

# SIMBA REDZIDZO

THE POWER OF EDUCATION

Quarterly Newsletter by Scholarship Beneficiaries



## SIMBA REDZIDZO TOASTMASTERS CLUB BY FADZISO MANGO

On the 18th of June 2022, Simba reDzidzo took mentorship of their scholarship beneficiaries to greater heights when they launched the Simba reDzidzo (SrD) Toastmasters Club. In partnership with Toastmasters International, a not-for-profit organisation whose mission is to empower individuals to become effective communicators and leaders, Simba reDzidzo has created a platform for its beneficiaries and other young people to develop their communication, leadership and public speaking skills. These skills are essential for the students' personal and professional development. The club is not restricted to Simba reDzidzo Scholarship beneficiaries only, but it is also open to any university students keen on improving their communication and leadership skills.

The educational programs of Toastmasters aim to help conquer any fear of public speaking, and allow individuals to deliver their speeches or presentations eloquently. Learning paths which include project planning, time management, dynamic leadership and others, assist with professional and personal development.

Simba reDzidzo beneficiaries are over the moon about this latest initiative by their sponsors. "I am excited and feel honored to be part of this esteemed communication and leadership platform. I am motivated to learn and become empowered to influence others positively," said one of the beneficiaries, Lwiindi Machingura. Speaking at the launch of the SrD Toastmasters Club, Dr Gerald Chitsunge, explained the desire of Simba reDzidzo to empower their beneficiaries to become confident leaders who will strive to break the cycle of poverty in communities. "By sponsoring formation of the Toastmasters club, we hope that our students will build networks and gain relevant soft skills that will enhance their employability as well as grooming them to become solid individuals," he added. True to its mission, Simba reDzidzo is transforming the lives of socioeconomically-disadvantaged young people, to stand out and become great global leaders.

## A DAY WITH BLESSING NHENGU

### 2ND YEAR INDUSTRIAL CHEMISTRY STUDENT

BY LWIINDI MACHINGURA

Blessing Nhengu is studying Industrial Chemistry at the Midlands State University in Gweru. We caught up with him to tell us about his student life. “My day begins with a prayer before attending lectures, which can be face-to-face or online. I also participate in practical lectures which take place twice a week for five hours per session,” he explained. Blessing enjoys the practical aspect of his learning and is excited that he can make aspirin in the laboratory. During his spare time, he engages socially by hanging out with friends, eating and completing assignments.



**BLESSING NHENGU IN CHEMISTRY LAB**

Blessing found transitioning from high school to university challenging. “I faced a lot of new things, like online learning, researching, referencing my work, and doing group assignments amongst others. I experienced network connection challenges, power outages, and the lack of learning devices affected how I did my assignments,” he explained. “Simba reDzidzo has made my life easier; I can fully commit to my studies without worrying about university fees. They provided me with a laptop which allows me to complete my assignments efficiently. They also provide me with a stipend to cover internet data costs” said Blessing. He indeed committed to his studies and passed his first semester with honours.

Simba reDzidzo’s mentorship program has had significant impact on Blessing. “One of the best things I learnt from my mentor that I’ll forever cherish in my life, is time management. Dr Chani gave me insights on how to manage my time well, balancing my social life with my academic commitments.” Blessing also appreciated and thanked Simba reDzidzo for organising the group mentorship weekend at Lake Chivero. “I learnt that challenges seem insurmountable before you face them, but once you gather enough courage you can reach great heights,” he said after completing the pamper pole challenge. “I thank Simba reDzidzo for giving me the opportunity to realise my potential. I have found myself growing in different areas of my life which I never anticipated. To say the least Simba reDzidzo is heaven sent and a guardian angel”.



**BLESSING GIVING VOTE OF THANKS AT SRD GROUP MENTORSHIP RETREAT**



**BLESSING AT LAKE CHIVERO MENTORSHIP RETREAT**

## LETTER TO SIMBA REDZIDZO

*Doctor Martin Luther said, "the function of education is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically. Intelligence plus character, that is the goal of true education."*

*The only hope that was left for me was education. I was hopeless. I felt like I was lost in a maze of my own pain, everything seemed to have no direction. All I needed was a chance, a chance to escape. Along the way, grace found me. Simba reDzidzo came to my rescue. For the first time in my life, I felt the hope and the ability to dream of a life without struggle. Not only did I get an opportunity to pursue my career, but my mindset was changed positively. SrD made me realise that, I am a blossoming flower ready to bloom, all I needed was a chance. Life's struggle made me think that once you enter the cycle of poverty, it's hard to escape it, but because of SrD I am confident that I am going to break the cycle of poverty. Generations to come after me will remember me because I will do what many failed to do. I needed a chance to break the cycle of poverty, and SrD came to my rescue.*

*You will forever be in my heart. Thank you very much for hearing me out. I am grateful.*

*Yours sincerely*

*Muriel Chitehwe, 3rd Year Medical Student*



## NEW KID ON THE BLOCK

### KUMBIRAYI KAZUNGA

2ND YEAR CHEMICAL AND PROCESS ENGINEERING

Coming from a poor rural background and being a girl child, it was always going to be hard to realize my dreams. This is a society where women and girls are looked down upon, and regarded as "belonging to the kitchen". I was motivated at an early age to change that. I decided to study science and mathematics, despite that these subjects were regarded as 'challenging' and more so for girls. After passing my 'A' levels I proceeded to enrol for study towards a Chemical and Process Systems Engineering degree at the Harare Institute of Technology. I want to pursue a career in engineering given the acute shortage of people with such skills in Zimbabwe. After qualifying as a chemical engineer I want to be a role model to the girl child especially those from poor family backgrounds, living in poverty just like me. However, despite the passion one might have, the high cost of university education presents a tough hurdle to many. Coming from a poor family where my parents cannot afford the cost of university education, it is organizations like Simba reDzidzo who offer hope through their scholarships to young people from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds. With their support I can focus on my education and I hope to realise my full potential.

The selection process for the Simba reDzidzo scholarship was rigorous. The initial step was to complete the application form on their website, supported by a personal statement of my background and aspirations. This was followed by a phone interview where I was asked a lot of questions about my family setup and financial situation. The third stage was a video interview where I was grilled on my values, career aspirations and how I intended to give back to my community. The interview process was well organized and time management was beyond expectation. The reception was very welcoming. I felt nervous but excited at the same time, the panel of interviewers were however polite and reassuring. The whole experience was life changing and I got to see life from a different perspective. The interview process was an emotional experience as I got to learn the changes I can also make in life.

- *Kumbirayi is one of the new scholarship beneficiaries.*

## SERVING THE COMMUNITY THROUGH CHESS

BY LWIINDI MACHINGURA

To contribute to his community, Leon formed a chess club to provide a recreational activity for youths to reduce idleness in the community. As the saying goes "an idle mind is the devil's workshop", many youths who are idle in his community, end up involved in antisocial and even criminal activities. "Chess provides a positive way to socialize, it develops perspective and enhances planning skills," explains Leon.

Simba reDzidzo provided him with two chess boards to promote his project. This has had a great impact on his "students" who are so fascinated and engaged that they have organized themselves to frequently play challenge games. Leon is humbled by the positive changes he sees in his "students". He hopes to grow the club to compete at national competitions.



### LEON CHACHA

1ST YEAR INSURANCE AND RISK MANAGEMENT



## MENTOR INTERVIEW

by Munashe Mukombe, Pharmacy Student

**Munashe:** What prompted you to become a Simba reDzidzo mentor?

**Dr Chani:** In the process of pursuing my life goals I have been helped by many people who provided opportunities and mentored me along the way. I felt the need to give back and help others as well. When the opportunity to provide mentorship arose within Simba reDzidzo, I gladly took it up.

**Munashe:** Have you had a mentor in your life, what were some of the things they helped you with?

**Dr Chani:** I have had several mentors throughout my life and career. They include my brother who encouraged me not to give up when things were not going well. He supported me to remain focused on my goals. He taught me resilience. Other mentors taught me the importance of networking, it has helped me a lot in my career.

**Munashe:** Do you find it difficult to accommodate mentoring into your busy work and family schedule?

**Dr Chani:** Mostly I manage well. However, there are times when work gets busy and mentoring becomes a challenge. Fortunately my mentees are flexible and understanding of these situations, and we have got round through good communication. I let them know if there is an unexpected change to my schedule, and we rebook the mentorship meeting.

**Munashe:** How might you respond to a mentee who is struggling?

**Dr Chani:** Thankfully, both my mentees are doing very well. If they were to struggle, I would work with them to identify the reasons for the problem as well as find solutions to it. Simba reDzidzo has policies in place to guide the escalation process if we fail to resolve the issues.

**Munashe:** What would you be most pleased to achieve in mentoring your students?

**Dr Chani:** I would be most delighted if I help my mentees to accomplish the goals they have set to achieve for them to realise their dreams.

**Munashe:** When the mentorship period comes to an end, will you maintain contact with your mentees?

**Dr Chani:** Definitely, I would like to keep contact with my mentees. It'd be nice to see how they are progressing in life, and to continue to support them if required.

**Munashe:** Are there any books or articles that you encourage your mentees to read?

**Dr Chani:** Each individual is unique in their requirements. I encourage my mentees to read "The 7 habits of highly effective people" which emphasizes the importance of time management and prioritising tasks.

*Dr K Chani is a Public Health specialist based in Australia and working across Pacific Island countries. He is a medical graduate from the University of Zimbabwe.*

## SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES

BY LWIINDI MACHINGURA



### STELLAH PRESENTING TO SOCIAL SUPPORT GROUP

Stella Dzikiti is a 4th year medical student at the University of Zimbabwe who volunteers at Parirenyatwa Hospital Sexual Assault clinic as part of giving back to the community. She is an advocate for girl child empowerment as she has observed that their vulnerability is the major cause for their exploitation. Her role in the clinic is to give hope to victims of sexual assault. She also assists with HIV and pregnancy testing and counselling at the clinic. Stellah participates in community outreaches that spread awareness on female hygiene.

The community project has enhanced Stellah's awareness of the many struggles women face. "I wish I could give every girl child a bodyguard because the world is just too cruel for them and it's heartbreaking to hear all those stories from the survivors," she lamented. Stella shares Oprah Winfrey and Joyce Meyer's stories to give hope to survivors, that there is more to live for and that they are bigger than their situations.

# SRD GROUP MENTORSHIP RETREAT

LAKE CHIVERO, MAY 2022

BY LWIINDI MACHINGURA



The 6th of May 2022 was a day to remember. Simba reDzidzo beneficiaries grouped by the University of Zimbabwe's taxi rank to board the bus bound for Lake Chivero for a group mentorship retreat organised by their sponsor. It was going to be a great weekend away. One by one, each beneficiary was picked up from their designated pick up points and off we went, swept with the excitement to be on the spot already. The bus was filled with chatter, laughter and presumably lies about the destination ahead, that we failed to come up with a possible answer as to why some of colleagues had not joined us. Unknown to us, the 'missing' beneficiaries were part of a big surprise ahead of us.

We alighted at the Lake Chivero retreat taking in the magnificent view surrounding the campsite. After an introduction with the coaches, an instruction was given to group in ten minutes. We thought we were about to get dirty on arrival. Five minutes passed, then we saw a face we are all too familiar with on our regular zoom meetings, walking towards us. Simba reDzidzo founder, Dr Gerald Chitsunge in the flesh was approaching, with a smile - all we could do was smile back in confusion! We had not anticipated that he would be there physically with us! We greeted, hugged in awe to our unexpected guest and the day had to be marked on the calendar to be the best! We were each gifted with goodie bag containing a T-shirt, a cap and stationery embedded with the Simba reDzidzo logo.



The weekend took us through team building activities including morning exercises, the leap of faith, the chain of sacrifice, tag, only to mention a few. We had a mentorship lecture on Entrepreneurship from Mr Mbekezeli Mthunzi which was very insightful as he elaborated on the youth's potential, hence the words "Stop talking, begin working". The highlight of the weekend was the bonfire chat with Dr Chitsunge. This was a moment of openness and truth as each one of us expressed themselves than we ever did before. We talked about our challenges and vulnerabilities, and offered solutions to each other. All this was possible because of the safe and enabling environment that our mentor, Dr Chitsunge, created. The group mentorship of May 2022 was a paradise on earth and the weekend is forever etched in our minds that no one can take away the experience.



# SRD GROUP MENTORSHIP RETREAT IN PICTURES





# NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE



CONTENT OFFICER 1  
Muriel Chitehwe  
4th Year Medical Student  
University of Zimbabwe



CONTENT OFFICER 2  
Munashe Mukombe  
2nd Year Pharmacy Student  
University of Zimbabwe



CONTENT WRITER  
Lwiindi Machingura  
2nd Year Social Work Student  
University of Zimbabwe



CONTENT PROMOTER  
Fadziso Mango  
5th Year Production Engineering Student  
Chinhoyi University of Technology



CONTENT EDITOR & DESIGNER  
Liosa Hodzi  
2nd Year Chemical Engineering Student  
Harare Institute of Technology



EDUCATE EMPOWER  
ELEVATE

## **Simba reDzidzo (The Power of Education)**

72 Lakeside Circuit

Dubbo NSW 2830

Website: <https://simbaredzidzo.org.au/>

Email: [info@simbaredzidzo.org.au](mailto:info@simbaredzidzo.org.au)

AUGUST 2022

# DONATIONS



Step 1: Head to  
our website



Step 2: Click  
'Donate Now'



Step 3: Fill out  
your details