

# The Sumbandila Scholarship Trust

## Newsletter No. 7 - June 2011



“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,

Since the last newsletter published towards the end of 2010 the Sumbandila Scholarship Trust has grown substantially - following the testing and intake of new candidates there are now 136 gifted children from poor backgrounds on the Sumbandila Outlier and Residential Programmes. A total of 290 children in their last year of primary school were tested at 6 venues in October 2010, bringing the total number of children tested by Sumbandila to 1267! There are now 100 children attending the Outlier Programme of Saturday and Holiday Schools and 36 children supported with full or partial residential and academic bursaries, most of them living in the Sumbandila hostels and attending Ridgeway College. New readers can find more details about the programmes, including previous newsletters, on the Sumbandila website at [www.sumbandila.org](http://www.sumbandila.org).



**Ally Macdonald registering candidates for the testing**

Secondary Education examinations results in January. The University of Cambridge International Examinations is the world's largest provider of international qualifications for 14-19 year olds. Nine thousand schools in over 160 countries write examinations through Cambridge including some of the top public schools in the United Kingdom and they are accepted and highly regarded by all South African universities. Ridgeway College results were very good and one student, Lauren Taylor, achieved straight A grades including five A\*s for top achievement, was the top student in South Africa for Business Studies and came in 3<sup>rd</sup> place for best results over seven subjects! The Sumbandila children attained an average of 65% across their subjects and their Maths and Information and Communication results (subjects which all of them took) were excellent with an average of 70% for Information and Communication and 69% for Maths. Additionally, six of the students wrote Physical Science and their average was 69%. We were not happy with their Afrikaans results but this was not unexpected as they have only been doing the language for three years. Certain Sumbandila scholars deserve special mention: Sandra Rabulanyana achieved an average of 75% across her subjects with 80% in Biology, 82% in Physical Science, 78% in Maths and 77% in English! Mmathapelo Ramahuma accomplished 76% in Business Studies, Biology and Physical Science and Rosy Mudzanani 75% in both Business Studies and Maths. Langutani Mathebula achieved 72% in Information and Communication and 71% in Maths and Physical Science. Considering that these children were in poorly performing rural schools only three years ago (in the United Kingdom there is a four year lead up to the GCSE exams), we are extremely pleased with the results and look forward to them doing well in their Cambridge AS Levels (a considerable leap from IGCSE) in 2012. Furthermore, this first Sumbandila intake were the only class not tested by us for admission into the programme and the indications are that the next group, who will write their IGCSE exams this year, will have even better results!



**The Ridgeway College 2010 IGCSE class**

At the beginning of 2011 Sumbandila Grade 10 student **Kingsley Malange** moved to St Albans, a top private school in Pretoria, who offered him a 90% bursary on the tuition fees (the remaining 10% and all his other expenses continue to be paid by Sumbandila). Having spent two years at Ridgeway, Kingsley is still very much a Sumbandila scholar and there is constant contact with Leigh continuing to play a parental role. Leigh has visited Kingsley regularly at St. Albans and he continues to help at Saturday and Holiday Schools when he comes back



**Kingsley still smiling!**

during holidays or over long weekends. Kingsley's results at St. Albans average 70% across his subjects with a brilliant 78% for maths, resulting in a wonderful report from his Principal Tom Hamilton, who stated **"What a splendid report - it is as if Kingsley has been here all his life!"** Kingsley recently took part in a gruelling 23 day orienteering trip with his peers which was, fortunately, well-buffered by his great sense of humour: **"We hiked, cycled, canoed and cruised 380km which is almost like travelling from Pretoria to Limpopo (without a car). It might seem like nothing but believe me, hiking up a mountain with a 20kg back pack and cycling for 90km and eating food cooked by people who've never cooked in their lives isn't fun. I enjoyed some of the things like canoeing for the first time, abseiling, horse-riding and having bread with jam on day 17 (the bread had already passed its best-before date but no one cared). I lost a good amount of weight on the journey and I came back pretty dark. When people asked me what happened I just told them "The Journey happened." I haven't been on a bicycle since then and I'm planning to keep it that way."** Sumbandila would like to thank St. Albans and Tom Hamilton in particular for their generosity and vision in accepting Kingsley for a place at the school. We hope that Sumbandila can continue to play a role as a hatchery, providing further wonderful opportunities for our scholars.

### **The New Residential Scholars.**

**Phuluso Mawela** lives with his mother and stepfather and two small brothers in a village in deep rural Venda. He spent his childhood moving from village to village because of a serious family conflict which put all of their lives in danger. Despite this constant moving between poor rural schools this young boy managed to achieve a standard comparable with students from private primary schools. It is an extremely poor family but his mother is quite an extraordinary woman who has survived the most appalling tragedies and managed to raise a lovely young boy with delightful manners and an extremely positive disposition. **Mudzhadzi Bakali** is the youngest child of eleven siblings; her father had three wives and has passed away while her mother is a domestic worker and mother of nine children. Mudzhadzi is a tiny little girl with huge spirit; she had most of the staff in tears during her Sumbandila interview as she herself cried through most of it. She impressed us with her academic ability and determination. She is an extremely hard worker and all her marks have already gone up by 20%.

**Khodani Ramuthivheli** lives in a village not far from Louis Trichardt. The father passed away some years ago and she lives with a woman she calls her mother but who we suspect may be her grandmother as she is already



**The three new Sumbandila residential scholars: Phuluso Mawela, Khodani Ramuthivheli & Mudzhadzi Bakali.**

68 years old. She is the youngest of an unknown number of siblings and comes from an extremely poor background. Despite this she has amazing confidence and is quite at home articulately discussing politics and current affairs with adults. When she first arrived she had no idea how to behave in the social context she had been flung into but she is a fast learner and has adapted well in a very short time.

and he was tired of the violence meted out to him by his father. We are uncertain of how he reached South Africa or how he crossed the border but we do know that it involved a great distance, jumping trains, walking

and some unspeakable experiences. Father Frank from the local Catholic Church took him into his boys' home for street children and soon realised that he was a clever little boy and needed a good school. He approached us and we took him into Ridgeway College in the hope that we would find funding for his fees and eventually his hostel accommodation. Despite our efforts, neither was forthcoming and Tendai had to remain in the boys' home for his first year at Ridgeway College. This was extremely difficult because the demands of



**Tendai Simon**

Ridgeway College are tough and the environment at the boys home not conducive to study. When Andy (from Marwyn Investments in London) and Jules Walford visited us earlier this year they met Tendai and were impressed with him and touched by his story. Andy then returned to London and told Marwyn about this child and they decided to sponsor him for a full residential scholarship! We are sorry that Andy and Jules were not there to see Tendai's face when we picked him up from the boys' shelter to take him to his new home. We have already seen a significant improvement in his academic performance and general well-being - he achieved a 68 % average for his last set of term marks!

**Sumbandila Residential scholars** continue to stand out in 2011 with good academic results and involvement in school activities. When one thinks of their first ungrammatical and anxious letters written to Marwyn Investment Management LLP when the project began back in 2007, then the improvement in their articulacy is striking. Two excerpts written by the scholars are included in this newsletter. Sumbandila scholars involvement in extra-curricular activities have included leading parts in the school play, participation and the winning of awards in Science, Maths and English Olympiads and attendance at national poetry Eisteddfods (Rosy won a gold certificate!). Very significant to the staff at Sumbandila is the fact that so many of them donate blood during the regular visits to Ridgeway College by the South African National Blood Service.

**Academic.** The Sumbandila residential children at Ridgeway College in Grades 8, 9 & 10 have just received their end of term results which are on the whole very good. The seven children in Grade 10 received an average of 65% across their subjects and did particularly well in Extended Maths (72% average) and Biology (69% average). Special mention must be made of Takalani who averaged 72% across her subjects and Tshumelo who averaged 78% across his subjects!



**Grade 10 Andani Mabunda holding his picture of the divided home, with the old one scary and threatening- a significant representation of the two very different lives many of the children must lead.**

Grade 10	English	Extended Maths	Core Maths	Accounting	Biology	Geography	IT	Science	Art	Subject Average
Elelwani Tshikovhi	51	67		66	74		69	64		65
Takalani Muedi	58	75		75	78		76	72		72
Hlamalani Mavukane	65		68		58	56	69		53	62
Thiofhi Lambani	51	67			64	58	64	65		62
Andani Mabunda	48		65		58	48	68		54	57
Shadrack Khorombi	49	57			65	58	66	55		58
Tshumelo Mukwevho	63	92		87	83		71	72		78

Grade 9	English	Afrikaans	Maths	Geography	Science	Biology	Accounting	IT	Subject Average
Kulani Vhukeya	69	69	75	71	75	80	75	82	75
Karabo Manuga	57	60	46	54	57	64		68	58

Grade 8	English	Afrikaans	Maths	Science	Biology	Economic & Management Science	IT	Subject Average
Mudzhadzi Bakali	56	72	73	58	69	85	57	67
Khodani Ramuthivheli	42	44	44	53	67	54	57	52
Phuluso Mawela	57	53	63	77	79	61	60	64

Kulani in Grade 9 achieved a brilliant 75% average in her subjects and clearly has a head for Maths and Science. We consider the three Grade 8 children's results to be very good considering that this is their first year at Ridgeway College - Mudzhadzi must be commended for her 85% grade in Economic and Management Science and Phuluso for his 79% in Biology!

## Outliers

With 100 children over Grades 8 - 11 now on the Outlier Programme, Saturday and Holiday Schools have become busier than ever! Eleven Saturday Schools and one Holiday School have been held so far this year and recent changes we have made, using new textbooks and new assessment techniques, have led to a much improved academic programme. Firstly, we are now teaching English as a first additional language, not a first language, and the material and techniques have proven to be much more accessible to the students. Secondly, we have started testing the Outliers only on work covered during Saturday and Holiday schools because the broader tests we were doing were not reflective due to the great variance of work being covered in their different schools. We have since recorded a marked improvement. Apart from our own testing, this year we will make use of the standardised tests introduced by the Department of Education for Maths and English classes. The Outlier students continue to stand out with eight of them achieving first place overall in the 2010 exams and seventeen of them consistently ranking amongst the top 10 students at their own schools. Two Outliers have been promoted a Grade based on their outstanding results, Azwihangwisi Davhana at Tshivase Secondary was awarded the Vhembe District Certificate for Maths Achievement and Murendi Rampai won a Silver Award at the National Maths Olympiad.



IT teacher Carolyn Ingram playing an entrepreneurial game

The Holiday school held in the first week of April was incredibly busy with up to 150 people (including all the staff and volunteers) being fed three meals a day! A highlight was the focus on music with local music teacher, Marina Venter and her daughter Larissa, practicing with the students over the 3 days. Marina studied music and has always been involved in community service while Larissa was nominated for the best performing actress in the country at the Aardtklop National Arts festival held in Potchefstroom! We discovered some very talented students through the performances, not having

known that Mpho Sadiki had been entered into the national music Eisteddfod! We also discovered that Rendani Munyadziwa plays the piano by ear brilliantly and the piano was moved onto the stage for the final evening party!

The Outlier Programme continues to evolve towards more teaching of life-skills, offering of psycho-social support and developing of community role models as we recognise the terrible impact of our students' backgrounds. There are now four street children and a number of orphans on the programme and the other learners all originate from poor rural homes where a nuclear family structure is a rarity. The social problems and stresses associated with their home environments and schools are enormous and one cannot expect

learners who deal with personal trauma on a daily basis to perform well academically unless these issues are addressed. While we have been very lucky to have the assistance of two part-time counsellors we would dearly like to have the assistance of a full-time counsellor! Fortunately, Sumbandila has consistent, supportive caregivers in the staff employed on the programme and a real feeling of community has developed between staff and students. For many of the Outliers, Sumbandila has become the safest and most dependable part of their lives.

Sumbandila has arranged for two Outlier students, **Yvonne Mulaudzi** in Grade 11 and **Farisani Mulaudzi** Grade 10 (no relation to each other), to move from their poorly performing schools to Tshikhevha Christian School in Thohoyandou. Tshikhevha is an independent school following the Independent Examinations Board syllabus and has very good results and very reasonable fees of R 8,000.00 per annum. The principal of Tshikhevha keeps in very close touch with Sumbandila about their progress with which he is hugely impressed, Yvonne having achieved the highest Maths results ever on the entrance test – a concrete result of four years on the Sumbandila Outlier Programme! Yvonne and Farisani continue to attend the Outlier Programme and Yvonne gave an impressive speech during a visit by potential donors. Sumbandila is paying the all the school fees and other costs for Farisani and 50% of the fees and other expenses for Yvonne. We have arranged for another Sumbandila Outlier, Tendani Mukhwevo, to attend school at Tshikhevha from next term.

**Department of Education Conference.** Sumbandila Residential scholars Rosy Mudzanani, Sandra Ramabulana, Takalani Muedi and Outlier scholar Mahlatsi Mulaudzi recently attended and addressed a Department of Education conference about orphaned and vulnerable children. The conference was organised by Sumbandila Trustee Nelly Tlakula who is a Chief Education Specialist and the Manager for Life Orientation and HIV and AIDS Education with the Limpopo Department of Education. It was the first time that the children had stayed in a hotel which they found quite overwhelming but the highlight of the conference was the talk given by Rosy in Grade 11 who is an orphan herself. She confidently addressed the 200 delegates at the conference and her quiet anger about how the system lets children like her down was very forceful. It was a real experience to see professionals from the government and non-profit sectors literally queuing up to talk to her afterwards.



**Rosy addressing the conference delegates**



**Andrew Hofmeyr**

**Film Award.** When the first group of Sumbandila girls enrolled at Ridgeway College in January 2008, then-student **Andrew Hofmeyr** was asked to film the awarding of the scholarships. He produced a very moving documentary that has had many people in tears! In 2010 with the help of **Josh Kurz**, a Los Angeles-based filmmaker who visited Sumbandila last year, the first documentary was submitted to the Sirens Society Filmantrophy Festival competition in the

United States. Andrew's films were shown at Cinespace in Hollywood in October and at the following awards ceremony he was awarded the Torch Award for Best Short Film for his initial documentary – an award which also came with a \$1000 donation to Sumbandila. This achievement has not only resulted in international recognition for Andrew, but also for Sumbandila and Ridgeway College.



**Leigh and Sumbandila students with the Torch Award**



**Techno cowboy Shadrack Khorombi**

**Fashion Show.** The Sumbandila scholars were a hit at the annual fashion show which this year had the theme of ‘Techno Trendz in the year 2050’. Hlamalani Mavukane, Takalani Muedi & Elelwani Tshikovhi won third place and Shadrack Khorombi, modelling his “Cowboys to Cow Techno” outfit, won fifth place. This was quite an achievement given that the Sumbandila costumes were made up entirely by the children themselves using scrap material!



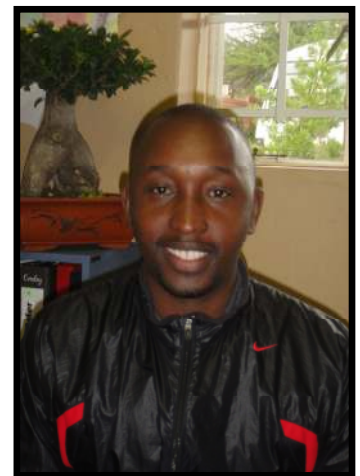
**Elelwani winning 3<sup>rd</sup>**

### **Pastoral Care & Counselling.**

The Sumbandila Scholarship Trust students all originate from poor rural homes and the social problems and stresses associated with their home environments and schools are enormous. Many of the children battle with the movement between two very different worlds, between Sumbandila and their homes where they must regularly cross a huge cultural and economic divide. Many of them struggle with a sense of guilt based on the disparity between what they are receiving and what their siblings and parents remain trapped in. The effects of stress and poverty on the ability to learn are well known and childhood poverty, mediated by elevated chronic stress during childhood, is inversely related to working memory in young adults.

In the last newsletter we mentioned that, through London-based counsellor Philip Hewitt, we had made contact with a young local counsellor, **Ndivhuwo Kutama** who has been assisting us part-time since then and who has assisted us hugely in bridging the enormous cultural gulf between our programmes and the children’s homes. Only 3 out of the 13 Sumbandila boys in the hostel have a father and Ndivhuwo has both the empathy and professional skills to provide the children with a modern view of their own empowerment and the confidence and support to make demands of their families and environment. As Ndivhuwo states himself: “I can honour my own culture without being swallowed by it.” Counselling the Sumbandila Residential and Outlier children is possibly the most essential part of the programmes and we would like to have Ndivhuwo work full-time but do not have the funds to do this.

**Philip Hewitt** has retired from Westminster School but has continued to visit Sumbandila and regularly calls both Leigh and Ndivhuwo on Skype to mentor them and keep up with the counselling programme. Philip has been paying his own way to come out from England and will be visiting again in July, but now that he is retired we are also looking for funding to keep his trips regular as his advice, mentorship and workshops are invaluable.



**Ndivhuwo Kutama**

## Hostel Developments.

There have been substantial changes to the Sumbandila hostels since the last newsletter in 2010. As described in the last newsletter we were fortunate enough to obtain a 10 year lease on a large building, the old army commando base, immediately adjacent to Ridgeway College. With extremely generous funding from the Nedbank Foundation, we adapted this building for use as a second hostel, purchased a considerable quantity of kitchen and other equipment and installed new ablution facilities and a



**Tshilidzi Ravhuhali & Alma Mapfumo with new equipment**

Wendy House at the boy's hostel which we have retained at the premises on Kruger Street. The Wendy House serves as a bedroom



**The new Wendy House**

for two of the boys: Tshumelo in Grade 10 and Phathu, a partially funded Sumbandila student with excellent results (he is a straight A Maths and Science student, will be entered for A Level Maths and plans to study engineering). Phathu's father runs an informal business and is able to afford some of the costs but as his father is far away he

ended up living in a shack together with a number of immigrants engaged in unsavoury activity. Although they have since been arrested we are very relieved that Phathu has moved into the hostel and see him as another example of Sumbandila being able to reach beyond our core beneficiaries.

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**Work Week.** As part of the Ridgeway College programme, the Sumbandila residential children in Grade 11 recently completed their 'work weeks' during which they were placed in various professional working environments for a full five days. These included the Democratic Alliance's (the official opposition party) Polokwane office, the University of the Witwaterstrand's School of Art, a local civil engineering firm, a local computer shop, a three star hotel, an accounting firm and a charity focusing on orphaned and vulnerable children. Sumbandila scholar Humbulani Manenzhe worked with the Olive Leaf Foundation project in Polokwane and found her experience very moving:

**"During my work week I went to the Olive Leaf Foundation in Polokwane where Mr. Kutama, our Sumbandila counsellor, worked. I was working with social workers and we went to different primary schools in the rural areas. There we worked with orphans and vulnerable children. I should tell you that when my work week was over I did not want to come back., not because I was really enjoying myself but because I was deeply touched by what those children told me, where they came from and what I felt by just looking at them. I did not feel like leaving them behind. Some of them were very young and the dreams they had were very realistic. They reminded me of how I was before I came to Sumbandila and that made me believe that they will achieve their dreams, that they will someday meet someone like Leigh. It might be that one day it will be me helping them or one of the other Sumbandila children. The work week showed me that it is not only us, the Sumbandila children that need help, that there are still many children out there who still need help. This gave me the courage to say to myself, I want to be that person to help those children."**

## Connection to other opportunities.

Sumbandila is helping to connect many of its scholars and other deserving people and organisations to opportunities. We have approached the D.G. Murray Trust to fund a Drop-In Centre, not only to assist our own Outlier school leavers with career advice and university applications, but also to assist those youngsters who continually make their way to Sumbandila looking for help, to assist other school leavers and also to connect those who have not made it through school to opportunity. Thanks to generous funding from **Bart Fuijkschot** we have been doing a great deal informally and some of the recent successes are described in more detail below

Sumbandila has been assisting two students with great potential. **Evans Matsimbi**, who had poor school results but who is highly skilled in technical drawing has been placed in an apprenticeship with a self-taught architect who began his now very successful business by drawing up house plans and quantity surveys for customers outside of building supply shops. **Lucky Tshikumbana** who is studying law at the University of Venda comes from a very poor background and could not afford even the modest entrance fees. Now in his third year of study, he passed all his courses in 2010 achieving four distinctions.



Evans Matsimbi



Care for those who  
cared for you

Sumbandila has been assisting with fundraising for and sharing resources with a nearby charity, the **Elim-Hlanganani Society for the Care of the Aged**. While the Society began by providing homecare to elderly people, a very significant part of its work is now aimed at addressing the needs of people living with HIV/AIDS and issues pertaining to vulnerable and orphaned children and youth, particularly those heading households. There are currently over 1500 recipients of services provided by the Elim Hlanganani Society including more than 500 orphaned and vulnerable children.

Having initially accepted Tendai Simon, the Zimbabwean orphan, onto the Outlier and subsequently the Residential Programme, the relationship between Sumbandila, Ridgeway College and the **St. Therese Shelter for Boys** run by Father Frank Gallagher at the Catholic Church in Louis Trichardt has grown substantially. Ridgeway College students and staff have donated clothes, blankets, shoes and school bags and Sumbandila has accepted another four former street children onto the Outlier Programme. Most recently a soccer tournament was held between Ridgeway and the boy's home. It was wonderful to see the boys from the shelter engaging with Ridgeway students on an equal footing and not as charity cases - they then defeated Ridgeway in the tournament and were absolutely delighted with themselves! Father Frank opened the shelter in response to the rapidly growing number of young street kids in Louis Trichardt, many of them migrants from Zimbabwe where the economic situation and the impact of the HIV/AIDS pandemic has led to the disintegration of family life on a devastating scale. The acceptance of children with a history of abuse and violence onto the programme has not been without its difficulties and Tendai has been victimised by his former friends for moving out of the shelter and into the Sumbandila hostel.



## Future Plans.

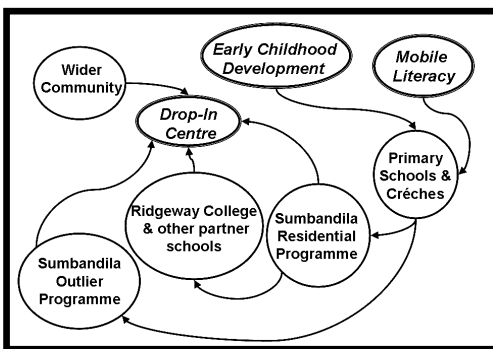
**Hostel.** As we stated in the last newsletter the current hostels are full to capacity and we have an urgent need for more accommodation! A larger hostel will also act as an income generator as we intend to accommodate a number of paying boarders for which there is an established and growing demand. We are still looking for funding to build a hostel but another possible solution is for Ridgeway to approach the Trust which owns the old commando base (the current girls' hostel) to discuss buying and expanding it.

**A home in the village.** There is also a growing need for a more suitable place to accommodate a number of our staff members and especially for the orphaned children. Tshilidzi and Energy currently have to leave their children with their grandmothers and see them only irregularly. With five full-time orphans, Mahlatsi, Rosy, Sandra, her brother Sindy and Tendai, who have nowhere else to go over weekends and holidays, we need to plan for their future, at least until they have completed their university education. We have approached the local Chief about obtaining a stand in a nearby village where Tshilidzi and Energy could live with their children

and which the orphans could also call home. We would then look for funding to put up a traditional homestead, a borehole and install electricity. We think this is a highly suitable option, especially as Sandra and Rosy often go home with other Sumbandila children over weekends as they really do miss the village life that they grew up with. Lastly it is also part of the Sumbandila philosophy that the beneficiaries give back and therefore go back to their communities.

**Preparing for University!** The first Sumbandila scholars will be writing their Cambridge AS Levels at the end of 2012 and we have to prepare for their university education! Equally, a number of the Outlier children now in Grade 11 are academically very strong and we will be looking for places for them at university too. With the University of Pretoria being the best tertiary institution nearby, it might make sense to acquire a property in Pretoria and to use the national bursary scheme that all of them qualify for to make the payments on the property. This would be cheaper than accommodating them all separately and would facilitate our continued mentoring of them, especially important for the orphans, and allow them to remain and support each other as a group.

**New project ideas.** In order to more successfully fulfil our long term vision of transforming the lives of underprivileged children with great potential we have been formulating ideas that will achieve a more effective intervention, longitudinally developing beneficiaries from early childhood through secondary education and linking them to opportunities for further study and livelihoods. The experience that we have gained over the last four years has highlighted the need to further improve the institutions that we have identified as well functioning schools and to intervene in the early learning centres that supply them. It has also underlined the need for career and counselling services for “our” secondary students and schools as well as for the wider community.



**Early childhood development:** ultimately we would like to help a number of early childhood centres (informal crèches) which supply

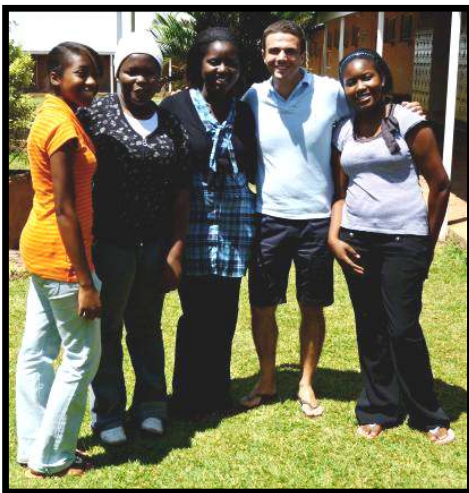
the primary schools which our testing database has identified as the well-functioning schools in our area. We would like to assist with in-service instruction aimed at gaining qualifications for the informal child care practitioners and provide them with educational expertise, training and resources with a strong focus on nutrition and access to grants. **Literacy:** we would like to do more to support the schools which supply us with our students and intervene in literacy learning there with a mobile language laboratory and a ‘mobile library’. The need is immense as surveys of learners and schools undertaken by the Department of Education in 2008 indicated that 63% of secondary school students were below the required language competence for their Grade and that only 7% of South African schools had libraries stocked with books! **Drop-In Centre:** we are already providing our children with a comprehensive support system as they make subject choices and enter examination years and information, resources, workshops and counselling about realistic career and livelihood opportunities are an integral part of our programme. However, as stated by Higher Education and Training Minister Dr Blade Nzimande, there is a dire lack of information and guidance for young South Africans, particularly in rural areas. Equally the costs associated with identifying an opportunity for further study, applying and registering exclude many for whom even these relative small costs are a financial impossibility. We would love to be able to establish a Drop-In Centre which could offer a career counselling service for high school students and school leavers from the region, including Sumbandila’s own students, which would also link them directly to opportunities for study and work.

## Visitors to Sumbandila.

As always, we have been fortunate enough to host a number of visitors over the last few months. In November last year we were visited by **Setlogane Manchidi**, head of Corporate Social Investment at Investec accompanied by **Tumelo Mabitsela**, Managing Director of the Kutlwanong Maths, Science and Technology Centre. Setlogane grew up in a dusty rural village in Sekoekoeniland in Limpopo before receiving a bursary to the University of Cape Town from the Study Trust where he was on the Dean's list from his second year onwards, graduating with an Honours degree in social policy and management. He has a wealth of experience in the development sector, is active in several educational initiatives such as the Desmond Tutu Leadership Programme offered by the African Leadership Institute and is highly regarded for his commitment to social change. Having a similar background to the Sumbandila children, Setlogane gave a phenomenal motivational talk to Ridgeway and Sumbandila students and in return the Sumbandila scholars gave a presentation to the visitors based on the upliftment of their lives as a result of joining the programme. Both guests were visibly moved by their experiences at Sumbandila and Setlogane referred to the change in the students as an example of 'deep, deep transformation'.



**Setlogane Manchidi (right) & Tumelo Mabitsela with Leigh, Mrs Ramahuma and her daughter and Sumbandila scholar Mmathapelo Ramahuma**



**Andy with Sumbandila girls**

**Andy Walford** from Marwyn Investment Management LLP in London and his wife **Jules** visited us again this year. Andy gave a short power point presentation to the students about their sponsor, Marwyn, and read a letter from Managing Partner James Corsellis. Andy also spoke about what happened in a normal day in Andy and Jules life - showing the students photos of London and their home. Humbulani Manenzhe and Phumudzo Sadiki gave a short speech on how Sumbandila had changed their lives and Rosy Mudzanani recited one of her recent poems. Andy and Jules have become a very close part of Sumbandila and the children appreciate their visits immensely. Their sponsorship, together with friends, of Tendai Simon to join the Residential Programme will secure the future of this gifted boy with a traumatic background. We offer our deepest gratitude to Andy and Jules and would also like to congratulate them on the imminent birth of their baby!

In February London-based Counsellor **Philip Hewitt** visited us for the fourth time for a week and continued his mentoring of Ndivhuwo Kutama and his counselling and peer support work with the children. **Bart Fuijkschot** from the **Ir Felix August Schippers Stichting** visited again in the middle of March and made a very generous donation to substantially expand (doubling the capacity!) the Ridgeway College IT Centre which will be of huge benefit, not only to the school but also to the Outlier Programme. We are extremely grateful to them for all the very generous and consistent support they have given to Sumbandila and Ridgeway over the years, including the continued sponsorship of Phumudzo Sadiki.

## Staff Members.

There is a very new member of the Sumbandila family as hostel mother **Tshilidzi Ravhuhali** has just had a baby boy! He is named **Ziswa**, meaning 'a new beginning', and is her second child. Tshilidzi is still on maternity leave but as soon as she returns we will post a picture of her and the new baby on the website!

Sumbandila Trustee and retired English teacher **Mike Linden** is having supper with the Sumbandila residents once a week at both the boys and girls hostels and helps the children with homework and discusses issues and problems around school and hostel life. He is often joined by **Chris Gozzard** the new Ridgeway College Physics teacher. Chris, who is from Wales and holds an MSc in Physics, is also an enthusiastic and active staff member on the Outlier Programme and he teaches Science at Saturday and Holiday Schools. Chris came to Ridgeway from Lesotho where he spent six months as an exchange teacher, fell in love with Africa and decided to stay on!



**Chris Gozzard**

Another new staff member on the Outlier Programme is **Dr. Parvaneh Farhangpour** who is teaching life-skills. Dr. Farhangpour is a specialist in second language learning and brings a wealth of experience to the programme, having contributed to and co-authored many expert books, having worked for years for the Department of Education and holding a PhD in Education from the University of Pretoria.

We are particularly grateful to Ridgeway College bursar, **Charmaine Waller**, who quietly and competently prepares the Sumbandila budgets, does the bookkeeping and prepares the financial information for the auditors all for a very nominal fee. In this newsletter we would also like to make more mention of two of our staff members in particular:



**Charmaine Waller**



**Jenny Macdonald**

**Jenny Macdonald.** It's very hard to define Jenny's role with any precision - there's very little in either the Residential or the Outliers programmes in which she is not somehow involved and whole areas in which she is the mainspring and foundation of all that happens: she makes the payments, buys the food, the clothing, the equipment, makes the doctors' appointments, sees to the maintenance of the hostels, cares for the welfare of the staff and still finds time to buy the seeds for Rosy's vegetable garden Life in Sumbandila is busy, complex, crowded with incident, bursting with development, growth and change and Jenny is the calm centre around which all this swirls, the one we turn to manage us through the thousand bureaucratic, logistical, financial, organizational and human problems, the whirlpools which could so easily swamp us. Jenny fills a mother's role, the organiser, care-giver, controller and centre of the

household. But this is a household of 136 people. The demands on her are immense and her response to the daily challenge, as well as being essential for our continued existence, a magnificent example to us all.

**Molly Madziva.** Mrs Madziva qualified as a junior school teacher in Zimbabwe. She later studied with UNISA whilst teaching full-time and obtained a BA degree, majoring in Geography. This enabled her to teach in high schools. She taught Geography to A level (Cambridge) in Zimbabwe before moving to South Africa. She moved to Louis Trichardt in 2009 and we are very fortunate to have her as a house-mother to the girls. She is very attentive to their needs and aware when there are disciplinary problems. She willingly spends a great deal of time talking with girls who have problems in the hostel or at home, and is able to help them in many areas of their studies.

## Financial.

Thanks to James Corsellis and Marwyn Investment Management LLP we have engaged the services of a professional fundraiser and proposals have been submitted to scores of potential donors. In addition, Director Leigh Bristow will be visiting London in the second half of the year and is planning much active promotion there of Sumbandila's work. While we have managed to gain substantial funding for hostel equipment and educational resources, leading to a significant improvement in the logistics of running the programmes, we have been less successful in attracting new funding for operational and programme costs. Our own administrative capacity (which we do keep as streamlined as possible, relying heavily on the partnership with Ridgeway!) is hindered due to inadequate funding for general organisational expenses, our rural position is a limiting factor and many basic organisational needs remain unmet. We are aware that the donor market has been difficult due to the poor economy and have experienced that donor priorities can change rapidly. According to our fundraiser the lead times for local fund-raising are much longer and many of the persons responsible for corporate social investment are juniors! There also appears to be an increasing reluctance to support external enrichment programmes when state education in South Africa is already receiving very significant funding and it is felt that schools themselves should be dealing with under-achievement. However, we are a long, long way from transforming our schools and the effect of the poor educational system on our children remains absolutely devastating!

Despite the challenges we face we firmly believe that the returns we are seeing from both the Outlier and Residential programmes- the deep transformation of so many children's lives - are well proportionate to the investment made. For example, the total cost for one Residential Programme scholar over the full five years of their secondary education is approximately R 415,000.00. The Sumbandila school and hostel fees for this year amount to R53, 820.00. For comparative purposes, Stanford Lake College, the nearest independent school with similar standards to Ridgeway College, will charge R 88, 734.00 and Pretoria Boys High, a government school will charge R 57, 000.00 in 2011.

Our audited financial statements for 2010 will be made available on the Sumbandila website at [www.sumbandila.org](http://www.sumbandila.org) and we would like to thank our auditors, Sheldon and Prinsloo Inc., who offer us a discounted service.

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## Donors & Partners.

We would like to express our gratitude to all of our donors and partners for their generous assistance and belief in the work that we are doing. Thanks are due to regular donors **Harry & Heather Mithen, Renate & Peter Heikamp, Andy & Jules Walford, Murray Hofmeyr, Nick Mahony, Bart Fuijkschot** and the **Ir Felix August Schippers Stichting, Loraine Cripwel, Rex and Rosemary Bloor** and also to **Alan White**, a local macadamia nut farmer who has made a very kind donation. The **Victor and Peggy Thomas Trust** continue to fund Outliers students Ntsako Mashaba and Nhlanhla Mahlangu and the **Study Trust** continues to cover specific costs of that programme. The staff and management of **Ridgeway College** offer a venue and a team of professional teachers without which Sumbandila could not do the work that it does.



Irving and Yvonne Tucker

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We would like to make special mention of **Irving Tucker** & his wife **Yvonne** who have both sadly passed away. Irving and Yvonne had been married for 40 years and despite leaving South Africa for England in the 1970's they have always been involved in helping struggling rural school children, mainly in the Eastern Cape. Irving was introduced to Sumbandila by Gail Maytham and visited the children at the beginning of the year. He subsequently bequeathed a generous part of his estate to Sumbandila.

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**Marwyn Investment Management LLP.** We would like to again express our deepest appreciation to all at Marwyn Investments and their associated United Kingdom donors for the support which started it all and which continues to fund the majority of the residential children. We particularly thank Marwyn for agreeing to sponsor Tendai Simon, the Zimbabwean orphan. Corporate donors who supported us through the Marwyn link were **LEK Consulting, Entertainment One, Bournor Bullock, Concateno, Co-Investment Capital, Silverdell, Barclays Corporate Banking, Jones Day, Investec, Wavex, Mazars, Travers Smith, Mayer Brown International, Singer, Ernst & Young, J P Morgan Cazenove, Edison Investment Research, Edge Architecture and Design, Deloitte, DLA Piper, Evolution, Oliver and Ohlbaum, KPMG, GTUK, Arbuthnot Securities, FinnCap, Cenkos, Numis and Ruffer.** Individual donors approached through Marwyn included **Oliver Pawle, Adrian Carey, Andy Walford, Vanessa Bolger, Amanda Stratford, Simon Pincombe, Antoinette Vanderpuije, Joel Baker and Rebecca Gilmore.**

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**The D.G. Murray Trust.** We would like to once again thank the D.G. Murray Trust for their very generous funding and for having such confidence in a new charity thus enabling us to establish, grow and most importantly *evolve* the Outliers Programme. In particular we would like to thank **Philip Methula** for his interest and assistance and for taking the time to visit us.

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The **Nedbank Foundation** has given very generous assistance, allowing us to substantially develop and expand the impact of our programmes through the purchase of educational resources and hostel equipment. Hostel equipment purchased with the funds donated has had an enormous impact, benefiting all of the 136 Sumbandila children and creating a comfortable residence for the many orphans among the Residential children who do not have a home to go to on weekends and during holidays. We would like to particularly thank **Thabile Kubheka** at Nedbank for all she has done and for personally visiting Sumbandila to see the project for herself, taking the time to meet and engage with our students

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**DRA Mineral Projects (Pty) Ltd**, one of the largest project management enterprises in Africa, is a South African founded group of companies specialising in mining, infrastructure and mineral processing project development. DRA were generous enough to make a donation in March 2011 and Sumbandila is especially grateful that it was un-specified funding that could be used to make up the shortfall in the Residential Programme budget. All at Sumbandila would like to thank DRA Mineral Projects, in particular **Mark Creswell** for meeting with us, as well as **Rodney Drew** the chair of the DRA Mineral Projects corporate social investment committee.

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**Dr. Asgar Ayob**

**Dr. Asgar Ayob.** Dr Ayob has a busy practice in a rural area north of the town where he works long hours, treating hundreds of patients. Despite his heavy work load he responds to our calls in the evenings or early mornings when any of the children in the boarding houses are unwell. He provides medication to us free of charge, and keeps us supplied with pain killers and asthma medication for day to day use. His wife, **Dr. Razina Ayob**, (also a medical doctor!) often accompanies him to visit the boarders and is especially helpful in talking to the girls about their problems. Dr. Asgar Ayob's brother, **Dr. Azim Ayob** is a dentist in Louis Trichardt who sees Sumbandila children who have dental problems and also doesn't charge us for the consultations. We are very grateful to the Ayobs for giving of their time and skill so generously.

## From the Director

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At the end of 2010 we had the honour of a visit from Setlogane Manchidi head of CSI at Investec. Setlogane is a model of what we would like our Sumbandila scholars to be in 10 years time. Not only is he extremely successful, humble and charismatic but he makes huge contributions to uplifting both his own community and the country as a whole.

Setlogane gave one of the most impressive motivational talks that I have heard but one of the things he said truly resonated with me. He spoke of the first time that his mother's employers (his mother was a domestic worker in Johannesburg) took him and his little brother to see a film at the cinema: it was a life changing moment for him because he had a glimpse into a different world and there and then he made the decision that one day he would become part of that world. That moment gave him direction, hope, ambition and he became determined to do something with his life.

One of our newest Sumbandila boys Phuluso Mawela (his mother is also domestic worker) tells of watching "High School Musical " and longing to be part of that world. Not for a moment would we want Phuluso to abandon his own wonderful culture for some Coca-Cola American culture but, in both cases, the film was a symbol of a world somewhere outside of the poverty and helplessness that these children experienced.

After Setlogane had spent an evening with our residential scholars and some of the outlier scholars his words to me were: "Leigh this is deep, deep transformation."

To quote David Wylde (an important voice in South African education):

*"...suppressed, untreated, social woundedness leads individuals to apathy and self-destructive behaviour and communities to wasting, looting and deliberately destroying systems.....  
...a sense of inferiority leads to apathy, laziness, and a lack of hope, interest and purpose....."*

What is critical in our programme for both the residential scholars and the outliers is that we give them confidence, a feeling of self worth, a sense of purpose and hope. Their peers in the rural areas, year after year watch school leavers sit at home because they have neither access to tertiary education nor access to employment. It is hard to be motivated in school if you know this is what awaits you at the end.

It is easy to measure the success of this programme in terms of academic results and in terms of the confidence of our students. To see possibly the weakest group we have, achieving good IGCSE results and competing with students from all over the world who have had a four-year run up from English-speaking schools into this exam system whilst our children have achieved it in three years having come from under resourced second language English schools is extraordinary, as is watching a little orphan girl stand up in front of a hall of adult professionals and deliver a speech which far surpassed anything said by any of the adults who spoke that night. This is success indeed, but the true measure of the success of the programme will be at the end of 2012 when our first school leavers (both residential and outliers) go on to tertiary institutions, to technical colleges, vocational training and into entrepreneurial endeavours. And of course the ultimate success will be when they begin to give back into Sumbandila and into their own communities.

If we are successful in obtaining funding for our proposed Drop-In Centre we will be able to extend some of the advantages to many more students from poor rural backgrounds.

What is definitely critical is the need for a full time counsellor to take care of the psychosocial needs of this project, both the Outlier and Residential children and prospective students at the Drop-In Centre. So many of these children are crippled and paralysed by the sense of hopelessness and inferiority that David Wylde describes and in many cases they suffer as a result of the lack of stimulation and proper nutrition in early childhood so critical for development. This is particularly critical for the Outliers because at least the Residential students have daily access to the house mothers and academic staff at Ridgeway College and in a small school we are able to address the psychosocial needs in a way that might not happen in a larger school.

One of the advantages of Ridgeway College is that only a percentage of our students are on full bursaries which means that the bulk of the student body come from middle-class homes: this economic diversity and the cultural and racial diversity at the school helps our scholars to learn to integrate in a very different environment and it certainly builds their confidence. For example it is wonderful to see how Kingsley Malange has settled at St Albans in Pretoria, when you consider that this is a school for the privileged. He is holding his own both academically and socially. We must remind ourselves that two and a half very short years ago he was in a rural village school and being raised by his grandmother.

In terms of the Outlier scholars Ridgeway College has at least shown these children what a school can be. Having said that, I hasten to add that many of our Sumbandila secondary schools in the rural areas are doing a wonderful job under difficult conditions. We hope that in the future as Sumbandila grows we will be able to give more support to these schools and offer workshops for teachers. In particular, we could offer our science and biology laboratories and our new extended computer centre where we hope to have a literacy program installed in the not too distant future.

Funding remains a constant struggle but when we compare the students on the Residential Programme to the students on the Outlier Programme I remain convinced that the residential programme, however expensive, is the heart of what Sumbandila stands for and that we are achieving an extraordinary amount with relatively little. The fees of a government-funded ex-model C boarding school in Pretoria are higher than Ridgeway College for boarding and tuition and the extras we provide in terms of medical, clothes, textbooks, transport etc. are provided at a remarkably low cost.

For the Residential Programme we are hugely indebted to Marwyn Investment Management LLP in London and in particular, James Corsellis, for having the confidence and faith in us to support such a programme both at its inception and ongoing. They not only support, visit and fund us but they trust us to get on with what we are doing.

For the Outlier Programme I must thank the D.G. Murray Trust. The programme assists over 100 children and at the end of next year will stabilise at approximately 130 children. We are hopeful that the D.G. Murray will continue to support this programme as the true results will only be seen once these children have left school at the end of 2012.

We must also extend enormous thanks to Bart Fuijkschot from the Ir Felix August Schippers Stichting who not only visits us every year but has been extraordinarily generous in funding for both Ridgeway College and Sumbandila.

To Nedbank (in particular Ciko Thomas for the introduction and Thabile Zulu for her visits and support) for their generous contribution to capital projects and educational resources which have enabled us to provide a hostel kitchen to support both the Residential and Outlier projects and build up our educational resources for the Outliers.

To all our other donors, thank you for your generous contributions and we are confident that we will continue to report successful outcomes and that your funds are going to the heart of one of the major crises in South Africa.

I would also like to thank Tom Hamilton and the staff at St. Albans, Tom for his vision and for giving an exceptional young man an exceptional opportunity and the staff for supporting Kingsley so wonderfully in his transition and for always being available when we call for assistance. I hope that this relationship will continue.

I would also like to thank the Trustees of Sumbandila, Mike Linden for his hands-on interaction with all the students and assistance with decision making. To Nelly Tlakula for her advice, friendship and liaison with the Department of Education and Gideon Ramulifho for his advice and input.

Thanks to Jabu Linden for writing reports, proposals and newsletters and for all his advice and support.

Thanks to the students of Ridgeway College and to the Sumbandila residential scholars for generously volunteering to assist the Outlier Project over weekends and holidays.

Finally and most importantly, thanks to all the staff of Sumbandila and Ridgeway College for their extraordinarily hard work and commitment and their belief in the success of these projects.

I would like to close with an appeal to all our friends, readers and donors. We have a number of residential scholars that will require funding for next year. Please support us. However small a contribution you can afford to make, large numbers of small contributions add up and in the long term what we are doing will make a huge impact. Of this I am certain.



**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@mweb.co.za](mailto:lbristow@mweb.co.za)

[www.sumbandila.org](http://www.sumbandila.org)