

The Sumbandila Scholarship Trust

Newsletter No. 6 - August 2010



“Sumbandila’s vision is the transformation of underprivileged children with exceptional potential into entrepreneurs and leaders who make significant contributions to society and their own communities”

Dear Friends and Supporters of Sumbandila,

The Trust's mission is to provide deprived children with a high quality secondary education alongside a strong mentorship programme, nurturing both leadership potential and entrepreneurial skills while encouraging social responsibility and awareness. We develop children's potential through both academic education and practical



Testing in progress at a rural Primary School

experience and empower them with a belief and the ability to make a difference in their communities. We encourage both Western and African values, "Service in Leadership" and "Ubuntu: becoming a person in and through other people."

New Programme Names

The Sumbandila Scholarship Trust has rechristened the Outreach Programme and it is now known as the Sumbandila Outliers Programme. The Sumbandila Full Scholarship Programme, which includes the students on full bursaries at Ridgeway College, is now known as the Sumbandila Residential Programme. This, our sixth Newsletter, will keep our friends and supporters in contact with some of the events

and activities around our programmes. Please do pass it on and also have a look at our website: www.sumbandila.org where there is more information about the history of the Trust and a film about the Sumbandila scholars. (For new readers, Newsletter 5 is available on the Sumbandila website).

The 2010 intake

Five hundred and thirty eight applicants were processed during the testing at the end of 2009. Final testing and interviews for the selection were held on the 6th and 7th of January 2010. Twenty seven children were invited to join the Outliers Programme and two children were accepted onto the Residential Programme with full bursaries, one child with a 100% hostel and 50% school bursary and two children with 50% hostel bursaries. A significant development in the selection process has been the admission of candidates originating from families earning low to middle income salaries who were subsequently offered partial bursaries by Ridgeway College - in fact the Sumbandila testing has opened up a market for Ridgeway which had been previously untapped. These children also attend the Outliers Programme of Saturday and Holiday Schools which greatly assists them in catching up with their peers academically.

Residential Programme

The two new Sumbandila residential students in Grade Eight, Kulani Vhukeya and Karabo Manuga and the partial bursary students Mutondi Rankhododo, Vhugala Mabirimisa and Mavhungo Madzivhandila, also in Grade Eight, have settled in well and their progress at school has been very pleasing. All the Sumbandila girls have



The Sumbandila Residential children with staff

moved to a new hostel – we are renting the old Army Commando barracks (complete with two sports fields) right next to Ridgeway College. The move to the ‘barracks’ was carried out in record time by Jenny Macdonald as was the installation of showers! Although the girls love the space (it is much roomier) and being right next to school they do miss their old home and the boys!

The Sumbandila children continue to stand out and three of them recently attended a Life Orientation workshop on the themes of HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention and leadership with Sumbandila Trustee Nelly Tlakula (Nelly is a Chief Education Specialist and the Manager for Life Orientation and HIV and AIDS Education with the Limpopo Department of Education) and Ridgeway College Life Orientation teacher, Adila Aboobaker. According to Nelly, the engagement by the Sumbandila children, in particular Shadrack Khorombi, was noteworthy and she was extremely impressed with them. Equally, the participation of some of the girls in the National Women’s Day walk on the 9th of August is an indication of their growing self assurance and we are proud of their desire to engage with the wider community. Rosy Mudzanani and Sandra Ramabulanyana spent their last holiday working at a local business and it was wonderful to see their pride and satisfaction at earning money in a real job. Rosy has taken her entrepreneurial ambitions further and has started a vegetable garden as well as, we have only very recently discovered, her own little tuck-shop for Ridgeway students! Rosy and Phumudzo Sadiki won merit awards in the last National English Olympiad and Tshumelo Mukwevho has been picked for the Ridgeway football A team. Lastly, a number of the residential children continue to assist with the Outlier programme of Saturday and Holiday Schools and in this way are able to give to others some of what they have received.

Our first Sumbandila scholars are currently writing their mock IGCSE examinations. When one considers that this exam is written by top scholars all over the world and that our girls were in chronically under-resourced schools only two and a half years ago, it is even more wonderful to see them reaching their level.

Outliers Programme

There are now 67 children on the programme (27 in Grade Eight, 21 in Grade Nine and 19 in Grade Ten) originating from 31 high schools over 11 Department of Education circuits, most of them located in the former Apartheid ‘Homelands’ of Venda and Gazankulu.



The 2010 Sumbandila Outlier children with Sumbandila staff and teachers

We are very satisfied with the development of the Outlier programme and we believe that the children are too and that this is reflected in the virtual absence of any absenteeism. We decided at the end of 2010 that our academic curriculum would be based on the common weaknesses and gaps that we have identified and would

be implemented irrespective of the teaching stage of the national curriculum in their various home schools. We have implemented this change and our curriculum now focuses on intensive teaching of core concepts in these subjects. As important to the Outliers programme as the children's academic progress, though more difficult to measure, is what the participants take back into their schools, peer groups, families and communities. From the children we know that Maths skills are being passed back to their peers through cooperative learning



Holiday School can be exhausting!

and that even Teachers have been borrowing the new 'PracMaths' text books! The popularity of the library books is extremely encouraging as is the way the children value them: to date only one book has been lost from the collection. Even more encouraging has been the circulation of our books amongst the family members and peers of the Outlier children as this is exactly the sort of result our programmes intend. We are always amazed by many of the children's ability to create and tell really good stories. The story Sumbandila staff have enjoyed most, "The Woorgis" (featuring the Sumbandila staff and volunteers), was written by two Grade Ten children, Tshilidzi Netsianda and Teboho Mavhusha. For those of you who have visited us, the following excerpt might bring a few chuckles: "They were taken to a room where there were three snakes. Jabu was not afraid of them. Bibi decided to name the snakes. The black mamba was named Mapfumo, the yellow and frightening one was named Leigh and the green, thin, jumpy and active one was named Carolyn"!!



Carolyn Ingram with her Saturday School IT helpers, Sandra, Tsepo, Rosy, Takalani & Fatima

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IT & New Computers

In addition to the marvellous facilities available to us through Ridgeway College's IT Centre, the arrival of Computers donated by Marwyn Investment Management LLP and Wavex has allowed us to set up a computer room in the Sumbandila Hostel! This has been of huge benefit to the children, allowing them to do their homework on a computer, do research for school projects and email their friends. IT learning has become a significant part of Sumbandila and this year's Outlier IT project, entitled My Family Book, involves the children assembling a family tree and history of their kin. This project includes working with templates, writing the stories of family members, using custom English dictionaries and these elements have been integrated into their English lessons. In addition they have

been taught to use a scanner to digitise photographs of themselves and their families and to retouch pictures using an open-source image manipulation programme. Interestingly, despite their poor backgrounds, all of them have family photos which can be scanned and there were over 400 scans during the last holiday school! We hope to be able to print the final documents for them to present to their families at the end of the year. When one considers that before joining the Sumbandila programme, the vast majority of the children had never even touched a computer before, then their progress is nothing short of amazing!

Loveline Visit

In Newsletter 5 we described the use of entrepreneurial games designed by the South African Institute for Entrepreneurship (SAIE) and through that our exposure to the work of Loveline (see www.lovelife.org.za) as many of the materials used by Loveline are designed by the SAIE. We are pleased to report that we have continued the use of these very successful games throughout the Sumbandila programme since and that Lerato

Mahayi of Lovelife was able to spend a week with Sumbandila. Lerato was thoroughly inspiring and brought us up to date with developments at Lovelife, particularly their 'Groundbreakers' model which trains individuals to go back into their communities with entrepreneurial and life-skills. We would like to explore the possibility of partnering with Lovelife in some way and using our Outliers as Groundbreakers. We believe there is an obvious synergy between the two programmes and that our children are already taking a lot of what we give them back into their schools and homes.

Lerato really bonded with the children, frankly discussing with them the difficult issues of relationships, sex and H.I.V as well as running SAIE's 'The Best Game'. Lerato talked to the children about Lovelife's work, about the Lovelife helpline and distributed pamphlets. With a representative from Lovelife present, we were very happy to also host officers from the South African Police Force's Child Protection Unit who undertook a workshop on the issue of woman and child abuse. Initially the students were very quiet and withdrawn until a facilitator asked them whether they trusted the police or not. This gave a few of the children courage enough to tell some very scary stories about negative encounters with the police. Following this the children really opened up and an unusually frank discussion ensued.



Lovelife evening with Lerato Mahayi (inset)

Field trips

Field trips are part of our objective to provide holistic learning and create environmental sensitivity and awareness in the children - future conservationists!

During the 2010 Easter School the current Grade Eights were given the same opportunity as last years Grade Eights and Nines to visit the Hanglip indigenous forest above Louis Trichardt. We spent a wonderful afternoon hiking and undertaking group learning activities on the theme of forest biodiversity. During the 2010 Winter School each Grade was taken on an expedition to an archaeological site at some nearby hills. The site is characterised by impressive stone walling encircling the



Grade Eight trip to Hanglip

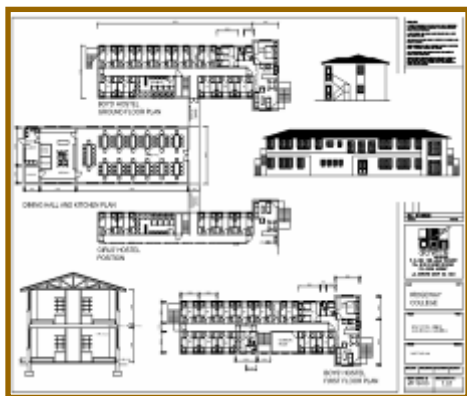
granite outcrops, on top of which are spread a significant number of artefacts dating from the recent to approximately 350 years before the present. After scaling the hill, groups of students undertook to locate, draw and describe an artefact (without disturbing it!) and a discussion about history and archaeology was held. The activities were guided by Jabu Linden who was involved in two archaeological rehabilitation projects at the Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. A fascinating aspect of the trip involved the children discussing and confronting the many fears and beliefs that are associated with old settlements in this part of the world.



Archaeological trip

Pastoral Care and Counselling

As we discussed in Newsletter 5, some of the children indicated a need for counselling and we have been extremely fortunate to have the help of counsellor Philip Hewitt from Westminster School in London. In July Philip visited Sumbandila for the third time (giving up his holidays yet again!) and spent nearly two weeks with the Sumbandila and Ridgeway College children as well as reviewing the peer support systems he helped us put into place last year. A very exciting development has been the contact, made through Philip, with local counsellor Ndivhuwo Kutama. Ndivhuwo, whose specialisation is vulnerable children and orphans, is working with the children on Saturdays and we are excited at the possibility of his being able to grow with Sumbandila, particularly his contribution of the vital ingredient of cultural intelligence.



Planning is advanced!

Visit and talk by Sibusiso Vilane

At the end of 2009 Sibusiso Vilane visited Ridgeway College and spoke at the schools Honours Evening. The next day he spent the morning chatting to and answering questions from the Sumbandila residential children. Sibusiso's story is quite amazing. Coming from a poor rural background he began work as a labourer on construction sites before his career took a very different path: he was the first black African to climb Mt.



Bart Fuijkschot

Everest (in fact he has climbed it twice!) for which he was awarded the Order of Ikhamanga by President Thabo Mbeki in 2006. Sibusiso continues to mount expeditions to other peaks and the South Pole and he links his expeditions to fundraising for charities. You can read more about Sibusiso on his website: www.to-the-top.co.za.

Visitors

Bart Fuijkschot from the Ir Felix August Schippers Stichting came to Sumbandila again this year to visit the children, in particular Phumudzo Sadiki in Grade Ten whose scholarship is fully funded by his organisation. Bart is remarkable for his understanding of the wider dimensions of the social factors that impact so heavily on the Sumbandila children. Sadly, our promise on his last visit, to teach the girls to waltz, had not been fulfilled but we are working on it and they will be ready for his next visit!

Plan for a New Hostel

Sumbandila has embarked on a fundraising campaign for the building of a 100 bed boarding hostel of three units: a kitchen/dining facility and initially one and ultimately two, 50 bed dormitories. The hostel will accommodate residential scholarship students during term time, Outlier students during holidays and provide a venue for meals during Saturday and holiday schools. The hostel will also act as an income generator as we intend to accommodate a number of paying boarders from Ridgeway College for which there is an established and growing demand.



Sibusiso Vilane (centre) with some of the Sumbandila children

Brad Sparks is based in Los Angeles, California and is the Director of KPMG International's Global Green Initiative. Brad met Sumbandila Director Leigh Bristow on a sponsored trip to the Antarctic and recently visited Sumbandila with a group of friends and colleagues. The residential children hosted them for dinner and were fascinated to meet Americans and discuss with them their country, music and film. That evening made us even more aware of the children's growing maturity and we were proud of the manner in which they hosted their guests. **Josh Kurz**, a filmmaker also from Los Angeles (though born and bred in New York), visited Sumbandila with Brad Sparks. Josh has uploaded Sumbandila to youtube (see: <http://www.youtube.com/user/SumbandilaSchool>) and is also organising an online campaign to collect books for the Sumbandila library (see: <http://www.swaptree.com/>). Josh specialises in fast-paced short form content for science segments, action sports and commercials and describes one of the highlight of his career as being the time he dressed up as a sheep and used large balls of Jell-O in an attempt to explain cloning!

In January **Claudia Shaw** from our principal Residential Programme funders, Marwyn Investment Management LLP, visited Sumbandila. Claudia coordinates Marwyn's support and we were extremely glad to be able to host her. It meant a great deal to the children to be able to meet another of the people involved in giving them such a life-changing opportunity and Claudia was extremely generous in her praise for Sumbandila: "It was very clear to me that amazingly, this little project in the heart of rural South Africa has achieved big things in a very short space of time. This is essentially down to a small but core group of insightful individuals who have pooled their invaluable wealth of experience in the educational sector to make this a truly unique project. I felt immense pride that Marwyn and our associates are so closely linked with such an inspirational project".

We were very pleased to host **Renate and Peter Heikamp**, from Hannover in Germany, who make regular contributions to Sumbandila and have recently donated money for the purchase of more books for the Sumbandila library. We all had a traditional Venda meal together (deliciously prepared by Tshilidzi at the hostel) after which the children performed a traditional dance and sat by the camp fire for a story-telling evening. The highlight of this was Vhugala telling stories passed on to him by his grandmother, which, although told in English were idiomatically very traditionally African. Renate and Peter were very pleased to be able to meet the children they have heard so much about and to experience for the first time a little bit of African food and culture.



Claudia Shaw with a few of the Sumbandila girls



The Heikamps with Sumbandila!

Funding

We are extremely privileged to have the continued support of our principal funders, Marwyn Investment Management LLP and their partners for the Residential Programme and the Cape Town based D.G. Murray Trust for the Outliers Programme. Murray Hofmeyer and the Study Trust are an amazing source of advice and support for Sumbandila and the Study Trust continue to assist in funding part of the Outlier programme. In the interests of diversifying our donor base we have employed the assistance of a professional fundraiser, Sue Peiser (see her website at www.fundraising.co.za), for whom Marwyn are covering the cost for six months. For this we would once again like to thank James Corsellis for both his generosity and foresight. Sue and her associate Alan Beuthin visited Sumbandila this month and toured Ridgeway and the Sumbandila hostel and met the children. Sue and Alan had detailed discussions with Sumbandila staff and Trustees about fundraising approaches and left with a very clear idea for developing strategies.

Ciko Thomas of the **Nedbank Foundation** kindly introduced us to his colleague Thabile Kubheka who visited us in April. We have received an incredibly generous grant from Nedbank towards the Outlier Programme and for the provision of kitchen equipment for the 100 bed hostel. Part of the money donated for the kitchen equipment has already been used for appliances in the temporary hostels and has made a big difference to the lives of the children and staff- thank you Nedbank!!! We also arranged for Thabile to visit the Elim Hlanganani Society for the Care of the Aged in the nearby town of Elim. We have been assisting this organisation since, despite their name, they now also serve hundreds of children and youths orphaned by the HIV/AIDS pandemic and we hope to be able to include some of their children in our testing at the end of this year. We are very pleased that Thabile's visit resulted in funding being granted to them by the Nedbank Foundation!

Harry and Heather Mithen from Perth, Australia were introduced to Sumbandila by Trustee Mike Linden who studied with Harry in Kwa-Zulu Natal many, many years ago. Harry and Heather initially raised enough money to cover the cost of a Sumbandila child at Ridgeway college for one year and have mobilised a network of about 140 Sumbandila supporters amongst family, friends and their church. So far this year they have raised an additional Aus \$ 8,000 after the latest fund-raising event to include Sumbandila - the Perth-Fremantle City-to-Surf Fun Run.



Harry and Heather Mithen

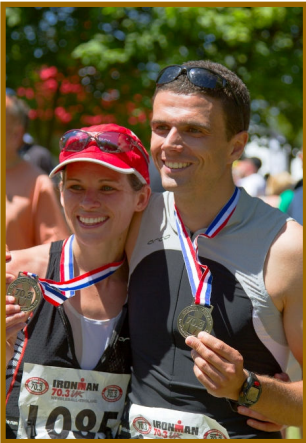
The **Victor and Peggy Thomas Trust** has generously offered to fund the expenses of two children who are part of the Sumbandila Outlier Programmes 2010 intake. This Trust was established in 1984 according to the wish of Victor Thomas who was born in the nearby town of Elim. Its purpose is to help advance education and training amongst young people in recognition of the life-long, enriching association Victor and his wife Peggy had with the Shangaan/Tsonga people.



Ntsako Alex Mashaba (left) and Nhlanhla Collins Mahlangu (right)

The grant will be used over the full five years of these two children's secondary education to cover their Saturday and Holiday School expenses. Ntsako Alex Mashaba is a 13 year old boy from Mbhokota village and he attends Marimane High School. Ntsako is a gifted boy who received an excellent report from his teachers at Masekani Primary School and he also did very well in the Sumbandila testing. Ntsako is 'mad about soccer' (he was very upset about Bafana Bafana's showing in the World Cup!) and we hope he will play a leading role in the formation of the Sumbandila football team that has been proposed by the Outlier children. Nhlanhla Collins Mahlangu, also 13 years old, lives with his grandparents in

Wayeni village near Vongani in the lowveld where he attends Hluvuka High School. Nhlanhla received an excellent testimonial from the Principal of Wayeni Primary and he scored outstanding English marks in the Sumbandila testing. Nhlanhla spends as much time as possible at a nearby internet café and is particularly enjoying the information technology lesson.



Andy & Jules

Andy Walford from Marwyn Investment Management LLP in London and his wife Jules visited us in March last year and donated R 2,000 for the purchase of reference books, including dictionaries, for the Sumbandila children. Very recently, on the 20th of June, Andy and Jules participated in the UK Half Ironman Triathlon with the aim of raising money for Sumbandila and in fact raised about £ 2,400! We are extremely grateful to Andy and Jules and look forward to them visiting us again in February next year.

Nick Mahony is helping to sponsor Crizelda Sibone who is currently completing her teacher training degree. Crizelda was the schoolgirl daughter of an illiterate farm labourer who heard that the wife of neighbouring farmer was a teacher and walked 18 km to ask Leigh Bristow for help with her studies. Leigh took her into her home, saw her through a successful final examination, then arranged for her to spend time working with the Mahonys in London before she began her teacher training.

Staff



"Mr. Map"

None of what we have been able to describe in this newsletter would have been possible without the enthusiasm and dedication of our staff and we could fill a newsletter with all the details! Phil Mapfumo (affectionately known by all as "Mr. Map"), the Ridgeway College maths teacher, has been instrumental to the success of the Outliers Programme and is a father figure for the residential children. Gill Enslin continues to do a sterling job as house mother to the Sumbandila boys and is responsible for their day to day guidance and welfare. In addition, Carolyn Ingram, the Ridgeway College IT teacher is one of the mainstays in organising Saturday and Holiday schools

and the way in which she has managed to integrate her Information Technology lessons with themes from Maths and English lessons as well as the children's school projects has been incredibly successful. Carolyn is a mentor and friend to the children and her love for IT has been infectious!

Thanks are due to Jenny Macdonald for her incredible composure while tackling the inevitable logistical quagmires, to Tshildizi Ravhuhali, Alma Mapfumo and Energy Sigauke (the unsung heroes of Sumbandila), to Donald Fridjhon, and to Mike, Bibi and Jabu Linden. We are also very grateful to Ridgeway College Grade Twelve student, Bokang Mpetla, who has been assisting Gill with the teaching of Science at Saturday schools. We have a new staff member on the Outlier Programme as we have recently appointed a new English teacher, Moudy Chirandu, who is also a qualified remedial teacher specialising in language. She has immediately established an excellent rapport with the children and her classes are much enjoyed and very lively!



Tshildizi and Alma

From the Director

I recently read a paper by Evens and Schamberg from the department of Design and Environmental Analysis and Human Development at Cornell University. They revisited the issue of the income-achievement gap in education and went on to show that childhood poverty is inversely related to working memory in young adults. This problem starts in the early primary years and accelerates over time. What this says to us is that the chronic

stress associated with poverty (which affects all of our Sumbandila children) has had and is still having a major effect on cognitive development. When you consider that working memory is essential for language comprehension, reading, problem solving, and long term storage of information, the effect of chronic stress on our students is one of the most important issues that Sumbandila needs to continuously address.

With the above in mind the following points are critical:

- 1) The students who have made it into our program have done so against extraordinary odds. When you consider that some of the children on the residential program are currently writing IGCSE exams, an exam which is written in top private schools all over the world, we are reminded of how remarkable they are.
- 2) We are also reminded of the importance and the value of the residential program versus the Outliers program, despite the disproportional expense of the former. Here we are able to ensure that many of the stresses they experienced at home, such as food and sleep deprivation and physical and verbal abuse are taken out of the equation. We are able to provide the simple luxury of light to work by at night and most importantly (whilst still inadequate) we can address their psychological and emotional needs.
- 3) The importance of Ridgeway College as a model for Sumbandila schools in the future. Although it is essentially a private school with middle class children, it is small, culturally and economically diverse and provides a less stressful environment for these children than a larger and more sophisticated city school.
- 4) The importance of a skilled, culturally compatible counsellor on an ongoing basis for both the residential and outliers program is made abundantly obvious.

Only five of our 22 Sumbandila residential scholars have a father and six of them have lost their mothers. One of our top Science and Maths students lost his father in a brutal witchcraft murder only two years ago. This speaks volumes about the terrible upheaval happening in our communities. We cannot hope to succeed in producing entrepreneurs, leaders, academics and, most importantly good parents if we do not address the psycho-social needs of our children, develop life skills, values, skills in self reflection and encourage them to set both short term and long- term personal goals.

The ultimate success of this project will be measured by how much of what our children learn, they take back into their communities.

I would like to thank the Sumbandila staff for their extraordinary commitment and hard work, the board and staff of Ridgeway College for their generosity and assistance, the Sumbandila Trustees for their support, all our Funders and supporters for their generous contributions and continued interest and belief in Sumbandila and James Corsellis and Marwyn Investment Management LLP whose generosity and vision is the reason that all this has been made possible.



Leigh Bristow
Executive Director

The Sumbandila Scholarship Trust

080-267-NPO / PBO No. 930032385

PO Box 1705, Louis Trichardt 0920 South Africa

Tel: +27 (0) 155163907/8 / +27 (0) 833791596

E-Mail: lbristow@nwweb.co.za

www.sumbandila.org