

# SIMBA REDZIDZO

## THE POWER OF EDUCATION

*The Official Newsletter of Scholarship Beneficiaries*

### Rebuilding Community: Making strides towards Restoration



Movan mahanya, 3rd year Geology, University of Zimbabwe

#### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

*"The April Edition of our Scholarship Beneficiaries' Newsletter is yet another proud testimony of a thriving Mentorship Program! It is remarkable to see the significant impact our mentorship program is making on the lives of these young individuals, and none of this would have been possible without the dedication and unwavering commitment of our Board, volunteer mentors, donors, and supporters. Thank you for empowering and nurturing the next generation of changemakers!"*

Dr Gerald Chitsunge, Founder & Executive Director,  
Simba reDzidzo

#### By Evidence Matutu

Since the beginning of time, humanity has had a close relationship with nature. Nature, in turn, has provided humans with countless benefits that are essential for our survival. Among nature's many gifts, trees remain one of the most vital. They provide oxygen, food, and shelter for animals. However, as civilization advances and development spreads, our natural resources are slowly dwindling. In many rural areas of developing countries, forests are the primary source of energy. As a result, trees are often harvested to sell as firewood, which is used for domestic cooking, and to fuel brick kilns for curing tobacco. Unfortunately, this practice disturbs the ecological balance and causes severe environmental damage.

Movan Mahanya, a third-year Geology student at the University of Zimbabwe, is a deserving beneficiary of the Simba reDzidzo Scholarship. His passion for preserving the environment and helping his community benefit from their natural resources without causing long-term damage inspired him to form the Red Gum Society. This youth-led organization aims to support communities in restoring the ecosystem through tree planting and educational programs.

As part of his Scholarship requirement to undertake projects to support and empower his community, Movan leveraged the knowledge he has gained as a geology student to understand the importance of the relationship between nature and mankind. He enlisted the help of his peers and embarked on an ambitious program to plant trees in Marondera District. Their efforts were supported by the Forestry Commission and Marondera University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology. **(cont. on next page)**



Red Gum planting trees in the community

### ***Continued from page 1***

Since its establishment, Red Gum Society has already planted 55 trees in Marondera District. This planting initiative is just the beginning of what is a long journey towards restoring the natural resources of the area, but Movan and his colleagues are committed to making a significant and positive difference. Their efforts are commendable and serve as a great inspiration to their community and beyond. Asked about what he has benefited from participating in Red Gum project activities, Movan said, "I have gained skills in communication, leadership, public speaking, teamwork and collaboration. Every opportunity in the project is an opportunity to perfect a skill. I have learnt how to draft a constitution, develop a business case and how to structure an organisation" He added, "When educating communities to combat climate change, I read science material on forestry management and gain knowledge in the process. I have also become better at decision making, problem solving and critical thinking". Movan concludes by expressing how grateful he is to Simba reDzidzo for the mentorship and opportunity to develop the skills he has learnt.

## **From Uncertainty to Empowerment: Mufaro's Life-Changing Experience with Simba reDzidzo Scholarship**

By Mufaro Shumbayaonda

"Living with the uncertainty of whether tomorrow is bright or blurred had always been the story of my life before Simba reDzidzo. It was a life that made no sense, where I went to school each day, not knowing if I would make it to the next. Slowly, I was losing sense of purpose. Without any predictable future, each day was pretty much the same with no direction. But, after a rigorous application process, I was incredibly fortunate to become a beneficiary of the Simba reDzidzo Scholarship, which has completely transformed my life. Now, I have direction, and I'm filled with the confidence that I will be able to make a positive impact on my life. Each day, I plan my day knowing what to expect, and I attend school with a sense of purpose.

Thanks to being part of Toastmasters international, I've been able to improve various aspects of my life, including leadership and presentation skills, and, most notably, self-confidence. Simba reDzidzo mentorship program has contributed significantly to my personal growth. I can freely share anything about my life with my Simba reDzidzo mentor, and she always provides me with guidance in every manner possible. Being a part of the Simba reDzidzo beneficiaries, I've not only found scholarship colleagues but a family of nice and friendly people who I can trust and rely on. I'm grateful for the Simba reDzidzo Scholarship, for it has not only empowered me, but also given me a sense of direction and purpose that I've never had before"



Mufaro Shumbayaonda examining a baby during clinical attachment

*Mufaro Shumbayaonda is a 3rd year Speech & Language Therapy student at University of Zimbabwe .*

# A NEW GRADUATE

COMPILED BY LIOSA RUTENDO HODZI

***Fadziso Mango (pictured on the right) recently completed 5 years of study towards Bachelor of Engineering Honors Degree (Production Engineering) at Chinhoyi University of Technology. Below is an extract of the interview I had with her.***



## **How was your journey at university and how does it feel to graduate?**

**Fadziso:** It's been a challenging journey, one with its fair share of ups and downs. But I'm thankful to God that I managed to pull through. I owe a significant amount of gratitude to Simba reDzidzo for giving me this incredible opportunity. Since joining the Simba reDzidzo family, I've learned so much, and every aspect of the experience has contributed to my academic and personal development. The individual mentorship, group mentorship, and community projects have been game-changers, and I'm grateful for the support and guidance provided to me by this wonderful family. To graduate with an upper-second class Bachelor of Engineering Honors Degree was the icing on the cake.

## **What were the highlights of your journey?**

**Fadziso :** My experience with Simba reDzidzo has been nothing short of amazing. Besides the financial support I received from this organization, I gained skills that have transformed my life in countless ways. I reflect on my journey with Simba reDzidzo, and some highlights immediately come to mind. These include the group mentorship sessions held at Mayittah, the individual mentorship sessions I had, engaging in community projects, becoming the president of Simba reDzidzo Toastmasters club, and the team building exercise at Lake Chivero.

Through the individual mentorship sessions, I received invaluable academic guidance and support for my career development, which has immensely helped me chart a path forward towards my professional goals. The group mentorship sessions were equally impactful, as I learned to be more professional, polished, and attentive to important details. The community project I volunteered for was particularly transformative, as I learned the importance of being selfless in serving others, rather than being self-centered.

The team building exercise at Lake Chivero taught me the importance of being a team player, and how collaboration and networking among different personalities can yield great results. Finally, serving as the president of Simba reDzidzo Toastmasters club has been a huge privilege, and has provided me with opportunities to grow my leadership skills daily. This role challenges me to find solutions to problems, mentor others, inspire people, and serve our community relentlessly.

## **What have you learnt as member and President of Simba Redzidzo Toastmasters club?**

**Fadziso:** As inaugural President of Simba reDzidzo Toastmasters Club, I'm incredibly grateful for the unwavering support of my executive members, Simba reDzidzo executive team, my mentor, TM Busi, and Area Director Brenda Zimbowora. Whenever I require advice or help with anything, I know that I can always go to them for assistance. For me, a leader is someone who understands the way and demonstrates it to others. As such, I concentrate on broadening my knowledge in several areas to enable me to guide others effectively. I'm actively engaged in every committee, ensuring that I'm up to date and that we're continually improving.

In the past, I was inhibited by shyness and struggled significantly with public speaking. However, as a member of the Simba reDzidzo Toastmasters Club, I've overcome my fear of public speaking and can now articulate my views with confidence. Being the President of Simba reDzidzo Toastmasters Club has instilled in me a sense of responsibility and selflessness. My primary duty is to serve my fellow Toastmasters, to assist each member in achieving their goals. I've learned how to inspire others, particularly the youth, by being a leader who is set apart. One who is willing to serve with dignity, honesty, and excellence.

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# Unlocking Potential: The Power of Mentorship

By Lwiindi Machingura

Mentorship is an essential part of everyday activities at Simba reDzidzo, whether it's individual or group mentorship. As part of our scholarship program, every beneficiary is assigned a mentor with whom they communicate regularly. Additionally, beneficiaries are enrolled in group mentorship programmes that promote communication, grooming, and etiquette, among other essential skills. To gain insight into how Simba reDzidzo's mentorship programme impacts its beneficiaries, I conducted interviews with scholarship beneficiaries. These interviews helped to understand how the mentorship programme has been instrumental in their personal and professional development. Below are some extracts from the interviews:

*"Initially, I found it hard to communicate with my mentor, but I grew more comfortable with the concept of mentorship with time. We set objectives for each month and were successful in achieving them. Scheduling proved to be a challenge initially due to conflicting timetables and time differences, but we were able to resolve that. Prioritizing tasks before making decisions helped me be efficient with my time and reflect on my progress. Volunteering with a career-related organisation has enhanced my personal and professional growth, impacting my mentorship positively. My goals for this year include obtaining good academic results. To achieve these goals, I am focusing on fulfilling short-term objectives each month."*

**Munashe Mukombe, 2nd year Pharmacy Student, UZ**



Munashe Mukombe, 2nd year Pharmacy



Kumbirayi Kazunga, 2nd year Chemical Engineering

*"I'm thrilled to share that I've been making tremendous progress in my public speaking and presentation skills through Simba reDzidzo Toastmasters club. Recently, I completed Level 2 of the presentation mastery path and am excited to start the next level. The wealth of resources available on the Toastmasters website has been invaluable to me, as has the support of my mentor from the mentor-mentee program. Additionally, my club members have created an amazing environment for personal development, offering me a great deal of support. As a result of joining Toastmasters, I have built the confidence required to become a successful public speaker and leader across various aspects of my life. The process of planning meetings and speeches has taught me essential organizational and communication skills applicable in other areas of work too. Overcoming my fear of public speaking has been challenging, however, having the support of my club members, I gained the confidence to overcome it. Although I faced the challenge of technical glitches and power cuts, I persisted, and ultimately, Toastmasters helped me learn new skills and have the courage to step out of my comfort zone. Every time I fail I get back up on stage. I am emboldened by the improvements I've made through Toastmasters over the past few months"*

*Moving forward, my primary goal is to become a mentor because supporting one another runs in the blood of Simba reDzidzo. I also want to establish a time management system to schedule and manage tasks more efficiently without sacrificing the quality of my work. Doing so will make me more organized and efficient in preparing for my speeches. I plan to design my presentations, including interactive elements to engage my audience better. In two months, my goal is to ensure that every presentation I give involves participation from the audience. I strongly believe that mentorship is essential in personal development, which is why I'm confident in the leadership potential in Simba reDzidzo.*

**Kumbirayi Kazunga, 2nd year Chemical and Processes Engineering, HIT**

# Mentors Make the Difference: A candid chat with Mr Manyura

By Blessing Nhengu

I was honored to interview Mr. Godswill Manyura, one of Simba reDzidzo's esteemed mentors. Our mentors play an integral role in the growth and development of our beneficiaries, and we are forever grateful for their invaluable contribution.

## **How did you become a mentor for SrD scholarship beneficiaries?**

I became a mentor for Simba reDzidzo Scholarship beneficiaries through a friendship with Dr. Chitsunge. After learning about the project and its impact, I offered to contribute to the noble cause. He offered me the opportunity to provide mentorship to one of the scholarship beneficiaries and I gladly accepted. Already I had experience mentoring other individuals.

## **What motivates you to become a mentor?**

I am motivated by a desire to see young people progress and succeed. I firmly believe in the power of mentorship, having benefited from it myself. Without the guidance of mentors, I wouldn't be where I am today. It's fulfilling to be able to give back and receive in the process.

## **How would you describe your SrD mentorship journey so far? What are the highlights? Have you faced any challenges?**

My mentorship journey has been fulfilling and thrilling as I guide and mentor my mentee, feeling like I'm mentoring a younger brother and reminiscing my university experience while doing so. Though connectivity issues and the time differences have posed challenges, we're determined to maintain consistency in our communications.

## **Besides SrD, are you involved in any other mentoring?**

I'm currently mentoring a young mining engineer at work, and it's been a fulfilling experience. I'm the type of person that's always willing to help others reach their goals and I'm currently assisting four young people in navigating the requirements needed to work in Australia. Additionally, I'm helping a few other individuals with life and career-related issues such as adjusting to a foreign land, changes in cultures, weather, and being alone.

It's gratifying to see how our conversations can play a significant role in shaping their lives. Thanks to our mentoring, I've had the pleasure of seeing 2 or 3 individuals successfully relocate abroad.

## **From your experience, what are the benefits of mentoring? What goals do you set regarding your relationship with your mentee(s)?**

At times, when setting goals, individuals can become too rigid and unable to see the bigger picture. As mentors, we have the experience to guide our mentees on when to make a change and when to pursue certain paths. With all my mentees, I see them as brothers and sisters, which allows for open and honest communication. This closeness means I become part and parcel of their achievements, guiding them along the way. Once we agree on timelines, we work together to pursue their goals. Additionally, I offer life skills training such as writing application letters to better prepare our mentees for the future. The goal is to develop our mentees' life skills and prepare them for their future.

## **You have had a long and successful career in mining engineering, what personal and professional habits helped you get to where you are?**

Acquiring academic exposure and transitioning to the industry is crucial in life. I believe in being open-minded and respecting those with more experience than me. Approaching new experiences with an openness to learn has aided me in gaining knowledge and solidifying relationships with colleagues. Humility and respect for the more experienced was key to my growth.

## **Do you have any advice to young people pursuing engineering as a career?**

Engineering requires open-minded individuals who are willing to apply efficient and effective principles to create change. To make a difference and unlock potential, one must not limit themselves, they must explore uncharted areas. Technological advancements are essential and keeping up to date is crucial. Engineering is universal, and being in competition with the world requires a global mindset. The opportunities provided through programs like Simba reDzidzo mentorship offer more than international passports and can lead to limitless possibilities. Challenge yourself and think globally!

# CLIMATE CHANGE: A NEW SHADOW HAUNTING OUR COMMUNITIES

By Forgive Mutende

Our planet has been warmer and colder over millions of years. Many people believe that climate change primarily means higher temperatures. Yet, the rise in temperature is merely the beginning of it all because the Earth is a system in which everything is interconnected, changes in one region might have an impact on all others.

Today, we are currently seeing rapid warming as a result of human activities, especially the burning of fossil fuels in our very own communities, which emits greenhouse gases. We are living in communities close to manufacturing industries and they produce emissions. People are cutting and burning down forests to create farms or pastures. Our vehicles too are emitting carbon dioxide every day into the atmosphere. If this continues and temperatures continue rising by any amount between 2–6 degrees Celsius, human, animal, and plant life will be greatly affected.

As a result of our actions, we have started experiencing severe droughts, water scarcity, severe fires, and flooding in our communities. This is significantly impacting our health, ability to grow food, housing, safety, and work and people are seeing directly how climate change can destroy our environment. Climate change is a huge challenge, but how we live and work together in communities can have a huge impact on tackling it. We need to raise awareness of efficient energy usage and inspire small changes in individual behavior that if done consistently can have a big impact on climate. As communities, let us identify opportunities to support energy transition through educating, training, and volunteering. People need to be introduced to actions they can implement into their daily routines to reduce their negative environmental impact.

Some communities have started reclaiming green spaces through sustainable community-led urban renewal projects such as community gardens, parks, and recreational centers among others. Most of them recycle their waste and they are getting money out of it.

We all have to start right now. The biggest call is not to find solutions because we already have them, what we need is ACTION. Because if we do not pay the bill now, we will pay dearly in the future. Unless we do something today, there is nothing we can do tomorrow!



Forgive Mutende

**Forgive Mutende is a 2nd year Medical Analytics and Informatics student at the University of Zimbabwe**

## Simba reDzidzo Scholarship Program Partners with Tariro House of Hope to give Hope to Vulnerable Children:

By Liosa Hodzi

Following a visit by the Simba reDzidzo beneficiaries to Tariro House of Hope in December 2022, a partnership was established between the two organizations to provide peer mentorship and support to 60 vulnerable children in Epworth. The beneficiaries' first quarterly visit to Tariro House of Hope on March 4th, 2023, was a resounding success, with the students engaging the children in team-building activities that fostered trust, communication, and coordination, such as the balloon caterpillar and blind artist. The day was filled with inspiring stories, hope, and a positive outlook for a better future, leaving a lasting impact on both the beneficiaries and children. Plans are underway for more regular visits, building on the success of this partnership. Simba reDzidzo is fostering empathy and empowering us to become better citizens.





# MEET THE SCHOLARSHIP BENEFICIARIES



**Leon Chacha**  
*2nd Year Risk and Insurance*  
Sharing his life story with THH children

*Insert: Munashe Mukombe, 2nd Year Pharmacy*



**Trish Macharavanda,**  
*1st year Pharmacy*



**Movian Mahanya, 3rd Year Geology**  
Entering data from the field



**Anesu Chatyoka, 2nd Year Crop Science**  
Mentoring school children in her community



**Liosa Hodzi (left) and Kumbirayi Kazunga (Right)**  
*2nd Year Chemical and Processes Engineering*  
In Engineering Lab performing an experiment

# NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE



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Liosa Hodzi  
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