (travelling down to Queen's Campus in Stockton for lectures). During the first term she discovered that she was pregnant, and her son Munesu (Ed) was born in Durham in March. This interrupted Tendai's studies, but with support from her extended family she was able to carry out her work placement, complete delayed assignments and submit her dissertation after returning to Zimbabwe. She passed the course with Merit, and returned to Durham (with Ed) for Congregation in January. She is hoping to do a PhD in healthcare. Tendai's Ruth First webpage is at:

community.dur.ac.uk/ruthfirst.trust/makamure.htm

The Ruth First Scholarship in 2016-17

There were 56 applications, 36 men and 20 women. The largest number of applications was from Zimbabwe (37). The most popular subject area was Business, Finance, Management and Economics (18), followed by Social Work, Community/Youth Work, Sociology (9). A new selection procedure had been agreed with the University, involving the Trust presenting a shortlist to the University's scholarships panel, which now makes the final decision. The candidate ranked first having informed us that she had accepted a Chevening Scholarship from another UK university, the Scholarship was awarded to Chipo Sana from Zimbabwe. Chipo is taking an MA in International Social Work and Community Development. She arrived in Durham at the end of September 2016 and moved into St Chad's College accommodation at Trinity Hall. Further details about Chipo can be found on the Trust's website: community.dur.ac.uk/ruthfirst.trust/thisyear.htm

Past Ruth First Scholars

The 2014-15 Scholar, Dave Namusanya, is working with the Malawi Electoral Support Network (MESN) as a National Coordinator and Public Relations Officer. He is also applying for further studies to carry out research on youth, popular culture and HIV/AIDS in Malawi.

Pearson Nkhoma (2011-12) completed his PhD in social work studies at Durham, investigating the problem of child prostitution in southern Africa.

Nomazile Chicho (2008-09) completed her PhD in social work studies, which was awarded in October 2016.

Information about all former Ruth First Scholars can be found on the RFET website: community.dur.ac.uk/ruthfirst.trust/former.htm

Events

St Chad's College MCR ran a photography competition linked to sales of photos, which raised £380 for the Trust.

The annual Banquet organized jointly with the Durham Palestine Educational Trust was revived after renovation work in the Town Hall had led to the replacement of the 2015 edition with a smaller event in May. It took place on 13 February, with music provided by Ngoma Vuma Uropa and other student musicians. Just under £2200 was raised for the Trust.

In June, Mike Thompson, Helen Charnley, Pearson Nkhoma and Sarah Banks took part in an enjoyable sponsored walk around Whitley Bay organized by the DPET. Just over £1500 was raised.

Finance

The accounts for 2015-16 will be tabled at the AGM by the Treasurer. Costs and income were similar to those of the previous year, leaving us with a modest surplus of just over £2000, which allows us to maintain a reasonable reserve.

Annual grants are received from Durham County Council (£2000 per year), the Durham Mineworkers' Association (£600 per year plus a contribution to books for the Scholar) and QStudent, the owners of Ruth First House on Claypath (£2760 per year). We are very grateful to all three organizations for their continuing support.

We are also grateful to Councillors Grenville Holland and Mac Williams for their wise advice; to Durham University for its commitment to awarding tuition fee scholarships to Ruth First Scholars; to the Departments that provide teaching and supervision; to the Durham Palestine Educational Trust for its collaboration in fundraising events; to everyone who contributes to the annual Banquet; and to St Chad's College and its MCR for their valuable commitment to supporting Ruth First Scholars and integrating them into the College community.

Bill Bryson, Chris Higgins, Sir Thomas Allen and Gillian Slovo continue to be supportive Patrons of the Trust.

13 March 2017

Mike Thompson

Chairman of the Board of Trustees