

# RUTH FIRST EDUCATIONAL TRUST

UK Charity No. 1019975

*Trustees:* Cheryl McEwan (Secretary), Francis Pritchard (Treasurer), 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)

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## ANNUAL REPORT 2017-18

### 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 2018 in pursuit of these aims.

### The Ruth First Scholarship in 2017-18

The Scholarship was awarded to Paul Chiwaya from Malawi, who took an MA in Educational Assessment. He lived in St Chad's College accommodation at Trinity Hall. He completed his course successfully and gave an inspiring Ruth First Scholar Seminar entitled 'The Plight of Malawian Youth: Seeking Solutions', which focused on the notion of 'positive youth development' and his work in Malawi with the Positive Youth Development Initiative. Paul's Ruth First webpage is at:

<http://community.dur.ac.uk/ruthfirst.trust/chiwaya.htm>

### The Ruth First Scholarship in 2018-19

There were 53 applications. The largest number of applications was from Zimbabwe (32). The most popular subject area was Business, Accounting, Finance, Management, Economics (13), followed by Social Work, Community/Youth Work, Sociology (10). A revised selection procedure had been agreed with the University, involving the Scholarships Office receiving and processing all applications and the Trust considering only those applicants who had already received an offer of a place. We presented a ranked shortlist to the University's scholarships panel, which approved our selection. The Scholarship was awarded to Faith Chipuriro from Zimbabwe. Faith is taking an MSc in Internet Systems and E-Business. She arrived in Durham at the end of September 2018 and moved into St Chad's College accommodation at Trinity Hall. Further details about Faith can be found on the Trust's website:

[community.dur.ac.uk/ruthfirst.trust/thisyear.htm](http://community.dur.ac.uk/ruthfirst.trust/thisyear.htm)

## Updates on past Ruth First Scholars

The 2016-17 Scholar, Chipo Sana, is working for Norfolk County Council as a social worker. She hopes to win funding to allow her to take a PhD.

Tendai Makamure (2015-16) is working for Africaid Zvandiri in Zimbabwe on an HIV/disability project, providing support to children and adolescents living with HIV/AIDS.

Pearson Nkhoma (2011-12) visited Durham in 2018 to be awarded his PhD, and published an article (co-authored with his supervisor Helen Charnley) based on his doctoral research on child prostitution in Malawi in the prestigious journal *Social Sciences*.

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

## Events

2017-18 turned out to be a quiet year with very few events.

A Banquet was planned jointly with the Durham Palestine Educational Trust but had to be cancelled due to disappointing ticket sales.

In June, Paul Chiwaya gave the 2018 Ruth First Scholar Seminar at St Aidan's College, which was attended by about 30 people.

Also in June, Mike Thompson, Helen Charnley and Paul Chiwaya took part in an enjoyable sponsored walk around Wolsingham organized by the DPET. A record amount of almost £2500 was raised.

## Finance

The accounts for 2017-18 will be tabled at the AGM by the Treasurer. Costs were similar to those of the previous year but income was significantly lower, leaving us with a deficit and therefore a reduction in the reserve that we have been maintaining in recent years. The loss of Banquet revenue was partly compensated for by increased sponsored walk donations, but QStudent cancelled its regular donations.

Annual grants are received from Durham County Council (£2000 per year) and the Durham Mineworkers' Association (£600 per year plus a contribution to books for the Scholar). QStudent, the owner of Ruth First House on Claypath, has been donating £2760 per year; however, it has been taken over by another property company, which is unwilling to continue to support the Scholarship. We are very grateful to all three organizations for their support.

We are also grateful to Councillor Grenville Holland for his 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 St Aidan's College and its Principal, Dr Susan Frenk, for hosting Ruth First Scholar Seminars; and to St Chad's College and its Principal, Dr Margaret Masson, 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.

12 November 2018

*Mike Thompson*

Chairman of the Board of Trustees